

## Thirsk Winton migrate from private cloud to iManage cloud

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Jason Winton, Partner, Thirsk Winton LLP

**Thirsk Winton LLP a modern, innovative law firm in North East London offering a range of business and private client services with a focus on property work including residential conveyancing, commercial property and leasehold enfranchisement. The firm also offers estate planning, probate and notarial services.**

Thirsk Winton has come a long way in its approach to document and email management and adoption of cloud technology. In 2015, the law firm was drowning in paper. Thirsk Winton had no system for storing matter-related records and consequently all information was either in paper or email format. With no single location for documents, it was impossible to institute any kind of search facility as a matter-related document could be potentially found in individual inboxes, in paper files or on shared hard drives.

In a growing law firm, where it's imperative that fee earners remain focussed on client-related activity, a lack of

document management processes was a massive drain on productivity and overall on the efficiency of the firm.

"With our business growing very quickly, we were completely focused on servicing clients. However, we soon realised that if we didn't adopt a document management system, we would be putting the quality of our service delivery at risk," said Jason Winton, partner at Thirsk Winton LLP.

### A private cloud model made commercial sense

Following extensive exploration of the market, Thirsk Winton chose iManage Work as its document and email management solution, with Harbor as its implementation partner. Winton commented, "[Harbor's] understanding of the law firm environment, grasp of the iManage Work solution and extensive experience in delivering the system to professional services organisations, was impressive."



At the time, adopting iManage Work as a privately hosted application made commercial sense. The privately hosted model offered Thirsk Winton all the benefits of cloud technology including a fully flexible and robust environment; improved accessibility to the email and document management system, especially when fee earners are on the move or working remotely; reduced risk and in-built disaster recovery; and enhanced security.

Key to the firm's successful adoption of the iManage Work document management system has been its suitability to Thirsk Winton. Harbor configured iManage Work to the specific needs of Thirsk Winton, providing a matter-centric approach to email and document management. All outbound and inbound emails on transactions, associated documents and records along with voice and text messages on individual cases are automatically saved to respective matter-related workspaces in a central repository in the firm.

The iManage Work solution integrates with Thirsk Winton's financial management software and Microsoft Office, truly making the document management system the primary storehouse and knowledge centre for all client and matter-related activity.

### Another leap in cloud technology adoption

Four years later, Thirsk Winton upgraded and migrated its privately hosted iManage Work solution to the iManage Cloud, again with the help of Harbor. Migrating nearly one million documents, today the firm has the latest and most modern application that provides full scalability and cost predictability, supporting the firm's ambitious business growth plans.

"[Harbor] was an obvious choice," Winton stated. "Our first implementation of iManage Work as a privately hosted solution was undertaken by them. Ever since then, they have been supporting the solution for us and will continue to do so – they are our 'go to' partner for anything iManage. In such projects, continuity is important, and the team there is knowledgeable about the iManage offering and are easy to get on with. These are important considerations in business-critical projects."



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Elaborating on the firm's business rationale for adopting the iManage Cloud, Winton, explained, "The biggest advantage of iManage Cloud is that the back-end, servers and all the hidden complexities of the application and the cloud platform are entirely looked after by iManage themselves. iManage is taking full responsibility for the application's maintenance, upgrade and reliability."

Winton added, "It's a much cleaner and even a more modern approach to cloud adoption. Everything is rolled into one subscription-based offering with all the necessary service level agreements. As a growing law firm, we can now very accurately predict costs. We pay on a per user basis and scalability is simply not an issue, unlike previously where, with every new headcount addition, we needed to ensure that we had the increased computing power, server capacity and so on, which included Azure licencing costs. All those issues now rest with iManage and [Harbor], we simply focus on our core activity of delivering legal services."

Previously, if the number of licences were to grow over a 100, it would have required not only more licences, but also change in the servers and other add-ons to increase capacity, representing a substantial step change from an IT standpoint for the firm.

"Thirsk Winton completely understands the business benefits of cloud technology and is judiciously developing its IT infrastructure on that basis," Jon Wainwright, Sales and Marketing Director at Harbor, observed. "This kind of forward-thinking outlook will benefit the firm as cloud-based



solutions are fast becoming the norm. With a reduced need to incur capital expenditure, the new system will genuinely give Thirsk Winton the flexibility and agility to grow, in keeping with its ambitious business development strategy."

## Users always on the latest version of the application

The users in the firm have the best document management system that there is to be had for their requirements. The same configuration of the application – one that was originally designed for Thirsk Winton by Harbor – is available to users in iManage Cloud. The additional benefit to users is that they 'always' have the latest functionality.

Winton noted, "iManage has adopted the same approach to product development as that of the likes of Apple and Microsoft. With improvements continually being made to iManage Cloud, we see the benefits of the new features and functionalities immediately. With every upgrade made to iManage Cloud, we automatically have the latest system with no requirement for additional training or assistance. These new features aid efficiency and productivity."

Many in Thirsk Winton are using the latest iOS iManage app on the mobile phones. Users can securely access matter files to view specific documents, from anywhere and at any time.

Security of data is of prime importance to Thirsk Winton and the iManage Cloud is ensuring it via authentication systems such as SAML, encryption and UK data centres. Winton remarked, "Similar to any organisation we take data security very seriously and with iManage Cloud we are assured that our data resides in a UK data centre, per our current requirements."

Simultaneous to the firm's move to iManage Cloud, Thirsk Winton upgraded its practice management system. These two new systems are now integrated, thereby delivering efficiency and costs savings to the firm. Winton concluded, "Because we are on the latest version of iManage in the Cloud, we can perform all sorts of integrations and undertake a variety of custom automations to further enhance existing technologies, offer unique services to clients and make cost savings."



Harbor is a globally integrated team of strategists, technologists and specialists focused on helping law firms, corporations, and their law departments achieve breakthrough outcomes. We are also helping to steer a legal industry in the midst of turbulent change. We navigate alongside our clients and partners, providing salient insights, scalable resources, and seasoned advice.



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