



ALB enables Ison Harrison to respond to change quickly and efficiently

They've continued to progress system development, working in partnership with Advanced

Ison Harrison is a large regional law firm, employing over 200 staff across 15 offices throughout Yorkshire. We offer a wide range of legal services, including commercial, personal and Legal Aid. We wanted a practice case management system (PCMS) that uses modern technology, could cover all of our work areas effectively and still offer a great user experience.

Our clients are important to us and the ability to respond quickly to their needs, while enabling and encouraging good working practices, is an absolute essential.

Time for a change

We had been using our previous case management system for some time and it was no longer capable of meeting our growing requirements. We felt we were at risk of becoming a bit stuck in the past.

We investigated several solutions but didn't progress with them. Ultimately, we decided that the best way forward was to move from our legacy system to ALB. The key benefit of this was familiarity. Both systems were structured by the same team of developers and were built using similar methodology. As well as being a very capable piece of software, ALB is modern looking, built with an attractive interface. Everyone who looked at it was impressed.

We have a substantial number of users, working across 14 departments and a variety of disciplines. Having a system that felt familiar, instead of starting from scratch, made system training and adoption much smoother and easier for everyone throughout the firm.

Efficient document management

One of the major issues we'd experienced with our previous system was a severely limited document management process. Clinical negligence matters were particularly affected by this as they generate thousands of documents. What ALB offered was a simple, yet very effective, integrated document management solution. Users can now quickly drag and drop documents and emails into the correct folder and that's made the process so much more efficient. It delivered the solution we needed.

The pace of change over the last 12 months has been massive. If we hadn't made the system change, we might be struggling to keep up now. Certainly, we would be limited on certain matter types. The courts started insisting on digital documents some time ago, and the impact of this on our court work for criminal and family law would have been difficult. There is a distinct possibility that we may have lost certain areas of our business had we not progressed to ALB.



Client >

Ison Harrison Solicitors

Sector >

Legal

Project >

Implementing ALB practice and case management software

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Adrian Barker >
IT Manager >
Ison Harrison >

Facilitating the move to remote working

Our implementation was completed not long before the first Covid-19 lockdown. Up to that point we only had six or seven people with the ability to work remotely, and we had VPN connections to handle a maximum of 50 people. With lockdown looming, we had to suddenly think about how we were going to set up all necessary staff for remote working.

As luck would have it, at the same time as moving to ALB, we'd been testing a new firewall and it had just been rolled out. It immediately moved up the agenda and in a short period of time we managed to get 100+ people working efficiently from home.

It wasn't a painless experience, but without a modern PCMS application, delivered in the form of ALB, we wouldn't have been able to achieve it at all. At the time we observed that without the new system we'd have been forced to just shut the doors because the old system would never have been able to facilitate working from home on the scale required.

On-going development

The rapid application development aspect of ALB has been very important to us as we are very workflow driven.

ALB lends itself to workflows and we use this functionality extensively. Even in practice areas like commercial law, that will never be workflowed, we still use functions in the background to produce items like engagement letters. With our previous system it would have been very difficult to achieve that without extensive time and effort.

We speak regularly with Advanced to ensure we are making the most of the additional features of the system. Generally, we read the provided documentation and try it ourselves, but we are still always engaging with the Support Team.

Recently we implemented Legal Live, the ALB portal. We had it delivered and went back to Support to ask some questions so we could sort out a few niggly issues. They came back to us, explained why the issues had arisen and helped us sort it out. We do seek help when necessary and we find the Advanced support system is very good. You know someone will respond to a query relatively quickly. Our questions always seem to reach the exact people who have the knowledge to provide the information we need.

Using the ALB development tools that are available means our on-going progress is constant. Recently, we've been implementing the ALB Workflow Toolkit. This was delayed by the pandemic but is now progressing again. Once a week we review the ALB workflow requests that we've received and add them to our development list. This remains our current focus but we look forward to what ALB delivers next.

Working in partnership

Going live shortly before the first lockdown, we acknowledge that without ALB's digital work tools, we would not have succeeded to the extent we have. In fact, we have thrived. This is in large part to the trust we placed in Advanced, ALB and the team who delivered the system. From project inception, through delivery and on to support, Advanced continues to press forward and respond to our needs.

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