How Trowers & Hamlins saved 25% on management costs with converged infrastructure

After four years in place, the international law firm's data infrastructure was beginning to show its age. We helped Trowers & Hamlins refresh with converged technology – and it's cut management costs by a quarter

"Tectrade have met and exceeded every expectation that we set, both in terms of the performance of the solution, the amount of capacity that we've got to spare now that the new solution's in place, and all of the support mechanisms going forwards."

Bob Greenwood
IT Manager
Trowers & Hamlins

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The challenge

Four years is a long time in the life of any growing organisation. Since its last storage and compute refresh in 2012, Trowers & Hamlins had seen its data needs expand and performance start to suffer.

Finance was putting up with slow-down during its bimonthly billing drives. Outlook was becoming sluggish. And with storage reaching capacity, the firm's IT team were spending too much time searching out spare capacity, and ensuring data was allocated to the right speed disk.

Faced with the prospect of paying more for its aging technology, the firm decided it was time to replace both its production and disaster recovery systems – and take advantage of recent developments in flash and converged infrastructure.
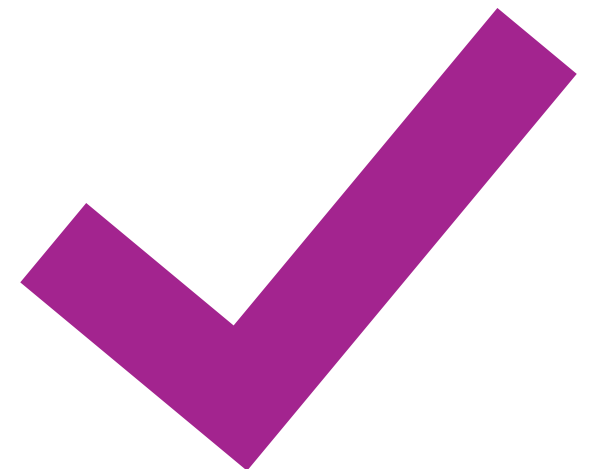
The solution

Our relationship with Trowers & Hamlins stretches back over ten years, since IBM first recommended us to help the firm embrace SAN. We jumped at the chance to tender for this refresh – and were thrilled to be selected.

Our proposed solution was designed to:

- **Boost performance, at the right price** – with a hybrid storage approach, combining flash and spinning disk.

- **Reduce power and cooling costs** – with converged infrastructure solutions.

- **Cut administration time** – with automated allocation of data to the optimum medium.

- **Minimise additional training** – with simple, familiar day to day management tools.

- **Increase capacity, longevity and reliability** – with an agile, scalable architecture, delivering 5 nines availability.

With the firm's current infrastructure approaching the end of its lease, we worked to deliver the solution as fast as possible. As Bob Greenwood, IT Manager at Trowers & Hamlins explains:

"The help that we got from Tectrade in terms of Account Management and solving issues as they came along – working with Cisco, working with IBM, and working with our Avaya support people to solve problems and to drive the project forward – was invaluable. I don't think we could have picked anybody better."

The Environment

- Two sites across London, providing an Active/Active data centre solution

The Products

- IBM VersaStack Reference Architecture – blending Cisco Unified Computing (UCS), Cisco Nexus switching and IBM Storwize Hybrid Flash/Disk subsystems incorporating IBM Virtual Storage Center

- VMware virtualisation and Site Recovery Manager

- IBM Hardware Compression

The Services

- This was an end-to-end engagement – including presales, project management, implementation and ongoing support

"We chose Tectrade because they demonstrated a complete understanding of our requirements – and because they provided us with the right mix of storage mediums, and the right level of performance, at the right price for our budget."

Bob Greenwood
IT Manager
Trowers & Hamlins

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The Results

A smooth transition, where the end users noticed nothing...

The transition to the new infrastructure was completed with zero impact on the firm's end users. As Bob puts it:

"There was no loss of access to the data. It was all managed without any downtime or system interruptions. Everything went super smooth."

...Nothing, that is, except the increased performance

Bob's IT team have witnessed a rare phenomenon – users are so stunned by the leap in performance, they're actually asking about it. Here's Bob again:

"Usually when you deliver a performance improvement, you get no comment whatsoever from the users."

But we've had people actually saying 'How have you made the system so much faster? What's happened to all the delays waiting for Outlook to synchronise?' And the guys in the Finance team tell us that the queries they run are going like greased lightning."

Less time spent on storage administration

The new solution automatically decides the best place for data to be stored. This is proving a huge time-saver for Bob and his team. As Bob explains: "It makes life so much easier. You don't have to decide where to put data. You can't make more work for yourself by accidentally putting it on the wrong tier.

"It's a whole layer of complexity that's been removed, and that means we can get on with other stuff instead."

The Results

25% Lower management costs

With converged infrastructure infrastructure – controlled through a single interface – the firm has been able to cut management costs by a massive 25%.

The switch to converged infrastructure also has dramatically reduced Trowers & Hamlins power and cooling requirements.

Higher capacity, higher reliability

The firm's gained much more space for data – instead of operating at 90% capacity, it's now closer to 10% – as well as the compression and scaling tools to effectively manage future growth. Even better, Bob's team is enjoying the freedom that comes with improved reliability:

"We've not seen a single spinney drive fail since we've put the new stuff in there. And that saves us going down to the computer room or business continuity suite to change any disk drives or power supplies."

Greater longevity

The firm is confident it's found the perfect combination of flash and hard disk drives to preserve performance well into the future – so confident, that this time it's opted for a five-year lease.

"Tectrade have been efficient and very, very helpful. Nobody says, 'Oh that's not my fault,' or 'We can't help with that'. It's full co-operation, right the way through – everybody owns the problem and the path to the solution."

Bob Greenwood
IT Manager
Trowers & Hamlins

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Is it time to refresh your systems?

Is your own infrastructure starting to show its age? We'd love to show you what we can do. Just get in touch

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Tectrade attacks the toughest, most complex data challenges for the world's most data-intensive companies. We partner with our clients to help them better protect and manage their critical data assets – reducing cost and risk, and unlocking the full value of their data. And with teams in Europe and the US, we can deliver projects and managed services on a truly global scale.

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