



CASE STUDY

Heller Ehrman and Venture Law Group Prove Case for RightFax and HP

"It's better than a fax machine ... RightFax has probably paid for itself 12-fold or more."—Steve Bronstein, IT Manager for Special Projects, Heller Ehrman

Reams of paper and rows of fax machines—common sights in busy law offices. While manual fax is often used to manage critical communication, too often, time- and labor-intensive processes make managing case work feel more like facing a “case adjourned.”

Two prestigious law firms called their manual faxing methods into question. Both researched the best technology for servicing clients. Later, when the firms merged, they found enterprise fax and e-document delivery from Captaris RightFax, the industry leader had won both cases, hands-down.

BACKGROUND

The Fall 2003 merger of Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe LLP and Venture Law Group created an international law firm of more than 720 attorneys and professionals with offices in 12 locations across the U.S. and abroad. Post-merger, the firm is known as Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe LLP with several practice groups, including the Heller Ehrman Venture Law Group (VLG) National Practice.

Heller Ehrman is a full-service law firm that represents a wide range of industry leaders, from entrepreneurial, technology-driven enterprises to established, global corporations.

As a group within the firm, Heller Ehrman Venture Law Group (VLG) National Practice specializes its practice on technology and early-stage companies. VLG offers expertise in venture capital financings, public offerings, mergers and acquisitions, technology licensing and corporate partnerships, executive compensation and taxation. VLG is recognized for its leadership in the technology forefront of practicing law—the group provides specially designed and tested solutions to best serve its technology clientele.

CHALLENGE

Long before the firms merged in late 2003, both Heller Ehrman and VLG maintained a commitment to excellent client service. As a result, both firms reviewed their respective communication processes and recognized the need to replace less effective manual fax methods.

To support their legal practices, both law firms handle vast amounts of paper on a daily basis. Briefs, contracts and other documents require thorough editing and several signatures. Then, they must be quickly distributed and filed—often requiring several fax machines and shelves of storage boxes.

“A large portion of what an attorney does is hand-edit documents to fax to clients or opposing counsel,” said Steve Bronstein, firm-wide IT Manager for Special Projects with Heller Ehrman and previous Vice President of Automation for VLG (before the firms merged). Since the documents—often totaling 50 or 60 pages—often require review by several attorneys, previous faxing often resulted in routing delays.

Even more frustrating was a challenge common to fax machine users: lost faxes. “It’s a problem with paper,” Bronstein said. “When five people need to see the same document, it’s often best to look at it together.” It was inconvenient, but otherwise, paper was misplaced.

For outbound faxing, VLG tried different solutions. It placed Visoneer scanners on every desk. “But desktop scanning devices didn’t have the longevity we had hoped for,” Bronstein said. “Instead, several fax machines distributed among workgroups took over the capability of writing on paper and faxing to contacts.”

Even prior to the merger, both VLG and Heller Ehrman determined they would not continue to rely on inefficient fax machines. “We knew we could integrate a better solution than what we had seen in past,” Bronstein said.

SOLUTION

Upon looking for a reliable replacement to manual faxing, both Heller Ehrman and VLG found evidence pointing to one solution: enterprise fax and e-document delivery from Captaris RightFax. Using RightFax, companies can send and receive documents electronically from the desktop, email, CRM, ERP and other business applications.

As a large firm, Heller Ehrman trusted RightFax for hundreds of users. Conversely, when VLG implemented RightFax in 1995, it did so partly because the firm was smaller. “RightFax was a perfect fit because we were looking for tools to serve our clients at the same level as a large firm that had more staff,” Bronstein said.

To keep RightFax running smoothly, VLG works with Unified Solutions, a premier supplier of mobile and e-document delivery and management solutions. “We have a fantastic relationship,” Bronstein said. “Unified Solutions offers valuable product knowledge and handles maintenance agreements.”

Thanks to the scalability and stability of RightFax, when Heller Ehrman and VLG later merged, both had come to rely on the solution as a centralized infrastructure for mission-critical document delivery.

“We haven’t had a need for office services to manage our faxes. That’s a direct to bottom-line cost savings.”

INBOUND EASE-OF-USE, RELIABILITY

With RightFax, documents are delivered directly to employee desktop computers. As a result, attorneys, paralegals and other support staff may view the same fax concurrently. When needed, users may easily print the document for signatures and still have an electronic copy that is easily routed, sorted or stored.

“The archival capability is an organizational tool that has become key to our practice,” Bronstein said. “It’s not just a one-time shot. We have a scanned file in our RightFax folder to re-send or easily schedule as a broadcast fax. Also, there is no more lost paper.”

Along with an easier electronic tracking system, there is less “lost” time, according to Bronstein. “We’ve always felt having an attorney sitting at the office at 6:00 p.m. to wait for a fax is unacceptable,” he said. “They should be able to leave the office, log-in on a home computer and download faxes while they enjoy dinner with the family. These remote capabilities are easy with RightFax.”

OUTBOUND FLEXIBILITY

In 2000, firm employees were easily faxing electronic files from Microsoft Word and other applications, but VLG again faced a need to fax a high volume of paper documents. As Bronstein investigated scanners, he found RightFax integrated with Hewlett Packard Digital Senders. VLG now uses seven HP Digital Scanners. When users scan and fax documents, a copy is automatically stored in the RightFax folder. “It’s better than a fax machine,” Bronstein said.

OVERALL COST SAVINGS

While researching fax options, Bronstein compared the cost of a high-end, high-maintenance multi-line fax machine against the scalable RightFax Enterprise server and appropriate licenses. “It was an easy decision,” he said. “Since then, RightFax has probably paid for itself 12-fold or more.”

Bronstein partly attributes the impressive ROI to the ease-of-use and low-maintenance RightFax returns. “Centralized fax can be complex and labor-intensive,” he said. “But, we have virtually no labor with RightFax.” He concluded: “We haven’t had a need for office services to manage our faxes. That’s a direct bottom-line cost savings.”

ABOUT UNIFIED SOLUTIONS

Unified Solutions is a premier San Francisco Bay area supplier of mobile and e-document delivery and management solutions. For more information, please contact: www.unifiedsolutions.com or 408-988-2574.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Captaris is a leading provider of Business Information Delivery solutions that integrate, process and automate the flow of messages, data and documents. Captaris produces a suite of proven products and services, in partnership with leading enterprise technology companies, delivered through a global distribution network. Captaris has installed over 80,000 systems in 44 countries with 93 of the Fortune 100 using the company's award-winning products and services to reduce costs and increase the performance of critical business information investments. For more information please contact us at www.captaris.com or call +1.520.320.7000.

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