

ELITE CASE STUDY WITHERS, LLP

ELITE ENTERPRISE CLIENT CAPTURES SIGNIFICANTLY
MORE TIME WITH INTAPP TIME BUILDER



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LEVERAGING TIME BUILDER TO CAPTURE ADDITIONAL £8,100 PER LAWYER ANNUALLY

Withers LLP, an international law firm with 350 fee earners and nearly 700 total staff based in eight offices and an established Elite® Enterprise client, wanted to improve time capture efforts across the firm. An internal team conducted a study that documented significant delays in time entry, which was buttressed by strong anecdotal evidence. As part of the same effort, the firm implemented a number of time recording improvement initiatives, including policies for daily time entry, encouraging use of automated timers and implementing an incentive/penalty program.

While these efforts produced improvements, there remained a pervasive sense throughout the firm that fee earners were routinely under billing their time. It was at this point that Withers decided to explore automated time capture technology. Through an evaluation process in 2010, Withers concluded that IntApp™ Time Builder™ was the most effective way to assist fee earners in more effectively managing their time recording activities and to ensure that billable time was completely and consistently billed.

Time Builder, developed by Elite partner IntApp, is a software solution that enables firms to increase revenue by capturing billable time that is missed or under-billed. It does this by providing time keepers with an accurate, consolidated report of their billable activity, generated by passively monitoring the key applications they use throughout the day.

Because Time Builder is tightly integrated with Enterprise, it gave the firm management confidence that it would work seamlessly with their existing technology platform. Fee earners are able to group, detail and submit activities directly into Enterprise.

IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF TIME RECORDING CHALLENGES

The team at Withers focused first on understanding the nature of time recording among fee earners. To do so, they conducted a quantitative analysis of time entry data. Results showed that compliance with the firm's policy requiring all worked time to be entered and finalized within 48 hours was far below desired levels.

Additionally, the data analysis showed that short duration events were far less likely to be recorded if the time was not entered within two days of having been worked. A number of other data points all combined suggested that while the firm's policies and operational emphasis on improving time recording compliance from fee earners resulted in substantial improvement, there remained significant challenges to more completely and accurately capturing and billing time worked.

The study also clearly suggested there was a significant upside in addressing the challenges that fee earners struggle with relative to timely and complete recording of their workday. Interviews with lawyers uncovered a number of issues that the firm was able to correlate with the data analysis and suggested that fee earners are overwhelmed by the sheer volume and pace of activities to such an extent that it becomes nearly impossible to record everything.

Of the participants in the assessment interviews, 93% entered their own time and most used timers; these were fee earners that were diligent and rigorous in their time recording and entry. Issues they identified were as follows:

- Short events in the office are often not recorded because of hassle associated with using timers.
- Work completed evenings, weekends and while commuting is a time recording challenge—with much of this time under or unrecorded.
- Work done outside the office is typically recorded on paper and only when remembered. This resulted in lost time and duplication of entry.

WITHERS LLP

Withers has been advising individuals, companies and charities for over a hundred years. They have a global client base with interests around the world. The firm has more than 670 people worldwide in eight offices spread across Europe, US, the Caribbean and Asia.

GOAL

Address issues of lost and unbilled time. Help fee earners capture their time more efficiently and effectively and ensure that all worked time is billed.

WHY INTAPP TIME BUILDER

Time Builder, integrated with Elite Enterprise, supplemented firm efforts to increase compliance with time recording policies and provide fee earners with an easy to use tool to capture additional billable hours.

BENEFITS

- Leverages investment in Elite Enterprise platform
- Simplified time recording and capture for fee earners
- Uplift of three hours per month for Time Builder users
- More consistent and complete capture of mobile time and other work that routinely went unbilled before adoption of IntApp Time Builder

According to a Withers fee earner, “I manually write down everything after the event unless I’m busy and then I do it at the end of the day. Unfortunately, when I do it at the end of the day, I estimate and know that I am conservative with those estimates. I know I miss email activity from early in the day as well. I find it difficult to use timers based on the number of matters I work on each day. I always struggle to hit 7.5 hours even though I’m in the office from 9am to 7pm daily. Time Builder would likely help improve my utilization without changing my hours—I’d more regularly catch those early morning emails and I wouldn’t have to estimate, I’d have the actual time worked for each activity.”

“Ultimately, the data analysis and the fee earner interviews led us to conclude that at very conservative estimates of fee earner adoption and additional time captured (including realization writedowns), the firm stood to realize an additional £720,000 directly impacting the bottom-line in the first year,” says Paul Steward, Systems Accountant. “The projected ROI on a Time Builder deployment was measured in weeks.”

Additional conclusions drawn by the firm included the following:

- Changing fee earner behaviour to an appreciable degree is exceedingly difficult and in particular, those fee earners that do not currently use timers are unlikely to ever do so.
- BlackBerry use is growing significantly and this time is most at risk of not being billed.
- Activity conducted while mobile was not being captured with same diligence as desk work.

The quantitative analysis, coupled with the lawyer interviews confirmed clearly the prevailing view that many fee earners were under billing their time. Having reached this conclusion, the prescriptive remedy for the firm became increasingly clear – implement Time Builder as a way to assist lawyers in more completely and accurately recording their time.

MANAGING A SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENT

As a result of the rigorous analysis and interviews with fee earners, Withers management understood that implementing Time Builder was not simply a technical process. In fact, the people and process components of the implementation would have the greatest impact on the outcome. To this end, they leveraged IntApp’s capabilities and expertise, including training materials and best practices based on work done with other firms.

The team also incorporated several key strategies in their plans for a successful Time Builder rollout. First was ensuring that firm management played a visible role in the

internal marketing initiatives, so that the project had the appropriate business focus. Additionally, the firm engaged its Marketing Director to build a marketing program around two core messages—Time Builder is designed to make the job of time recording easier and it will help lawyers bill more time, achieve billing targets and bonuses.

During the early rollout, the firm focused on a rigorous assessment of both adoption and benefits. The analysis indicated that virtually all fee earners used Time Builder as part of their time entry process. Capturing time worked on BlackBerries and other out-of-the-office activities were the areas overwhelmingly cited as key areas where Time Builder helped fee earners bill more time. Of the participants in the survey, 93% would recommend Time Builder to their colleagues.

“We understood from the outset that it was critical for the Time Builder rollout not to feel like an IT initiative and we were fortunate to have strong support throughout the firm’s management team,” adds Steward. “Our Managing Partner was involved in every aspect of the evaluation and the decision to proceed and she signed on as the project’s Executive Sponsor.”

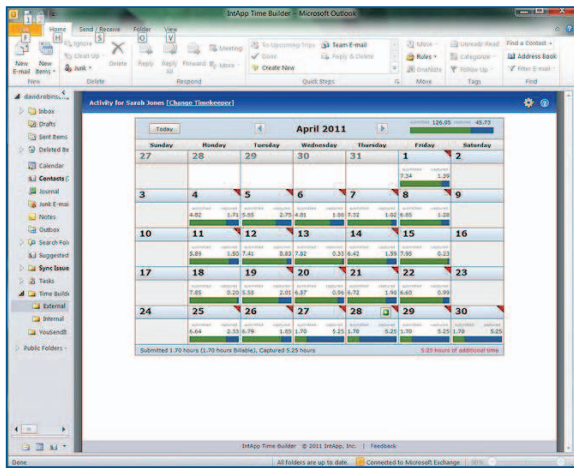
The firm’s Marketing Director produced a firm-wide campaign, complete with a “mascot” and slogan—“Time Well Spent”—to reinforce the importance of this project to every fee earner and the firm from a business perspective. The campaign focused on the benefits of making it easier for fee earners to record all their billable time and the consequent impact on both fee earner and firm achievement of financial goals. The success of the campaign cannot be understated in terms of promoting the importance of time recording generally and more specifically, generating interest in Time Builder as a way to improve performance on this critical task.

The firm’s training strategy was essential in converting the interest generated by the marketing campaign into the highest adoption rate possible. Rather than rely on the standard classroom training methods, which is highly efficient, but often not effective, the firm pursued an approach that relied on desk-side coaching sessions. Fee earners were visited personally at their desk and introduced to Time Builder. They were shown how to navigate their activity list, edit and submit time through Time Builder and how to personalize the system to their individual work style.

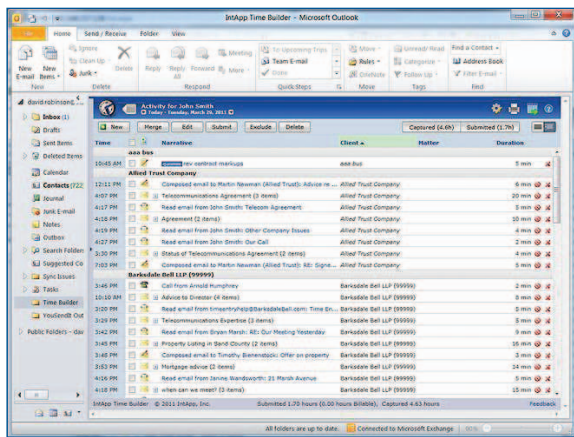
This approach ensured that fee earners would have the best chance for an outstanding experience with Time Builder right from the start. The results the firm was able to document post deployment bore out the wisdom of the three essential components of the project deployment strategy included:

- Early “buy-in” and strong support from firm management
- Comprehensive marketing program focused on benefits to fee earners
- Highly personalized training program

These components worked together to deliver the projected business results for the firm across every measure: adoption, increased billings and return on investment.



Time Builder activity log sorted by time.



Time Builder activity log sorted by client.

“The response from the user community has been very positive. Time Builder is solving genuine problems fee earners experience with time entry. It’s helping fee earners find additional time and has paid for itself,” explains Finance Director, Mike Timms.

MEASURING A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME

The three essential components to the post-deployment analysis of Time Builder were as follows:

- Establishing test and control groups of similar makeup across similar practice groups.
- Analysis of time entry data to establish impact of Time Builder on billable hours in the test group.
- Interviews with fee earners to correlate with the data analysis.

The data analysis included time entry activity and billed hours for a four-month period prior to, and four months after the Time Builder deployment for both the test and control groups. FTE days worked were factored in to the analysis to ensure consistency across fee earners throughout the study period.

Comments from fee earners reflect these results:

- “Sometimes you get busy and don’t use the timers right. I use Time Builder on a daily basis and find in excess of an hour each day that I would have otherwise overlooked.”
- “I was skeptical at first, but Time Builder takes away the sloppiness from time recording. I am finding an extra two hours per week.”
- “Time Builder is extremely useful because it is easy to under-estimate time. I use it to cross-check at the end of the day and routinely find an additional 30 minutes or more.”

“The quantitative analysis we conducted identified a measurable uplift in billable time for fee earners who utilized Time Builder,” concludes Steward. “Through this study, we conclusively demonstrated to firm management that the projected increase in billable hours was easily achieved. Adoption rates exceeded initial expectations as well. That we were able to document additional hours captured and billed of more than £8,100 per fee earner as a direct result of Time Builder in a particularly difficult economic environment was particularly impressive.

He continues, “Equally important was the corroborating information we developed in discussions with fee earners. Their enthusiasm for Time Builder was important in helping the firm conclude that it would become an important tool for fee earners over the long term.”

Every technology and business initiative a firm undertakes must address a clear business need and be expected to deliver on its promises. Withers’ rigorous approach to understanding the business issues associated with time recording led them to a decision to implement Time Builder.

Their equally rigorous approach to defining success criteria and following through to document the results is both exemplary and instructive. In no uncertain terms, the firm has achieved the goals and projections set out as success criteria for Time Builder, resulting in measurable benefit to the firm.

STRONG PARTNERSHIP PAYS DIVIDENDS

The active partnership between Elite and IntApp enables the companies to continue building on their advanced technology platforms and offer law firms the latest time

capture techniques available. For example, IntApp has developed an iPad and iPhone app that enables fee earners to view their recorded activity in real-time and submit time entries directly into Elite Enterprise or 3E from wherever they are.

“The combination of Elite practice management solutions and IntApp Time Builder provides law firms with formidable tools to improve lawyer productivity and overall firm financial performance,” says Dan Tacone, president of IntApp.

To learn more about Elite and IntApp Time Builder, visit elite.com.



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