

A Lindenhouse Case Study

HW Vaughan & Co, Swansea Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers



HW Vaughan & Co is a company of chartered accountants. Originally established in 1929, the current partners, Rylan Lopez and Russell Halliday, took over in 1998. Their office is located in Swansea City Centre.

In a nutshell, HW Vaughan & Co offers advice on business, finance and tax from cradle to grave. Their specialist services include audit, advice for high net worth individuals and trusts, corporate finance, insolvency and an outsourcing service covering payroll, vat, book-keeping and management accounts. The company's website can be found at www.hwv.co.uk. Rylan Lopez is an executive member of the UK200 Group. Representing chartered accountants and solicitors from across the country, this is the foremost grouping of quality assured professionals in the UK.

HW Vaughan & Co is firmly of the opinion that 'technology is the future'. Technology is embraced throughout the company, wherever possible. All staff have PCs with flat screens and there is a rolling programme of renewing PCs when they are two years old to keep up to date. All client management systems are computer based.

As part of a review process in the millennium year, they decided that they would like to invest in a paperless office system, but that it was not a top priority. Typically, for a firm of accountants, the decision was eventually spurred by cost considerations in 2002. As Rylan Lopez recalls:

"What forced the issue was that the photocopier lease was up for renewal. Typically, the available leases were for five years only and we didn't want to commit to such a long lease at that time. So that's when we decided to put the money from the expired photocopier lease towards the installation of a document management system and staff training."

That's when HW Vaughan contacted Lindenhouse for a demonstration. Lindenhouse specialize in helping financial services and accountancy companies to reap real rewards from the effective use of document management systems, and in particular, Invu. Lindenhouse's knowledge of document management – they are the UK's leading reseller of Invu – and their experience and understanding of the specialist needs of accountants, ensured that from the very first presentation they were able to demonstrate that they could deliver

exactly what HW Vaughan wanted.

Convinced both by the value for money argument and the potential benefits of the system to the business, they decided to choose Lindenhouse and, of course, Invu. Amongst the many reasons for choosing Lindenhouse was their huge experience with the system and their highly trained customer support staff (with at least two fully Invu trained engineers permanently available at their call centre at any time). The system was installed by Lindenhouse in 2002. Transition was fairly painless and staff adapted quickly as a result of the training that Lindenhouse provided. HW Vaughan set a cut off date for migration from old system to new. All documents after this date are on Invu whilst documents pre this date are retained in a traditional format – although these are very rarely referred to now.

Document management now underpins the correspondence and record retention side of HW Vaughan's business. Centralized storage of data (having everything in one place) makes it easier to track down documents and deal with queries more efficiently. Looking beyond the initial start up costs, the benefits have been immediate and tangible according to Rylan Lopez:

"In terms of cost benefits, we have saved office space – probably in the region of 200 sq ft. In Swansea at the moment this alone would cost about £2,000 a year in rent. We have fewer filing cabinets, (let's say a one-off saving of approx £1,000). Ongoing savings in stationery costs amount to about £1,500 each year and the need for support staff has gone down meaning salary savings in the region of £15,000 plus national insurance contributions."

"Just as important to us however, given that we work in a service industry, is the fact that we can deal with clients' queries over the 'phone because we can access file information instantly rather than having to go down to a basement, retrieve the required file and call back."

"We also believe that using a document management system increases security. Clients' account details are password protected, meaning that we can allocate different user levels so that nobody can view confidential information without the specific authority to do so"

About Lindenhouse

Lindenhouse provides quality IT products and services to a wide range of clients. The company is focused on document management solution provision and develops bespoke software to provide integration to all insurance and financial services back-office systems and to practice management systems in both the Accountancy and Legal sectors. Lindenhouse have installed 1700 document management systems to date and are rightly proud that it retains 95% of its support contracts – a testimony to the dedication and professionalism of the company's technical staff and help desk.

For more information, please contact Mark Woolley at Lindenhouse.

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