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# Customer Success Story

## Hallmark Whatley Hulme





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#### Overview

Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors, based in Worcester, faced significant challenges back in 2015 with their outdated IT systems, which was hindering current operations and future growth. Their old system lacked remote access, was unreliable, and required multiple suppliers for different services, leading to inefficiency and high costs.

To address these issues, Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors partnered with EBC Group for a comprehensive IT overhaul. EBC Group provided a modernised IT solution that included a new, reliable, and scalable system. This upgrade featured enhanced security measures, a robust disaster recovery plan, and improved connectivity through a new leased line to EBC Group's data centre.



*“EBC Group offered a comprehensive IT solution and took time to understand our business needs, both for now and the future. In addition, the installation and support process has been excellent.”*

– Julian Powell – Business Manager (HWH Law)

#### About Hallmark Whatley Hulme HWH Law

Hallmark Whatley Hulme is Worcester's oldest law firm, tracing their roots back to 1790.

They are a full service law firm – property (residential & commercial), private client, employment and litigation/personal injury – their clients are corporate & individual.

Hallmark Whatley Hulme ensure that their clients have one point of contact that is dedicated to them who will coordinate their team's efforts so that the client can remain in control and are fully informed at all times. They bring each client a combination of deep industry knowledge and expert perspectives from other industries on the challenge at stake, to offer their clients fresh perspectives and breakthrough business insights.

They are constantly looking at ways to improve their use of technology, both for case work & security purposes – paramount in 2024.

#### What Made Hallmark Whatley Hulme Choose EBC Group?

EBC Group had already established a strong working relationship with HWH Law by efficiently managing their print services. Given EBC Group's proven track record, HWH Law began exploring the possibility of consolidating all of their IT needs under one singular provider. They stressed that their goal was to streamline operations, reduce costs, and ensure a seamless integration across their entire IT infrastructure.

After conducting a thorough evaluation of potential suppliers, HWH Law concluded that EBC Group were the ideal partner to help them implement their new IT strategy. EBC Group's expertise and comprehensive service offerings made them the perfect choice to manage the various aspects of HWH Law's technology requirements.

EBC Group's role extended beyond just supplying the necessary hardware. Proving to also be instrumental in the installation of software, ensuring that HWH Law's systems were up-to-date, fully operational, and tailored to their specific needs. A key component of this project was addressing HWH Law's cyber security requirements. EBC Group provided them with robust, cutting-edge solutions to safeguard their data and protect their network from potential threats.

By entrusting EBC Group with these critical aspects of HWH Law's IT infrastructure, they were able to centralise their operations, enhance their security posture, and focus on driving their business forward with confidence.



## The Challenge – 2023/2024

Hallmark Whatley Hulme has always taken cyber security very seriously, having first obtained Cyber Essentials certification in 2014, which they have successfully retained each year since. However, the cyber landscape has evolved significantly over the years, presenting new and increasingly complex challenges. Recognising this, HWH Law understood the importance of adapting their IT strategy to meet these emerging threats.

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) Code of Conduct explicitly requires that law firms “safeguard money and assets entrusted to you by clients and others.” As a firm handling client funds, HWH Law is acutely aware of the risks posed by fraudsters and hackers. Therefore, it was imperative that their IT strategy be both comprehensive and resilient, encompassing robust hardware and software solutions, as well as ongoing staff training and awareness initiatives.

Additionally, the firm’s responsibility for sensitive client data makes them an attractive target for cybercriminals. In light of this, HWH Law recognised the necessity of adopting a proactive approach to mitigate cyber risk, ensuring they remain vigilant and well-prepared to protect their clients and their business from potential threats.

## The Solution

EBC Group began the project with a series of on-site visits to understand the specific needs and challenges faced by Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors. These visits culminated in an in-depth service report and commercial summary, which provided clear insights into the areas that required updating and enhancement.

The detailed reports broke down payments and identified significant cost-saving opportunities for HWH Law. These savings were earmarked for reinvestment into other critical areas of the business, ensuring a more efficient and future-proof operation.

Key areas of improvement included the implementation of new mail and firewall defences, which necessitated further investment in new servers. This upgrade facilitated a complete migration to EBC Group’s data centre, enhancing security and performance.

The cost savings from the new IT system allowed Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors to further invest in EBC Group’s managed services. This included the adoption of a new print and telephony environment, streamlining their operations and improving overall efficiency.

EBC Group delivered a comprehensive new IT system for Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors, significantly enhancing performance and reliability. The new system is scalable, accommodating advanced backup and disaster recovery solutions, a remote desktop environment, and Voice over IP (VoIP) capabilities.

### Key features and benefits of the new IT system include:

**State-of-the-Art Virtual Backup and Disaster Recovery Plan:** Virtual backups are now replicated at EBC Group’s data centre, providing enhanced security and peace of mind for Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors.

**New Remote Desktop Environment:** This environment offers complete flexibility for employees, allowing remote users to operate seamlessly on a unified platform.

**New Leased Line Implementation:** The leased line connects directly to EBC Group’s private cloud, enabling the efficient implementation of VoIP and further enhancing communication infrastructure.

This upgraded IT system has positioned Hallmark Whatley Hulme Solicitors for improved operational efficiency and future growth.



solution ✓



## The Implementation Process

In January 2024, EBC Group upgraded HWH Law's systems as recommended, including SentinelOne, which is proving itself to be an excellent product. Implementation was managed excellently with minimal impact on staff/work – communication was key for all parties.

In addition to the project, EBC Group also trained all HWH Law staff on cyber security & ran an email campaign to highlight areas of vulnerability.

## How EBC Group's Solution Enhanced HWH Law's Security Posture & Incident Response

HWH Law believe that their cyber security systems have improved since the recent upgrade from EBC Group – everything is happening in the background which allows them to focus on their main priority, practising the law.

HWH Law have recently seen cyber attacks & software failures on both national & international scales but they have remained protected throughout. Cyber security is an ongoing battle and HWH Law recognise they must do as much as possible to mitigate risks.



## How Did EBC Group Help HWH Law to Understand the Importance of MDR & SIEM?

In October 2023, HWH Law undertook a review of their IT strategy & sat down with EBC Group to appraise. They recognised areas for improvement and where savings could be made to mitigate potential additional costs – a collaborative approach. Part of the project was to review HWH Law's approach to MDR and SIEM – and EBC Group recommended suitable products to improve their cyber security.

## How Security Issues Affected HWH Law's Day-to-Day Operations & Overall Business

The evolving cyber landscape has significantly impacted HWH Law's day-to-day operations and overall business by necessitating a continuous focus on IT security, staff training, and compliance with regulatory requirements. As cyber threats became more complex, the firm knew they had to find a solution to update their hardware, software, and security protocols.



## Overall Experience Working with EBC Group



HWH Law have fostered a long-standing relationship with EBC Group, a partnership that has been built on a foundation of trust and mutual respect. EBC Group consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of HWH Law's business needs and priorities. EBC Group's ability to provide technical advice has been invaluable to HWH Law, guiding them through complex decisions with clarity and confidence.

Their commitment to ongoing support has been a cornerstone of the partnership. Demonstrating responsive, reliable, and proactive characteristics in addressing any issues that arise, providing HWH Law with the assurance that their IT environment is in capable hands. This continued support has enabled them to focus on their core business activities, knowing that their IT needs are well-managed and secure.

## Do HWH Law Recommend EBC Group to Legal Firms Facing Similar Challenges?

HWH Law have stressed that they would highly recommend that any law firm speaks to EBC Group regarding Cyber Security. They take time to understand the challenges & advise on suitable products which not only do the job but also represent value for money. EBC Group are approachable, all their staff are professional & friendly, from CEO to engineers to account managers.

## Additional Services from EBC Group in The Upcoming Future

HWH Law have recently discussed with the EBC Group Sales Team that in the next 2 years they will need to move to a cloud-based application for their legal management software and will therefore require EBC's assistance on approach to take on systems & security.

