



COVID-19, Cloud Computing & Business Continuity

Background

For nearly 15 years, the law firm of Pearson, Simon & Warshaw, LLP has served as plaintiff's counsel for individuals involved in class action and complex litigation matters out of three offices in the U.S., two in California and one in Minneapolis.

The founding partners thoughtfully designed the firm with redundant business systems, infrastructure and training so that it resembles a business instead of a traditional law firm. This progressive structure enables the firm to work very efficiently and, as a result, allows them to take on cases against competitors with deeper pockets. In 2018, the firm's leaders knew their existing on-premises servers were reaching the end of their lives.

It is well-established that law firms lag behind other businesses adopting new technology generally and in moving systems to the cloud in particular. Pearson, Simon & Warshaw is no different in this regard — and for good reason. Law firms store volumes of client data that is both private and personal and are obligated to protect that information.

Dan Warshaw, a partner and the firm's technology champion, admits to finding reassurance in being able to see his firm's servers and to troubleshoot any problems in person. However, he knew that if his firm were hit with a natural disaster like an earthquake, the firm would take days or weeks to get back up and running. He knew cloud-based storage was the best way for his firm to prepare for disaster.

The Solution

Warshaw spent months analyzing and testing cloud-based servers and sought guidance from the experts at Innovative Computing Systems for recommendations and advice.

The firm took its time transitioning to cloud-based servers to ensure a seamless transition. Warshaw tried to "break the system" on more than one occasion and the firm had extensive beta

Client

Pearson, Simon & Warshaw, LLP

Business Challenge

The law firm's servers were coming to the end of their life and the firm's leaders needed to decide whether to replace them or move systems to the cloud. At the same time, the firm recognized the need to prepare for business continuity in the event of a natural disaster.

Solution

The firm evaluated the pros and cons of cloud-based servers for upwards of 18 months. In the end, they relied on the advice of Innovative Computing Systems experts — who they had been working with for more than 10 years — and selected the Innovative Cloud Solution powered by AWS to provide virtual servers.

Results

After a smooth transition to cloud-based storage, the firm soon faced an unprecedented test of their system: over the course of a weekend, all employees started to work from home as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



testing to make sure all systems were fully integrated and accessible. The result was a flawlessly rolled out system for the entire firm. The firm's new cloud-based servers were fully operational in the early weeks of 2020.

Lessons Learned

On March 19, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued a stay-at-home order as the result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Days earlier, Pearson, Simon & Warshaw's partners decided to err on the side of caution and, since they knew they could, told all employees their last day in the office would be Friday, March 13.

Warshaw described the transition as unbelievably simple. The firm ensured all employees had internet access at home and supplied them with the equipment they needed to their job duties. On Monday, work resumed as normal — but with everyone fully remote — save for minor issues to fix, such as rerouting default printers.

When they set out to update their data storage capabilities, the firm's leaders had no idea their decisions would prove so pivotal so quickly.

"Nobody could have predicted that a worldwide pandemic would be the first business disruption we would face," Warshaw said. "So many firms – especially the small ones – had no idea what to do. We were so fortunate to be able to safely continue operations and serve our clients."