



Schoeman Attorneys, Based in Cape Town, Leaves Paper Behind With Mimecast

Context

Based in Cape Town, Schoeman Attorneys, Conveyancers and Notaries Public is a boutique law firm that offers a broad range of legal services to its clients. They specialise in commercial law, BBBEE advice and planning, mining law, civil litigation, contract drafting (including antenuptial contracts), conveyancing and notarial practice, wills and estate planning.

Established by Director Nicolene Schoeman, this boutique law firm has a strong entrepreneurial mindset. This distinguishes them from other law firms in that they apply first-hand experience to the common challenges faced by entrepreneurs.

Schoeman Attorneys is ideally positioned to offer proven, practical solutions incorporating legal compliance and risk aversion that make business sense to their wide range of clients – from entrepreneurs who run SMEs to national and multinational corporates as well as community-based organisations.

At a Glance

Company

- Schoeman Attorneys (www.schoemanlaw.co.za)
- Industry: Legal
- Number of Email Users: 6

Objectives

- Reduction in paper based communication
- Access to a comprehensive cloud archive
- Improved eDiscovery tools

Benefits

- Significant reduction in paper usage
- Access to a secure perpetual archive
- Robust and granular eDiscovery
- Mimecast mobile application access for all staff when not in the office

“The platform has also significantly reduced Schoeman Attorneys’ need for paper based communication. A key initial objective.”

Nicolene Schoeman - Director, Schoeman Attorneys

Working closely with their clients of many shapes and sizes – ranging from SMEs to large multinationals Schoeman Attorneys is committed to offering each client the same level of dedicated attention while offering a working environment that inspires creative thinking, practical solutions and positive results.

Challenge

Traditionally, legal firms have relied heavily on the presence of physical documents to account for client actions, evidence, communication and billing. In fact, it is not uncommon for these entities to safeguard large repositories of sensitive paper-based data on behalf of clients for later use.

Over time, larger firms have gradually moved towards secure cloud based storage and archival platforms to digitally stockpile critical information. Although this has provided an elegant solution for many of South Africa’s leading legal entities, the sheer cost and exertion typically associated with a move of this nature has side-lined the majority of smaller players.

“Attorneys have complex document archival and security requirements to comply with in order to protect client confidentiality and data integrity” comments Nicolene Schoeman, Director of Schoeman Attorneys.

“It is a unique industry that has gradually become more reliant on technology to service this need. Despite this, only larger firms have successfully endeavoured to reduce their dependence on paper-based communication”.

Known for its commitment to innovation, Schoeman Attorneys had previously moved its email communication platform over to another open source application in an attempt to realise this ideal. Unfortunately, the service did not offer archival and eDiscovery solutions comprehensive enough to meet the needs of an emerging legal firm. With this in mind, Schoeman Attorneys began its search for a better suited alternative.

Solution

“After a thorough investigation, the firm elected to move its email platform over to Mimecast with the assistance of certified partner, Evolv Networks.

In November 2012, Schoeman Attorneys embarked on a phased transfer approach which would gradually see it transfer daily electronic communications and archival services onto the Mimecast Unified Email Management solution.

By April 2013, the process was complete. In order to make full use of the features and benefits staff received thorough training on the Mimecast platform, facilitated by Evolv Networks. Staff were then able to embrace the benefits associated with a more unified approach to email security, archival and continuity.

Benefits

To date, Schoeman Attorneys has enjoyed several benefits following its move over to Mimecast's Unified Email Management platform.

Access to a comprehensive archiving solution equipped with robust eDiscovery tools has been the chief advantage, believes Schoeman.

"We are extremely satisfied with Mimecast's platform thus far. Our previous cloud based email environment afforded us only a marginal amount of archive capacity and often made it difficult to search for legacy information unless we had the exact client name, date or direct email address".

"Fortunately, this concern is no longer present. Mimecast's perpetual archive solution and eDiscovery capacity has proven tremendously useful to each of Schoeman Attorney's employees. The Mimecast mobile application has also made it far easier to access and explore this repository on the go".

In an environment that is particularly conscious of strict security and maintaining the confidentiality of client information, Mimecast has offered a unique value proposition. As one of the few global cloud service providers to gain ISO27001 certification, Schoeman Attorneys can rest assured that its data is protected at all times.

The platform has also significantly reduced Schoeman Attorneys' need for paper based communication. A key initial objective, adds Schoeman.

"Mimecast has aligned well with our vision to become trend setters in the legal environment by reducing our reliance on paper-based archiving without compromising client confidentiality. Its Unified Email Management platform has certainly streamlined many of our internal processes, affording us a unique competitive edge".