

Dragon Speech Recognition Software Ramps Up Productivity and Efficiency At Pearsons & Ward

In today's fast-paced, competitive legal market, it is still the personal touch that makes a big difference in the legal services industry. In the case of independent solicitors Pearsons & Ward based in Malton, North Yorkshire, it has always invested in technology to ensure that efficiency and a tailored, personal service, co-exist. The firm offers a comprehensive range of legal advisory services to private individuals and businesses across many diverse sectors.

Against the backdrop of an increasingly competitive market, the firm wanted to find a way to speed up its document workflow processes, while lowering its administration and document production costs. Previously, letters were dictated using digital dictation devices and the files would then be sent to the secretarial team for transcription, before being sent back to a fee earner to be checked and signed off.

To speed up this process, the firm looked to a technology-based solution that would enable it to accelerate the production and distribution of letters, without compromising the company's trademark personal touch. After seeing a demonstration of Dragon NaturallySpeaking by an authorised Nuance reseller, Pearsons & Ward considered the latest desktop speech recognition to be an ideal complement to its existing digital dictation devices. Partner, Richard Scott, from Pearsons & Ward, described to the reseller the problems the company faced with its former workflow process. "The reseller took the time to understand our business, listen to the challenges and what we were looking to accomplish." Based on this understanding, the reseller recommended Dragon NaturallySpeaking from Nuance. With its 99% accuracy rate and ability to transcribe up to 160 words a minute, Dragon enables even the busiest user to power through their workload, creating highly accurate documents very quickly.

Boosting productivity without losing the personal touch

Dragon's rapid enrolment process was a benefit to Richard. "I don't have time to tame a technology, or to let it distract me from my tasks. With Dragon, I was up and running very quickly." After the initial training sessions, Richard was able to start utilising Dragon's power and performance, as he explains: "I have to admit, I am an awful typist. Dragon enables me to quickly and easily convey my thoughts, without being hindered by the keyboard. The efficiency gains I have experienced using Dragon extend beyond creating and completing Word documents quickly."

He added: "I really like how much easier Dragon makes replying to emails, which is one area I'm gaining a real advantage." Richard estimates that creating and responding to emails equates to 60% of his Dragon usage. "As soon as emails come in, I can read and reply swiftly. In this day and age of email, clients have an expectation of the timeframe in which emails should be replied to. Dragon enables me to meet this expectation easily, thanks to its speed and accuracy."

Additionally, Richard claims: "With Dragon, I feel I have more control; because I am replying to my own emails, I retain a one on one relationship with the client, so they feel like they are on the receiving end of an attentive, speedy and personal service."

In addition to helping the firm save time, it is also helping to save costs. “Now that the secretaries have less typing to do, we don’t have to invest in extra resources to conduct essential tasks like filing,” To which Richard adds “...the quality of my filing has increased considerably, now that the secretaries are able to do it for me properly!”

Planning for a speech-based future

Richard has some advice for any other legal professionals that are considering deploying Dragon. He states, “It is human nature to expect that one product can change how you work overnight. But the technology has to fit in with how you work and not interrupt you. I started using Dragon for email, when I was satisfied that there was a real advantage, I started to integrate it more into my daily activities. Then I started to use Dragon to create documents, and I now enjoy the productivity boost that comes with it. Too often, people try and change too much too soon and blame it on the technology if they don’t get the results they expected immediately. By integrating Dragon in a considered way, it really does complement my workflow process and I have seen a definite increase in productivity.”

Dragon has impressed Richard’s colleagues too, with a litigation partner agreeing to trial it. “Eventually,” Richard explains, “we’d like to integrate Dragon into our case management system,” a move that would put Dragon right at the heart of the personal service delivered by Pearsons & Ward.