

## Small Business Case Study

Dell servers with Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Dell laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, desktops with Intel® Pentium® 4 processor technology  
Company Size: 100-150

**ridout & maybe LLP**  
CANADA'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TECHNOLOGY LAW FIRM

# Ridout & Maybee LLP makes the case for better client access

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### Case Summary

As a technology and intellectual property law firm, Ridout & Maybee LLP\* wanted to give its clients access to the status of their patent and trademark portfolios. The firm needed mobility for its law professionals and an extranet to enhance client communications all powered by Intel technology.

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### Challenge

Founded in 1893, Ridout & Maybee LLP\* is one of Canada's leading and fastest growing Intellectual Property (IP) and technology law firms, consistently ranked among the top five in Canada. The firm works with clients around the world to protect their innovations, intellectual property assets and technologies through legal processes including patent protection and trademark registrations.

When Ridout & Maybee LLP\* merged its Toronto and Ottawa practices in 1998, there were about 15 lawyers and 60 staff. The firm has since exploded in size – today there are more than 130 employees in their offices in Toronto, Ottawa and Mississauga.

"We have had tremendous growth and with that kind of growth, there are always challenges," says partner Charles Kent. "We are in a technologically-oriented field of law and it is important for us to keep abreast of technological changes that would help us to both run our offices and serve our clients."

"We're determined to be as advanced as possible within the confines of practicality," says Kent.

That meant finding new ways of communicating with clients, streamlining client reporting and providing the professional staff with the tools they needed to stay in touch while managing their extensive travel schedule.



**“Hardwired DSL connections are becoming less and less available. With our laptops and Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, we are WIFI-ready.”**

### **Solutions**

Building on a core network infrastructure of Dell\* servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Scott Fife, Manager of Information Technology, launched a new client extranet to address the need to provide clients with instant access to up-to-date information on their portfolios – whenever they need it.

Fife interconnected the company's two server farms of more than 10 Dell\* servers with Intel® Xeon® processor technology to increase internal office communication and provide secure access to corporate e-mail and files stored in the firm's SQL databases.

To enhance client file security, the company uses Internet Protocol Security developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force to support secure exchange of packets at the IP layer over Virtual Private Networks (VPN), and multiple factor authentication through firewalls to gain network access. This enables the firm to support all network locations and remote users with the security of full encryption and layered authentication.

### **Key Advantages**

The primary advantage for the firm's clients has been enhanced access to information – including when, where and how they use it.

“Our clients can access their IP portfolio through our file management database at any time.

This enhances customer service and addresses our clients' need for up-to-date information,” says Fife.

Patent and trademark applications take years to process and must be maintained according to Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) guidelines. Trademark and patent applications, and subsequent trademark registrations and issued patents face regular deadlines and due dates. Before the implementation of the firm's extranet, clients would have to ask for a client summary which required office personnel to generate a client report every time the information was needed. “The extranet gives clients the ability to check their patent and trademark portfolio at their leisure, without calling us for a status report,” says Kent.

To ensure privacy and confidentiality of client data, Fife created a separate database on a Linux platform housed in one of their Dell\* servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology. Daily, the client extranet downloads data from the firm's internal SQL server and posts the up-to-date information on the extranet. He explains that downloading files to a separate database enhances security, and when coupled with other security mechanisms including a firewall and SSL connection, it prevents others from accessing unauthorized data.

“Clients can view the information online and download it to a spreadsheet which can then be



used in presentations or simply sent to colleagues via email," says Fife. The extranet has also provided the firm with a secure way to exchange information with its clients. "We can securely exchange documents, transfer and print through the SSL connection."

Clients love the features of the new extranet and there is demand for the service. While they haven't tracked actual time or cost savings, Kent says it is a competitive advantage. Ridout & Maybee LLP believes it will help them attract new clients and retain existing clients over the long term.

### **Offices Seamlessly Connected**

With offices in Toronto, Ottawa and Mississauga, Kent says that ensuring all staff are seamlessly linked is a priority for the firm. The network infrastructure is interconnected over the VPN using an Allstream E10\* network and switched to provide high bandwidth connection to all offices. Fife distributed applications across the network of Dell\* servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology to share software applications.

A priority for Fife in building the network has been ease of maintenance. By standardizing on Dell equipment and Intel processors, Fife says, "We've got the right combination of reliability and service with Intel and Dell."

Fife adds that Intel processor technology has allowed the firm to seamlessly leverage the power of both Linux\* and SQL\* platforms using a single processor.

### **Professional Road Warriors**

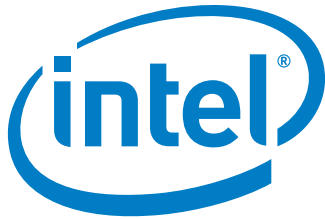
Mobility has always been a priority for the firm. The need for quick and easy access to client information, including a full-featured mobile computer, allows firm employees to address client requests in and out of the office. That meant purchasing laptops. Fife says Intel® Centrino® mobile technology makes putting new laptops in the field easier.

"Training needs are minimal because wireless access using Intel® Centrino® mobile technology is so easy to use," Fife says, adding that the extended battery life is a real benefit for staff.

With an international client base, firm professionals travel extensively to meet with new clients, review innovations and provide on-site support. In an effort to keep professionals connected during their travels, the firm provided their professionals with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology-based laptops, to give them access to firm files and communications.

"Our professionals travel extensively and need to be mobile," says Kent. He further noted that heavy case loads, combined with the need for clients to have access to the lawyers handling their case, make laptops a key advantage to productivity.

Kent notes that the firm is very active in numerous industry associations, which requires further travel and participation in industry events. In recent years, he has noticed that more hotels are providing free wireless access. "Hardwired DSL connections are becoming less and less available. With our laptops and Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, we are WIFI-ready."



### Future Uses

Fife says that the growth of the firm has reached a point where they need to decide whether to archive data or maintain it in a storage solution that allows access.

"More and more, people want to access old files, which will require larger capacity with a SAN (Storage Area Network)," says Fife.

Kent would like to see a day when there is less paper requiring storage in their file rooms and off-site storage facilities. "We are doing more and more electronically. Our goal is to be a 'paperless office' within the next few years," he says, noting there are external factors making paperless offices possible including more courts, patent offices and trademark offices now accepting electronic filing.

Fife adds a further step forward is convergence, and the ability to bring all their disparate software applications together in one place to facilitate easy access to data. Fife is confident that their future plans are achievable, and credits Intel with providing the reliable and stable systems on which they need to grow.

"The solutions that Intel provides allow us to do what we do best – continue to provide superior client service in a business undergoing constant technological change," says Fife.

Find out more about a business solution that is right for your company by contacting your Intel representative, or visit the Intel Business Enterprise Web site at [intel.ca/business](http://intel.ca/business) or its industry solutions specific sites at [intel.ca/business/bss/industry](http://intel.ca/business/bss/industry).



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