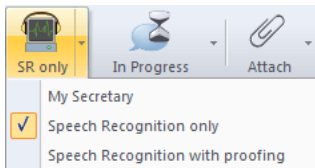


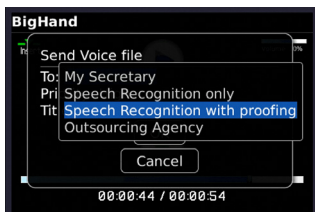
Speech Recognition delivers return on investment for Morrish Solicitors LLP

CASE STUDY

“One member of staff is currently on maternity leave...The cost of one Speech Recognition licence is equivalent to one week’s temporary cover, therefore our savings on this one individual alone are significant.”



Send from desktop



Send from mobile device

Overview

Morrish Solicitors LLP has over 100 staff across four offices in the North East: Leeds, Bradford, Yeadon and Pudsey. The firm maintains a proud tradition of forward-thinking service to its clients, nationally and amongst its local communities.

Morrish upgraded from analogue tape dictation equipment to BigHand digital dictation workflow software in 2007, and hasn’t looked back. The productivity benefits of BigHand software very quickly came to the fore; the ability to prioritise work and instantly distribute to support staff via desktop and smartphone revolutionised the way the firm handled dictations and the document production process.

The most recent and significant development in the field of voice productivity technology is the coming of age for server-based Speech Recognition software. The new server-based technology is worlds apart from the client-side software of old that required hours upon hours of training, often by reading fairy tales into the software in order to improve accuracy levels. Many authors simply did not have the time or inclination to make it work and many firms abandoned the technology.

The Dragon NaturallySpeaking™ speech server from Nuance Communications represents a new era in automated, accurate and easy to use transcription technology. Furthermore it is fully integrated with BigHand’s award-winning digital dictation software to deliver even greater productivity. Reliable Speech Recognition has arrived and is delivering tangible results for the rapidly increasing number of firms that have adopted it.

Jaime Lockwood, IT Manager at Morrish Solicitors discusses the firm’s decision to implement BigHand’s server-based Speech Recognition module and the benefits experienced as a result.

The Big Challenge

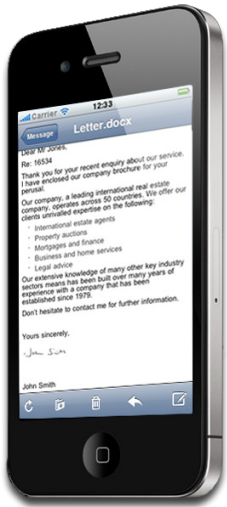
Our interest with Speech Recognition began with our relationship with BigHand, but like many firms that have previously tried and failed with client-side software, we were sceptical about the productivity benefits that the new server-based technology could deliver. We had heard positive reviews of BigHand’s Speech Recognition module from a local firm already benefiting from the technology – our partners were therefore keen to give it a try. As part of our due diligence, we looked at other systems’ Speech Recognition modules but in our opinion they just didn’t work as well.

We approached BigHand to organise a half day ‘Big Challenge’ that would give a number of our partners and fee earners the opportunity to try the software first-hand. They were sceptical at first but keen to see just how far the technology had evolved.

Our evaluation delivered very impressive results; one partner improved their accuracy from 62% to 95% after the first round of corrections, and another partner achieved 97% accuracy after the first round corrections. We were also incredibly impressed by the speed of the system, dictations were being turned around in just 2 minutes.

The results stopped us in our tracks, we were considering Speech Recognition as a tool for the future but given the high accuracy levels, it suddenly became a viable proposition that could very quickly deliver productivity benefits.

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Objectives for Speech Recognition

Based on the success of our evaluation, we were keen to progress and implement BigHand’s Speech Recognition module ahead of our original timescales. We began with our Employment department, with the technology being used by both the partners and fee earners to provide us with a balanced view of its potential.

Our primary objective was to free up secretarial time for our highly skilled staff to concentrate on the more intricate work where documents require changes or formatting. Speech Recognition will not replace secretaries; it is a tool to take away the mundane or less important work, ensuring they can focus their skills on the more detailed and demanding requirements. Morrish takes the training of support staff very seriously and the transcription of file notes for example is a waste of their substantial abilities.

To that end, we have evolved our working practices so that authors now send all internal documents direct to the Dragon Speech Recognition server for transcription, including emails, file notes and attendance notes i.e. documents where an occasional spelling mistake will not impact the level of service we deliver.

Benefits

■ **Return on Investment**

One member of staff is currently on maternity leave, we are now using Speech Recognition to cover much of her work rather than employing temporary cover. The cost of one Speech Recognition licence is equivalent to one week’s temporary cover, therefore our savings on this one individual alone are significant.

Removal of temporary cover also means that we do not have to spend time training a temp on BigHand, plus our document management system and our content management software. With the internal work being submitted direct to the Dragon server, our skilled support staff can focus on specialist work – you simply cannot get this level of specialist knowledge and experience with agency staff.

■ **Increased Productivity**

The use of Speech Recognition has increased organically as partners and fee earners have identified opportunities to reduce their workloads. Our partners use iPhones to increase their mobile productivity and the ability to have recognised text returned direct to their iPhone has certainly increased their out-of-hours productivity. When travelling, it is far easier and quicker to dictate rather than type and therefore BigHand helps them to get more done.

Users’ Feedback

We have heard very little from our users which is a good sign – it is an indication of the widespread acceptance of the new technology and importantly that things are not going wrong. The software is incredibly intuitive, in fact, authors record dictations in exactly the same way as they do with BigHand, it is simply a case of sending to Speech Recognition via their pre-configured workflows. Adoption has therefore been an evolution rather than a revolution.

The process has been seamless, users are just getting on with it – dictations are being turned around faster and we are seeing very high accuracy levels in the transcription.

Looking Ahead

The use of Speech Recognition continues to grow organically, and the technology will be provided to all new trainees. Morrish is very selective with our trainee contracts, we invest heavily to ensure that they start working as they should in say 10 years’ time. Our trainees are very quickly brought up to speed with BigHand digital dictation software, Speech Recognition Module and mobile apps right from the start.

The potential for Speech Recognition to deliver increased productivity and cost savings is significant. It has already been established as an essential business tool here at Morrish, and just as the arrival of digital dictation did many years ago, I am confident that its ease of use and quick win benefits will deliver impressive results for legal and professional services firms of all sizes.