



HOW FOCUSING ON ORGANISATIONAL FITNESS
ALLOWED A 100 YEAR OLD LAW FIRM TO
REDISCOVER THEIR COMPETITIVE EDGE

IP DIAGNOSTICS | LAW FIRM CASE STUDY

In practice for over 100 years, a leading law firm was facing increasing competitive pressures and shifting market demands, posing a significant threat to its ongoing success. Seeking strategies to address these challenges, they commissioned CPA Global to conduct a detailed audit of their current practices. The findings of the analysis enabled CPA Global to present a range of initiatives that could help the firm adapt to achieve its ambitions.

BACKGROUND

The European firm is one of the largest in its country. Founded over a hundred years ago, they employ around one hundred staff, half of whom are IP attorneys. They offer a complete range of legal and IP services and have an international profile, specialising in particular on the Asian market. The law firm uses both an IP Management System and renewal services from CPA Global.

After many successful years as the leading IP law firm in its country, the firm's position was under threat. Increasing competition, evolving service demands from clients and elevated price sensitivity, particularly within the Asian market, were eroding the scale and profitability of the firm.

Having been established for over a century, many traditional processes had remained unchanged within the company for decades. Office routines and procedures were typically highly manual with little automation.

To become more competitive, the firm needed to become more efficient. The partners commissioned CPA Global to conduct an audit using our IP Diagnostic approach to identify strategies to achieve the key business priorities they had identified:

- Maximise the number of billable hours
- Optimise internal processes and increase automation
- Increase cooperation with trusted partners to extend their service offering
- Become better at identifying prospects and new clients
- Become more proactive with IP advice to clients
- Help clients to optimise their IP portfolios
- Become more responsive to clients' fixed-fee requests
- Increase differentiation from their competitors

IP DIAGNOSTIC - A RESEARCH-DRIVEN PROJECT TO DEFINE BEST PRACTICE

An IP Diagnostic is a collaborative engagement where we help your organization identify opportunities to maximise your people, process and technology. We customise the breadth and depth of the project to support your exact needs. For every project, we assemble a multi-disciplinary team aligned with your unique requirements, leveraging our extensive industry experience that has been refined through working with hundreds of customers across the globe. [Read more about IP Diagnostics here.](#)

IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT AREAS

The CPA Global team went on the ground at the firm, working hand in hand with the firm's staff to gather data. Through group discussions, interviews and observations, several procedures and ways of working were identified that were having a negative impact on the firm's efficiency, resulting in increased operating costs and reduced competitiveness.

- In general, the way tasks were allocated between teams lacked alignment, and the amount of administrative effort was well above the expected benchmark. Administrative staff were engaged in many manual and monotonous tasks, and IP attorneys also carried a significant burden of unnecessary administrative work, such as checking invoices, quotes and searches.
- Trademark renewals were being processed in an unnecessarily manual way.
- Large amounts of trademark work were being received from Asia, but the expertise of the team was more oriented toward patent work.
- The firm were having difficulty meeting price expectations and delivery times from the Asian market, as well as difficulty agreeing to fixed-fee requests.
- Analysis of the reciprocity balance with Asian partner firms revealed it was not in the law firm's favour, they sent far more work to partner firms in Asia than they received in return.
- Several valuable functions in their IP Management Software were completely unused, particularly where they would enable automation.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Based upon analysis of the data collected, CPA Global presented its IP Diagnostics report including a range of proposed initiatives structured in three phases – a first phase to deliver immediate efficient gains and increased volumes of incoming work, a second phase to prioritise, organise and improve the law firm's administrative practices and a third phase to deliver more wide-ranging efficiency gains.

PHASE ONE - READILY IMPLEMENTED RAPID EFFICIENCY GAINS

- external search providers.
- Develop a target list of Asian companies with high growth and law firm metric reports for business development.
- Obtain a tool for faster tender calculation and recruit external support to speed delivery times to Asian market.
- Begin using the functionality within in their IP Management Software that would increase efficiency and automation, and train employees in using them.
- Merge search tools and increase use of



ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVING
3,565 attorney hours and
1,540 assistant hours

PHASE TWO - PRIORITISE AND ORGANISE

- Use technology to maximise efficiency within the foreign filing process.
- Free up time for IP attorneys and administrative staff with the aid of external support.
- Enable personnel to focus on higher-value tasks by introducing external IDS support.
- Outsource trademark renewals to enable personnel to focus on more profitable tasks.



ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVING

2,592 attorney hours and
13,122 assistant hours

PHASE THREE - ADDITIONAL EFFICIENCY GAINS

- Outsource additional manual activity such as docketing.
- Introduce external support for more administrative elements related to filings.
- Optimise the processing of IDS management via automation.



ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVING

15,552 assistant hours in
docketing alone

Commenting on the experience of the project and the final report, the law firm’s CEO stated:

“With an increasing number of offices and countries of operation, it was essential to understand the most effective and scalable way of operating. You helped us to see what can be achieved by each specific component within the whole. This in turn helps us to understand where we can achieve higher profit and lower costs by implementing automation and thinking about who should really be performing each task.

The report has exceeded our expectations, and I am impressed with the level of insight you achieved in such a short space of time.”

About CPA Global

CPA Global is the world’s most trusted IP management company, leading by blending new technology with unrivalled expertise to better many of the world’s respected corporations and law firms. Delivered by an outstanding global team of 2000 people, our integrated offering sets the standard for reliability and secure, verified IP data. For our customers, we minimise risk and deliver actionable IP intelligence for better decision making. Put simply, we take the hassle out of IP management, liberating our customers to focus on what they do best.

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