



Windows Vista and the Microsoft Office System Customer Solution Case Study

TEPLEN & ASSOCIATES
P . L . L . C

Customer: Teplen & Associates

Web Site: www.teplenlaw.com

Customer Size: eight employees

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Professional services—Legal

Partner: Allarus Technology Management

Partner Web Site: www.allarus.com

Customer Profile

Teplen & Associates is a New York City-based law firm that assists in all aspects of business and personal resettlement in the United States. The company has eight employees.

Software and Services

- Windows Vista™ Business
- Microsoft® Office Professional 2007
 - Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007
 - Microsoft Office Word 2007
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Windows® Small Business Server 2003

Hardware

- Ten HP DC 5100 desktop computers
- Three portable computers (HP, IBM, Toshiba)

For more information about other Microsoft customer successes, please visit:

www.microsoft.com/casestudies

Law Firm Increases Productivity, Enhances Computer Stability with Software Upgrade

“Having new software-assisted efficiencies will help us take on more clients and more work, without expanding our staff. Microsoft software helps us grow our business while keeping overhead low.”

Eric Gerstein, Attorney, Teplen & Associates

Teplen & Associates is a New York City law firm that specializes in immigration issues. Eager to improve staff productivity, the company deployed early versions of the Windows Vista™ operating system and Microsoft® Office Professional 2007. Teplen is enjoying efficiencies from easier document formatting and information search, improved stability of its practice management application, and better protection against spam and spyware.

Business Needs

Teplen & Associates, a law firm based in New York City, assists businesses and individuals seeking to establish themselves in the United States. The firm works with foreign nationals in all facets of immigration law, including temporary visas, employment authorization, applications for labor certification, permanent residence petitions, green cards, asylum applications, and citizenship. Teplen has a staff of eight people, including six attorneys and two support staff.

Teplen is a long-time user of Microsoft® software and attributes the company's

efficient growth to the productivity gains its staff has experienced by using products such as the Windows® XP operating system, Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003, and Windows Small Business Server 2003. Over the past eight years, the company has tripled its legal staff from two to six attorneys without increasing the number of support staffers. “Teplen has added more attorneys and more cases but hasn't had to hire more support people, chiefly due to the Microsoft product stack,” says Michael Eden, Principal of Allarus Technology Management, Teplen's technology partner. “The attorneys can do more for themselves and the support people are more productive.”



Teplen has learned that technology plays a key role in making its staff more productive and allowing the firm to take on more work without constant hiring. For Teplen, the most important technology attributes are productivity, stability, and “anywhere” access. “We cannot be slowed down by constant computer failures,” says Eric Gerstein, Attorney at Teplen & Associates.

However, the firm experienced frequent desktop computer failures when it ran its legal practice management application. The application locked up or failed several times a day, requiring at least 15 minutes of computer reboot time per day, per staff member. “We just assumed that this was something we had to live with,” Gerstein says.

Solution

In mid 2006, Teplen learned from Allarus Technology that early versions of the Windows Vista™ operating system and the 2007 Microsoft Office system were available for trial. Gerstein leapt at the chance to try the new software. “We’re constantly looking to improve the productivity of our staff, so we can handle a larger volume of work, and make work more enjoyable,” Gerstein says.

“I love Office Professional Edition 2003, but by comparison, Office Professional 2007 is much more user-friendly,” he continues. “The new user interface helps me find functions more easily, and as a result, I’m much more efficient.” Gerstein found that he could immediately see changes to document formatting and more easily save customized documents. “Using the new Office Professional 2007 programs, I’m able to do my work without as many steps. I spend less time thinking about the tool and more time thinking about my work.”

For example, the Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007 messaging and collaboration client provides a preview feature that allows users to scroll over a fax and see the fax without opening it. “We get 20 to 30 faxes a day, many of them spam, and the preview feature has made my life incredibly easy,” Gerstein says. “I used to have to open each file, but now I can scroll over, preview, and delete. It’s a small thing, but it cuts way down on the nuisance factor.”

Teplen has also discovered great efficiencies from the Windows Vista search capability. “Immigration work tends to be somewhat repetitive, but we typically can’t find documents that would help us with a current case,” Gerstein says. “In the past, it was easier to locate the paper copy than the electronic version, and then retype it. Today, using the Windows Vista search bar, which is a phenomenal tool, we can search and find the electronic version immediately.”

Benefits

Teplen will soon roll out Microsoft Office Professional 2007 and Windows Vista Business to its 10 desktop computers, achieving the following benefits companywide:

- **Improved productivity.** “Creating documents is the heart and soul of what we do, and the new features in Microsoft Office Word 2007 make that task much easier,” Gerstein says. “As for the productivity gains from the Windows Vista search capability, we’re not only locating documents faster but also no longer reinventing the wheel. We save several minutes [that were] spent tracking down documents and hours spent re-creating them.”

- **Improved stability.** A completely unexpected benefit of Windows Vista has been improved stability of the legal practice management application. Because of memory management improvements in Windows Vista, the application is far more stable. “Nothing’s more frustrating than being under deadline, having your computer crash, and having to start all over again,” Gerstein says. “Windows Vista has fixed a problem we didn’t think could be fixed.”

Because the firm’s desktop computers are more stable, employees’ remote connections to those computers are also more stable, improving the productivity—and reducing the frustration—of employees working outside the office.

- **Faster business growth.** “Having new software-assisted efficiencies will help us take on more clients and more work, without expanding our staff,” Gerstein says. “Microsoft software helps us grow our business while keeping overhead low.”
- **Enhanced computer security.** Windows Vista also safeguards Teplen & Associates against spam and spyware, which contributes to a more stable computing environment.

Working with Allarus Technology, Teplen is next considering using Microsoft SharePoint® Products & Technologies to set up collaboration sites for sharing case data and related documents among Teplen staff and clients. “This will save Teplen staff from repeatedly responding to the same questions and help them be more responsive to clients in multiple time zones,” Eden says.