

Assisting global growth with high performance end-user IT

SLA-DRIVEN OUT-OF-HOURS
IT SUPPORT FOR LEADING
INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

CASE STUDY

OSBORNE CLARKE



IN BRIEF

CUSTOMER CHALLENGE

- Improve capability, responsiveness and customer service of out-of-hours IT support service.
- Align out-of-hours service experience with in-house daytime IT support.
- Build scalable global IT support model to support growing international presence.

PLAN-NET SOLUTIONS & SERVICES

- SLA-driven managed IT support aligned to Osborne Clarke's daytime service. Available from 7pm to 7am, 365 nights a year, and weekend and UK bank holidays daytime.

BENEFITS

- Improved customer service through a high performing out-of-hours IT support service with focus on continuous improvement.
- A consistent user experience 24/7.
- An overall global IT support platform capable of scaling with increased business growth

OSBORNE CLARKE CASE STUDY

OSBORNE CLARKE WAS FOUNDED IN BRISTOL IN 1748. TODAY, IT IS AN INTERNATIONAL LEGAL PRACTICE WITH 24 OFFICES & OVER 900 LAWYERS ACROSS EUROPE, ASIA AND THE USA.

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THE IT CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

Following the opening of its first international office in Paulo Alto in Silicon Valley in 2000, Osborne Clarke has been expanding its global presence ever since. It now has over 24 offices with more plans in the pipeline.

The global IT team, hubbed from Bristol, found that with this significant growth, there was increasing demand for IT support outside of standard UK working hours.

Adrian Hiscock, Head of IT Services explains their decision to use an external provider to cover this demand, "Early on, we decided it would be more effective, logistically, to use an external provider to run our out-of-hours IT support. We could have done this in-house, but we would have had to employ and manage a minimum of four shift workers and we wouldn't have had enough demand to keep them fully occupied. We were also not at an international scale where a follow-the-sun model would have been feasible."

Osborne Clarke had been using another provider for out-of-hours IT support for a number of years. However, as its internal IT began to evolve and become more and more sophisticated to match the ambitions of the firm, they felt their out-of-hours service was remaining fairly static. They wanted a more responsive service and a provider that would be more proactive in suggesting and implementing service improvements and enhancements.

Osborne Clarke decided to go to market for a new provider. After substantial due diligence, the firm selected Plan-Net as their new out-of-hours IT support provider.

Adrian explains their decision, "None of the other options had the legal IT experience Plan-Net was offering and we felt that might have been holding us back to an extent. For instance, when a Partner calls the Plan-Net team about a legal application issue, they are familiar with the application and how to manage related issues from their experience with other legal clients."

"Plan-Net also works with a number of law firms with IT hubs in Bristol, so we were able to talk to our peers and gain insight and comfort from their feedback about the way Plan-Net engages with its clients and the team's accountability and reliability."

SEAMLESS SERVICE DAY & NIGHT

Plan-Net were engaged to provide IT support to Osborne Clarke employees from 7pm to 7am, 365 days a year from its Shared Service Desk, Plan-Net 24. Additionally, it was contracted to provide weekend and bank holiday daytime cover. The Shared IT Desk specialises in supporting the legal sector and already supports lawyers and staff across 30 countries.

Both the requirement from Osborne Clarke and the proposed Plan-Net solution was an out-of-hours service that would closely match the law firm's in-house daytime global IT support operation.

"We want our Partners and staff across the globe to receive the same service, to ring the same number, use the same Service Desk tool and email addresses, regardless of when and where they make contact," explains Adrian.

In order to achieve this, Plan-Net commenced a significant on-boarding programme, spending three months working in collaboration with the law firm's IT Service Desk team and management to understand and document its systems and processes. The transitional period involved defining how Plan-Net staff would be trained, performing the technical connectivity side of things, including arranging secure access to Osborne Clarke's service desk tool, and agreeing the reporting and SLAs. This work established the partnership between the two firms which has assisted the development of the service before and after the service going live.

"The on-boarding stage went really well. We had a review with only some small adjustments made and then the service went live. Now, almost one year on, everything has been running smoothly," observes Adrian.

HIGH PERFORMANCE, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, COLLABORATION & AVAILABILITY

During the on-boarding process, Osborne Clarke and Plan-Net agreed a set of weighted SLA's that included metrics such as Service Desk Resolution, Ticket Quality and Speed of Response. Apart from the first month of live service, Plan-Net has outperformed the agreed weighted target consistently for the past year.

A key part of the success is in the collaborative arrangement between the two parties. For example, Plan-Net will ensure someone from its team spends a day every month working alongside the daytime in-house Service Desk team at Osborne Clarke. This allows them to stay up to date with processes, culture, developments and changes in the IT environment at the firm. In addition, the target Service Desk Resolution rate could be increased by 10% by collaborative working. The law firm arranged for Plan-Net to gain increased access to its key systems in order to perform more fixes at 1st line. Plan-Net also worked with the Osborne Clarke IT team on an induction test tailored to its specific environment and processes that all Plan-Net staff supporting the firm must pass.

"We benefit from a hands-on Plan-Net manager who can bridge the gap between our daytime operation and what goes on during the shifts. He is our eyes and ears

and very much seen as an extension to our management team here," explains Adrian.

Plan-Net provides IT support availability which covers a large proportion of daytime support demand from users in Asia and the US and the last few hours of the working day for some of the European offices. The service also picks up contact from those in the UK working past 7pm or before 7am. However, it is also proving to be a useful resource in the daytime, when there are UK bank holidays but other European offices are still open. Having this overflow facility improves the overall resilience and capacity of Osborne Clarke's IT support model.

The Osborne Clarke IT team prides itself on high performance and continuous improvement; it regularly benchmarks against other law firms, it holds annual IT surveys to gain constant feedback from users, it is continually developing IT talent with apprenticeship schemes and promotion from within. The firm is also working towards complete flexible working, having invested in laptops for all fee earners and by making the Thames Valley office the first of its planned "connected working" hubs. Their own IT support SLAs are aggressive, guaranteeing contact within 30 minutes of an issue being raised, often with users receiving an email response within a few minutes.

"As Osborne Clarke continues to expand both organically and through acquisition, it's hugely important that we have the necessary systems, processes and suppliers in place to on-board new Partners, lawyers and staff effectively and efficiently. The appointment of Plan-Net very much reflects a core element of our IT strategy, which is to partner with high performing organisations in order to deliver the most effective services we can to our people and our clients," concludes Adrian.

“ We've had positive feedback from users and we've seen the service improvements and developments we were aiming for. For instance, we've found Plan-Net to be a very useful resource for creating and documenting knowledge articles for our IT team to approve, to assist everyone around the globe. ”

Adrian Hiscock, Head of IT Services, Osborne Clarke



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