



Case Study: **Private Practice**

How Private Legal Firms have taken efficiency to the next level with Iken Case Management

Today's Private Practice firms are faced with a host of new challenges that have fundamentally changed working practice, not least the introduction of "no win, no fee" agreements for a range of case types. While cost-efficiency and risk-management have always been fundamental to legal firms, today they are simply essential for business continuity.

Faced with these challenges, John Moriarty, now-retired managing partner of the private practice firm Moriarty Stone (and former president of the Bristol (UK) Law Society), looked for support from technology solutions. He explains:

"We wanted to find a product that would help increase our efficiency and improve our ability to manage risk, whilst still maintaining a satisfied client base. Initially we thought we wanted a document management system, but after two years we were ready for the next step – and that's where Iken Case Management came in."

"Iken supported joined-up working and gave us more control over output"

In a thriving legal practice like Moriarty Stone, the capacity for joined-up working was essential. Iken Case Management software stores all documents, letters and emails in one place only, where they can be accessed by all professionals and teams collaborating on that work, meaning that work on a case can continue even if a fee-earner is out of the office.

"Our work was consistent, but without sacrificing flexibility"

Moriarty Stone's library of standard letters, documents and emails was all stored as templates and precedents within Iken. This ensured that correspondence was of a consistent quality, but it also had further benefits:

"We had a standard template for practically everything, so if a member of staff couldn't find one relevant to what they were doing, it would cause them to ask: 'am I going about this the right way?' It also stopped us duplicating work and trying to reinvent the wheel all the time."

The result for the firm was a better standard of client service:

"In the last few years, we've seen the need to include more and more detail in our correspondence with clients, to provide a better response to an increasingly knowledgeable client base. But with Iken, we could prepare a four-page letter in the time it had previously taken us to write one page."



“We could produce a higher volume of quality work in the same time”

Because Iken pre-populates documents and emails with frequently-used information such as names, addresses and file references, the time saved on continually looking up and entering this information allowed staff to spend more time on value-added activities.

“Iken helped us to react quickly to legislative and procedural changes. We could now really show that we were specialists, and on top of things”

Having standard documentation for legal work is very important, but so is the need to be able to adapt documentation quickly to reflect changing legislation. Before installing Iken, this was a real concern for John's firm.

“There was a tendency for precedents to get set in stone, because it was so difficult to roll out any changes across departments and other offices. After Iken, one or two authorised people could rapidly change the precedents as changing circumstances required.”

“Iken increased efficiency and lessened the need for administrative support”

“Before the implementation of Iken Case Management, administrative work was onerous, so the ratio of administrative staff to fee earners was about 1:1. But within 18 months, we were able to do the work with 30% fewer support staff! We could then increase both our level of fee earners and our productivity.”

John sums up: *“Iken has enabled everything we wanted it to: control, consistency, speed and risk management, as evidenced by Solicitors Regulation Authority visit approvals.”*

From Moriarty Stone to Metcalfes

When John retired in 2008, Moriarty Stone became part of successful Bristol-based legal firm Metcalfes. When the remaining staff made the move across, they chose to take Iken Case Management with them, and they still use it to organise cases.

“Iken Case Management continues to play a valuable role in supporting the team to handle a considerable caseload. I believe that Iken supports efficiency while allowing us to offer a professional and personal service.”

Adrian Stone, Partner
Metcalfes Solicitors

See: www.metcalfes.co.uk/

For more information on Iken Solutions for Private Practice firms, visit our website: www.iken.biz/Private or call us on: +44 117 373 0790, or 0845 450 9201 from the UK.