



Microsoft Genuine Software Customer Solution Case Study



GALBUT & HUNTER
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
LAWYERS AND COUNSELORS

Overview

Country or Region: United States
Industry: Legal

Customer Profile

Specializing in commercial and securities litigation, the law firm of Galbut & Hunter represents investment-banking houses and multinational corporations in addition to individuals and start-ups.

Business Situation

Because the firm has no dedicated IT staff of its own, it needs stable, reliable business solutions that require low maintenance. Additionally, it wants solutions that create value for its clients.

Solution

The firm deployed a variety of genuine Microsoft® operating systems and software, which increased the productivity of its lawyers and the level of service that it delivers to its clientele.

Benefits

- Delivers a premier technology experience
- Provides more value through updates and support
- Instills confidence

Law Firm Overcomes Challenges of IT Environment, Improves Clientele Relations

“We have peace of mind because we have a dependable solution that helps us deliver value to our clientele time and time again.”

Keith Galbut, Associate and Chief Operations Officer, Galbut & Hunter

From its office in Phoenix, Arizona, the law firm of Galbut & Hunter serves a domestic and international client base that ranges from individuals to multinational corporations. A large portion of the firm’s casework focuses on commercial transactions, securities litigation, real estate law, and business law. Increasingly, the firm discovered that advances in technology heightened the expectations of its clients, especially regarding communications solutions that helped them consult with the firm’s staff. In accordance with its philosophy of using technology to increase value for its clientele, the firm worked with Microsoft® Certified Partner itSynergy and created a solution based on genuine Microsoft software, including Microsoft Windows® XP Professional. With genuine Microsoft software, the firm has gained stable, reliable solutions that deliver the performance it requires.



Microsoft®

Situation

Based in Phoenix, Arizona, the law firm of Galbut & Hunter serves both a regional and an international client base. The firm's five lawyers provide legal counsel in a number of practice areas, which include antitrust law, intellectual property, and business litigation. Given the firm's international scope, many of Galbut & Hunter's concerns revolve around supporting and servicing clients that may be located thousands of miles away from its Phoenix office.

"Technology plays a major role in our operations," says Keith Galbut, Associate at Galbut & Hunter and the firm's Chief Operations Officer. "Our clients expect direct and regular access to our team. They have preferred ways of communicating with us, and we need the right infrastructure to support those preferences."

Another major consideration for Galbut & Hunter is having processes and systems that support accurate record keeping. Documenting and filing communications in an organized and secure manner are critical to the firm's operations and client satisfaction. The many deadlines encountered in the practice of law likewise demand that the firm's staff be able to access information swiftly and reliably.

In 2001, when Galbut & Hunter opened for business, it had only a basic network environment in place, which provided a data store for file sharing on a central server computer. Because the firm did not host its e-mail internally, users accessed their e-mail through an external service provider. Workers stored e-mail locally on their computers, which prohibited the central administration of e-mail information.

Essentially, the firm's desktop and portable computers operated in a peer-to-peer environment that did not foster collaboration

or optimize information management—functionally that is vital to any law firm, much less one that relies on shared expertise to serve its clientele.

"We did not have a group calendar against which we could plan meetings with one another, and we didn't have a shared list of contacts," says Galbut. "And we certainly did not have remote-access capability to allow team members located outside of the office or out of the country to access all of the firm's information."

The firm faced another issue as well. The third-party software that the firm used for legal research and trial preparation often presented issues of compatibility with the operating system that the firm used on its desktop computers. Further complicating that issue was the size of the firm. If such an incompatibility arose, lawyers and staff at the firm addressed it themselves, which often cut into productivity. "Although we had people at the firm who were interested in technology, we did not have a dedicated IT staff," says Galbut.

It was clear to the firm's senior partners that Galbut & Hunter needed two things: reliable solutions that met the firm's needs and a partner that could implement and maintain those solutions.

Solution

In 2002, Galbut & Hunter contacted Microsoft® Certified Partner itSynergy. Together, they implemented a number of solutions based on genuine Microsoft software that work together to improve the performance and reliability of the firm's IT environment. With genuine Microsoft software, users and companies have an authentic product that helps ensure greater reliability, fast access to updates, and virtual freedom from the issues typically associated

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Keith Galbut, Associate and Chief Operations Officer, Galbut & Hunter

with counterfeit software—such as security risks and missing or malicious code.

As of January 2005, the firm uses a combination of Microsoft Windows® XP Professional with Service Pack 2, Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 (part of Windows Server System™ integrated server software), and Microsoft Office Small Business Edition 2003.

To date, Galbut & Hunter finds that the best means of acquiring new software is often through the purchase of new desktop and portable computers that come with genuine Microsoft software preinstalled on them. “We typically upgrade our hardware every 18 months,” says Galbut. “In addition to keeping ourselves current, this policy eases maintenance and provides us with reliable, authentic software that meets the demands of our practice.”

The software meets the firm’s demand for centralized and manageable solutions that support its business needs, such as sharing and collaboration within the firm and with clientele. “Our firm embraces and employs advanced technology, perhaps more than other firms of our size,” says Galbut. “We strive to implement solutions that create value for our clientele, and the experts at itSynergy help make this happen for us.”

Michael Cocanower, President of itSynergy, elaborates, “The staff at Galbut & Hunter embrace new technology solutions. However, they don’t want to just know what makes something the latest and greatest. They want to know how it will benefit their clientele.”

Benefits

Genuine Microsoft software provides Galbut & Hunter with a reliable and productive environment for its lawyers and staff that helps the firm better serve its clientele. “Technology facilitates our philosophy of

service. With genuine Microsoft software, we can deliver great value to our clientele as efficiently as possible,” says Galbut.

Delivers a Premier Technology Experience

Currently, the IT environment at Galbut & Hunter performs at the level that the practice demands. In particular, the Windows XP Professional operating system supports the third-party applications and hardware that the company uses for research and the creation of presentation material for courtroom appearances. No longer do lawyers and staff members wrestle with the compatibility issues once associated with these applications, which often cut into their productivity.

Olivier Beabeau, an associate at Galbut & Hunter, explains, “The best way I can put this into tangible terms is that when I calculate billable hours for my clients at the end of the day, it always adds up to how much time I was in the office. I’m not spending time on technology issues. I’m working.”

This increase in productivity garners positive feedback from the Galbut & Hunter client base. “Clients compliment us on the extra level of detail we deliver, and we can do that because of our client-centered philosophy—and having the technology to support this philosophy,” says Galbut.

Perhaps one of the most significant gains comes through the use of the Microsoft Office Outlook® 2003 messaging and collaboration client and Microsoft Exchange Server 2003—which is included in Windows Small Business Server 2003. A remote access feature called remote procedure call over Hypertext Transfer Protocol (RPC over HTTP) provides the Galbut & Hunter staff with the full functionality of Outlook 2003 while working remotely—and without the need for the firm to support a virtual private network (VPN). Now staff can increase their availability to the firm’s clientele and address items on the

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Michael Cocanower, President, itSynergy

firm’s docket with much more flexibility than before.

“The need for a sound docketing procedure is critical,” says Galbut. “If we miss a deadline, it can put a client in a weaker position very quickly. Because of liability issues, any system that we use must feature redundancy, security, and ease of access.”

Provides More Value Through Updates and Support

As a firm that uses genuine Microsoft software, Galbut & Hunter has access to tools and programs that help make its systems less vulnerable to hackers and malicious code—such as viruses and worms. Using genuine software means continued access to the updates that help ensure secure and smooth-running systems. Additionally, the firm has access to the Microsoft Download Center, which offers yet more add-in software and updates, many of which are available exclusively to users of genuine Microsoft software.

This access, in conjunction with the ongoing support that Galbut & Hunter receives from itSynergy, helps ensure that the firm’s systems and information are secure. “It’s about support,” says Cocanower. “You don’t need it every day, but it’s nice to know you have it when you do.”

Instills Confidence

One of the primary concerns that Galbut & Hunter has with its IT environment overall is the lack of a dedicated, on-site IT staff. Solutions that provide a stable computing experience are thus of great value to the firm. Through the confidence that such solutions engender, Galbut & Hunter can concentrate on serving its clientele rather than concern itself with technical issues.

For that reason, Galbut & Hunter appreciates the remote maintenance features of its new

environment, such as the hundreds of new Group Policy settings available in Windows XP Service Pack 2. Galbut says, “Basically, now itSynergy can support us from across town by remotely accessing our system.” Prior to the implementation of Windows XP Professional, after-hours support calls to the Galbut & Hunter offices required a staff member to coordinate and admit the entry of itSynergy’s workers into the building—which meant extra hours for some of the firm’s staff.

What’s more, as a law firm, Galbut & Hunter understands on a basic, ethical level the importance of using genuine, noncounterfeit software. It also views genuine Microsoft software as a business asset, and the same holds true for the professional partnerships that spring from its use. “Competency is key. We know that itSynergy values the relationship it has with Microsoft. Microsoft in turn helps itSynergy give us great support,” says Galbut. “We have peace of mind because we have a dependable solution that helps us deliver value to our clientele time and time again.”

Cocanower agrees, “With genuine Microsoft software, you get genuine support.”

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: www.microsoft.com

For more information about itSynergy products and services, call (602) 297-2400 or visit the Web site at: www.itsynergy.com

For more information about Galbut & Hunter products and services, call (602) 955-1455 or visit the Web site at: www.galbuthunter.com

Software and Services

- Microsoft Office System
 - Microsoft Office Small Business Edition 2003
 - Microsoft Office Outlook 2003
- Microsoft Windows Server System
 - Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003
 - Microsoft Exchange Server 2003
- Microsoft Windows XP Professional

Hardware

- Dell portable computers
- Dell desktop computers
- Dell server computers

Partners

- itSynergy

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