

M+K Lawyers

Commvault and Pure Storage deliver savings, speed and security for Australian-based M+K Lawyers

macpherson kelley.

Challenges

- M+K Lawyers operates in a highly competitive environment requiring a flexible data management solution which can quickly accommodate the changing needs of the business
- The firm's lawyers were reporting systems performance and latency problems on applications
- The IT department needed to free up time to fulfill a more strategic role in the enterprise rather than just managing technical keep-the-lights-on issues

Solutions

- Commvault data protection, Disaster Recovery with Archiving through OnePass capability, Virtual Machine Management, Deduplication and Pure Storage flash array

Benefits

- Deduplication delivers 90% reduction in data under management, cost savings and optimised performance
- Pure Storage Flash Array and Commvault integration optimises backup times and application performance – reduced from 6 hours to under 30 minutes
- Improved performance reduces the number of helpdesk requests by 60%, shifting IT team from technician to strategic enabler

Industry

Legal

Location

Australia

URL

www.mk.com.au

Platform/File system

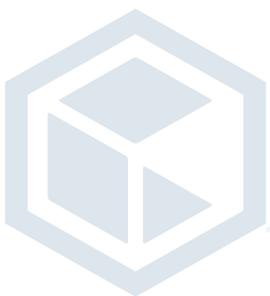
- Pure Storage Flash Array
- Microsoft HyperV

Database

- Microsoft SQL Server

Applications

- Microsoft Exchange, SharePoint, Active Directory



“With the reliability and speed offered by Commvault and Pure Storage, we have seen a 40–60% reduction in tickets to the help desk and fewer application errors. This has freed up the IT team allowing us to become less of a technician and more of a strategic business enabler.”

Matt Purves National Infrastructure Manager | M+K Lawyers

Commvault and Pure Storage deliver savings, speed and security for M+K Lawyers

As a mid-tier Australian law firm M+K Lawyers is keenly aware of the winds of disruption blowing through the legal landscape. Not only has the Australian legal sector seen the arrival of a slew of global firms, it has been inundated with technologies such as eDiscovery, online dispute resolution, e-mediation and predictive coding and analytics which have the potential to radically reform the practice of law.

M+K Lawyers has over the last three years carved out a unique position in the market, growing through acquisition into one of the nation's largest firms focused on meeting the needs of mid-sized enterprises which they consider the engine room and innovation hub of the Australian economy.

With 45 principals, 275 staff and a footprint that stretches from Brisbane to Melbourne, the firm is also the only Australian member of the global Multilaw association of 75 law firms, providing clients with access to international expertise. In this fast paced and exacting environment, information is considered a strategic advantage for M+K and must be skillfully managed and protected.

When time is money

Law firms can be pressured environments, with no tolerance for failure or lack of response. The same goes for the IT solutions and their ability to enable access to critical business information, and provide assurance and responsiveness to the organisation.

As Matt Purves, M+K's national infrastructure manager explains; "The last lawyer finishes at 3am and the first starts at 5am, so our information systems need to be responsive, reliable and populated with data of exceptional integrity."

M+K Lawyers first implemented Commvault's data protection and information management solution in 2012 to replace a legacy Symantec solution which didn't provide the scalability and flexibility needed as the firm went through a series of rapid-fire mergers. Commvault is now used to support M+K's disaster recovery strategy, offsite storage and data protection and archiving. The firm's primary data centre is located in its Dandenong office with the Melbourne site hosting auxiliary and backup copies of data, which will soon be replicated to the cloud.

The deployment of Commvault to protect and manage 20 terabytes of production data and an additional 6 terabytes of archive data led to a 90% reduction in the volumes being managed because of deduplication with DASH copy replication to the Melbourne site.

Marcus Nessel, Network Administrator for M+K Lawyers said the deduplication itself drove immediate cost savings in storage-related costs. Purves adds, "Although that initial transition to the Commvault platform delivered significant savings and efficiencies, there was an even greater opportunity to drive business productivity."

The IT team was exercised to manage the firm's infrastructure, and the challenge grew with every expansion – resources became increasingly stretched and as the focus became more about simply keeping the lights on, the team struggled to fulfill the strategic role they aimed for in the enterprise.

In addition, due to aging infrastructure the backup window was being stretched into business hours, and lawyers were concerned about the performance of their IT infrastructure as a whole.

Faster storage for speedier solutions

In the past M+K's users complained that applications were slow and the IT Team was constantly logging tickets to resolve errors in its systems and applications. In a business sector where time is literally money – as Purves notes "We charge every six minutes so the impact of improvements in time latency could mean a spike in revenue for the business." Addressing the latency issues the firm had been experiencing became a priority to support growth.

The firm undertook a hypervisor upgrade in order to support the degree of scalability demanded by the fast growing business. M+K uses Commvault to protect and manage the heavily virtualised environment where 90% of its servers are on Microsoft Hyper-V. The introduction of Commvault's single platform for management of the virtual environment ensured easy handling of hypervisor protection.

To drive performance optimisation and reduce latency issues, Nessel and Purves implemented Pure Storage, a leading provider of Flash Array storage alongside Commvault, enabling the firm to deliver significant productivity gains through strong native integration with Commvault. They benefited from automated management and replication of data to the secondary data centre in Melbourne where auxiliary copies were hosted on HP disk.

Transitioning the workloads from their legacy storage array onto Pure’s high performing all-flash storage was simple as Commvault was already installed on all the virtual servers and integrates seamlessly into Pure Storage. “The Commvault solution proved to be critical in enabling this process, we were surprised at how smooth it was to migrate to the new array,” says Nessel.

With the reliability and speed offered by Pure Storage, M+K saw up to 60% reduction in tickets to the help desk and fewer application errors. Nessel explains that Commvault has also sped up provisioning which has been important given the pace of growth at M+K. “Commvault is policy driven through their OnePass capability which automatically backs up and archives according to pre-determined criteria. So you add a VM and off you go. This has freed up the IT team allowing us to have less of a technical support focus and more of a strategic business enabler.”

Commvault also handles backup and archiving associated with the firm’s files, emails, SQL databases and mailboxes to ensure compliance with legal requirements and reduce organisational risk.

“Being a law firm we don’t delete anything – and now we can monitor and make sure that we have everything easily accessible and secure.” Exchange daily backups which had been gradually widening from the ageing infrastructure are now completed in less than 30 minutes and just eight minutes for their practice management system, thanks to power of Pure Storage Flash Array and Commvault.

As a law firm, M+K have to keep at least seven years of data and that was clogging up the SAN. It was an expensive exercise to have information sitting there that was no longer actively used, so they looked to Commvault’s OnePass to automatically and securely remove that data from the main SAN and onto more cost efficient tiers of storage as it became redundant.

“We now have all emails older than 6 months and any file that hasn’t been used in 12 months automatically archived and that has taken the pressure off the transaction environment. A preview function available to all users allows archived emails to be viewed instantly via the Commvault server, even when users are offline on remote devices.”

The future looks bright

While the Commvault platform is invisible to the lawyers, its impact is obvious as it is delivering the firm the ability to grow and retain its data stores in a sustainable and risk-free manner.

“We now have business confidence that when we need strategic business information to be available, it will be there,” said Purves.

While the current environment has significantly improved overall systems responsiveness and better meets lawyer expectations, Purves is planning further refinements and says that the firm is finalising its cloud strategy which will see them move their DR site to the cloud.

“We again expect that Commvault will underpin this transition. One of the main drivers for us adopting Commvault was the business flexibility that it supports,” he says.

To learn more about the full benefits of Commvault OnePass for backup and archiving, please visit commvault.com/onepass >