

THOMSON REUTERS ELITE CASE STUDY

CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS

STAYING ON TOP OF BILLING REQUIREMENTS
WITH DESIGN GALLERY

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SUPPORTING GROWTH WITH A TRUSTED PROVIDER

Charles Russell Speechlys is considered to be one of the world's leading business and private wealth firms. Their clients access legal services through their network of offices throughout Europe and the Middle East, as well as long-standing relationships and networks throughout the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean.

Charles Russell Speechlys was formed by the merger in 2014 between Charles Russell and Speechly Bircham. The rich and varied history of both firms stretches back more than 150 years, and together they create a top 30 UK firm that combines a preeminent private wealth practice with a significant business law capability.

Going into the merger, it became clear that the firms would have to consolidate technology and put scalable infrastructures in place for long-term success. The firms each used a different system for financial and practice management, with Charles Russell having relied on Enterprise® from Thomson Reuters Elite since the system's inception more than 20 years ago. Ultimately, the decision makers from both firms agreed to roll out Enterprise firm-wide, realizing that investing in Elite would provide the greatest benefits in the long run.

In fact, the firm's decision makers decided to implement a second Elite system leading into the merger. Anticipating that Charles Russell's total bills would increase from roughly 3,000 to an estimated 14,000 after the merger, the firm's Financial Systems Manager Michael Malone realized that it would have to transform its document automation processes in order to keep up with the massive uptake. Already in place at Charles Russell was Document Studio™, the data transformation tool from Elite, but the merger made a solid business case for transitioning to Design Gallery™.

"It quickly became clear that Design Gallery would provide a far superior solution, and it has indeed proven itself to be an extremely efficient tool."

Michael Malone
Financial Systems Manager

Design Gallery is a document automation solution designed to streamline the collection, conversion, and distribution of data. Its advanced Automated Data Transformation design provides more speed and flexibility to support specific and often varied business processes by transforming data into a variety of formats and distributing it quickly and efficiently. Its integration compatibility with Enterprise and 3E® allows for the rich creation and conversion of paper-based documents, advanced spreadsheets, text/ XML files, and output meant for online publishing and mobile devices.

"Document Studio certainly fit the bill for Charles Russell, but going into the merger, we identified potential obstacles in its ability to meet a significantly larger volume of bills, as well as more complex template requirements," Malone recalls. "It quickly became clear that Design Gallery would provide a far superior solution, and it has indeed proven itself to be an extremely efficient tool."

IMPRESSIVE AND IMPERATIVE CONSOLIDATION

Quickly after the deployment, Malone became confident that the level of success he and his team had achieved with Design Gallery would not have been attainable with any other solution. "It would be very difficult to find another tool that could integrate with Enterprise in order to obtain the information needed to satisfy all of our billing requirements," he states. "Without Design Gallery, I'd say that we certainly would not be able to develop the bills we need, let alone produce them in the rapid timeframe within which we are able to today."

CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS

Formed by a merger in 2014, Charles Russell Speechlys is a full-service law firm specializing in various practice areas, including employment and family law. Its 500 lawyers provide a wide-range of expertise across the globe.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

The firm needed a document automation solution to streamline a massive increase in billing volume.

WHY DESIGN GALLERY?

Design Gallery is an automated data transformation solution that quickly and efficiently streamlines the collection, conversion, and distribution of data.

BENEFITS

- Consolidated nearly a hundred billing templates with a single configurable design
- Instant and effortless bill generation
- Fast, accurate, and reliable billing processes
- Onsite support

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Michael Malone

A concern that the finance team had going into the merger was the possibility of the massive increase in bills causing backlogs in document output. However, the reality of the situation has been that as soon as billing criteria is finalized, there are no delays in the ability of Design Gallery to generate the bill and queue it up for printing.

“One of the greatest benefits of Design Gallery has been that bills are produced more quickly and more accurately than we could have imagined,” Malone notes. “We have yet to encounter any issues with its performance.”

Prior to the merger, Speechly Bircham was maintaining at least 50 and as many as 100 templates in order to meet clients’ specific billing requirements. Rather than rewriting each individual template, the customizable fields offered by Design Gallery made it possible to create one single configurable version.

“Because the template we have developed within Design Gallery offers several different options to compartmentalize criteria, we essentially have the ability to replicate all of the billing formats Speechly Bircham had used previously—the only difference being that they are now derived from a single design,” explains Malone. “Design Gallery equips us with complete flexibility to easily make any future changes as they are needed.”

A key element to the success of Design Gallery was the fact that the implementation team was able to come onsite to help develop the template according to the firm’s various requirements. “Speechly Bircham had been using the same templates for quite some time, making it a real challenge to replicate all of their components,” says Malone. “Having the implementation team available to meet face to face and by phone in the same time zone was crucial to ensuring the accuracy of all of our bills.”

Additionally, Design Gallery has resolved concerns about the differences in the designs and layouts of the two firms’ existing templates by providing the newly merged firm with a single, cohesive version. “Design Gallery has helped us establish our new image, and it really underscores the fact that we are now one completely merged firm,” describes Malone. “Our clients have been receptive to the new brand as it instills confidence that we are still providing the exceptional quality of service they have come to expect.”

A FULL SUITE OF SOLUTIONS

One of the key reasons for selecting Design Gallery was that it would provide seamless integration with an array of Elite solutions. Just before the move to Design Gallery the firm’s finance team decided to get ahead of the electronic billing curve by implementing the web-based eBillingHub® application; today, the firm is prepping for a major upgrade, transitioning from Enterprise to 3E.

During the evaluation process, the firm’s decision makers anticipated an eventual transition to 3E, and now that the time has come, all of the elements of Design Gallery are ready to be seamlessly replicated in the new system.

“Now that we have made the decision to move forward with 3E, it’s comforting to know that all of the time and effort we have invested in Design Gallery won’t be lost and will continue to benefit our firm in the long run,” he concludes.

For more information about Design Gallery, please visit elite.com.

