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—David Carlson, IT manager—desktop support, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C., Boston, Mass.

MINTZ LEVIN
MINTZ LEVIN COHN FERRIS GLOVSKY AND POPEO PC

HP customer case study: Large law firm leases HP PCs to provide attorneys with reliable, current-generation technology

Industry: Legal

Objective:

Provide reliable technology for an international law firm

Approach:

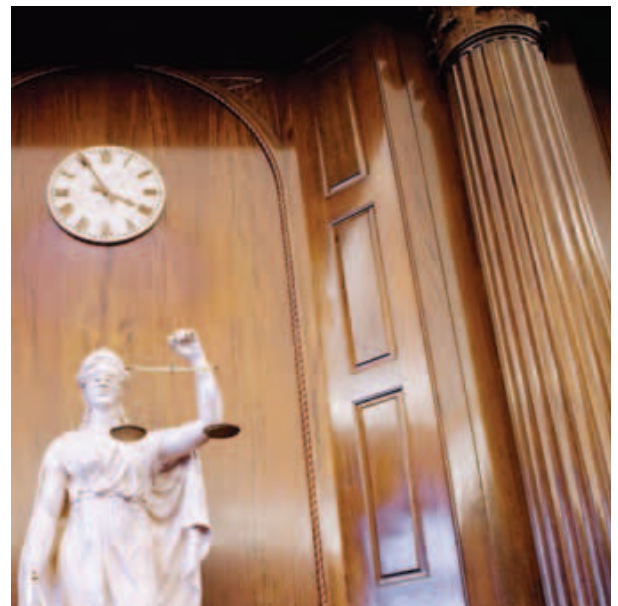
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C., leases HP PCs on a three-year cycle to ensure regular technology refresh

IT improvements:

- HP business PCs are engineered for trouble-free use over three years
- PCs are under warranty, requiring minimal on-site hardware support

Business benefits:

- Reliable three-year life for PCs without user interruptions for necessary BIOS or hardware upgrades
- Robust platforms serve needs of every user, from senior attorneys to administrative support staff
- Leasing eliminates need for capital outlays, results in predictable monthly expenses
- Pleasant, trouble-free end-of-lease process with HP Financial Services
- Bulk shipping for less packaging and waste



Attorneys bill generally by the hour. Time is truly money. And every minute they waste because of unresponsive technology takes money from the firm's bottom-line. That's the first and most important reason the firm of Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C., based in Boston, has standardized on HP PCs.

“We switched from another vendor several years ago, in part because of problems with reliability,” recalls David Carlson, IT manager—desktop support, for Mintz Levin. “We determined then that HP offered a well-engineered business product. It was a clear upgrade from a consumer product—more stable, with a design that reflects the needs of the business lifecycle. We determined that we could get three years' service without requiring BIOS updates or hardware upgrades.”

“What we’re really about here is keeping attorneys productive. Stability and performance are something we don’t want to worry about. We’re willing to invest in the right product with the right people so our time is spent delivering service. For us, the right product and right people are at HP.”

David Carlson, IT manager—desktop support, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.



Standardization and individuality in one

Mintz Levin is a multi-practice, full-service firm with offices in New York; Washington, D.C.; San Diego; Palo Alto, Calif.; Los Angeles; and London. It employs some 500 attorneys, and nearly 1,000 people overall.

Every user gets a new PC every three years; with rare exceptions this includes both attorneys and staff. Employees who travel get HP notebooks, most recently, the HP EliteBook 6930p or HP EliteBook 2530p; and those who don’t get a desktop, currently the HP Compaq dc5800 Small Form Factor PC.

There’s one base software image for all notebooks and desktops, regardless of who the user is or what he or she does. The primary software on the base image includes Genuine Windows® XP Professional, Microsoft® Office, the DeskSite document management system, and Workshare Protect (a metadata tool). Software specific to individual legal needs—which comprises more than 92% of the software the firm uses—is downloaded to individual users automatically based on membership in Active Directory groups. Litigators get litigation software, tax specialists get tax software, etc. If a user logs into someone else’s PC, the applications needed by that individual will install automatically.

“We try to make it as simple as possible, so that our attorneys and staff are free to concentrate on providing their particular service,” Carlson notes.

Because the firm sticks to its three-year refresh cycle, its HP PCs are generally under warranty. “If we don’t return them exactly at the end of the three-year cycle and warranty period, we take on responsibility for

repairs and the resulting costs.” That entails extra responsibility for technical support, which can be especially difficult in offices without dedicated technology staff. “For us, keeping PCs beyond the three-year lifecycle just isn’t worth the trouble and potential costs,” he says.

“With HP Financial Services, they understand the nature of the asset and what to expect at the end of a lease. The return process with HP is much more pleasant and predictable.”

David Carlson, IT manager—desktop support, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

With equipment under warranty, the firm’s technical staff rarely has to deal with a hardware issue. But serviceability is still important. “If a user has a problem and we can fix it quickly, we will. HP PCs are easy for our staff to access. But if it’s going to take an hour or more, we will give them a new machine. We use a script to move the personality of the PC from old to new,” Carlson notes.

Leasing with HP Financial Services

Like many firms with an eye to regular technology refresh, Mintz Levin leases its PCs. “The firm started leasing because the financial aspects were appealing, but the technology aspects are important as well,” Carlson notes. “From one lease cycle to the next, leasing puts everything on a schedule so that we can ensure we’re staying up with the latest software technology and matching it with current hardware.” Leasing also allows Mintz Levin to take advantage of the most energy efficient PCs available.

Windows®. Life without Walls™. HP recommends Windows.

That's important to accommodate ongoing software upgrades. "Year to year, we know we can take advantage of what's coming out next because we know we're going to have hardware that will support it," Carlson adds.

Mintz Levin was used to leasing, but experienced frustrations when it came time to return products. The financing company didn't always understand the nature of the asset very well, Carlson notes, and they generally were reselling the PCs to another business at the end of the lease. Often, the PCs were to be shipped to a third party for cleaning prior to reselling.

"So there was always a question about normal wear and tear," recalls Carlson. "Overall, we always had an unpleasant conversation at the end of the lease."

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David Carlson, IT manager—desktop support, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

Since switching to a lease through HP, he notes, the firm has had smoother sailing. HP ensures that all data is removed from hard drives and all Mintz Levin asset tags are removed. "With HP Financial Services, we always know where we're shipping to, and there has never been a question about the condition of our PCs. They understand the nature of the asset, and what to expect at the end of a lease. The return process with HP is much more pleasant and predictable."

Leasing also makes technology a regular, predictable expense. "There's no need to find money for a major capital outlay. Even in years where we're refreshing a lot of our PCs, our monthly cost isn't going to change very much," Carlson says.

Technology partnership

Mintz Levin works with Agilisys, an HP partner reseller, to acquire its desktop technology. Carlson says Agilisys

Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Desktop computing for major law firm

Primary hardware

- HP EliteBook 6930p
- HP EliteBook 2530p
- HP Compaq dc5800 Small Form Factor PC

Primary software

- Genuine Windows® XP Professional
- Microsoft® Office
- DeskSite
- Workshare Protect

HP Services

- HP Financial Services

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and his sales representative help him remain current on the roadmap for future HP technology. They also help Carlson in unexpected ways to accomplish his goals.

"It was through Agilisys and HP that we were made aware of bulk shipping," he recalls. "That may not seem like such an important thing, but it's very helpful. Typically, we have to commandeer some space when we do a desktop refresh for unpacking and staging the new PCs. But now we're getting PCs eight to a box. It's much less packaging and waste and easier for our staff to deal with. We put the old PCs in the same box and send them directly to HP, and we're done." Bulk packaging also lowers HP's environmental

footprint by reducing the need for extra packaging and by lowering the volume of material to be shipped.

In the end, he says, the bottom line for the technology team at Mintz Levin is service. "What we're really about here is keeping attorneys productive. Stability and performance are something we don't want to have to worry about. We're willing to invest in the right product with the right people so our time is spent delivering service. For us, the right product and right people are at HP."

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