

The image features the word "Lenovo" in a large, white, sans-serif font, centered horizontally. To the right of the word is a small "TM" trademark symbol. The background is a vibrant red with a repeating pattern of circular, textured elements that resemble the perforated surface of a hard drive platter or a similar industrial material. The lighting creates a slight gradient, with the top being brighter and the bottom darker.

Lenovo™

BREAKING LAWYERLY STEREOTYPES:
OSBORNE CLARKE LEADS THE WAY.

International legal practice Osborne Clarke future-proofs its business with new technology.

2017.03

Case Study

ThinkPad

REDEFINING WORKSPACE WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

International legal practice Osborne Clarke recently opened a new office in the heart of the UK's M4 technology corridor that puts agile connected working on the map. Although they've been working open-plan and flexibly since 2001, connected working is the next evolution in their working style. Or as Darren Collins, local IT support engineer in Reading, England puts it, "By freeing our people from some of the traditional constraints of office life, we're future-proofing our business." Not only did these adjustments tackle the challenges of communication and workflow, it's vastly improved company morale.

Osborne Clarke did away with all of its cubicles, corner offices and desktop computers in their Reading office. The new workspace features an open floor plan and desks are set out in loosely designated team areas with no individual allocation, which boosts interaction with colleagues and cross-team working. Colleagues simply pick up their belongings, a coffee or tea to get the good ideas following, and a Lenovo ThinkPad from a designated locker and sits—or stands—where they please.

"We find many of our people are looking for a better balance, and in order to retain employees, we must support them."

—Nathan Hayes

Global IT director, Osborne Clarke



ON-BOARD WITH THE NEW MODE OF WORKING

“Technology and connectivity means that anybody can work at any desk, or in the office’s new work or social areas,” said Collins. “Desks have been allocated to teams, not individuals, aiding interaction with colleagues and cross-team working.”

From twenty-something paralegals to senior partners, everyone is on-board with the new mode of working. With the breadth of services and clients they handle, from banking and finance to intellectual property, Collins explained there’s really no such thing as a typical day in the office.

“That’s why it’s so important for us to equip each colleague with the necessary skills and tools to facilitate their varying working styles,” he said. “With their ThinkPads, they can easily log-on to the system at any of our offices, client sites, or at home.”



ThinkPad X1 Carbon

THINKPAD FOR STRONGER WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Osborne Clarke is no stranger to keeping up with the times. The 250-year-old business boasts twenty offices on three continents, and while they are headquartered in London, their smaller Reading office is the test bed for the flexible or agile working.

“We call it agile connected working,” said Nathan Hayes, the firm’s global IT director. He stressed that the shift is part of a larger effort to engender flexible styles of working and a stronger work-life balance among employees. When the right technology is involved, such as ThinkPad or Skype for Business, he said that many colleagues report they feel even more productive when they’re able to define their own schedules.

“Ten to 15 years ago, most lawyers were putting all their energy and lives into becoming a partner. That’s not true now; we find many of our people are looking for a better balance, and in order to retain employees, we must support them,” said Hayes.

MAINTAIN SECURITY WHILE WORKING ON-THE-GO

“The ThinkPads universal docking system and support infrastructure allows for high functionality with minimal glitches, which is essential to my work and I know my colleagues find it useful as well.”

—**Jeff Chang**
Corporate Partner

“Floor space is reduced from our old office, but it feels twice as big,” said corporate partner Jeff Chang, who describes himself as part of the “older generation,” that have also welcomed the new changes.

Chang wasn’t alone on this paperless frontier; a major aspect of the transition involved providing ample training to ensure that all members of the Reading team were up to speed on the technology and how to most effectively use it. Given that confidentiality of the clients is of utmost importance to

Osborne Clarke, colleagues were also briefed on how to maintain security while still working on-the-go. Their protected wireless network insures that client information is both easily accessible and thoroughly safeguarded.

“The younger generation picks up on the tech much quicker since it’s been part of their lives for longer,” he said. “But for me, the training helped me discover the weird and wonderful things my laptop can do that I hadn’t thought of!”



ThinkPad X1 Tablet

LOOKING AHEAD

“It’s become obvious that connected working is actually easier, more efficient and more beneficial to people’s general well-being,”

—Darren Collins

Local IT support, Osborne Clarke- Reading

One of the key benefits of agile connected working is that it fosters a breakdown in the traditionally hierarchical structure of the office. While the ThinkPads have made working remotely easier, they’ve also eliminated some of the barriers to working collaboratively in-person.

From IT and data to regulatory and compliance, the new technologies Osborne Clarke has implemented, including the ThinkPads, are helping to keep all the moving parts of the business working harmoniously.

Tucked away inside an old city, the time-tested firm is leading the charge in techenhanced lifestyles. On the cobbled streets of Reading, one might not expect to find a law firm with such an innovative spirit, but Osborne Clarke has been able to use technology to redefine lawyerly stereotypes.

“Our strategy is based on using best of breed technology as an enabler for our people to be flexible, productive and to exceed our clients’ expectations,” said Collins, looking to the future. “We’ll continue to develop our global network with enhancements in unified communications—consolidating chat, voice, mobile and video into one streamlined service—and a number of technologies aimed at saving time for our fee earning community.”



ThinkPad X260





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