

Building on partnerships with local suppliers delivers savings for Chester Solicitors, Storrar Cowdry.

CLIENT:	Storrar Cowdry
SECTOR:	Professional Services
COST CATEGORIES:	Contract car parking review IT and telecoms health-check

THE CLIENT

Solicitors Storrar Cowdry have been serving both private and commercial clients from their Chester offices for over 35 years. 2015 marked a big move for the organisation with the amalgamation of two sites into an impressive new city HQ and the conversion to limited company status.

THE PROJECT

ERA 'Northern Powerhouse' Consultant, Alastair Baker, approached the practice head, Dalene Storrar, shortly after the move to the new premises and thus began a comprehensive review of the company's overhead costs. To date (Jan. 2020) gross savings of £61,000 have been delivered for the family run practice, which employs around 30 staff.

At the time of ERA's original engagement in 2015 the practice was looking for immediate assistance in understanding the lease and maintenance contract commitments of 5 copier/ printing machines, provided by 2 separate suppliers. ERA's Managed Print specialist Andy Kinnear takes up the story:

"Whilst two new machines had been supplied at the time of the relocation, two old ones had been 'wrapped' into the new lease agreement. Understandably the old machines were less than reliable, and the client was very unhappy with the level of service and support being received under the contract. We were able to arrange the replacement of a fifth machine almost immediately, at a 48% cost saving. This new machine provided enough capacity to be able to reduce the use of the older machines, and thereby the need for support call outs. Two years later we were able to replace the older machines using a new supplier who provided an excellent package, including a 50% cost savings, on the promise of the contract for the replacement of the remaining fleet when they reached the end of their initial lease period in 2019."

SUMMARY OF SAVINGS

Office Supplies	48.3%
Photocopiers/printers (phase 1)	47.53%
Photocopiers/printers (phase 2)	50%
Document Management	18.3%
Business Rates Revaluation	18.08%
Document Exchange (DX)	17.45%



STORRARCOWDRY
solicitors

I believe working with ERA over a period of years has proved valuable for our business. We believe in being courteous and considerate people to do business with, and this applies as much to our relationships with our suppliers as our clients. ERA's approach was a good match, offering the benefit of a depth of buying expertise represented by a local associate able to attend face to face meetings on a regular basis. The savings have been achieved largely without any disruption to our supply chain.

DARLENE STORRAR – MANAGING PARTNER,
STORRAR COWDRY

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By taking a long-term view, ERA is able to manage the procurement process on behalf of clients at every step, ensuring quality and service levels are maintained and best value is achieved.

Storrar Cowdry Managing Partner, Darlene Storrar, also requested ERA take a look at contract parking arrangements for the practice's Partners. With city centre spaces at a premium the cost had been rising for some time. ERA's review identified potential savings of 7% on alternative city centre parking spaces or significantly greater savings utilising a location 10 minutes' walk outside the city walls. However, as is always the case with ERA projects, the choice of which solution to implement is in the gift of the client and on this occasion Storrar Cowdry opted to remain with their current arrangements, but with renewed confidence that the annual costs were not excessive.

Meanwhile ERA's Iain Clements, Office Supplies category specialist, had already commenced a review of Office Supplies

which quickly revealed potential cost savings of over 38% with the incumbent supplier. Over the next 2 years Iain worked with the supplier and the practice's staff team, tightly managing the core list of products and delivering regular audits. As a result, savings actually delivered increased to over 48%, against a background of rising costs in the marketplace. Consequently, in 2017 Storrar Cowdry requested ERA to continue managing the office supplies spend with the same supplier - a position that continued for a further 2 years.

Having seen the savings delivered in Office Supplies and Copiers, Darlene Storrar suggested ERA take a look at the arrangements for Records Management and Document Storage. Content with the service being provided, and aware of the potential disruption to the business, Darlene was keen not to move to a new supplier. An important element of the ERA methodology is to unbundle charges and obtain costs for the constituent parts, thus enabling a more transparent understanding of the real cost of service,

whilst eliminating the cost of elements of the service which are not utilised. Consequently, ERA were able to negotiate an 18% reduction in costs whilst retaining the trusted incumbent supplier. When the local supplier was later acquired by a national organisation, ERA used their existing relationship with the acquirer to ensure Storrar Cowdry's beneficial terms and service levels were maintained.

ERA's Property team undertook a survey of Storrar Cowdry's new HQ, India House, and discovered the VOA valuation to be based on an over estimation of the floor space. An appeal against the 2010 valuation was made and a significant rebate and future rateable value reduction was secured.

Storrar Cowdry have also benefited from a free health-check of their IT and telephony arrangements, with ERA's John Trimble visiting the site and providing advice and support on a number of occasions.

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ANDY KINNEAR, ERA MANAGED PRINT SPECIALIST

