

Case study: Taylor Wessing

Success through innovation and choice

BigHand Go technology improves working flexibility, productivity and efficiency at Taylor Wessing.

Dictation on the move supporting client needs

Top 20 law firm Taylor Wessing has an ever-growing profile and turnover, but with the help of BigHand the firm is scaling while staying true to its philosophy of people first in achieving success for clients and employees'.

Elliot White's strategic IT role as Business Relationship Manager is deeply connected to this philosophy – his goal, he says, is to "help our lawyers get the most out of IT". White needs to understand exactly what the firm's lawyers are doing, how they are working, what their challenges and pressures are – and then turn that knowledge into "processes and technologies and software to help them work better".

"I find out a lot of things over coffee with an associate or an informal catch-up with a partner. It's those conversations that really bring evolution and innovation, and improving efficiency is generally at the centre of them. Lawyers make our business, so improving their efficiency is a continuous focus."

Having previously used a different Digital Dictation (DD) provider for some years, White was keeping a close eye on where the technology was going, specifically around mobility as that holds

great potential benefits for the firm and its people. "We were keen to explore the opportunity that mobile would bring, but our existing DD technology wasn't moving in the right direction. We also needed our technology upgrades to be easier, simpler and quicker."

BigHand's solution

White therefore picked BigHand in 2012 to drive some Dictation innovation into Taylor Wessing, starting with a pilot programme for 30 mobility users. "During the pilot we tracked Dictation volumes from source analysis, to see if heavy Dictation users were still using it – and the majority loved the fact they could Dictate from anywhere." The roll out was pain-free, he says. "We didn't have to swap devices, and the software is self-explanatory so no retraining. BigHand created a credit card-sized help sheet and that was enough – we just let them go."

From rolling out to Associates and Partners, now everyone has access to the BigHand Go service – in fact, it's the default. "It was on Blackberrys back then, but we knew in advance that BigHand could accommodate a real breadth of operating systems, and we want everyone to have choice.

"People have to be away from the office for many reasons, work and personal. Being able to work in a variety of ways usually means increased efficiency, providing the tools to work, no matter where you are, is part of that." Dictation can be difficult if you're doing it directly through a VPN, says White, so there were "huge efficiencies" using the BigHand app instead.

"We now have 230 users on the BigHand Go platform – that's more than half the firm, and growing all the time." The plan, he explains, is to have every Taylor Wessing lawyer using it, including trainees. "New starters just choose their OS preference – Android, Apple or Microsoft – but it's the same app for everyone. Even in the office, they can use it over WiFi and everything is submitted straight to server."

Cost savings and improved productivity

The saving the firm has made in reducing Dictation hardware alone has been a big benefit. "It's a massive difference, and helps our bottom line a great deal. We're not really buying Dictation hardware any more. If existing stuff breaks, we replace it with a mobile. This must be an industry trend – and if you have the ability to save money you should."

White says that using BigHand technology means more billable hours can be effectively captured. "Being able to instantly submit Dictation will, of course, increase productivity," he says, "but also the time lawyers are spending is the best possible time for work quality, because they are Dictating straight away. We all know that it is far better to get something down straight away."

After a client meeting, in the taxi for example, they can Dictate and, when they get back to the office, documents are there for review. "It's time well spent for the client and firm."

The firm uses in-house secretaries but it has recently made significant changes to increase efficiencies by creating a shared secretarial service desk, BigHand enabled us to create a separate workflow to incorporate this.

"Jobs are sent to the shared desk for a quick turnaround, or to a specific secretary if needed," says White. Fee Earners can submit from anywhere to any secretary, he adds, "so our secretaries are utilised across the firm and lawyers can choose".

Lawyers can see live updates on Dictation now, and know who is working on dictation at any time – they have total visibility of the process. "This sounds like a simple thing, but it's very important. Being able to keep track of Dictation from anywhere, anytime, is such a big plus. The answer to 'Where is my Dictation?' hasn't been available here before. Lawyers can now better manage and meet client expectations."

This also helps in managing the secretarial service desk. "We know how much work is coming through, and we can see whether our lawyers understand the service and make sure they utilise services best. We can also correlate data to see if there are common trends in what's happening with Dictation."

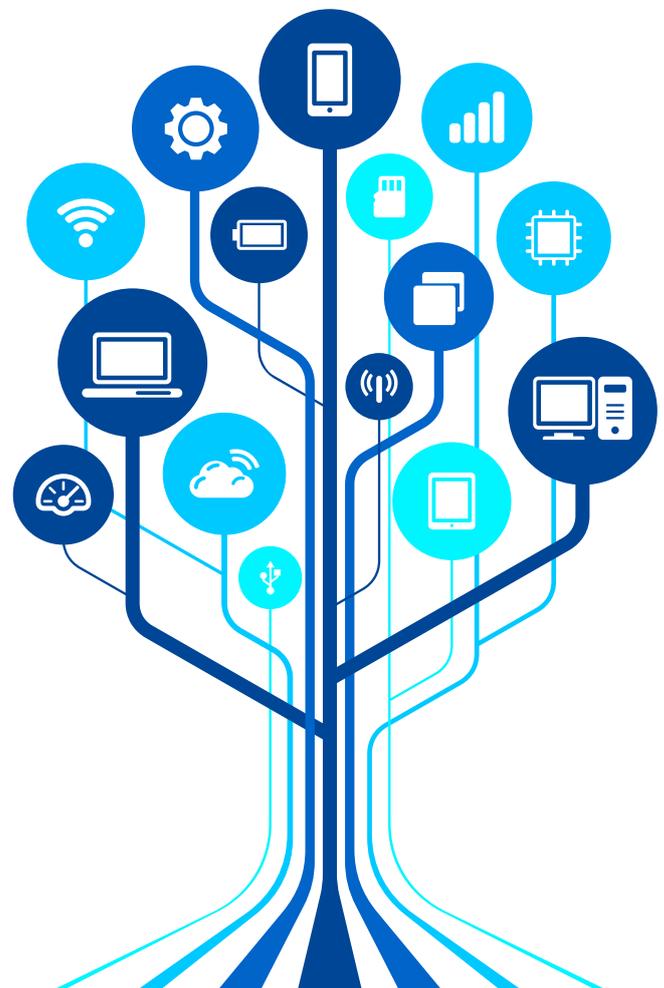
White says the firm is continually revisiting Dictation workflow now that there's more capability to do so. The firm uses private workflows for high-profile clients, for example, so that specific secretaries can review dictations. "BigHand is a powerful bit of software, and we will build more bespoke workflows with it. I'm always trying to understand how we can create more process management to help the business."

Centralised workflow helps Taylor Wessing grow as a firm

White cites areas such as highlighting priorities in the secretarial queue to improve turnaround time and ensure even better service as an example of this.

When DD was first introduced at the firm, White created some sophisticated document profiling to retrieve information more easily – and after the move to BigHand, this has delivered significant rewards. "We expanded this a lot when we got BigHand. The BigHand back end makes it easy to add a new profile type. It helps us understand what kind of Dictation is being done, the make-up of departments and their document activity, and we can analyse the data for decision making."

Advanced workflow and profiling will be taken further with the firm's imminent adoption of the first Dictation app, specifically designed for the iPad. "I really believe in the power of marginal gain," explains White. "It's unrealistic to think we can make everyone work 100% more efficiently 100% of the time – but all these tools help individuals work better and more efficiently incrementally."



White is keen to reiterate that neither he nor the firm forces technology on people, because that doesn't engender real use. "Giving people choice means their habits really change. You can't expect everything to work for everyone, so we start by working on the areas it can really help and grow from there." White says that BigHand Go will benefit many of the firm's Fee Earners. "They will be able to review documents from anywhere, and Dictate on to them. They can even scan copies of documents using their iPad and move them on in the workflow. It may seem like only a slightly different way of working, but it will be very helpful."

A powerful toolkit increasing the scope for more innovation

Perhaps one of the reasons that White's been able to innovate is the firm's 'innovation fund'. This lets people like him "try new things", he says. The next move for Taylor Wessing is BigHand server-side Speech Recognition, with the ability to submit audio remotely from a smartphone or tablet and have specific types of documents created as a quick first draft.

"I think BigHand Speech Recognition provides an even more efficient way of using time. It's also a good middle ground. Some new trainees, for example, like to type their own work and it's that type of work we would like to target, but Lawyers will still enlist secretarial help for other types of work." This is building yet more choice into the system at the firm, which should in turn create more buy-in.

In sum, he says, BigHand provides a powerful toolkit of ways in which Dictation can help Taylor Wessing's Fee Earners. "To be honest, it seems to be the de facto solution for a lot of firms. BigHand have spent a lot of time developing the software to make it the clear leader in the legal sector. This is just another reason they will help us stay a leader in our sector, too."

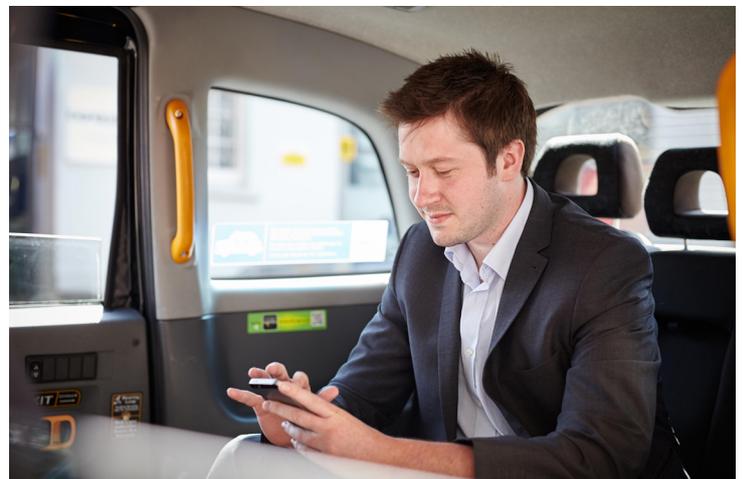


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Key benefits for Taylor Wessing



- Gave Lawyers more control reducing need to find staff to complete work
- Total visibility where Lawyers can track progress of work online
- Balanced workload where Lawyers can share a pool of secretaries
- Helped remove a seemingly never ending backlog of Dictations
- Gave Lawyers more control reducing need to find staff to complete work
- Enabled Lawyers to be productive away from the office



Elliot White, Business Relationship Manager

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