

CASE STUDY

Stephenson Harwood



Stephenson Harwood Loses No Time Implementing DTE Axiom

In a busy law practice, accurate and reliable time entry enhances client service and profitability. Stephenson Harwood is benefiting from Advanced Productivity's DTE Axiom – a cutting-edge time recording system with mobile and offline functionality.

Stephenson Harwood is an international commercial law firm with seven offices around the world including London, Hong Kong and mainland China. There are 84 partners and some 750 employees. IT Director Chris Petrie worked with Phoenix to upgrade the firm's time recording system; 'Our lawyers routinely work on client matters when they are travelling and outside the office. They needed a time recording system that could support their working practices.'



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Having established the business rationale for an upgrade, the next step was to identify the firm's key requirements. 'We needed a system that could be used on the move, was 'light' to install on to laptops and other devices and could work off line,' explains Petrie. Crucially, it needed to retain features of the legacy system that fee earners liked: the timer function, the screen layout and the ability to differentiate between billable and non-billable hours and highlight time that had not been allocated to particular matters or tasks. It also needed to interface with the firm's practice management and document management systems.

Why Phoenix?

- Leading provider of software solutions and IT consultancy for Professional Services Firms
- Extensive experience within the IT/legal industry
- Autonomy iManage Platinum and Development Partner
- A team of experienced and highly qualified professionals
- Exclusive European distributor for DTE Axiom

"Because the system is user friendly and accessible, our lawyers have started capturing billable time that would have been lost simply because the work was undertaken outside the office."

**Chris Petrie, IT Director,
Stephenson Harwood.**

DTE Axiom - Achieving the Perfect Fit

Petrie established a small steering group which included representatives from Finance and IT as well as IT trainers, who understood which features of the legacy system users liked – and which they found challenging. Together they drew up a shortlist of vendors who were invited to demonstrate their products.

DTE Axiom was the obvious choice as it met all Stephenson Harwood's needs in terms of functionality, look and feel. Petrie highlights offline functionality as another major advantage. 'This is especially useful when lawyers are travelling or working in international offices where internet access is less reliable,' he observes. When time is recorded offline, the data is captured on the BlackBerry or laptop and the system automatically synchronises as soon as the device connects to the internet.

The next step was to decide how the system should be implemented and tailored to the firm's requirements. 'We needed to ensure that the change was manageable and beneficial rather than a radical change that would disrupt our busy lawyers,' explains Petrie.

Petrie and his team then worked with Phoenix to tailor the new system to meet the firm's requirements. As DTE Axiom is used mainly in the USA – and deployed by US law firms' London offices – most of the adjustments involved anglicising the terminology for UK lawyers. Phoenix also worked alongside Stephenson Harwood's in-house training team to structure and deliver training sessions.

Reaping the Benefits

Stephenson Harwood is already reaping the benefits of switching to DTE Axiom, which has made it much easier for fee earners to track billable and non-billable hours. 'Because the system is user friendly and accessible, our lawyers have started capturing billable time that would have been lost simply because the work was undertaken outside the office,' says Petrie.