

EzeScan helps Donn & Co. cut scanning time down by more than half.



Sharon Petford, partner at Donn & Co. says scanning solution Post Partner, powered by EzeScan and Brother has saved the firm around 50% of time spent scanning documents for case work.

When someone thinks of a traditional high street law firm, what is often pictured isn't far from the environment found in the 1999 film *Office Space*, except with more paper. Over the last couple of years, law firms big and small have been making moves to reduce paper usage and the manual tasks that surround them. Donn & Co has recently taken on a few initiatives to change the way it works - making it more digitally-enabled. Sharon Petford, partner at the firm, says it's important to create efficiencies and keep up with the times.

The majority of Donn & Co's work is conveyancing and property-based, which means high volume and low margins that require careful, organised management to turn a profit. "We don't necessarily want to increase staff numbers but we do want to increase our capacity to take on more work. That's why we're looking into various technology solutions to be able to do that." She says one of the steps on this digital journey is Post Partner scanning solution, powered by EzeScan and Brother, which can move post and other hard copy documents directly to the optimum location in the firm's case or document management system. It has enabled the firm to do 'batch scanning' to cut down on time spent and human error involved in scanning the hundreds of paper documents needed to work on client matters.

Previously, the firm used a massive, standalone multi-function printer, which was set up in one room in the office and was used by everyone - for everything. In a not-so-document-heavy business this might be all that is needed - but for a high street and predominantly conveyancing based law firm, it just doesn't work. Petford says. Before using Brother's ADS-3600W scanner and Post Partner, she says, assistants had to stand at a machine in a small room, scanning documents one by one, take those documents up to the computer and re-open them digitally so that they could see what they were and label them appropriately.

"They were constantly being interrupted because someone would need to print or photocopy something. And it was also right next to reception, so they were again

stopped from doing the scanning by clients coming in, as the firm's first priority is to assist the clients."

She estimates it's made Donn & Co's scanning processes about 50% faster - It saves a lot of fee earner and administration time, boosting productivity at the firm. There are no interruptions, the assistants can put more documents through in one go and label them at the time they are scanned, with the facility to have the document open on-screen, Petford adds. It means fewer errors as well. "You know that you're labelling the right document because you can see it then and there, and the system saves it to a folder for you, making it easier to drag and drop into the appropriate case file."

The number of documents Donn & Co processes is very high, she says. Just one case file could have numerous letters, contract, property information forms, planning and buildings regulations compliance paperwork and more - so it takes a long time to scan, label and save all of that information manually.

Petford says: "The scanning solution is quick and reliable and we've not had any major issues so far. It's also very user-friendly - staff don't need an awful lot of training on it. It's self-explanatory and just takes a couple of clicks." And, she adds, keeping staff happy is quite high on the firm's agenda - having an accurate and speedy scanning solution makes them more comfortable and will motivate them to work hard on more thought -challenging tasks.

Beside the need for greater efficiency and staff happiness' a big driving force for using the Post Partner scanning solution was the firm's recent decision to undergo a few crucial changes to the way it works - the move to cloud was also



on the agenda. Donn & Co has been working with Tom Bailey, managing director at Best Practice Law - which developed the Post Partner scanning solution. Bailey works closely with EzeScan and Brother to further develop Post Partner and other digital transformations Petford says this has contributed towards the success and progression of the firm's IT strategy.

Post Partner can move hard copy documents directly into a case or document management system.

At the moment the firm's biggest challenge is dealing with client expectations. "They're constantly expecting things to be done more quickly, so we have to be prepared and be able to respond to that. That's what we're constantly looking into, and using the Post Partner scanning solution is one more way of helping to achieve these expectations." Petford says.

Australia

T: 1300 EZESCAN (1300 393 722)
E: sales@ezescan.com.au
W: www.ezescan.com.au

UK

T: +44 20 3535 0645
E: sales@ezescan.co.uk
W: www.ezescan.co.uk

USA

T: +1 (323) 443 0022
E: sales@ezescan.com
W: www.ezescan.com

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