

Case study: Wright Hassall

## THE BUSINESS OF LAW: Wright Hassall choose BigHand to support their drive into the UK Legal Top 100



### Wright Hassall deploys BigHand technology to facilitate smarter working and drive productivity amongst Fee Earners.

The legal industry has undergone a fundamental change in working practice in the last five years. As increasing numbers of firms have recognised the need for, and indeed embraced, business expertise and business transformation skills to fulfill their latent capacity, so have they embraced the power of technology. None more so than Midlands-based Wright Hassall Solicitors, a firm which is on a growth trajectory to become one of the UK's Top 100; its current use of BigHand technology is seen as key to smarter working that will enable this ambition.

#### Overview

Wright Hassall Solicitors is a traditional law firm with a history dating back 170 years. Currently one of the largest firms in the Midlands outside of Birmingham, it is in the midst of a three year plan to break into the Top 100. Moreover, it aims to do so not through merger or acquisition, but through organic growth; in the last two years, Wright Hassall has achieved 40% growth by, as IT Director Martyn Wells, says "making our processes sharper."

"If you look around the Top 200 firms, it's no surprise that BigHand's market penetration is around 85%", Martyn explains. "They are dominant and the reason they are is because the

product suits the needs of the profession. So when we started looking to replace our legacy Digital Dictation solution, for me it was an obvious choice to speak to them to see what new features they could offer that would help us take our business to the next level. In addition, we wanted a partner who understood the intricacies of the legal market."

#### Helping Fee Earners work smarter

Wright Hassall swapped out its previous Digital Dictation provider, and went live with BigHand Digital Dictation, Speech Recognition and BigHand SmartNote, a workflow automation tool, in July 2015.

Its objectives were clear: how could the firm help makes Fee Earners more productive and take tasks away from them that they really didn't need to be doing?

One of the processes Wright Hassall had identified as time consuming and of little value-add to the business was the production of notes: notes of phone calls, attendance notes and file notes. Martyn explains: "These notes were typically being Dictated, typed up by the secretarial team, sent back for approval and then printed, filed and logged on the document management system. It was a lot of work for something that is rarely referred back to."

## Managing Change successfully

Martyn puts the success of the BigHand implementation to date down to two things: up front investment in change management prior to the introduction of BigHand; and compulsory training for users, through informal workshops in part incentivised by BigHand's marketing activities. The combination of these activities led to 99% attendance from Fee Earners, which has led to significant business benefits being realised across the firm.

Since July 2015, approximately 30% of the Dictations that were previously going through secretaries vanished immediately through SmartNote. And, within Wright Hassall's conveyancing team in particular, 99.35% of everything they Dictate goes through SmartNote and Speech Recognition.

"It's had a dramatic effect. Not only are Fee Earners saving time, but we have been able to refocus the efforts of our secretaries to more compliance-based tasks, such as file closure, better money laundering checks, and scanning more work. This in itself has a monetary benefit as we're saving on the amount of paper archiving we have to do. And, in the case of our conveyancing team, we have been able to convert the secretarial resource into helping with Fee Earning work, so we've increased fee income."

Looking ahead, Wright Hassall intends to focus on case management and is looking into tools that will further improve and automate workflows to make for smarter business management across the firm.

Martyn concludes: "BigHand ultimately fulfills our communication with the client. It's enabling the seamless integration of the written documentation our clients need, with the internal management of the spoken word, merging that with the precedents we require within each document, and finally integrating it with our document management system so we have a complete audit trail. BigHand is underpinning how we work smarter as a firm to assist with our organic growth ambitions."

  
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## Key Project Facts



- Wright Hassall has achieved 40% growth in the last 2 years
- The firm implemented BigHand Digital Dictation with Speech Recognition and BigHand SmartNote in July 2015
- Since the roll out, approximately 30% of the firm's Dictations are processed through BigHand SmartNote
- 99.35% of everything Dictated by the Conveyancing team now go through BigHand SmartNote and Speech Recognition

### Martyn Wells, IT Director, Wright Hassall

"We were particularly attracted to BigHand SmartNote as it allows us to completely automate that process. Dictations are sent to BigHand's Speech Recognition platform along with the template for the correct form, and then filed. There is no need for secretaries to get involved and no need for approval as the voice file is saved alongside the note in question. It's a significant process improvement."