Wragge & Co LLP goes online with Linetime

Wragge & Co is one of the most innovative law firms in the country, so it's no surprise that it understands how important workflows, automation and systems integration are. A rapidly rising top 25 UK-headquartered international law firm, Wragge & Co has long used technology to be better, faster and more efficient.

Ian Weatherall, partner and head of the Finance, Insolvency, Recoveries and Sales Team (FIRST) at Wragge & Co, wanted to improve his team's reporting and billing, enabling them to be "more flexible, quicker, with less manual input". He also wanted to improve workflow, automate administrative tasks and integrate the team's processes because he knew that would create further efficiencies**.**

Working with the team, and the right tech

Wragge & Co chose Linetime after the company demonstrated a flexible team approach and a case management system (CMS) that could integrate data and processes within FIRST, and the firm at large, to increase productivity.

A new system isn't all about the technology. The right people are vital. Adrienne Mansfield, FIRST's general manager, was brought in to implement Linetime, and explains why this is a vital factor. "The individuals we met during the tendering process were a key factor in choosing Linetime. They became an extension of our internal team, and they continue to support and work with us to tailor the system to meet our requirements".

Integration breeds productivity

Now that Linetime's Liberate CMS is in place, administrative tasks are quicker and easier to perform, and fee-earners are able to focus more of their time on client service.

"Being able to view and bill everything online further increases our efficiency," says Ian. "And now we're able to concentrate more on our day jobs." The newly formed, dedicated finance team within FIRST gets even more value from the result, he says, "In terms of billing, we can maximise efficiency by providing our legal team with the ability to bill online and at the desktop, then allow our Finance team to pick up the remaining financial activities to complete the process".

All the FIRST data had to be moved on a set date from Wragge & Co's existing system to Liberate, including all the templates that had been tailored to FIRST. This would make any manager nervous, as it can't be allowed to impact on the team's day-to-day business, nor any of the firm's clients. Ian adds, "The team at Linetime made this happen without a hitch. The transition was a smooth one." Linetime's "user friendly interface" also helped with the move.

Benefiting from a single, electronic system

Liberate also had to handle two very different work types for Wragge & Co. FIRST's focus is banking and finance dispute resolution, and its workload ranges from complex Court of Appeal cases to bulk work. The latter is heavily reliant on repetitive administrative tasks like processing volume claims (e.g. mortgage repossessions and debt recovery).

"With the two halves of the team working very differently, our CMS needed the flexibility to meet both their needs," Adrienne explains. "But Linetime can be used by all our fee-earners, regardless of their area of expertise and regardless of the nature of the work, to enhance the work they do."

By digitising the whole process, Liberate's workflow and process automation has improved integration and efficiency. "Files are now electronic, with a single file number. They move seamlessly around the team and all have the electronic case history attached – it's a great improvement," Ian says.

Managing risk with workflows

Using Liberate also allows Wragge & Co's FIRST to apply this efficiency to taking on bulk work. This was previously a time consuming manual task, but data can now be received electronically and uploaded electronically, very quickly and efficiently. Thereafter, Liberate kicks off a risk management workflow that performs automatic conflict checks on all data.

Checking data in separate systems across an international business like Wragge & Co would, in the past, have been very time-consuming. Linetime's web-based conflict checker integrates with the organisation's central finance practice management system, and performs an instant conflict check against all existing clients "This level of integration and workflow is key to ensuring we are meeting regulatory requirements and driving efficiency in our team, "says Ian.

Efficiency across external and internal integration

One area where Liberate is making a big difference is its integration with the Possessions Claims Online (PCOL) service. FIRST can now submit proceedings straight from the CMS, significantly reducing disbursement costs. PCOL integration with Liberate allows fee-earners to process claims online and receive a court hearing date within an hour. This is a faster process that keeps client costs down and speeds up proceedings.

Linetime's internal integration with the team's other core systems, such as Microsoft Outlook, means information can be easily and automatically tagged, filed and recognised. Liberate also connects to Wragge & Co's document management system, Autonomy, so that other areas of the business can file documents electronically with FIRST.

Keeping track, but staying onside with the regulators

The benefit of this level of integration is no more evident than in Linetime's ability to work with call recording system Veritape. Recording phone conversations is a regulatory requirement for finance-related work, but there are also very strict guidelines around data protection when it comes to these recordings.

Adrienne explains how this works at Wragge & Co: "Liberate produces a pop-up when the phone rings and the fee-earner picks up the receiver, it then records the call. The recording is tagged with a case code, description or client's name, and attaches the call record to the case file so that the fee-earner can access the call in the future, if required." The fee-earner also has the ability to turn off call recording when, for example, they need to take down credit card details, which cannot be recorded.

Delivering more to clients with integrated systems

FIRST also uses Linetime's extranet product to connect the CMS with Wragge & Co's clients. Ian's team uses the B2C Online Case Tracking system to provide key clients with the ability to review current cases and exchange instructions, using live data. A secure internet connection allows clients to log in, view the status of cases and review files and documents. Clients can quickly and easily submit instructions through B2C, and create and run reports, all of which delivers more value to clients and better efficiency to the team.

Better and fuller integration, both with internal and external systems, means Wragge & Co's FIRST works more efficiently, and allows the team to provide a significantly improved level of service to all clients. As Ian says, "Having a robust CMS in place, ensures that we use Liberate, to work as efficiently as we possibly can."

Software
beyond
expectations