

Farrer & Co Case Study

The Organisation

Farrer & Co is a leading London-based law firm with a distinguished reputation built up over three centuries. The firm offers wide-ranging specialist advice to a large number of prominent private, institutional and commercial clients. With a tradition of being at the forefront of legal changes and developments, the firm has been involved in many landmark cases shaping the law.

The Business Need

Costly maintenance of old system

Before CRYPTOCard, Farrers had an aging remote access security system which had become expensive to maintain and difficult to manage. Lawyers were using costly hard tokens which had a limited lifespan and were often lost. A large number of the tokens were due to expire within 12 months, so it was an ideal opportunity to review the market for other solutions.

There was also a desire to upgrade the software on which the system ran. The anticipated cost of achieving an upgrade and replacing tokens was the deciding factor in prompting the search for alternatives. In addition, the firm wanted to introduce stronger business continuity options and to ensure that any solution implemented would be straightforward for non-technical legal staff to use and manage.

The Solution

System replacement with cost reduction

Vistorm, an HP Company and CRYPTOCard partner, introduced Farrers to a range of possible providers. Initially contracted to deliver the managed firewall at Farrers in May 2009, Vistorm have subsequently supported the firm with a number of security initiatives across the firm's infrastructure.

Farrers wanted a solution that was class leading and innovative. At the same time, they were keen to reduce the high annual maintenance costs on the existing system. Crucially, the system had to be simple to use. Taking a vendor-independent approach, Vistorm introduced a number of leading two-factor vendors to Farrers (RSA, SecurEnvoy and CRYPTOCard). Following vendor presentations, Farrers chose CRYPTOCard for their flexible approach to authentication and low TCO.

Flexible and cost-effective

Some of the firm's lawyers still need to use hard tokens on occasion, so it was important to maintain this option alongside soft tokens or SMS tokens. The consensus was that since CRYPTOCard was the only product that provided all three types of tokens (hard, software and SMS), it offered the most flexible solution for the firm.

Reliability in all situations

Another key benefit was the fact that CRYPTOCard's hard tokens have a longer lifespan than those provided by other suppliers and it is even possible to securely replace the battery in some tokens, further extending their useful life.

The Benefits

An integrated solution

As part of the rollout, the firm added a CRYPTOCard software token on each BlackBerry. This enables all the lawyers to authenticate to Citrix and access all of the core business applications from any location.

“The TCO over three years is approximately 60 per cent cheaper than the previous system, taking into account maintenance costs and replacement tokens.”

Neil Davison, Head of Information Technology, Farrer & Co

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The Benefits continued...

Practical ease of use

Previously, when the lawyers had to use separate tokens, they often did not have the token with them, or had forgotten or misplaced their PIN. Since in the majority of cases they always have their BlackBerry with them, the firm felt that software tokens on BlackBerrys would be the most convenient and cost effective solution. In cases where lawyers are frequent travellers or home workers without a BlackBerry, it is still possible to provide a hardware token. SMS tokens are available for other staff that do not have BlackBerrys and use remote access less frequently.

The Future

Full steam ahead

The system has been simple to deploy and the lawyers have adopted it quickly. The most significant change is from an operational point of view.

Head of Information Technology Neil Davison explains, "We now have enough tokens to deploy across the business, not only to lawyers but also to support staff for business continuity situations such as when heavy snow causes travel disruption. We contained our costs by purchasing a number of 'in case of emergency' licences which again demonstrated the flexibility of CRYPTOCARD. Also, we have now almost completely eradicated the loss of hard tokens."

Vistorm worked closely with Farrers during the project build and testing to ensure minimal user downtime, thorough understanding of the technical configuration requirements, and timely implementation. Vistorm then worked with the Farrers IT team to ensure they could handle basic support requests themselves and could instruct non-technical users around the changes required to move from the old to the new authentication service. Both Vistorm & CRYPTOCARD are still available for high-end support requests or service upgrades, but day-to-day administration is handled and supported by the Farrers IT team.

The solution is now live across the firm with the majority of the lawyers and support staff using CRYPTOCARD to authenticate to the remote access system. Whilst a handful of people were still using the old system at the time of writing, Farrers planned to migrate them to CRYPTOCARD and to retire this system within a couple of months.

Savings assured

Forecast savings are considerable, thanks to the extension of the solution across the firm. Once every lawyer is set up on the new regime, Farrers will then enable all business support staff to access the firm's systems in the event of an emergency or business continuity crisis. "Now we have such a flexible solution in place, I want to ensure we receive maximum value" says Davison.

Product Overview

CRYPTOCARD Overview

Twenty-years of technical excellence have won CRYPTOCARD the trust of thousands of customers in over 70 countries. With the highest levels of encryption, most robust tokens and lowest total cost of ownership, CRYPTOCARD offers unsurpassed value in solutions for positively identifying individuals through strong password security.

"No other supplier came close to offering such a comprehensive solution at such a competitive cost."

Neil Davison, Head of Information Technology, Farrer & Co

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