

# Case Study

Scrutton Bland invest in IT for growth

## More information

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**Tim Long**  
Partner

**Scrutton Bland**

**Independent financial and insurance firm Scrutton Bland wanted its IT infrastructure to enable the future growth and development of the business. In a major investment, the firm has put into place a state-of-the-art IT infrastructure.**

### ▶ A people business focused on excellence

As well as being an Accounting, Tax, Audit, Corporate Finance Services and Business Advice, Scrutton Bland are an Independent Financial Advisers and Insurance Broker who strives constantly to provide clear advice and effective solutions to clients across multiple sectors, ranging from agriculture, construction and education to legal, medical, distribution and more. As the largest independent financial services provider in Suffolk and North Essex, with three main offices in the UK, Scrutton Bland is a 160-people-strong firm with a 120-year pedigree. It prides itself on being a people business focused on excellence, offering personal and tailored services for its clients.

Excellence is equally important to Scrutton Bland in the choice and the running of their IT systems. It is why the firm has always approached the evaluation of its requirements for IT with the utmost professionalism and thoroughness. And it's why Scrutton Bland has chosen Keltec as its 'Key Information Technology Partner' for enterprise infrastructure, virtualisation and storage. In addition to calling on Keltec's virtualisation capabilities, Scrutton Bland's solution utilises Keltec's Storage and Enterprise Infrastructure skills. Keltec is able to address all aspects of data storage, management, security and archiving within organisations. At the same time the company's Enterprise Infrastructure skills enable design and delivery of high-quality IT infrastructures, including servers, backup and recovery and more. Scrutton Bland also utilises Keltec's peripheral division, Keltec Express, for printers and toners.

### ▶ A business imperative: efficient high performance infrastructure

Scrutton Bland's IT environment comprises Intel-based HP servers and PCs, with virtualisation capabilities courtesy of VMware. Putting into place an efficient high performance infrastructure was a business imperative that came to a head early in 2011 when Scrutton Bland decided its existing infrastructure was failing to provide the performance or storage capacity needed to achieve the firm's growth objectives. A meeting with Keltec at the time became the starting point for a completely new HP P4000 SAN storage solution across Scrutton Bland's two core sites at Colchester and Ipswich. Keltec designed, installed and now support the firm's solution, taking care of all configuration requirements.

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“We chose Keltec as a ‘Key Information Technology Partner’ because of a good business relationship with them previously and their ability to clearly understand our business and IT needs. Keltec has the IT expertise to advise us and the technical skills to support our virtualisation, infrastructure and storage solution 24x7.”

Ian Doe  
IT Manager

Scrutton Bland

## ▶ Performance and flexibility, thanks to virtualisation

According to Scrutton Bland Partner Tim Long, the costs involved in enhancing the firm’s complexity of patched servers would have been prohibitive. The focus quickly turned to an entirely different environment – virtualisation. “We didn’t like the cloud approach of having data stored externally. Nor did we want to continue replacing existing servers in an ad-hoc fashion, delaying the inevitable. So we chose the virtual server route.”

But an additional reason lay at the heart of the firm’s decision. “This is a massive IT investment in the future of our business. To achieve our business objective of growth as a multi-disciplinary firm – of which accountancy is the main part – we wanted a completely new IT environment,” says Tim Long. “We needed a robust set of servers with flexibility to allow us to use terminal server systems for home workers, for instance. Keltec was able to provide a robust and flexible environment, giving us a cost-effective yet high performance infrastructure, with a leading virtualisation and storage solution. We believe this to be a strong business-enabling solution.”

Scrutton Bland had previously used Keltec in other areas of its IT environment, in which Keltec had proved itself. Even so, the tender for the business remained a competitive one. But according to Tim Long: “Importantly, Keltec came up with practical and workable proposals for our virtualisation path and they clearly had our best business interests at heart in designing a solution that would be cost-efficient and future-proof for us.”

## ▶ Moving the HP environment forward: cost-effective with better productivity

Ian Doe, the firm’s IT Manager, played a key role in Scrutton Bland’s new way forward. He’s clear that in providing around 160 users with more and more services, the firm cannot afford to run on inefficient approaches to its IT. The previous servers were seen to be hampering growth and efficiency. “As Scrutton Bland grows, demands on IT increase. Servers going down have a serious impact on our efficiency. For example, if our company-wide intranet being unavailable had a noticeable effect on staff productivity, as everyone uses it. So when servers cease to become resilient and uptime is continually at risk, the business suffers, particularly if you can’t get quick and effective support from the vendor.”

He adds: “It was clear virtualisation was the answer for us. Keltec were able to provide a viable path forward from our existing solution, while offering the responsive support we need as a business. They understood our needs and designed a virtualisation environment that takes into account where we want to be in the next three to five years.”

## ▶ Virtualisation benefits – lower costs, increasing flexibility and more

As an HP Gold Partner, Keltec had the experience and expertise needed to move Scrutton Bland’s HP environment forwards. The virtualised server project includes all licences from Keltec, HP Intel-based servers and HP StorageWorks, with server virtualisation through VMware ESXi 4.1. It also comprises Windows 7, SQLServer and Microsoft volume licensing.

“With Keltec’s virtualisation solution for our HP environment we’re seeing many benefits,” says Ian Doe, “such as lower operating costs and lower total cost of ownership. We’re also now witnessing enhanced productivity, increased flexibility, greater manageability, and more. And let’s not forget the green benefits through less power consumption.”



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## ▶ Disaster Recovery

Scrutton Bland’s mail servers run on a virtual server, as do file servers and print servers: these are critical to the smooth operations of the business. An important consideration in moving to virtual servers was Disaster Recovery: the ability to replicate services between its Ipswich and Colchester office. So if one office’s server goes down, the other office can bring users back online from its server. The same applies to a third smaller office in Diss.

## ▶ Understanding and technical skills for the firm’s biggest ever IT investment

According to Scrutton Bland’s Tim Long and Ian Doe, it was vital at the outset to verify Keltec’s technical credentials. “When you take on a major IT investment project like this – in fact the biggest in the firm’s history – you want to be certain the people you work with have more technical knowledge than you,” says Ian Doe. “We chose Keltec as our ‘Key Information Technology Partner’ because they have the IT expertise to advise us and the technical skills to support our virtualisation, infrastructure and storage solution 24x7. This was a major consideration. We also had a good business relationship with them previously and they clearly displayed a complete understanding of our business and IT needs.”

## ▶ Big savings through licensing expertise

That understanding was vital in the area of Microsoft Volume licensing. Each server requires a licence. With Keltec’s licensing expertise and experience a highly cost-effective solution to licensing saved Scrutton Bland significant costs through obtaining 10 Enterprise licences each of which can be used four times in a virtual environment. Keltec also provides Scrutton Bland’s Microsoft Desktop Open Value licence covering Windows 7, Office and the Exchange for Outlook – all bundled into one package and purchased ‘all in one’ to contain costs.

