

A TIMELY TRANSFORMATION ENABLES LAW FIRM TO WEATHER THE STORM

A hurricane was no deterrent to Hand Arendall
Harrison Sale's commitment to clients



Industry:

- Legal

Headquarters:

- Alabama, US

iManage footprint:

- iManage Work 10 in the Cloud
- iManage Share
- iManage Drive
- iManage Security Policy Manager
- iManage Threat Manager

Executive Summary

Hand Arendall Harrison Sale thought it was difficult to implement a new document management strategy that entailed migrating to the cloud with iManage amid strong resistance to change. Then a natural disaster devastated one of their offices, shutting it down for more than a year and wreaking havoc on their clients' lives and businesses, bringing a different perspective. The firm had patience, determination and unexpected help from within that enabled them to achieve improved security, efficiency and increased productivity. The investment paid off when the hurricane hit, freeing staff to focus on helping their clients recover.

About the Customer

Headquartered in Mobile, Alabama, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale has eight offices across Alabama and Florida and is one of the largest law firms in the region. With a focus on litigation and business transactional law, the firm and their 96 attorneys are committed to building long-term relationships with their clients.



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Melvin Evans

Director of Information Technology, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale

Business outcomes:

- Disaster resilience
- Increased efficiency
- Improved productivity
- Reliable security

The challenge

Good solution, disappointing results

When Melvin Evans, Director of Information Technology at Hand Arendall Harrison Sale, joined the firm more than 15 years ago, FileSite, a legacy iManage solution that is soon to be retired, was in use. Unfortunately, the implementation had not been successful in terms of adoption or training.

“Every attorney was storing documents their own way, with their own structure and their own setup,” recalled Evans. “Nothing was matter-centric and people had trouble finding what they needed. They wasted more time looking for the documents than working on the documents. Secretaries had to work differently for each attorney they supported.”

The install was on-premises, so there was no cloud. “I had to manage data in two different locations,” commented Evans. “It was total chaos. For five years I didn’t think it could be fixed. Then I realized that management would support me with tools and resources, and we devised a plan.”

The firm’s goal was to organize documents logically, with easy, secure access regardless of location. The strategy was to move all their data into iManage Work 10 and train all the users well. “Resistance was strong,” admitted Evans. “Every attorney thought their way was the best way.” Then one of the partners researched how much time attorneys spent supporting a specific vertical — how many billable hours were charged and how many hours were lost. This exercise showed the lawyers exactly how much time they wasted looking for documents.

The solution

Patience, determination, and help from within

Migrating to the cloud from two physical locations was a major undertaking, but the firm was determined to get it right and planned it well. And they didn’t need to do it alone. “iManage was right there to support us every step of the way, to help us get ourselves transitioned,” said Evans.

Giving the attorneys an active role in developing the iManage workspace templates and structures for the different practice areas, has made a difference as well. They set up a collaborative, matter-centric structure so that when a new hire comes in, they know exactly where to find what they need.

Beyond the physical and technological challenges, the firm needed to incentivize new habits in the firm’s employees and overcome their resistance. “We had a large initiative to help our users get accustomed to the changes that were coming,” said Evans. “We showed them the workspace templates, that everyone should format and store their information in the same way and retrieve it in the same way.”

There were trials and training in advance of the implementation, and more training after the migration. Help came unexpectedly from internal champions. Several attorneys had joined the firm and were a positive influence due to their experience with iManage and matter-centric filing.



We needed to access our data to help our clients recover, rebuild, and get their businesses and their lives back on track. iManage allowed us to do that quickly and efficiently.

Melvin Evans

Director of Information Technology, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale

There was one more thing that helped the transition. Hand Arendall Harrison Sale has always nurtured long-term relationships with their clients, lasting as many as 60 years for some. "We all want to take care of the client and the staff can see that. Simply by using iManage correctly, we're giving clients our best."



Business outcomes

Security, efficiency, and productivity

The firm has experienced a huge transformation. Among the many benefits of migrating knowledge assets to Work 10 in the Cloud, three themes prevailed: security, efficiency, and productivity.

Evans said he never has to worry about security or data integrity. "Taking the security burden off our shoulders was a blessing, because we have a small IT team and we know how important this data and these documents are."

The efficiency of the work cycle has improved dramatically through integrations with Microsoft Outlook and other applications the teams use daily. "iManage integrations help us complete the cycle without breaking up the process," commented Evans. "Workflow is fluid and smooth."

Productivity has also visibly increased. "People are getting their work done faster," said Evans. "And we know these are things that will only get better going forward."

Hurricane Michael tests the firm's mettle

When Hurricane Michael hit Florida and devastated the firm's Panama City office, the space was unusable for more than a year. But the firm never wavered from their steadfast support of clients, who needed them more than ever.

A major benefit of the iManage migration is that physical location no longer matters to the firm. Now, it is easier to collaborate with clients or work remotely. During this difficult time, iManage Share and iManage Drive became especially vital to the firm's performance as well as their communication. Just as the firm envisioned, everyone works the same way wherever they are, following the best practices put in place when iManage Work 10 was set up.

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Despite losing one of their own offices and the damages suffered by the staff as individuals, the firm was able to keep moving forward. Attorneys reached out to clients asking how they could help. All the data was in a secure, safe location that was remotely accessible to the staff, so clients received the help that they needed.



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Throughout a pandemic and even a hurricane, Hand Arendall Harrison Sale attorneys billed more hours and got more work done, despite not being in the office. “All because we had iManage and were all using it the same way. Even our helpdesk calls became less frequent,” concluded Evans.

Looking ahead

The firm wanted to avoid doing too much while people were still working remotely and getting used to the new system, but once they returned to the office and everyone was comfortable with Work 10, they began training staff on some newer iManage solutions.

“But the hurricane was an eye-opening time for the entire firm,” Evans said, “because emergencies and disasters can happen any time.” Hand Arendall Harrison Sale is committed to taking care of clients in the most efficient manner, and now they are confident in their ability to meet that commitment through any disruption.

About iManage™

iManage is the company dedicated to Making Knowledge Work™. Its intelligent, cloud-enabled, secure knowledge work platform enables organizations to uncover and activate the knowledge that exists inside their business content and communications. Advanced Artificial Intelligence and powerful document and email management create connections across data, systems, and people while leveraging the context of organizational content to fuel deep insights, informed business decisions, and collaboration. Underpinned by best of breed security, sophisticated workflows and governance approaches, iManage has earned its place as the industry standard through continually innovating to solve the most complex professional challenges and enabling better business outcomes for over one million professionals across 65+ countries. Visit www.imanage.com to learn more.