

Briefing

May 2020

SMARTER LEGAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

SPECIAL REPORT
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group at work for Herbert Smith Freehills

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It's the screen team

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 COMMENT

Preparing for every contingency


In our daily lives, we're so accustomed to technology, we barely give it a second thought. That is unless our systems stop working, or they're working slower than we'd like. Then it gets our attention. Beyond the personal aggravation you may feel from this inconvenience, system disruptions or slowdowns can take a real toll on overall productivity, especially if it happens regularly. These facts are especially true now, as the lines between work and home are not only blurred, they're nonexistent.

To be as productive as possible, the systems that professional services firms rely on to support operations must run at peak performance. Some firms are proactive and establish relationships with service providers that can come to the rescue when things go awry. But just as often firms are in reactionary mode, which is risky business.

The time to identify your go-to people is when everything is running smoothly, not when your system is down. This preparedness is not only a question of identifying technical experts to help with unplanned IT support services. It also includes identifying resources who have broad systems expertise to help ensure your environment runs optimally throughout the lifecycle of your entire solution landscape – and who can respond to rapid changes in needs.

For example, we can all now relate to

the sudden need to be able to work from home. But other examples could include your practice management system malfunctioning and your firm not being able to do the work it wants. Or, you need to restore your system after it has been compromised due to a security intrusion. Or perhaps you need to get your systems up and running after a planned system restart, but the system won't come back online. Resolving these types of problems requires broad knowledge across software and systems, but also deep application, infrastructure and programming knowledge. Firms often have in-house resources with specific domain expertise, but few have direct experience across applications in addition to in-depth technical knowledge. They may be able to troubleshoot a particular technical problem, but might have little to no understanding of the specific applications in your solution landscape.

Anything can happen when it comes to IT. As there's an unplanned nature to it, you need to draw upon people with a skillset that can handle the unexpected to help make sure your firm's systems can deliver on the performance expected of them. If recent events have taught us anything, it should be that your firm needs to identify resources with not only deep expertise, but also expertise across systems, to make sure your people can be productive whenever and wherever they need to be. 

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