



## Essant Customer Case Study

*"Essant Professional Consultancy Services have enabled us to achieve internal cost reductions and improved information availability – essential for serving our clients in a more timely and effective manner."*

Neil Pamment,  
IT Director Denton Wilde Sapte

### AT A GLANCE:

**Company Name:**  
Denton Wilde Sapte  
United Kingdom

**Industry:**  
International Law Firm

#### Key Challenges:

- Office and ICT relocation
- ICT infrastructure reconfiguration, data and application migration
- Implementation of off-site production environment
- Creation of discrete failover site
- Reduction in time consuming, costly manual processes
- Introduction of standard IT processes, policies and procedures across locations

#### Solution and Services:

- Essant Professional Services
- CCIE consultancy
- Infrastructure consultancy
- Project management office
- Business consulting
- Implementation, staging & testing
- New production ICT environment
- New CISCO network (LAN)
- New test & development environment
- New HP Blade Server environment

#### Existing Environment:

- 75% end-of-life server and network infrastructure
- Zero asset management
- Disparate legacy systems
- Changes in key IT personnel

#### Implementation Highlights:

- Investigation, relocation and reconfiguration of ICT environment – de-risked and delivered right first-time.
- New data centre up and running in just 5 months
- Completed implementation on-time and within budget parameters

#### Key Benefits:

- Cost savings – outsourcing of data back-up
- Process efficiencies - on-site tools for core application management
- Improved internal knowledge base
- IT compliance and operational consistency through policy, procedure and process
- Improved core service delivery - reduced latency and increased data availability
- Future-proof ICT infrastructure - stable platform for introducing new applications key to future strategic development

## DENTON WILDE SAPTE

### *The Background*

Top 20 UK Law Firm, Denton Wilde Sapte, recently undertook a strategic project to consolidate its UK operations – moving from two London premises to a single, centralised, City location.

Originally founded as T Wilde & SA Hussey in 1775, the international law firm today employs over 1400 staff and has offices across Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. With over 700 case lawyers and practising partners reliant on core IT applications, a successful reconfiguration and relocation of the IT infrastructure was essential for maintaining both effective client communication and efficient working practices.

### The Challenge

With disparate IT functions and operations distributed across geographically remote sites, the challenge was not only to relocate and rationalise technology, but also to implement the requisite processes, policies and procedures for the creation of a robust, resilient, manageable and compliant infrastructure. Correspondingly, Denton Wilde Sapte commissioned a two phase project; consisting of an investigation, then reconfiguration of its entire ITC environment.

core business applications. Working to such a tight deadline, we needed an agile partner, experienced in large scale ICT project delivery and also able to offer a collaborative approach to provide resource precisely when and where it was most needed.”

After researching the marketplace, Denton Wilde Sapte selected networked technology specialist Essant for Phase I of the project. Following the output of Phase I, Phase II was also awarded to the same, leaving just 5 months for the completion of the relocation project - a significant challenge for all involved.

“The nature of our business requires that staff have instant access to shared documents at all times”

### A Detailed Analysis

The output of the Phase I investigation identified and detailed areas in which the current IT infrastructure was unable to meet future requirements for availability, manageability or resilience. The audit showed that over 70% of server and network assets were approaching end-of-life and that asset

Neil Pamment, IT Director explains, “We run seven major applications across our IT infrastructure, ranging from e-mail and billing management, to secure extranet-based specialist client services. The nature of our business requires that staff have instant fast and easy access to shared documents at all times, such as case notes and client histories. Any reduction in network and application availability would effectively result in business processes grinding to a halt.”

With a strong internal IT team already in place, Denton Wilde Sapte had specific requirements regarding the personnel and approach needed to deliver the project.

Neil continues, “We needed to both outsource and in-source resource – to out-task those areas of business that were not cost-effective, yet gain additional expertise to help us regain complete control of our

management capability was lacking. As in many organisations, keeping up with the advancing business requirements was proving challenging for the IT team.

Neil expands, “Prior to the transformation it was difficult to deploy new applications with any great degree of confidence – due to both the infrastructure and the fact that knowledge had been lost through changes in personnel. With a corporate drive to provide an increasing number of services through ICT, our capabilities were falling short of our aspirations.”

“A key area of concern was our backup environment. Our system of performing back-up through manual routines was time consuming, costly and gave limited and fragmented access to archived documents. Having a requirement to now migrate and rationalise 5.5 terabytes of data that policy appeared wholly inadequate.”

In summary, Phase I highlighted requirements in 5 key areas;

- A network, server and storage technology upgrade
- A network, server and storage infrastructure re-design
- The placement of 1300 user connections under operational management
- The addition of a new data centre facility
- The recommendation of backup and archiving strategies

**Building the Right Team**

Given the complexity of the project, a Virtual Programme Office was set up by Essant to introduce programme governance and process controls. This proven framework was instrumental in guiding the project to a successful and on-time completion.

and Denton Wilde Sapte, incorporating Engineers, Consultants, Systems Analysts, Business Analysts, Programme Managers and Support Managers. The team blended external resource with in-house capabilities and enabled Denton Wilde Sapte to achieve return from existing skills, whilst calling on specialist engineering and programme management expertise, as needed.

**Tangible Benefits**

Central to the reconfiguration project was the rationalisation of two discrete London-based server environments into a single off-site specialist data centre facility, incorporating a consolidated server and storage environment, using the latest in storage area network (SAN) technology.

The resulting outsourced production site and redesigned network is already delivering cost savings, improved data availability and reduced latency. By placing all on-site user connections under operational management, the Denton Wilde Sapte team is now able to remain focussed on managing and developing core business applications to gain operational efficiencies and make service enhancements.

The disaster recovery for core systems has been transferred to a discrete site, ensuring a resilient failover environment. Automated back up provides peace of mind as well as savings in terms of both time and money.

Throughout the project Essant worked in tandem

with the in-house IT team and steering committee to ensure milestones were reached and objectives were met.

Neil accounts how this collaborative approach to programme management steered the project to a successful conclusion.

**“As a result of the reconfiguration, reliability is substantially improved and TCO has been reduced across the solution”**

Concurrently, Denton Wilde Sapte assembled an in-house steering committee to ensure that the programme output met the needs of all stakeholders, from both an IT and business perspective.

The resulting programme delivery team consisted of over 30 highly-skilled individuals from both Essant

“Essant specialists are experienced in all core ICT disciplines and were able to recommend a number of competitive technology alternatives, helping us select a solution to precisely meet our corporate objectives. Their advice and guidance through vendor negotiations enabled us to instantly share their knowledge and vast experience of the marketplace. Whilst Essant did not supply any of the hardware on this occasion, their input in evaluating, sourcing and locating the solution, as well as helping us adopt a formal project culture, was critical to the project’s overall success.”

In addition, the project has also provided some supplementary benefits, including;

- a VoIP ready network
- a vastly improved in-house knowledge base
- full baseline documentation
- a comprehensive data archiving strategy

The most potent benefit for the business, however, is the transformation of an IT infrastructure that was becoming disparate, cumbersome and difficult to manage, to one that is capable of delivering the future service offerings of the business.

Neil concludes, “In addition to having consolidated sites infrastructure without any business disruption, we are now in possession of a manageable, secure centralised ICT environment, on which we can confidently develop tomorrow’s applications.”

“We are continuing to work with Essant to implement

the appropriate training, policies and procedures so that we can best utilise this investment in IT to help support and steer the future strategic development of client service delivery.”

**“We needed to both outsource and in-source resource - to out-task those areas of business that were not cost-effective and gain additional expertise”**

The new solution was delivered on-time and within budget and is meeting all core requirements stated at the project outset.

Neil continues, “As a result of the reconfiguration, reliability is substantially improved and TCO has been reduced across the solution. The virtual backup is saving time and money and the improved network performance is helping to increase the availability of shared information and further enhance the quality of our extranet-based client services.”

<http://www.dentonwildesapte.com>  
<http://www.essant.co.uk>