

ERA's independence makes the difference with trusted advice to law firm Whitehead Monckton

CLIENT:	Whitehead Monckton
SECTOR:	Legal
COST CATEGORIES:	Managed print, office supplies
ADDED VALUE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater visibility and control over spend Improved service and support from supplier Independent quarterly review audits Streamlined fleet and updated ordering process Future-proof technology and enhanced solutions



THE CLIENT

With offices in Canterbury, Maidstone and Tenterden, Whitehead Monckton is one of the largest legal practices in the county of Kent.

They offer a wide range of services specifically for businesses together with legal support for individuals.

It's important to Whitehead Monckton that they are recognised within Kent as being a very approachable and professional firm. Many of their staff, including a number of directors, completed their legal training with the firm and their ethos of client support and care is very important to all members of the firm.

THE CHALLENGE

Simon Longhurst, Chief Operating Officer at Whitehead Monckton, had successfully engaged Expense Reduction Analysts (ERA) at a previous company, so when re-approached in his new role at Whitehead Monckton, Simon was keen to rekindle the relationship.

Andy Kinnear, one of ERA's top consultants with over 30 years' experience and with over 100 implemented Managed Print projects since joining ERA, was brought in to lead the programme of work.

When analysing the various contracts in place, it became apparent to Andy that none of the contract end dates aligned, and some were recent agreements with financial penalties if terminated early.



Whitehead
Monckton
the Kent law firm

I have used ERA before, so it was an easy decision to re-engage with them. ERA always take the longterm approach and always work in the best interest of their clients.

SIMON LONGHURST,
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, WHITEHEAD MONCKTON
SEPTEMBER 2020

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"Most of the projects I undertake have current contractual agreements, which are normally five years," Andy begins.

"Whilst it is always nice to find immediate savings for clients, this is not always possible. We always work in the best interest of our clients, and my advice, where possible, is to wait for the contracts to expire at the end of their primary term, as this will result in no re-financing of current agreements that would incur further interest charges. It also provides a 'level playing field' for all suppliers when re-tendering. Upgrading contracts early nearly always benefits the incumbent supplier and, from my experience, the client very rarely achieves best value with an early upgrade."

As part of Andy's investigation, it also became apparent that some of the equipment was very old, and had been retained from previous agreements. The retaining of equipment had not been reflected in the costs as both the lease and service costs were far higher than the market average.

The relocation to their brand-new bespoke head office meant that there was also a requirement to re-audit the requirements for this site.

THE SOLUTION

Leveraging his knowledge and experience, Andy undertook a bespoke tender exercise considering the evolving business landscape. Several suppliers were invited to tender. As Andy continues:

"There is clearly an objective to provide a commercial benefit to our clients, but it is equally important to make sure that other factors are considered. Law firms in particular often require bespoke software applications and certain manufacturers are better placed to meet those needs - so the companies invited to tender are carefully selected."

As a growing company with a new modern head office in Maidstone,

Whitehead Monckton's Managed Print requirements and needs were completely different to their existing situation.

Andy included suppliers whom he knew were ethical with clean contracts and importantly have expertise within the legal sector. Other considerations were geographical location and reputation for excellent customer service.

ERA AS A TRUSTED PARTNER

The level of detail provided in a tender document highlights the value ERA brings to its clients. Service response times, contract terms and conditions, account management experience and sector experience are just some of the key considerations.

The ultimate objective is to enable the client to make an informed decision for a solution based on using a supplier that best suits their business requirements.

In the case of Whitehead Monckton, a new supplier was appointed, and whilst the 60% savings were staggering, there were other suppliers who were even more competitive in terms of price. Although ERA assists with the recommendation, ultimately it is the client that retains full control of the decision-making process. Simon Longhurst comments:

With so many different suppliers in the marketplace, and in a sector where the terms and conditions can be complex and varied between each supplier, the guidance from ERA and the expertise from Andy, in particular, really provided added value, and gave us the peace of mind we needed."

SIMON LONGHURST, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, WHITEHEAD MONCKTON

OFFICE SUPPLIES

As part of the ERA Client Relationship, Whitehead Monckton were also keen to review their spending on stationery consumables. Andrew Lee, an ERA consultant and specialist in this category, was asked to review this spend and provide a full audit of where savings might be achieved whilst maintaining or improving customer service.

After a thorough tender process, Whitehead Monckton were presented with several supplier options to choose from. As Marie Holland, Office and Training Manager explains: "We were very happy with the results of the tender, and ERA guided us in terms of which suppliers might suit us best, however, ultimately the final decision was ours."

The result was a 44% saving on office stationery with a fantastic saving of 95% on confidential shredding.

Marie continues: "A really great result overall. ERA helped and led implementation meetings so there was a smooth transition, and we couldn't be happier with the customer service, product quality and service levels we have received from our new supplier."

ADDED VALUE

ERA's relationship does not end once they have helped identify suitable suppliers and helped their client achieve best value, whether this be reducing costs, improving the current SLA's in place or recommending new client benefiting solutions.

With this in mind, Client Relationship Manager Stuart Hallam was brought in as part of the overall ERA team. Both Stuart and the project specialist team will continue to work closely with Whitehead Monckton over the next few years, ensuring that the tendered service levels and cost savings are being achieved.