

Leveraging Technology to Drive Document Efficiency in a Hybrid-Working World

By: Ayman Hatem, Product Director - Document Productivity, BigHand

The new era of hybrid working is here to stay, meaning firms must adapt to continue producing high quality documents, efficiently and regardless of where staff are located.

When it comes to being technologically advanced, most would agree that the legal industry remains "behind the times" when compared to many others. However, there has been a substantial shift in the pace at which legal technology has evolved including conversations around cloud infrastructure, machine learning, legal digital assistants, and many other exciting new developments. In the legal document space, firms are looking to use technology to enhance how they generate document deliverables for clients, as well understanding their staffing requirements and ensuring knowledge transfer to the next generation. In recent years we've seen considerable advancements from major document management systems such as iManage, NetDocuments as well as Microsoft's Office suite with M365. We've also seen many systems support hybrid working by providing new ways for users to interact with them, no matter what device or where they are working from.

In our recent survey, the [Legal Workflow Management survey](#) found that **93% of firms expect support staff to continue working remotely 2 or more days a week.** In the same survey, firms also said they expect to lose up to 80% of their support staff through attrition or retirement in the next 5 years. Firms are mindful that this could impact lawyers time doing more administration work on billable hours and instead look to adapt to support them.

For staff to focus on higher-value work and to maintain high-quality, accurate and consistent documents, law firms need solutions that are quick and easy to use with minimal training requirements. We've seen a sharp rise in firms that are revisiting their document tools to ensure that is the case, stating the following as key considerations:

- 1. Advanced features** – A feature set that meets all firm requirements, logically organized and well-integrated, that gives users access to best in breed time-saving tools.
- 2. Standard Product Releases** – Easy to upgrade software that is quick to deploy and be administered completely self-sufficiently
- 3. First Class Customer Support** - Assisted implementation for a successful roll-out that incorporates focused training and documentation to help users with adoption.
- 4. Trusted Partnership** - Dedicated support to resolve any usability and technical challenges.

Document Excellence at Wedlake Bell:

As a long-standing BigHand user, [Wedlake Bell](#) saw these benefits of BigHand Document Creation firsthand. For them, legal document excellence was obtained by leveraging easy-to-use technology that required minimal training, and built-in features that save time. **Before using BigHand Document Creation, it took up to 45 minutes to process an engagement letter which now takes under 5 minutes.**

As David Hymers, Head of IT at Wedlake Bell explains, "All the little efficiency savings BigHand brings add up to make a significant difference," he says. "Our secretaries love it and it's enabling our lawyers to be more self-sufficient so the whole team can focus on the more value-added work."

For Wedlake Bell, a trusted vendor partner for support and adoption was key. As Hymers concludes, "This is our third time of implementing one of the BigHand portfolio solutions, and every time their expertise and knowledge impresses me."

About BigHand:

[BigHand Document Creation](#) is an award-winning DMS-integrated legal document solution that simplifies Microsoft tools for streamlined legal document production. Standardized templates can be created without the need for complex code, and deployed firm-wide in a single click for consistency, branding and improved version control. Users can access key design features such as numbering, bullet points, styling and more. The solution builds on familiar Microsoft technology, for increased adoption and minimal training.

BigHand has over 3,500 clients and 600,000 users worldwide, supporting 87% of the Top 200 firms in the UK and 68% of Am Law 200 firms. The leading technology provider actively listens and responds to client needs, demonstrated in its outstanding customer satisfaction score of 98%.