



Philips Speech Processing User Case



HLW Philips Digital Dictation Helps Lawyers to Work More Efficiently

HLW is a vibrant commercial law firm providing influential legal advice to businesses and organisations across Yorkshire. Concentrating on the small to medium corporate legal market, HLW offers a high quality, London-standard service at Yorkshire prices. The firm's 90 staff in Sheffield and 10 at the Leeds office provide wide-ranging expertise covering fields such as corporate, commercial litigation, insolvency, employment, property and debt control. HLW aims to nurture lasting relationships with all its clients, instilling in them the confidence to work together through even the most difficult legal processes.

THE BRIEF

With such a wide range of expertise within one firm, it is essential for HLW to have a reliable and accessible means of communicating data between lawyers and secretaries. Transcription work needs to be managed logistically between the two offices so urgent dictations can be prioritised successfully and transcription workloads shared effectively.

However, using analogue Dictaphones with tape-based transcription kits had created significant difficulties. When lawyers were working away it was impossible to transmit data immediately; the tape had to be posted or handed over manually, involving driving into Sheffield city centre, which was problematic. If notes were written up by hand for secretaries to type up on an ad hoc basis, this complicated administration of the job and risked compromising client confidentiality.

The analogue dictation method inevitably proved increasingly unmanageable, delaying projects, causing stress for staff and incurring costs for the firm. In 2005 the acquisition of the Leeds office gave the final impetus for a complete restructuring of the firm's dictation and transcription processes. It was decided that a new digital dictation solution was essential to support an expanding staff team with an increasing workload and to facilitate remote and mobile working.

KEY ISSUES

- How to support lawyers more efficiently when they work away from the office.
- How to improve workflow between the firm's two offices and allow urgent dictations to be prioritised.
- How to ensure client confidentiality in the dictation/transcription processes.

PHILIPS



There were several criteria for the new equipment: it had to be easy to roll-out, cost effective, user-friendly, with the functionality to enable the HLW admin team to provide high quality support to the lawyers. In addition, the new technology needed to integrate well into the firm's established Citrix IT environment.

DIGITAL SOLUTION

In consultation with Audio Business Machines in Sheffield, Philips Digital Dictation technology was chosen. Among the deciding factors were the highly reputable brand name, simplicity of product function and value for money. HLW purchased sixty digital Pocket Memo 9400 devices for mobile dictation and 42 SpeechExec Pro Transcription Set 7277 systems.

The DPM 9400 enables single-handed use or voice-activated hands-free dictation, while DSS file format ensures both minimum file sizes and the crystal clear sound quality necessary for accurate transcribing. SpeechExec Pro Dictate software facilitates workflow management, supporting definition of keywords and priority indexing. Lawyers can now automatically download dictation files from their DPM to a PC via the USB connection, ready for emailing direct to a transcriptionist in either of HLW's offices.

The SpeechExec Pro Transcription Set 7277 includes ergonomic earphones and foot control, and recordings can be easily organised and prioritised in a familiar Windows®-style folder on a PC. Access to all the relevant dictation data – length, author's name, key words and priority status – provides simple yet powerful workflow management capabilities.

THE VERDICT

All staff in HLW's Sheffield and Leeds offices are now using the Philips digital dictation system.

According to Keith Arrowsmith, partner at HLW, "The Philips solution has significantly improved our work processes, helping us meet our responsibility to minimise stress levels for all our staff. Our lawyers now have much greater flexibility for remote and home working, with none of the workflow problems they used to experience with the old analogue system."

"It goes without saying that for a legal firm, data accuracy and confidentiality are of paramount importance. With the Philips Digital Dictation technology installed we can be sure that confidentiality between lawyer and client is secured, and data is being transferred accurately and effectively."

Keith Arrowsmith praised the contribution of the Philips sales partner, Audio Business Machines, "We received excellent service support from ABM; they delivered exactly what was promised and helped ensure a smooth roll-out of the new technology to all our staff. Having specialised in dictation solutions for over 20 years their advice was invaluable and their manufacturer-trained staff were very competent with Windows and Citrix, as well as the Philips equipment."

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Significantly improved team-working in providing support for lawyers
- Flexibility for fee-earners to work at any location without impacting the efficiency of the dictation/transcription workflow
- Enhanced data security for confidential client information
- Simple, seamless integration into HLW's Citrix environment

