



Case Study: Premier Farnell

Operating in 21 countries worldwide and trading in over 100, **Premier Farnell plc** is a market leading worldwide distributor of over 400,000 electronic and electrical products and services. Clients include Motorola, Nokia, Rolls Royce and Chrysler. Focusing on their design engineer customer base and building their presence in China and Eastern Europe, Premier Farnell is in a period of rapid growth and development.

General Counsel, Steven Webb heads up a team of in house lawyers based in Leeds, UK and in Cleveland Ohio, US. The legal team is responsible for commercial contracts relating to the supply chain and IT procurement as well as dealing with intellectual property and employment. Steven is also Company Secretary and the legal team supports him in this role, also taking responsibility for corporate governance.

With a growing workload the **business case** was based on the need to build capacity and implement smarter working. A growing reliance on electronic communications and a dispersed team had resulted in different approaches to electronic filing and the lawyers were keen to develop a single approach.

They wanted to acquire a system that would bring documents and emails together in one place thus replicating the original paper file in electronic form. Heading up teams in the UK and US, Steven also wanted a management view of matters across both teams, improved knowledge sharing and better team working.

One of Premier Farnell's senior lawyers was tasked with writing a requirements specification and researching options. A number of systems were considered and Iken was eventually selected. **Why was Iken selected?** Steven says:

"Iken offered a specialist matter management system rather than just a document management system. It was the most user friendly system we saw and provided the closest match to what we used to do on paper. Iken was most attuned to the way we're used to working."

Steven saw **Iken training** as an opportunity to bring together the UK and US lawyers for a team building exercise, with training in Cleveland Ohio in May 2006. Iken Business had already configured the Iken database to the exact requirements of Premier Farnell so lawyers were trained in their own context and were fully live on Iken within a week.



A year after implementation Steven has realised the **key benefits** he was seeking, in particular:

- Smarter working, with lawyers spending less time filing and searching for documents
- Improved team working, better audit trails and management overview of all activity across the UK and US
- Speedier document production with pre-population of letters, emails and standard contracts and automatic filing.

Steven is pleased with Iken and with Iken Business as a company. Everyone in the legal team is using Iken on a daily basis for all areas of law and it is proving easy to induct new members of staff without the need for specialist Iken training consultants.

Premier Farnell has recently embarked on an e-Life project designed to generate innovative ways of improving corporate efficiency. As a part of their contribution the legal team is recommending Iken to their colleagues in other parts of Premier Farnell who are engaged on project- or matter-centric work.

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