



Schofield Sweeney is very much a people business. Being able to communicate effectively to other lawyers, clients and each other is a business critical capability. With a hundred staff split between two offices, the practice had a slightly more complicated life than they wanted.

A simple issue with potentially big consequences was phones ringing out even at a manned reception desk, due purely to a lack of capacity.

At a deeper level, having a linked system across both offices seemed to build in a weakness as much as a strength, as a problem centrally would take down the Leeds office too.

OPPORTUNITY

With the existing digital phone system in the main Bradford office going end-of-life, the opportunity to solve the issue and upgrade generally presented itself.

Graham Sweeney brought in SICL and the decision was taken to invest in a Cisco IP based telephone system.

The solution chosen was based on a Cisco Call Manager Server. Local Survivable Remote Site Telephony (SRST) voice gateways were deployed at each office to provide a connection to the BT phone lines and protection against the

“CALL QUEUEING HAS MADE A REAL DIFFERENCE. WHICHEVER OFFICE A CUSTOMER CALLS, THEY GET THE SAME LEVEL OF SERVICE AS ALL CALLS ARE PLACED IN A SINGLE QUEUE, WHETHER TO THE BRADFORD OR THE LEEDS OFFICE. BEFORE THAT, WE WOULD OFTEN GET THE PHONE RINGING OUT WHICH IS NOT A GOOD WAY TO CONDUCT BUSINESS.”

failure of the central Call Manager servers. In a worst case scenario, affecting either office, the phone system in the other would stay fully operational. Thus a key issue from a business continuity basis was addressed.

As Graham Sweeney, Operations Director, relates it was a move that dealt with a number of small but not insignificant issues the company had grown used to in their day-to-day operations.

“TO BALANCE SPEND VS VALUE”

FUTURE ORIENTED

In 2012, the end-of-life aspect reappeared with the Cisco

servers hitting their 5 year limit. Once again, this presented an opportunity to take the business' capabilities up another level.

As law is purely a people business, recruiting good talent is vital. With potential recruits increasingly including technology as part of their career decision making, a chance to improve things again was welcomed.

Two key requirements of the new brief were:

- Introduction of further system resilience as the phone system was ever more critical to business
- Meeting growing demand for the latest smartphone capabilities from employees

SPEND VS VALUE

Graham sat down with Liam Morris, account manager at SICL, to scope things out, always mindful, as Graham puts it “to balance spend vs value”.

Part of that careful calculation of spend vs value was the reuse of existing investments in handsets and voice gateways. Sticking with Cisco as a proven provider kept the unknowns to a minimum, whilst helping to deliver a strong value for money result.

As ever with new technology, you can meet the brief plus some. Cisco has released new UCS (Unified Computing Services) servers, allowing multiple instances as virtualised servers. This brought two very strong benefits for Schofield Sweeney.



- Ease of future expansion without extra hardware - a good cushion for a growing business
- Full failover resilience of the core server platform, reducing further the possibility of a reputation-sapping outage

THE REAL PRIZE

The real prize though, as Graham points out: "is to make the small things seem easier for people."

Elaborating, Graham lists some of the features that appeal to his colleagues who are out of the office about a third of the time.

"SICL HAVE BEEN WITH US FOR 6 OR 7 YEARS SO WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME. BEFORE THAT WE WERE WITH A MAJOR PROVIDER. WITH SICL, WE HAVE A MUCH BETTER EXPERIENCE."

- "Voicemails are now emailed as an attachment. You play the voice file and it then deletes it from the system without any intervention"

- "Click on a link in Outlook and it goes straight through"

SICL - A BETTER EXPERIENCE

With the deployment of Cisco Jabber clients on user desktops, presence and Instant Messaging have become available, further expanding the options by which Schofield Sweeney can engage with their clients.

"WITH SICL, WE HAVE HAD A MUCH BETTER EXPERIENCE."

Graham Sweeney,
Operation Director

Commercial Law firm Schofield Sweeney operate out of twin offices in Bradford and Leeds. They are one of the leading law firms in the region, with practices in all aspects of commercial law. Key to business is a strong results-driven approach, built to deliver against critical deadlines. As you might imagine, good communication skills, supported by the right technology is what underpins such practice.



SICL is an award-winning technology company specialising in IT service and solutions; on-premise, in the cloud and hybrid. Using its expertise, experience and accreditations, SICL helps organisations design, deploy and deliver IT services aligned to strategic aims.

From 'datacentre to desktop' SICL provides project and support services tailored to individual customer requirement delivering technical excellence with exceptional customer service.

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