

LINKLATERS CASE STUDY



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Linklaters works with FAST to achieve a compliant IT environment in under 12 weeks

Linklaters will save an estimated £200,000 on software licensing per year by implementing the FAST Programme.

Winning Global Recognition for an Outstanding Commitment to Quality. Global law firm, Linklaters, specialises in advising the world's leading companies, financial institutions and governments on their most challenging transactions and assignments.

With 30 offices in major business and financial centres in 22 countries, Linklaters' goal is to provide an outstanding quality service to clients anywhere in the world. In 2003, Linklaters retained its position as the UK's leading M&A (Mergers & Acquisitions) law firm, with 91 announced deals valued at EUR 73,738 million. Other successes included top rankings for France and the Nordic region with 31 and 32 deals valued at EUR 27,946 million and EUR 11,807 million respectively. Some of Linklaters' most recent high-profile projects include: the £7 billion public offer by Capital Management & Investment plc's to acquire Six Continents plc, the £5 billion merger of Granada plc and Carlton plc to create ITV plc, the £2.5 billion acquisition of Scottish & Newcastle's managed pubs, restaurants and lodges business by a private equity consortium and the £1.01 billion sale of Goldfish credit card business by Centrica plc to Lloyds TSB plc.

Linklaters' UK headquarters in the heart of the City of London accommodates 2,500 staff working across four key practice areas: corporate, international finance, commercial real estate and litigation, using a thin client computing environment. By partnering with FAST Consultancy Services over a twelve-week period, Linklaters became the first global law firm to attain FAST Audit Certification - an achievement that will save the business £1 million in software licensing fees over the next five years.

Exploiting IT asset management for long-term business advantage

Linklaters has built a global reputation for unsurpassed quality by focusing on six core values - excellence, teamwork, imagination, determination, commercial judgement and

integrity. The firm is regularly invited to tender for high-profile corporate projects of a sensitive and business-critical nature. In these situations, Linklaters' reputation is of paramount importance. Linklaters has long had an interest in achieving BS7799 (the most widely-recognised security standard in the world) to help the company support its indepth tendering process. BS7799 would also give Linklaters a globally recognised endorsement of its quality advantage. IT asset management is a key aspect of BS7799.

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In essence, BS7799 requires organisations to undertake a ten-step compliance check to prove that they have put in place appropriate measures to protect their corporate assets, maintain the integrity of their hardware, software and information and prevent interruptions to business activities. To work towards BS7799's exacting standards, Linklaters' needed to put in place

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an IT asset management process that would eliminate business risk, ensure software compliance, identify any unnecessary hardware costs and align the company's IT asset management processes for future growth. With a UK userbase of 2,500 people supported by a combination of 4,000 workstations and servers and a timescale of only twelve weeks before 2004 software and hardware budgets had to be finalised, Linklaters decided to outsource a large part of its asset management activity to achieve its goal. After some initial research, FAST Consultancy Services, with its professionally recognised, independently accredited, end-to-end IT asset auditing and software compliance service was appointed as Linklaters' asset management partner.

Saving £200K per annum by achieving software compliance

Linklaters' UK operation runs a thin client environment with a mixed laptop and desktop user base. In order to bring long-term cost advantages to the business, the UK IT asset management programme had to deliver a thorough understanding of the data and applications held on every machine in Linklaters' network - in under three months. Working in close partnership with the IT team, FAST Consultancy Services launched the following three-phase programme:

1. A walk-round audit of the company's 2,500 UK laptops and desktop PCs. This delivered comprehensive log of Linklaters' desktop and laptop asset base and identified a hardware surplus. Key findings were a 3:1 overestimation of the number of laptops in the organisation and an excess of desktop PCs.

2. Comprehensive data analysis of all the software applications used by Linklaters' UK staff. This phase identified a range of software duplications and shortfalls, which, once reconciled, will generate estimated licence savings of £200K per year.

Detailed software vendor discussions to find and collate licensing information for all the applications used across Linklaters' UK network. This phase (carried out by FAST Consultancy Services' partner Ultima Business Solutions) delivered a comprehensive documentation library, proving Linklaters' software compliance for the first time.

Achieving a compliant, value-led IT framework for future growth

FAST Consultancy Services' IT asset management programme was carried out from start to finish in just twelve weeks, in time to meet the company's 2004 IT

budgeting deadline. On completion, Linklaters submitted its report for independent analysis and was rewarded with full FAST Audit Certification and the accolade of being the first business of this size (2,500 users) to realise complete software compliance within such short timescales. The achievement has had the added advantage of putting the company well on target to meeting the requirements of BS7799.

In addition to the £1 million savings that Linklaters will realise over the next five years, the business now has a complete database of UK IT asset information that accurately matches hardware and software investments to specific people and locations for the first time.

The value of this database was demonstrated shortly after the project finished when Linklaters was asked to provide evidence of its Adobe licensing. The IT team was able to provide full documentation in less than ten minutes by retrieving the information from Software Organiser, which was used throughout the project. By automatically ensuring this asset database is kept up-to-date, the auditing platform that FAST Consultancy Services has installed will ensure Linklaters remains compliant over time and that hardware and software acquisition and/or disposal can be conducted in a timely and professional manner.

In 2004, Linklaters intends to continue with a global rollout of the FAST programme. Commenting on the UK project, Orhan Moyo, Security and Client Systems Team Leader at Linklaters says, "Through a combination of thin client technology and outsourcing our IT asset management programme to FAST Consultancy Services, we achieved what we thought would be impossible in under twelve weeks - a fully audited and compliant UK IT environment.

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For more information please call **0844 815 5742**, email contactus@fast-compliance.co.uk or visit www.fast-compliance.co.uk

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