

## Triad builds a data lake to power Foot Anstey's growth

By collaborating with the Triad team, Foot Anstey took the ambitious step of implementing a data lake, long considered the preserve of much larger businesses. This strategy has prepared the firm for future growth and enhanced responsiveness to client needs.

### About the client

Foot Anstey LLP are an award-winning top 100 UK law firm and a top ten firm for revenue growth in the legal sector. Across all their services, they aim to provide commercially savvy, expert legal advice that is easily integrated and actionable in the world. Their network of seven offices supports nearly 50 partners and over 500 staff, offering both businesses and individuals specialist legal advice and services.





## The challenge

Over the last ten years, Foot Anstey has maintained steady organic growth and more than doubled revenue. The firm believes modern and innovative technology is a key building block for the sustainable growth required to drive the business forward over the next ten years. This will enable new digital services to be deployed to clients, strengthening engagement whilst providing new tools and services to their lawyers to help modern working methods.



To support this growth, the CTO at Foot Anstey decided to accelerate plans for digital transformation and transition away from a routine technology support function. Foot Anstey contacted Triad via our CTO advisory service. We initially facilitated a series of strategy discussions and workshops that led to a digital transformation strategy. This was followed by a project to implement the foundations for a data platform.

As information technology becomes more complex and distributed, a reliable real-time and self-service data access solution was needed. Foot Anstey's business data was captive within different dispersed line-of-business applications, creating challenges for how they were integrated and how data was managed. This data needed to be freed by implementing a unified data layer, consolidating information from different applications to present a single view, enhancing knowledge discovery and management for staff and clients, whilst also providing insight into how other teams engage with clients and promote internal collaboration.

## The solution

The digital transformation strategy defined a new capability where commodity information technology could be strategically sourced. This would allow Foot Anstey to focus on higher-value business development initiatives and advisory services, to support the continued expansion of the business.

The Digital, Data & Technology team was asked to establish the platform, the single company-wide entry point for data and metadata management, security, and audit.

The business wanted to realise benefits from the new platform as quickly as possible, so Triad recommended an approach to design and implement the solution with phased delivery. The foundation implementation comprised of the following products: Azure Data Lake Gen 2, Azure Synapse, Azure Data Factory, Self-hosted Integration Runtime and Azure Key Vault. Two further phases delivered the remaining services comprising the following products: Power BI, Azure VM Jump Box, Azure AD Domain Services, Azure Bastion, Azure Vnet, Azure Site-to-site VPN and Azure Log Analytics.

An Azure Data Lake is at the heart of the platform, satisfying the need to centrally store and make available all of the firm's data. Pipelines ingest on-premises SQL database data incrementally every hour and store it in the data lake. Synapse serverless SQL transformation processes combine data from different systems and reshape it into a star schema for Power BI and other structures for various applications. The platform can be expanded to provide planned new features utilising Azure Cognitive Services.

Triad took advantage of its partner relationship with Microsoft, engaging one of their cloud solution architects to validate the design and help us transition the configuration of Azure Services into a secure private cloud.



**“It has been extremely helpful having someone with knowledge of the Microsoft ecosystem, in particular, the Azure Analytics platform, to facilitate a smooth and productive project. The guidance and mentoring through design and into building the foundation architecture, including Azure DevOps, has fast-tracked what we could have achieved on our own.”**

**- Andrew Commander** | Solutions Architect, Foot Anstey

# The result

This highly successful initiative has met a broad set of business goals. The foundations for a modern data platform provide a blueprint to expand from and add further data to the platform. Thanks to the collaboration and knowledge transfer during design and implementation, the in-house team can now build out the platform and sustain it.

The data platform is improving reporting and automating routine activities, allowing Foot Anstey to focus on delivering value-added services to its clients. This is a key milestone of the data strategy that will enable great value for years to come.



**“Triad are a trusted and valued advisor. They helped define an IT strategy that is transforming our IT service. To help drive the strategy forward, Triad provided mentorship and implementation expertise to extract maximum value out of our investment in Microsoft technologies and cloud platform.”**

- Dave Bloor | CTO, Foot Anstey

**“The Triad management consulting team worked with the technology leadership function at Foot Anstey to develop a multi-year roadmap that would secure Foot Anstey’s position as one of the UK’s pre-eminent law firms. Using a multi-horizon approach, we developed principles and goals for the technology team and the wider business. Leveraging existing assets in tandem with driving transformational change was key to the approach. As such, we recommended that Foot Anstey pursue a wholehearted adoption and exploitation of the Microsoft 365 platform alongside an array of exciting interventions that would test, explore, and ingrain new ways of working. It is extremely gratifying to have continued our engagement with Foot Anstey over the last few years and to witness the strides they are making on the back of this strategy.”**

- Adrian Leer | Managing Director, Triad Group Plc

