

# Kingsford stacey blackwell

Business



Company: Productivity Computer Solutions (PCS) Customer: Kingsford Stacey Blackwell Submitted by: Promote PR Date: October 2001 Commercial law firm, Kingsford Stacey Blackwell, will be sending more data traffic than normal across the fibre optic cables under Lincoln's Inn following their purchase of an extensive SunRay solution from Sun Microsystems. Kingsford Stacey Blackwell, have bought a total of 35 SunRay's after becoming one of the first UK companies to pilot the new thin client technology. The new system supplements what is already an impressive technology set-up, including a Solaris driven network and a web site providing on-line conveyancing and other services. KSB have been a customer of Sun since they implemented a networked system seven years ago. The same SparcStation 20-50 and 20-70 servers that were bought then, are still in use and a further four Ultra II servers and an E250 have since been added. This system supports two buildings in Lincoln's Inn, another building in London's Fetter Lane and a further office in Harpenden.

Currently, 200 people are using the network, supported by only three IT staff including a Sun specialist seconded from KSB's long-time IT provider, Productivity Computer Solutions (PCS). Ken Smith, the KSB partner who has been responsible for the IT implementation, said: When the system was first specified seven years ago, the Pentium 1 chip was not even available. Had we gone down the NT route, we would now be on our third upgrade. We made what is an unusual choice for a law firm to install the initially more expensive Sun platform, but we have more than saved in terms of the easy upgrade path, the longevity of the system, its sheer stability and low support costs. In October of last year, KSB were looking for a new desktop solution.

The firm had recently set up a personal injury division, which was rapidly growing, and needed to purchase new desktop terminals.

Ken Smith again looked at the new technology on offer from Sun and after seeing the SunRay's operating at PCS, decided to give them a trial. The pilot scheme that we ran here proved very quickly that this type of technology would be ideal for us, said Ken Smith. We have an Enterprise 250 server primarily supporting all 35 SunRays with load balancing across the other servers. If we want to buy more, it is literally a question of plug and play. SunRays are one of the thinnest thin clients available. A stateless, zero administration desktop, the SunRay removes everything from the desktop except the physical components required by the user.

SunRays operate user sessions from the Sun server. Access to Windows and Xwindows applications can be provided by a Citrix Metaframe implementation or by using Tarantella. Ken Smith is currently evaluating which route to implement but would prefer to continue to use, for core business applications, native Solaris products. The SunRay also introduces hot desking. Users simply insert a smart card into any SunRay terminal on the system, and their own desktop environment will immediately be displayed.

All the applications and programmes that would normally be stored within a desktop system are run by the server, leaving only the resources needed for the individual user's interface. As a result, the SunRay terminals require no administration, and are easily interchangeable. John Pennington at PCS, said: After we installed the SunRays for the pilot scheme, KSB very quickly

realised that their support overhead would reduce even further. This system performs every function that KSB needs with a totally centralised administration. PCS provides all the external support for the entire Sun set-up at KSB, and has an ISDN link from its head office in Wakefield to ensure that any technical issues or problems are solved quickly.

Ken Smith said: As far as our IT infrastructure is concerned I think we are future-proofed for some time to come. The SunRays provide a brilliant desktop solution, which will save us a huge amount of money and resource, and which we can add to as and when the need arises.