



CASE STUDY

Implementing process changes to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)



The Industry

With an ever-increasing amount of paperwork to deal with, both hard copy and electronic, legal practices are particularly vulnerable to the crippling GDPR fines that will come into effect on 25 May 2018.

The GDPR requires legal practices to know and prove where personal data is stored. A UK-based legal practice decided to use an office move as an anchor to start to action some of the process changes they needed to abide with the GDPR. What they needed was guidance for how to do this – ADDS was happy to help!



The Challenge

1. Lack of a file tracking system

The legal practice was aware that they had numerous files that needed to be located and tracked:

- ❗ Old/hidden files from under desks
- ❗ Files kept in 'secret' storage cabinets
- ❗ Documents which had passed their record retention date
- ❗ Historically missing files

2. Limited office space

They were moving to an office space which was only a third of the size they currently had, which meant that they didn't have enough space to store all the files from open cases, let alone historical files.

3. A disorganised deed/will room

The practice partners wanted to continue to store deeds and wills onsite, however the room was a GDPR nightmare:

- ❗ Wills and deeds were consistently taken from this room without notification, and if they were returned they were often placed in an incorrect location
- ❗ The room was not locked
- ❗ There was no way of tracking the deeds and wills stored in this room

In fact, the fee earners had found it such a nightmare to deal with, they had started to store Deeds and Wills in their own office storage areas.



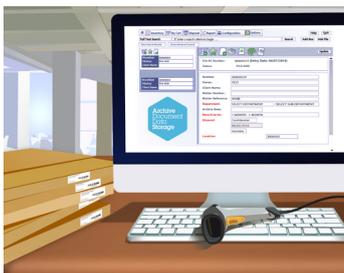
The Solution

Barcoded, registered and tracked files, giving all files an audit trail

Five months before the move, they started with a monthly hard copy file amnesty. The first week of every month, the fee earners, partners and PAs were assigned a date to hand over old/hidden files from under desks/secret storage cabinets with no questions asked and no slapped wrists! These files were then barcoded, registered and archived. Not only did the firm locate historically missing files, but it also meant files that had been closed some time ago and not handed over could then be barcoded, registered and tracked, giving all files an audit trail: GDPR triple tick!

Retention scheduling

Old files that had been recalled from archiving some time ago were also handed over during this period. This meant that these files could be reviewed by fee earners right away. If they had passed their retention period, it was logged on ActiveWeb (an EDRM system) and sent back to ADDS on a destruction instruction. We always provided them with a Certificate of Destruction to prove GDPR compliance. Full audit trail and secure destruction completed and documented: GDPR win!



Hardcopy files hosted on a secure, encrypted EDRM system for immediate access

Open files were barcoded, registered and sent offsite for scanning. Fee earners could then have consistent access to these files during and after the moving period in electronic format. It was a GDPR win as the documents were more secure offsite, had full audit trails and files were not being transported in hard copy by fee earners – instead they were hosted on a secure, encrypted EDRM system for immediate access.



A new deed/will room process using ActiveWeb mobile

The deed/will room at the new office premises was set up using our mobile ActiveWeb software. Once the shelving had been erected and 'health and safety' checked, the ADDS team went into the new premises and placed shelf location codes on each shelf. Next, a computer and barcode scanner were set up within the room. Each will and deed that was removed from the old room was barcoded and registered before being assigned to a relocation crate. Once the relocation crates reached the new premises, it was scanned right away (along with each deed/will) into a holding area and then scanned into its location. Deeds and wills were then assigned to locations by scanning the barcode on the file and the location barcode of the shelf it was to be stored on. The result: a full audit check of each will/deed, as well as each one being assigned their own location for easy tracking.

Three PAs were then placed in charge of the deed/will area and shown how to use ActiveWeb mobile to do the following:

- ✓ Search for wills/deeds and check their status
- ✓ Sign them out to members of the team
- ✓ Assign the deeds/wills back into their locations on return

A full GDPR accountability win with this new process!



The Result

The legal practice now has peace of mind that these new records management processes comply with the GDPR. Here are the highlights:

- ✓ A full audit trail
- ✓ Immediate access to files/deeds/wills via ActiveWeb, an encrypted EDRM system
- ✓ Secure destruction of files which have passed their retention periods (plus a Certificate of Destruction)
- ✓ An organized and monitored will/deed room
- ✓ Freed up office space!