

Advantage

Reprinted from *Advantage*
Pitney Bowes Management Services
Business Magazine

**MILLER
JOHNSON**
Attorneys and Counselors

- ▶ **Setting a Precedent**
Law firm Miller Johnson raises the bar for efficient business processes and top-tier client services with Pitney Bowes Legal Solutions

An open book is shown from a low angle, with the pages fanning out. The book is the central focus, with a warm, golden light illuminating the pages. The text is overlaid in a clean, white, sans-serif font. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and white, suggesting a library or study environment.

Founded by six
entrepreneurial
attorneys in 1959,

Miller Johnson

is a highly respected law firm with more than 90 attorneys based in its Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo, Michigan, offices. The venerable firm continues to develop family-oriented relationships with its growing list of clients, which includes small, medium and large companies, public and privately held entities, and nonprofit and service organizations.

Challenge

How a growing regional law firm could fill service gaps, leverage best practices and deliver clients services on par with top-tier global law firms.

Solution

Partner with a leading legal solutions provider to leverage industry expertise, innovative technology and best practices to transform operations and accelerate growth.

Results

Immediate improvement in service levels across business processes, a significant reduction in project management time by staff, and a perfect match in culture.

Having grown into one of the largest law firms in western Michigan, the thriving practice remains committed to delivering the highest levels of legal counsel and service to its clients.

As part of that commitment, the firm evaluated its internal operations and identified service gaps and opportunities to improve its office services, which were decentralized and reported to three different managers.

Miller Johnson Director of Finance and Operations Andrea Myers and Director of Human Resources Kelly Fisher, were tasked with driving process improvements and enhancing services to differentiate Miller Johnson from other regional law practices and mirror those at elite global law firms.

"We didn't feel like we had the capability, knowledge or time to be able to provide attention to those areas and take them to the next level," Fischer said. "We were struggling to maintain the current service level. We wanted to notch it up to provide exceptional service for our firm and clients."

Changing the culture

They agreed that outsourcing these business processes and services – from print and records management to mail and office management – was the best option; however, they knew they would need to build a strong case to convince the management committee. The firm has always placed a very high priority on the welfare of its employees, and any change to its operations would need to take them into account.

Myers and Fischer embarked on what would be a year's worth of research beginning at the Association of Legal Administrators conference, where they had conversations with potential partners to examine what services were available. What they discovered surprised them.

"We were shocked by the breadth of services available," Fischer said. "We were excited by the significant efficiencies we could gain and the service options we would have access to. It was very impressive."

As they prepared to make the

case to the management committee to outsource these services, they had to proceed carefully, given the sensitive nature of this topic for employees. Preparation for the meeting was closely guarded and all the information gathered quietly.

"It was a huge change for our firm, and management had strong reservations," Myers said. "When we did our formal presentation, the management committee were very impressed. We actually thought when they took the vote on whether to proceed, it would be split, but it was unanimous. They felt we had done our legwork. It was going to be a huge change, but it was the right thing to do for the firm to achieve the next level."

"We looked at every aspect – not just the benefits to the firm and its clients but also the people directly impacted and how they were going to be cared for. No matter the decision, those individuals would be taken care of."

With the approval of the management committee, Myers and Fischer invited



The comments I heard have been about the responsiveness of the Pitney Bowes team to even the simplest things. That someone on our services team says, 'I got your request, and I'll be right down,' is so important. People love the team's responsiveness to issues. ” ”

Andrea Myers
Director of Finance and Operations
Miller Johnson

the top three firms to compete for their business. Following a rigorous selection process, the decision was made to outsource the firm's business services to Pitney Bowes Legal Solutions. Not only did Pitney Bowes have the depth of experience in managing business processes at leading, global law firms and a wide range of services to offer, but they also offered an excellent package of salary and benefits as well as a comprehensive transition plan that took into account the potential impact on people's lives.

The plan was to transition these key services within 90 days. One significant concern was the timing for announcing the partnership with Pitney Bowes to the employees. Pitney Bowes worked closely with the Miller Johnson transition team to create an implementation plan for all current processes and services. While the plan called for a 90-day transition, the Pitney Bowes team – armed with the experience and wisdom gained in hundreds of implementations –

developed several contingency plans to address potential issues that could impact that timeline.

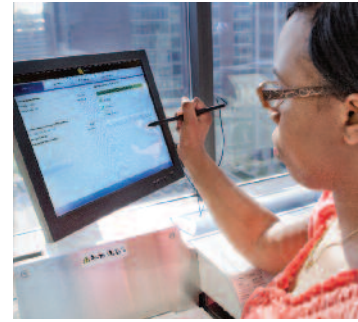
Just such a case arose. When Miller Johnson employees learned of the impending transition before the official announcement, PB dramatically accelerated its implementation timeline.

"Within two days, Pitney Bowes was able to implement its action plan and go live," Myers said. "That was awesome."

Raising eyebrows

Miller Johnson was the first Grand Rapids-based law firm to outsource its business processes, so when word of the unprecedented move got out to the legal community, it "raised a few eyebrows around town."

"When Kelly and I were investigating, outsourcing was a foreign concept to law firms here," Myers said. "No one in Grand Rapids was using outsourcing. That's why it took a year to research and investigate because no firms were using it here."



The Pitney Bowes team created a digital service request process via the firm's Intranet to submit and track their service requests. This new online submission tool provided end-users with an expanded range of services that delivered more value for clients.



Pitney Bowes has brought best practices and industry insight from working with some of the largest law firms in the world to Miller Johnson. They are partnering with us to create a five-year roadmap to take Miller Johnson from the present-day state to what a top-tier law firm should be ...

Kelly Fischer
Director of Human Resources
Miller Johnson



Above, left to right: Kelly Fischer, Director of Human Resources, Miller Johnson; Betsy Raymond, Chief Operating Officer, Miller Johnson; and Andrea Myers, Director of Finance and Operations, Miller Johnson

Improving efficiencies

Overnight, Pitney Bowes became the face of Miller Johnson.

Every detail of the firm's business processes – from print and records management to mail and office management – was reviewed and improved. The immediate goal was to triage and address issues immediately.

"It was a great match in culture," Myers said. "We shared the same attitude: you just jump in, figure it out and get it done."

For example, the physical layout of the facility was not conducive to an efficient workflow, so the Pitney Bowes Legal Solutions team redesigned the space and workflow – a change that had immediate impact on productivity.

Since the firm adopted best practices – something that was lacking before – its staff knows exactly what to expect for each service. For the end users, the improved processes led to higher end-user satisfaction – and

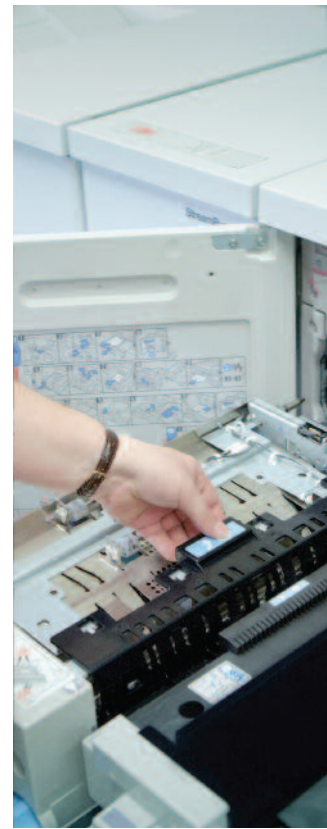
quicker response to user requests.

"The comments I heard have been about the responsiveness of the Pitney Bowes team to even the simplest things," Myers said. "That someone on our services team say 'I got your request, and I'll be right down,' is so important. People love the team's responsiveness to issues."

Scaling up for extraordinary projects

The ability of Pitney Bowes to scale its services to manage virtually any project was evident almost immediately. As Pitney Bowes was re-engineering and optimizing core services at the firm's headquarters, it was announced that the Kalamazoo office would be moving and needed help managing the logistics for their vast records archive.

Pitney Bowes was able to leverage resources from its nearby National Processing Center (NPC) and provide immediate and dedicated support to



ensure the move of more than 11,000 linear feet of files was completed without a hiccup.

Prior to the move, the Pitney Bowes team helped review the files and culled almost 30 percent of the files that didn't need to be transferred. This made the move that much more cost effective for the firm.

The Pitney Bowes team also helped create a centralized filing system to make searching the records easier and faster, saving valuable time for the legal staff.

When the move date arrived, the team was there throughout. The Pitney Bowes site manager worked alongside Myers and others for four days straight – including the weekend – to have everything up and running when the doors to the new office opened on Monday morning. That commitment and dedication resulted in a very happy client.

“The Pitney Bowes team did an

amazing job on our recent office move for Kalamazoo,” Myers said. “We could not have done this office move without Pitney Bowes!”

The NPC also helped to implement another best practice. Miller Johnson used a paper-based request form to initiate projects. The Pitney Bowes team created a digital service request process via the firm's Intranet that provided end-users an efficient and comprehensive solution to submit and track their service requests. This new online submission tool not only streamlined the process, but also provided end-users with an expanded range of services that delivered more value for clients.

A perfect match of services and personalities

While the partnership between Miller Johnson and Pitney Bowes is in its early stages, the improvements in business processes have been significant.

“I think Pitney Bowes has exceeded

our expectations already,” Fischer said. “Pitney Bowes has brought best practices and industry insight from working with some of the largest law firms in the world to Miller Johnson. They are partnering with us to create a five-year roadmap to take Miller Johnson from the present-day state to what a top-tier law firm should be — all with the underlying objective of freeing up the firm's staff to focus on their core competencies.”

“It relieves the burden on us knowing that it's taken care of when we make a request,” Myers said. “When I delegate something, I know it's taken care of. My management time has gone down, which was one of my goals. Pitney Bowes has actually returned time to me.” ■



Pitney Bowes Legal Solutions is a leading provider of document management, eDiscovery and litigation support services designed to help law firms, corporate legal departments and government agencies operate more efficiently and effectively. A division of Pitney Bowes Management Services, Pitney Bowes Legal Solutions designs and builds innovative, Best Site™ solutions based on client needs.

World Headquarters
1 Elmcroft Road
Stamford, CT 06926-0700
888 245 PBMS
www.pb.com/management-services

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