

# LTN

## LAW TECHNOLOGY NEWS

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DELIVERABLES

Exemplars

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## SPECIAL DELIVERY

When McKenna Long had trouble securely e-mailing large files, it looked for a speedy alternative.

**A**t McKenna Long & Aldridge, a 10-office law firm focused on complex litigation and transaction and government/regulatory law, lawyers and support staff must routinely send and receive large files. We found that several file-transfer methods presented problems, so we decided to look for better alternatives.

Our firm has 450 attorneys and non-

attorney public policy advisors, and 500 support staff. Our practice includes complex litigation, corporate, environmental, energy, climate change, finance, government contracts, health care, intellectual property, technology, international law, public policy/regulatory affairs, and real estate. We have nine U.S. offices, and one in Brussels.

In the past, the methods of moving our files varied, depending on the legal professional and the location. Larger offices often rely on file transfer protocol (FTP) sites, while smaller ones would turn to courier services or mail. All offices would often default to e-mail to transfer files.

### LIMITATIONS & COMPLICATIONS

Each method worked to a certain degree, but each also presented limitations. Although easy to use, e-mail messages would often be returned to the sender due to the size of attachments. This would force users to break the e-mail attachments into multiple parts and send each individually — a very time-consuming task, especially when the sender is a busy (and billing) lawyer.

Complicating matters, the use of e-mail couldn't always guarantee the secure delivery of documents — which created a level of risk. Even though our IT department provides high levels of security within our firewall, we could not guarantee that each offsite recipient practiced the same level of diligence.

The complexity of FTP sites caused unwelcome frustration for attorneys and litigation support professionals. The sites, which could threaten security if not properly created, maintained, and monitored, frequently required IT support. Use of FTP created administrative overhead, and was not as user-friendly as we would have liked.

For example, if user permissions were not set properly, it was difficult to secure external user access. And encryption was nominal. In short, FTP became a burden.

### VULNERABILITIES

Other methods of data exchange — including loading information onto USB drives or burning CDs and sending them via couriers or snail mail — created vulnerabilities because such methods could not ensure secure delivery once outside the law firm's

walls. They also couldn't guarantee that the information would be shared only with the parties to which it was addressed.

If information goes to the wrong party, it creates huge liability issues. It isn't hard to imagine a user accidentally hitting a wrong key and sending to the wrong recipient, or a rushed IT professional missing an important step in establishing security for an FTP site. And this doesn't even address another threat to security: tech-savvy lawyers who try "rogue" workarounds while waiting for IT support.

Above and beyond security, our lawyers wanted file-transfer software that was easy to use and integrated well with their established work habits. Both our IT professionals and the firm's lawyers wanted an audit trail of exchanges that would ensure receipt, and generate the confidence of knowing that the document was delivered via the most secure means possible.

With all these factors in mind, we began the important process of researching and evaluating file-transfer software.

## THE SEARCH

In May 2009, Sam Robin, our senior manager, enterprise applications, and I began an intensive search into technology alternatives for file transfer. We conducted online research and sought referrals from trusted colleagues.

At the time, we had been using the Ipswitch ([www.ipswitch.com](http://www.ipswitch.com)) FTP server, so we also evaluated recent enhancements including increased control over creating, and securing access to, FTP folders. However, we found that Ipswitch did not provide the ease-of-use (for both sender and recipient) that we needed to support self service secure file transfer for our attorneys and staff. Nor did the enhancements reduce IT support for the file transfer process.

When we looked at Biscom Delivery Server, from Biscom ([www.biscom-deliveryserver.com](http://www.biscom-deliveryserver.com)), we were immediately impressed with its simplicity, security, and scalability.

The company, based in Chelmsford, Mass., was established in 1986, and also offers fax servers, hosted fax services, high definition faxing, and file conversion. It partners with Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, Xerox, VMWare, Siemens, McKesson, and others.

Designed for large organizations, the Bis-

com Delivery Server (BDS) is a file transfer system that helps users encrypt and securely send files, documents, and messages, while generating completed transaction and audit trail reports.

## EVALUATION

Our evaluation process, which began in June 2009, included an in-depth test of BDS' technology and functions. The software's

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ability to accommodate the secure transfer of a large number of files, and its simple, straightforward user interface, helped seal the deal.

After a month of evaluation, we moved forward with Biscom. The entire process took less than two weeks and involved installation in our Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Los Angeles, and San Francisco offices.

The initial installations replaced the use of old-style file transfer protocol by our practice support teams. BDS now supports the secure high-volume document transfers required for complex litigation.

The total cost for our BDS project amounted to less than \$10,000.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- > Total cost of installing our new system: less than \$10,000.
- > We have seen a 50% reduction in overnight courier costs.
- > We have also seen a 50% reduction in the amount of time required for IT to support file transfers.
- > Our attorneys and administrative staff trust the system, and are much more self-sufficient.
- > IT staff monitor transaction logs regularly to assure security.

With very little user introduction and training, the system was quickly adopted to replace e-mail for ad hoc transfers of large files.

Our litigation attorneys and paralegals gravitated to the web-based interface, and especially appreciate the system's notification features — now they can easily transfer the files, and can also track when those files are received and who received them.

## IT SUPPORT

On the IT side, our engineers monitor the transaction logs on a regular basis to ensure complete security.

Our file transfers are much more manageable than they were before. Prior to Biscom Delivery Server, the litigation team needed help from our IT staff for almost every transfer. Now, attorneys and administrative staff are more self-sufficient and require very little IT support.

Unlike FTP sites, our users trust Biscom. We've seen a 50% reduction in the use of overnight courier services, resulting in considerable cost savings.

The results extend beyond cost savings. Productivity has definitely increased, because attorneys can easily transfer files. Ditto for IT, which is experiencing a 50% reduction in time required to support file transfer help requests.

An unexpected bonus is improved collaborative efforts with our clients, vendors, and external counsel.

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