

Redefining the relationship between business and IT



The Customer

Humphries Kerstetter is a specialist litigation practice renowned for its pedigree in the commercial disputes market. Based in the heart of London the firm was founded in 2009 with a vision of creating a lean and highly-skilled practice, largely free of conflicts, which could go head-to-head with the top-tier firms in high stakes litigation.

Over the past decade, Humphries Kerstetter has held true to that core vision, growing year-by-year into a truly dynamic firm, free of outdated hierarchies, in which the work and the clients come first. Recognised in The Lawyer HOT 100 2018, the firm has earned a cast-iron reputation for excellence in its field, receiving instructions from both claimants and defendants and with a client list of several FTSE 100 companies and international investment banks.

The team consists of 15 employees, including four Partners, based in a central office, but significant amounts of time are spent remote working due to the logistical demands of the legal profession.

The Challenge

The digital revolution has transformed the legal sector over the past decade and Humphries Kerstetter required a managed IT solution that would keep the firm at the forefront of the market.

Following a review last year, the team concluded that the firm's existing IT equipment was no longer fit-for-purpose and new systems were required. A key driving force behind this was the changing nature of legal work, requiring fast and reliable file sharing of electronic documentation as employees work remotely. Humphries Kerstetter required an IT system that would futureproof the firm and allow for its future growth.

However, a strategic IT transformation project was only one of the rivers to cross. Given the growth of the firm, the team needed to move to new offices in Fleet Street. The decision was taken to implement as much change as possible in a compressed period—meaning that migration to a new IT system and a new office would happen at the same time. It was a business-critical process for the firm—and one which required careful planning, intelligent solutions and ultra-reliable implementation.

The Aura Solution

The first step of Aura's approach, as with all clients, was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the business, how it functions now and where it wants to be in order to grow and thrive.

Aura's support model began with an onboarding project, conducting a full strategic review of Humphries Kerstetter's IT systems and identifying key areas that required improvement. The review concluded that new IT infrastructure was required, and Aura's specialists held detailed discussions with the team about the options. A key decision revolved around the pros and cons of a cloud-based billing system. The team at Humphries Kerstetter decided that a server based in the office was the best course of action to match the business's specific requirements. The firm migrated to a new billing system as part of the project and Aura liaised with the third-party provider to ensure implementation would complement and dovetail into the new IT system.

Following weeks of planning and preparation, the Aura team pulled out all the stops in the final week of the IT migration and office move to ensure a smooth transition. Engineers worked through a weekend to ensure that the new IT system was ready to go and would work without a hitch when business resumed at 9am on the Monday.

Aura specialists also installed a new telephony system that would take the firm's communications systems to the next level of productivity and efficiency. A unified communications system on a single platform, converging voice, video, and data needs, was set up.

Humphries Kerstetter was also allocated a Virtual IT Director to fully examine the company's IT needs from an overall business perspective, as well as an Aura Account Manager with whom to liaise on day-to-day requirements and chair monthly meetings.

Aura's highly-skilled service desk and round-the-clock engineering support teams gave the team peace of mind should any reactive issues occur and require remote or on-site response.

The Result

Aura’s strategic approach ensured that the IT migration and office move was implemented with the absolute minimum of disruption to the firm.

The team at Humphries Kerstetter are now working with an IT system that is fit-for-purpose and resilient to the needs of legal work in the 21st century. Furthermore, Aura Technology has built a system that is adaptive and can be improved even further as time goes on. Aura specialists are working closely with the team to explore other avenues to improve, such as video conferencing.

James Russell, Partner at Humphries Kerstetter, said: “People came into work on the Monday and logged on to our new IT system without any problems whatsoever. The Aura team were very calm and professional, and we felt in very safe hands throughout the entire move.

“Aura are now looking after all our IT requirements. It’s a night and day difference to what we used to have. The team are extremely responsive, and nothing seems to be a problem.

“They have already got very good data and analytics on what’s working and what is not working. I actually feel that they are truly working with us—not just providing a utility. They understand how we work and might work better. I feel it’s a collaboration—not just IT support.

“I trusted Tim Walker and his team, and they delivered over and above our expectations. Working with Aura has saved us so much time management—allowing the IT experts to do what they do best has allowed us to concentrate on our own work.”



◀ **James Russell**
Partner, Humphries Kerstetter

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