



CDH Makes More Sense of Cloud and Mobility with Mimecast

Mimecast creates an environment that supports business strategy and adds value in key areas.

Context

Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr is one of the largest business law firms in South Africa, specialising in services covering the complete spectrum of business legal needs. Its dedicated sector-led teams consist of lawyers with experience in a wide range of industries and the public sector.

A firm believer in partnerships, CDH makes getting to know its clients a priority. Understanding business and management needs creates the ideal platform for the firm's depth of skill, which enables it to respond to clients' business operations locally and elsewhere in the world through its alliance with DLA Piper.

Challenge

With some 115 directors and partners and 200 qualified lawyers, located at offices in Johannesburg and Cape Town, CDH is one of the larger legal firms in the country.

Although face-to-face and telephonic consultations form a large part of the firm's client engagement, many of the firm's interactions take place via email, putting it at the top of the list for business enablement.

At a Glance

Company

- Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr (www.cliffedekkerhofmeyr.com)
- Industry: Legal Services
- Number of Email Users: 626

Objectives

- Simplify an overly complex mail environment
- Drive user adoption (and ROI)
- Alleviate infrastructure pressure through cloud-based services
- Support mail access via multi-platform devices

Benefits

- An intuitive, easily searchable archive
- Improved productivity (users)
- IT resources (personnel and infrastructure) can be optimally allocated
- Access to mail anytime, anywhere, from any device
- Confidence that future tools and services will be adopted and used effectively
- Complements incoming M365 and cloud strategy

“We have created an environment that our lawyers can access at anytime from anywhere on any device. They always have access to the information they need. Mail is a large part of that and this is something that Mimecast does exceptionally well.”

Ralph Hopkins - Head of IT, Cliffe Dekker Hofmey

This creates a few headaches from an IT perspective. “Uptime is crucial, but equally important is access both from an archiving and a mobility point of view” explains the firm’s Head of IT, Ralph Hopkins.

“We often revert to our archives to recover information for consultative and billing purposes. Unfortunately our incumbent archiving solution, although effective, was extremely cumbersome. It required a lot of training from a user perspective and many just found the system too difficult to navigate. IT was swamped with mail-related requests, which was equally frustrating. It was also administratively intensive to maintain mailboxes, set rules, and make sure these worked correctly.”

CDH supports a large mobile workforce. “The nature of our business requires users to work off premises or outside traditional office hours, yet the need to access information remains,” says Hopkins.

Solution

CDH, already inclined towards cloud-based solutions with a mature Microsoft Exchange platform and a migration to Microsoft 365 on the cards, saw Mimecast as a natural fit.

A big plus point was moving the business’s substantial archive into the cloud. “With mail use at an all-time high, there is added strain on our storage infrastructure,” expands Hopkins. “Mimecast alleviated this, physically removing it from our environment. We no longer need to worry about unmanageable archives and the only mail back up required is our Exchange Live Mail.”

The solution fell into place with little disruption and an almost instant user adoption. “It’s one thing to put a solution in place, but if users can’t get to their mail easily, you are going to have a very low adoption – and ROI.”

Mimecast’s intuitive web portal that allows users to manage their own mail and simple-to-use mobile application have overcome this barrier entirely. Its simplicity was experienced throughout the implementation, where services were extremely easy to onboard and activate.

Benefits

Support for Business Strategy

All CDH professionals are on smartphones and there is a huge uptake on tablets – About 90% of its staff are mobile from a tablet perspective.

“We have created an environment that our lawyers can access at anytime from anywhere on any device. They always have access to the information they need. Mail is a large part of that and this is something that Mimecast does exceptionally well,” says Hopkins.

“We are in the process of moving to an M365 cloud environment, and while there are definite overlaps, we are impressed by how Mimecast handles this through complementary services.

“We really like their thinking and their ability to see what is becoming relevant in its clients’ environments and create solutions that speak to this. Mimecast’s elastic, flexible licensing also allows us to upscale and downscale as our business requires. We definitely feel the value in the solution, financially and operationally,” Hopkins explains.

Solutions that move with the business

One of the things that CDH finds most attractive is the continuous stream of new releases. It’s not just the products themselves that are impressive, but how they come into being: Mimecast truly listens to its customers.

“Not only is Mimecast great to work with, accommodating and understanding, but when we do have issues, we know these will be taken into consideration and that more than likely there will be a release that will address this down the line. Their customer drive is commendable” concludes Hopkins.