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Smart Time Case Study

One-on-One with Tom Haslam

Chief Innovation Officer, Herbert Geer

Leading Australian Law Firm Successfully Implements Smart Time

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Tom Haslam, Chief Innovation Officer for Herbert Geer in Australia has been using Smart Time at his firm for just under a year. Smart WebParts recently talked to Tom, who says it has successfully met his

targets for finding billable units of time, making timekeeping easier for attorneys and support staff, and for improving timesheet accuracy.

What were the business drivers for implementing a time capture solution?

Our primary driver was to insure we rendered accurate client invoices. Smart Time facilitates the process by providing the attorney a detailed journal of their day's activities. Besides improved transparency and accuracy, Smart Time also frees up time for the attorney to focus on our clients' requirements rather than administrative tasks.

In addition, there was a desire to more accurately capture all of an attorneys' time. So, the second driver was firm profitability, especially since we had a concern that people weren't remembering all their activities and recording them.

The third driver was making it easier for people to do their job. One of a attorneys' biggest complaints was having to complete a timesheet. Everyone approaches it differently and some do it better than others. Smart Time's timesheet recording is easier because it reports what you've done and predicts what you're going to record.

Did all attorneys benefit?

Yes. It's not like the people who struggle with timekeeping get more benefit out of the system than the people who are really good at it. Learning the

system is simple, easy to get started and the benefits are realized quickly.

For the attorney who only does timesheets once a month, they obviously get quite a significant benefit in terms of accuracy and recreating their timesheet more quickly.

Or, it might also be their secretary that gets the benefit. From what I've seen, it's the high performers who have really taken to Smart Time. Also the really good secretaries will go to their partner and say, "Look, I hate having to do your timesheets at the end of the month, it's always a mad rush. Let's start using Smart Time and it'll be better." And then they teach the partner how to do it.

So, far the attorneys really like the automated report function. I use it, and for me, I don't even think about time recording during the day. The next day I run my report and fill in my timesheet in 10 minutes. It's very accurate and I can then move on to the next thing.

What are the key benefits of the system for the attorneys?

Number one, it makes it quicker for people who are trying to recreate their timesheet from scratch.

Two, it really helps people who are working out of the office.

Three, it is a significant benefit for part-time people. On their day off they might take calls or review an e-mail for a special client, for instance. Previously that time might have been forgotten. Now, they get a report that includes all that time.

Four, it also helps really busy people who now don't have to worry as much about their timesheet.

The last benefit, which is a funny one, is that the litigators have used it to prove or disprove whether they had a certain conversation on a certain day, if, for example, that's being claimed by the opposing attorney.

Has the system increased booked hours?

This is a hard question to answer because you will never have two situations that are exactly the same. There are always differences, so it's impossible to just change one parameter, *i.e.*, introducing Smart Time and say, "Ah, yes it's gone up by 3 hours." That's very hard to prove.

But having said that, the people who use the system tell me they think it's increasing the number of hours they're recording. And they are saying, "Yes, we think we are getting at least an extra couple of units a day." To us, that sounds good. I certainly use that in my business justification for the product.

About Herbert Geer

Herbert Geer is a significant Australian law firm with offices in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The firm with over 330 people has committed to achieving intelligent and commercial solutions for clients through the application of industry and sector knowledge, technology and their first class legal skills.

www.herbertgeer.com.au

About Smart WebParts

Smart WebParts provides innovative software solutions that maximize profits for law and accounting firms as well as professional services organizations. Our flagship product, Smart Time, is programmed to close revenue leaks and increase billable hours for firms who embed it into their timekeeping process.

Our team consists of experts in finance, accounting, process engineering and technology. Our staff has over 100 years of experience in the industries we serve. We utilize best-of-breed technologies, tools and production processes and we innovate and create new tools when necessary. We have built a dedicated team of software developers who offer solutions that are unique in the industry.

Smart WebParts is privately held and is headquartered in Los Gatos, California.



19148 Old Vineyard Road
Los Gatos, CA 95033
877-776-7505

Alpha House
100 Borough High Street
London, SE1LB
0800 048 8571

info@smart-webparts.com
www.smart-webparts.com