

## KEYSER MASON BALL LLP

## Moving to the Cloud: A firm's move to a more efficient, headache-free model

“It's so important to have a dependable system, and to not have to worry about interruptions and how to resolve them. We don't have any of those concerns anymore.”

– Ruben Goulart, Managing Partner

### THE CHALLENGE

Keyser Mason Ball LLP is a firm focused on business law and litigation that prides itself on providing its 50-plus lawyers and support staff with the technology required to balance their work and home life. As such, it was imperative the firm's IT system be highly reliable and accessible so that staff could access work remotely. But, the firm's partners knew their servers and workstations were out of date. In addition, a transformer providing power to the building was experiencing glitches, causing occasional power outages.

It was time to make a change.

Animate helped the firm's partners explore two possible IT strategies: a traditional model, whereby the firm's servers would remain on site; and a thin-client model, where its servers would be hosted in a third-party data centre. The costs associated with the two options were about the same, but the data centre model had a few additional benefits that appealed to the partners:

1. They had confidence the firm's system would be housed in a world-class facility with the highest level of security (i.e., retina scanners), as well as a superior back-up and recovery process.
2. The benefit of longer-term cost savings through the use of Virtual Server Technology, in which the firm's servers would be used for multiple functions.

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3. This model also allowed the firm to slowly roll-out new workstations (versus having to buy everyone a new workstation simultaneously).
4. It was a “greener” solution, as data facilities use power more efficiently than onsite solutions.
5. The peace of mind knowing the firm’s servers and software would be managed by Animate’s high-caliber team of experts who “live-and-breathe” technology.

#### THE SOLUTION

After seeing the immediate and long-term benefits of choosing a thin-client model, the firm made the decision to relocate its IT servers to a third-party data centre in downtown Toronto.

Animate packaged an end-to-end IT solution to fit all of the firm’s needs that included:

- A competitive contract with a world-class data centre;
- The necessary servers required to store the firm’s data and run its applications; and
- Connectivity so the firm’s staff could access their “desktop” regardless of whether they were working at the office, at home, or in court.

Animate’s solution also included a dedicated IT manager, helpdesk services, and monitoring software to ensure the firm’s servers would be constantly managed and monitored, and its staff properly supported.

#### THE MOVE

The transition to the third-party data centre went very smoothly. The firm’s servers were transported to the data centre on a weekend, and the firm was up-and-running first thing Monday morning. Most people weren’t aware the move had even occurred!

Ruben Goulart, Managing Partner, enthuses that access to the system has never been better. “We’re in the service business and are affected by the same demands as our clients,” he says. “Our system is now much more reliable than we could have accomplished on our own. There is no difference at all in terms of working at home or working from another location, and lawyers who travel have seamless access to their work.”

#### THE RESULTS

With Animate’s IT solution in place, lawyers who encounter a problem at the office, at home, or while travelling can call and receive fast and professional assistance through the Animate HelpDesk. “They’re able to do most things remotely instead of coming onsite,” says Marilyn O’Brien, the firm’s Office Manager. “It’s working out really well because Animate doesn’t have to be here to solve an IT issue.”

Since engaging Animate, the firm has eliminated most of the headaches that had been associated with managing its own IT system. Animate ensures the firm’s IT is operating based on best practices, and the data centre provides the peace of mind knowing their data is protected in a highly secure environment that is constantly monitored and controlled.

What’s more, with Animate’s quarterly status updates and annual strategic planning meetings, the firm is fully aware of all costs that will be associated with its IT system over the next few years; so there will be no surprises.

**“When the system was onsite, it caused a lot of headaches and we spent a lot of time talking about IT issues at our partner meetings. We now have the opportunity to realize savings in terms of personnel, and we know our servers are in a safe and controlled environment.”**

– Ruben Goulart, Managing Partner



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