

*Case study*

CCH Document Management Carpenter Box

Everyone knows that a document management system can save time, office space and paper. But have you considered that it might also help to save your business if the worst happens? When Chris Coopey, a director of Carpenter Box LLP, was woken at 2am with the news that one of the firm's offices was on fire, at least he knew that the practice was well prepared. Back in 2000, when he was a partner in a large local law firm, Chris had seen another disaster at first hand when an office in Lewes was flooded. That experience made him realise just how vital it was to plan for the unexpected.

“Like most firms, Carpenter Box bought a document management system principally for the efficiency gains it would bring. A secondary consideration was the fact that it would make us a lot less reliant on paper files, which are always a risk. Because of my personal experience in the 2000 floods, I probably appreciated that risk more than most.”

A quick response from the Fire Brigade means that the damage was limited, although repairs might cost as much as £40,000. Around 500 paper files were affected by water but, because we're pretty much paperless now, it's having very little effect. A lot of what we need for our day to day work is still safely stored within the system. If we hadn't had a document management system in place, we would undoubtedly be in a much worse position now.

I'm sure most people think 'It won't happen to me', but no one is immune from events like these and you need to plan for the unexpected. Our document management system has made a vital contribution, but it's important to see this within the context of our overall Business

Continuity Plan. Once the fire had been put out, our plan gave us a framework. A good plan creates a process that will automatically take you where you need to go.

One of the great things about softcopy documents is that it's so easy to back them up and when you rely on digitised documents you need to take backups seriously. To give us even more security, instead of just backing up the data, we're going to be mirroring the office servers using a server farm so that our entire IT infrastructure can be rebuilt very quickly.

Ironically, a few months ago I wrote a couple of articles for our client e-newsletter highlighting the importance of planning for these kinds of events. An alarmingly high percentage of businesses never re-open after a major disaster, but exactly the same could happen to any accounting practice that fails to have systems and plans in place. As our experience has shown, everyone needs to be prepared for the unexpected.”

Chris Coopey
Director

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Find out how we can help



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