

## Law Firm Assigns Best Talent to Clients from Any Office



Minter Ellison implemented Quad, Jabber, and WebEx for collaboration, and TelePresence for in-person experience across continents.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Customer Name:** Minter Ellison

**Industry:** Legal

**Location:** Sydney, Australia

**Number of Employees:** 1100+ Employees

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Assign best team of lawyers to clients, regardless of location
- Deliver excellent client service
- Efficiently share knowledge in global organization

#### NETWORK SOLUTION

- Cisco Quad for secure online communities, Cisco Jabber for presence and instant messaging, and Cisco WebEx for real-time collaboration on documents
- Cisco TelePresence for in-person meeting experience
- Cisco Unified Computing System to host collaboration and other business applications

#### BUSINESS RESULTS

- Increased value to clients by enabling lawyers to work more efficiently
- Optimized team performance by simplifying knowledge sharing across global offices
- Reclaimed time previously spent traveling to partner and client meetings

### Challenge

Among the largest law firms in the Asia Pacific, Minter Ellison employs approximately 1100 lawyers in 15 offices across Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, and the United Kingdom. The firm's clients include leading multinational organizations and Fortune 500 companies, global financial institutions, and government organizations.

Minter Ellison distinguishes itself with a "one-firm" strategy, assembling virtual teams of the best-qualified lawyers for each case from any global office. A client in Hong Kong might work with lawyers in Australia and the United Kingdom, for example, if these lawyers have the most relevant experience. "Globalization is transforming legal professional services," says Peter Westerveld, director of technology at Minter Ellison. "We take advantage of our network to operate as one virtual office that spans physical offices around the world."

As staff and clients began using social networking tools and video in their personal lives, Minter Ellison saw an opportunity to bring these new collaboration methods into the firm. Enterprise social networking tools would help lawyers share knowledge in a timely fashion with colleagues anywhere in the world.

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The firm also wanted to enable lawyers and clients in any location to meet with an in-person experience, but without the time and expense of travel. “For cross-border transactions that are sensitive and time-critical, it’s important that all lawyers in any location can communicate and exchange documents,” says John Weber, chief executive partner for Minter Ellison. “Our goal was to create a one-firm experience regardless of the client’s and team members’ location.”

## Solution

To build the foundation for its global collaboration strategy, Minter Ellison first implemented an advanced Cisco network connecting all offices. Cisco® Unified Communications makes it as easy for lawyers to reach a colleague in another country as to connect with someone in the office next door.

Next, Minter Ellison began adding other Cisco collaboration applications to help ensure high client satisfaction, optimize the performance of virtual teams, and improve organizational communications. Cisco partner Alpha West implemented Cisco Quad™ for secure online communities, and Dimension Data deployed Cisco TelePresence® and Cisco WebEx®.

“The collaborative communities in Cisco Quad let us warehouse our intellectual capital and encourage lawyers to share their know-how with colleagues. Doing things more efficiently provides better value for our clients.”

— Paul Kallenbach, Partner, Minter Ellison

The firm’s lawyers use Cisco Quad to share documents, view feeds about case progress, blog, post articles, comment, and stay abreast of constantly changing laws and regulations. “Cisco Quad allows us to warehouse information in an efficient way so that we can find it quickly, and it also allows us to very quickly find the right experts anywhere in the world,” says Paul Kallenbach, a partner with Minter Ellison. Importantly, Quad meets requirements for client confidentiality. “Designed for the enterprise, Quad has enabled us to introduce social technologies in a secure, managed way not possible with consumer collaboration services,” Westerveld says.

For real-time interaction, the firm’s lawyers use Cisco Jabber™ to see whether colleagues are online or on the phone, and can simply click to send an instant message or call. And to collaborate on documents and presentations, lawyers in any location join Cisco WebEx sessions combining audio, video, and web conferencing. “Our lawyers are quite mobile and frequently join Cisco WebEx meetings from home or business trips using personal devices, using the free WebEx app for iPads and iPhones,” says Westerveld.

Finally, for high-level meetings requiring an immersive, in-person experience, Minter Ellison’s lawyers and clients can go to one of the firm’s boardroom-style Cisco TelePresence 3010 Systems, implemented by Dimension Data, which seat up to six participants. “The audio and video quality of Cisco TelePresence is so good that within a minute, you forget that the other person is not in the same room,” Westerveld says. Participants can see the same nonverbal cues they would if they were meeting face-to-face, and can also easily share documents such as contracts.

“TelePresence has fundamentally changed the way I do business,” says Weber. “I can now meet with my board without having to travel across the continent, and I can meet with my management team in multiple locations at short notice to deal with urgent issues.”

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To minimize data center space, power, cooling, and management costs, the firm has consolidated 95 percent of its applications, including Cisco Unified Communications, Cisco Quad, and Cisco TelePresence Server, on a Cisco Unified Computing System™ (UCS™) in the data center. Application virtualization has lowered data center space, power, and cooling costs.

Switch port and cable costs also decreased, because all Cisco UCS B200 Blade Servers in the system connect to the network and storage through a pair of fabric interconnects. Not having to individually cable each new blade server also helps the IT team respond more quickly to requests for new services and applications.

## Results

Excellent client service from virtual teams spanning the globe

The new ease of global knowledge sharing contributes to the excellent client service that helps Minter Ellison attract and retain loyal clients. For example, lawyers on virtual teams devoted to particular clients or industries routinely share knowledge in Cisco Quad communities. “Interpretations of law change daily, and our lawyers have set up a wiki on Cisco Quad, providing up-to-date research on areas such as employment law,” says Westerveld. Cisco partner Alpha West integrated Cisco Quad with the firm’s customer relationship management software so that lawyers working inside a Quad community can simply click to open the client file.

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Efficient organizational communications

Cisco Quad communities set up for training are increasingly replacing classroom training. Employees appreciate being able to review the training materials and participate in interactive discussions when they have time rather than scheduling their day around classroom training.

Another way that the firm has increased the efficiency of organizational communications is by replacing certain meetings with Cisco TelePresence sessions. Each member of the management team avoids at least 12 trips a year, saving travel time, costs, and carbon emissions. "With TelePresence, the experience is like being in the same room, and yet we can be back at our desks in minutes instead of losing a day to travel," says Weber. "TelePresence is an easier way to do business, and also helps make us more efficient and client-focused."

### Boon for recruiting top legal talent

The Cisco collaboration tools even play a role in helping Minter Ellison attract and retain top legal talent. "Junior lawyers are comfortable using social tools and video in their personal lives, and giving them the same capabilities in a corporate environment shows our commitment to helping lawyers make the most of their time."

PRODUCT LIST
<b>Unified Communications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Cisco Unified Communications Manager</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Cisco Unified IP Phones 7962 and 7942</a></li></ul>
<b>Collaboration Applications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Cisco Jabber</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Cisco Quad</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Cisco WebEx Meeting Center</a></li></ul>
<b>TelePresence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Cisco TelePresence System 3010</a></li></ul>
<b>Data Center</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Cisco Unified Computing System with Cisco UCS B200 Blade Servers</a></li></ul>

### Next Steps

Minter Ellison continues to add more Cisco collaboration capabilities to increase efficiency and the client experience. Plans include:

- Extending Cisco Quad to clients and business partners, creating secure communities for collaboration.
- Enabling lawyers to join Cisco TelePresence sessions from their desks, using Cisco WebEx OneTouch.
- Using Cisco Jabber with Microsoft Office applications, so that from within the applications, lawyers can view each other's presence information and just click to start an instant messaging, voice, or WebEx session.

### For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Collaboration, visit: <http://www.cisco.com/go/collaboration>.

To join conversations and share best practices about collaboration, visit:

<http://www.cisco.com/go/joinconversation>.



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