

# BARLOW, LYDE AND GILBERT

Leading international law firm transforms user service levels and its productivity using Predatar for fast, painless implementation of IBM TSM.

## KEY FACTS

- New automated backup releases personnel for other duties
- Changes to 4 million documents backed up every hour
- Document restore times improved from three days to two hours
- New user service levels established
- Ability to retain every version of every document



## THE CHALLENGE

Barlow, Lyde and Gilbert (BLG) is justifiably proud of its IT infrastructure and understands the benefit a ‘best in class’ IT investment can provide to its clients, 300 lawyers and support staff. However, with an existing requirement to back up over 4 million documents and a growth estimate of 500,000 documents per annum, the firm’s existing backup solution had reached capacity.

The compliance pressures of document and e-mail retention established by Sarbanes Oxley and other regulations have accelerated storage demand, as has the use of electronic discovery by our extensive litigation practice. BLG’s litigation lawyers, working with the regulatory authorities, are given millions of documents and e-mails to review every year. Reviewing this amount of data would be extremely difficult in hard copy so, instead, law firms obtain images of all of the relevant documents; these images, as electronic files, can be searched and linked to build up a case. The problem is that, as these are graphics files, they take up a significant amount of storage space.

## GOING THROUGH THE PAIN

The impact of reaching the capacity of its backup solution meant that BLG’s IT team had to painstakingly rebuild the entire backup database every three weeks. “Having to rebuild the database was not only painful but also meant that we would have to find the correct version of a database before we could restore a document. This meant the average restore time for a single file would be at least three days,” comments Phil Scott, Senior Technical Manager at BLG.

Tape administration was also proving time consuming and expensive. With a library of 600-700 tapes containing 1.5 Terabytes of data to back up each weekend - and 1 Terabyte each night - the result was countless backup failures. “I would estimate that only one week in the year was without backup failure that required investigation and action to rectify,” explains Phil Scott.

“The combination of the IBM brand, TSM functionality and capabilities of Predatar was by far the most impressive solution we investigated”

Phil Scott, Senior Technical Manager, BLG

“We have achieved all of our goals from the automated backup project”

Phil Scott, Senior Technical Manager, BLG



**THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION**

The BLG IT team began its search for an alternative automated backup solution that would offer an ‘incremental forever’ capacity, faster, more reliable backup, and release the full-time backup administrator to work on other projects. This sort of investment would allow the team to offer service level agreements on restore times to their users that could ultimately increase productivity for fee earning staff.

**SILVERSTRING SHOWED THE WAY**

Silverstring provided a turnkey solution, software, hardware and consultancy that has made the implementation successful but also ensured a high level of skills transfer that gives BLG confidence for the future. The implementation was performed in stages for the 80-90 servers, with BLG investing in a licence for 140 processors. Throughout the implementation Silverstring ensured that there was no impact on server availability or performance, and no negative impact for users.

Now, at BLG, document servers are backed up by TSM, which looks at changes in all four million documents every hour. The IT team can also now retain every version of every document; this is important as some contract work find it necessary to have four or five iterations of a document that may need to be referred to in the future.

This was impossible to achieve with the former backup solution. The new system enables lawyers to respond more quickly to future customer requests and queries on contract changes.

Document restore times have been reduced from three days to a maximum of two hours and the project has released a backup administrator for other duties. Backup monitoring now takes a maximum of two hours a day as the reliability has been transformed. As Phil Scott says, “Our support agreement with Silverstring gives us additional monitoring and assistance and we have just signed up for another year’s contract. We have achieved all of our goals from the automated backup project and have radically increased our service to our users with increased functionality whilst reducing administration and costs.”

**PREDATAR IS POWERED BY SILVERSTRING**

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