

29 Bedford Row Chambers Takes Unprecedented Industry Step by Outsourcing Entire IT Support and Disaster Recovery Solution

oncore IT provides complete IT solution on single fixed fee basis allowing easy 'charge out' method to Barristers while protecting highly confidential case management data

About 29 Bedford Row

29 Bedford Row is a recognised leader in the field of family law. It is described as such by both The Legal 500 and by the Chambers & Partners Guide to the UK Legal Profession. Many members of Chambers are also individually listed as leaders in the Family/Matrimonial field in Chambers & Partners, The Legal 500, and Legal Experts. In addition to a team of top-flight divorce and ancillary relief practitioners, 29 Bedford Row has expertise in all aspects of the law relating to children, including child abduction and adoption.

The Chambers' IT Requirements

29 Bedford Row recognises that despite traditional opinion, Chambers are businesses and should act as such, rather than the old and stuffy 'quill & ink' image so often associated with the profession. The Chambers took the conscious decision to fully embrace the benefits that technology can bring by adopting an innovative and radical approach to the running of their internal IT systems.

29 Bedford Row differs greatly from most other Chambers in that it has chosen to completely outsource its IT function. Having renewed its 3 year agreement with oncore IT in January 2007, it now has an all encompassing IT support agreement under a single, fixed annual fee. By using this fixed fee approach, 29 Bedford Row has greatly simplified the apportioning of central charges to each of the Chambers members and escaped the previous nightmare scenario of having a plethora of IT suppliers providing various IT services, some under contract and some invoicing ad hoc on a monthly basis. Also, with the introduction of oncore IT's highly innovative prepaid, engineering voucher system, the requirement for non-contractual engineering support, such as providing out of normal working hours support, 29 Bedford Row can apportion the charges to members of Chambers according to the number of vouchers they have used. This effective billing approach, coupled with oncore IT's superior quality IT support services and a comprehensive online data back-up and recovery solution, made the offer hard to refuse.

Peter Duckworth, barrister at 29 Bedford Row, states:

"We have to look after client confidentiality, so it is imperative that the data from my PC, at my home address and in the office, is protected at all times...The oncore IT service provides me with peace of mind that even if I lose data, it can be retrieved with minimum disruption to my work and because the data is encrypted, I know that no one but I can access the data."

A 29 Bedford Row spokesperson commented; "We are now in a paperless era, where safety boxes for storing important legal documents have been replaced by the need for the protection of digital data, which in turn relies on the stability of the IT infrastructure that underpins the business. Managing highly sensitive and personal legal cases means that in the event of an IT systems failure, we need to be able to retrieve case management data and related emails very quickly and reliably. Losing case data or having case data stolen could signal the end of a case and a loss of

reputation for our business.”

29 Bedford Row was previously using a tape-based solution, which was unreliable and very inconvenient for the office, because it involved a non-technical member of staff having to manually back up the office data and organise for it to be physically transported from the office to an offsite location. Retrieving the data would take days, as the tape needed to be transported back to the office and sometimes the retrieved data would be corrupted and therefore irretrievable. The backup procedure was also infrequent because of the time-consuming management of the tapes; given that the majority of data that needs to be retrieved is recently generated data, this data may not have even been backed up to tape yet and would therefore be lost forever.

29 Bedford Row therefore needed a fully outsourced IT support solution that would ensure that any server problems would cause minimum disruption to the business, without the need for involvement from any internal staff, and that any lost data could be quickly and reliably retrieved.

A Perfect Match: oncore IT

29 Bedford Row chose oncore IT to provide it with a completely outsourced IT solution that would not only provide maximum protection for their highly sensitive client data, but also to design, implement and support the entire IT infrastructure that this important data runs on. Having contracted with oncore IT for the past 8 years, the Chambers was confident that oncore IT was more than capable of undertaking the complex task of providing a total outsourced IT service.

“29 Bedford Row is one of the UK’s most prestigious Chambers and home to some of the most successful and respected barristers in the country,” said Patric Kinstrey, Director, oncore IT. “Being at the pinnacle of their profession, it is absolutely essential that the Chambers have the highest levels of IT support and data protection available; oncore IT is obviously delighted to continue to meet with these very stringent and exacting requirements. The Chambers in general operate in a slightly different manner to most similar sized business, in as much as each Barrister is effectively treated as an individual business within the Chambers. The way in which we have been able to tailor our key managed services to meet this challenging requirement has proved absolutely critical in us gaining the full trust and confidence of the Chambers to the point where they have awarded us with a new, fully inclusive 3 year contract.”

The Services

oncore IT now provides the Chambers with a total outsourced IT support service using its highly effective and successful PReSS (Proactive Remote Engineering Support Service) IT network management system. PReSS is at the heart of all of oncore IT’s highly innovative managed IT services and provides continuous and proactive system monitoring, fault identification, alerting and resolution services 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. PReSS incorporates a full call logging and escalation process that ensures any IT problem detected is immediately, logged and then constantly tracked through the system until it has been resolved by our NOC team (Network Operations Centre) in accordance with the Chambers SLA. The system has been designed to be completely ‘transparent’ in that it will allow full access by nominated staff at the Chambers to view all support activity undertaken by oncore IT. This feature further ensures that oncore IT is indeed meeting its service levels. In addition to the core PReSS system, oncore IT also provides the Chambers with a wide range of its other key managed services, including the prime Internet connectivity for all the Chambers members by implementing a 2mb leased line with ADSL automatic failover, which includes an anti spam and virus email filter. Included in the overall service is ‘remedial’ support in the form of software updates, patches and fixes; oncore IT for instance installed new server systems for the Chambers in January 2007, with the system now running in a future-proofed Windows environment along with the latest version of Microsoft Exchange 2007 and Office 2007. oncore IT also works closely with many leading applications

specialists, with a high number of Chambers members using the Meridian suite of applications for their time recording, case management and billing requirements. oncore IT is able to provide an effective 'first line' support for such vendors, greatly alleviating the pressure on the vendors to provide their clients with general IT support that is not particularly associated with the main application they are providing.

One of the most critical managed services oncore IT provides the Chambers with is the on-line data back-up service (OLB). The initial OLB installation was carried out in December 2006, taking only two days to complete the first back up of all the Chambers data into oncore IT's highly secure data vault located within its NOC. The OLB service, based upon Asigra's award-winning data protection software technology, now automatically backs up the Chambers' newly created or amended data every night. As the service is online and fully encrypted from the moment it leaves the Chambers' network, it is much easier, quicker and safer to store and, if ever required, restore. oncore IT employs a fully resilient data back-up vault and as such runs a duplicate and highly secure offshore vault containing a second full copy of all stored data, which acts as oncore IT's own back-up contingency.

As a further enhancement to the OLB service, oncore IT also provides the Chambers with a full data disaster recovery service. Should the Chambers suffer a major catastrophe such as fire, flood, prolonged mains power failure or be denied access to its offices for whatever reason, oncore IT will invoke its DRS plan and will begin the restore of the Chambers' entire system (if necessary) onto transportable standby server equipment contained within oncore IT's NOC. Once this restore is complete, the standby equipment can be shipped to a location within the UK as specified by the Chambers. As part of the service, oncore IT performs a complete Trial Data Restore at the oncore IT data centre on an annual basis. This trial ensures that should the Chambers suffer a real catastrophe or major IT Systems failure, oncore IT has the proven ability to fully recover the systems and data in the agreed time scales.

Tangible Results

Now fully upgraded and implemented, the Chambers boasts one of the most comprehensive and advanced IT systems within the Chambers community. In outsourcing its entire IT requirement in this way, the Chambers has not only freed itself up from the day to day responsibility of trying to manage and support an increasingly complex network, but released key staff to concentrate on more productive and profitable activity for the Chambers. The Chambers now has great peace of mind in the knowledge that its IT systems are provided by oncore IT under a very strict and detailed SLA (Service Level Agreement), which provides it with the highest levels of service possible with the minimum of overhead being placed on its own internal resources. All of the support, services and equipment are now incorporated within a single, fixed fee contract for the next 3 years.

Downtime can be disastrous, especially for mission-critical systems where every second offline costs a barrister time, money and potentially, clients. Having the security of the oncore IT service means that downtime is now minimised, thereby contributing positively to the overall profitability of the business.

Member of Chambers Case Example

Peter Duckworth is a highly experienced and well-respected barrister at 29 Bedford Row Chambers and has published a number of titles, including: 'Matrimonial Property & Finance' (Looseleaf); 'Family Finance Toolkit' software; a regular column in 'Family Affairs' (journal of FLBA); occasional leaders in 'Family Law Journal'.

Peter Duckworth comments on the benefits of oncore IT's data backup and disaster recovery service: "We have to look after client confidentiality, so it is imperative that the data from my PC, at my home address and in the office, is protected at all times. With substantial fees being billed

every day, it would be catastrophic to the running of our business if we were to lose data. The oncore IT service provides me with peace of mind that even if I lose data, it can be retrieved with minimum disruption to my work and because the data is encrypted, I know that no one but I can access the data.”

Background Information

For further information about 29 Bedford Row Chambers, please go to www.29bedfordrow.com, or call 020 7404 1044.

About oncore IT

oncore IT provides a 24/7, 365 days a year managed IT service for small and medium sized businesses, incorporating both hardware and software for a complete outsourced IT solution. oncore IT partners with best of breed vendors to provide an IT management service that only a large corporate would normally have access to. Services include: remote IT management; provision of all hardware equipment and software licenses; disaster recovery; remote (offsite and online) backup and recovery; desktop management and assistance; equipment hosting and replacement; monitoring and alerting; network access services; bandwidth management; firewall provisioning; and email filtering. For more information, please visit the company's website at www.oncoreIT.com or call 08450 541122.
