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From Manual Overhead to a Streamlined Practice

How Shawn Aiken Elevated His Arbitration Practice with Case Anywhere



Organization

Shawn Aiken,
Arbitrator

AIKEN THOMASON ADR

Location

Phoenix,
Arizona

Practice Focus

Commercial
Arbitration

Platform

Case Anywhere,
by Proceed



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CASE STUDY

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BACKGROUND

A Seasoned Arbitrator, a Growing Practice

Shawn Aiken is one of Arizona's most respected commercial arbitrators, with more than 30 years of ADR experience. Based in Phoenix, Shawn draws cases from the American Arbitration Association (AAA) panel as well as privately administered matters, the latter ranging from straightforward two-party disputes to complex commercial cases involving dozens of separate filings. In early 2026, Shawn transitioned to focus exclusively on arbitration and operates alongside partner Tim Thomason and long-tenured case manager DeAnn Buchmeier.

Shawn's practice is built on a conviction that case management is not a back-office afterthought. It is core to delivering fair, efficient outcomes. "In arbitrations, case management is often overlooked by the parties and arbitrators," he notes.

"Managing from filing the demand to award, you want to drive as many efficiencies as possible, so the outcome is both fair and efficient."

Shawn Aiken, Arbitrator

THE CHALLENGE

A Flood of Emails and a Scattered Document Record

Before adopting Case Anywhere in 2021, Shawn's practice relied on Worldox (a document management system) and Microsoft Outlook to handle the flow of filings, correspondence, and exhibit exchanges across active matters. The approach worked — but at a cost.

A garden-variety commercial arbitration can generate 60 to 70 separate filings. Multiply that across 30 active cases at various stages and the administrative burden grows quickly. Documents had to be received, routed, and tracked manually. Service lists had to be maintained separately. Every upload and every email introduced the possibility of error, whether it be a missed filing, a document sent to the wrong party or not received, or a gap in the record that only surfaced later.

The cognitive burden of manual administration, Shawn adds, was just as significant as the time lost. "Whether it was me or a case manager, somebody had to go dig around in the DMS," he notes. And for an arbitrator billing at a premium hourly rate, time spent on administration is time not spent resolving disputes.



THE SOLUTION

One Hub. Every Document. Every Party.

Shawn adopted Case Anywhere in 2021 for all of his privately administered matters. He runs a private-labeled hub under his own brand, offering a dedicated, secure case site that counsel, parties, and staff access for filings, communications, and case calendaring. Tim Thomason maintains his own separate hub, offering a built-in confidentiality wall between their respective matters.

The platform is used from case initiation through final award across what Shawn describes as 19 to 20 distinct workflow steps. According to Shawn, Case Anywhere has a meaningful effect on nearly all of them.

THE RESULTS

Five Dimensions of Impact

1 | Operational Efficiency: Hours Reclaimed, Friction Eliminated

The headline change, in Shawn's words, is that his practice "no longer has to rely on a DMS or Outlook." Documents are uploaded once to a single hub and instantly available to all authorized parties. No manual routing, no email attachments, no duplicated effort.

Shawn estimates the time savings at a few hours per month per active case. This means time reclaimed from tracking down documents, confirming service, and managing the administrative overhead that previously fell to him or his case manager. For an arbitrator with a premium hourly rate, those hours represent meaningful economic value. The platform also reduces overall elapsed time from case initiation to final award.

2 | Elevated Experience for Counsel, Staff, and Parties

Case Anywhere keeps "all of the players — lawyers, assistants, paralegals, arbitrator — looking at one set of documents without having to manage uploads, SharePoint, or emails." Automated reminders keep the case schedule moving, and the clean, readable interface leaves no ambiguity about what has been filed, when, and by whom.

One feature Shawn highlights is the platform's handling of service lists. In email-based workflows, ensuring the right documents reach the right parties is a persistent source of friction and risk. Case Anywhere eliminates that problem: a single upload triggers automatic notification to every party on the service list, and anyone needing to be added or removed can manage that directly.

Beyond the platform itself, Shawn points to the quality of Case Anywhere's operations team as a differentiator. "We think very highly of the ops side of Case Anywhere," he notes, citing the responsiveness of their intake, billing, and support staff as a reliable extension of his own practice. For a small shop where administrative capacity is finite, having a capable team behind the platform matters.

3 | Audit Trail as a Risk Management Tool

One of the less obvious, but critically important benefits came into focus during an active matter. A party claimed they had not received notice of a hearing. Shawn was able to pull Case Anywhere's audit log and use it directly in drafting the award, establishing definitively that notice had been properly served. "I've got an audit log from Case Anywhere, and I'm able to use that," he said. In a world where disputes about notice can derail or challenge an award, an independently verifiable service record is significant protection.

4 | Brand Differentiation and Professional Signaling

Shawn's private-labeled hub, powered by Case Anywhere, is branded with his logo and accessible through his website. It reinforces his professional identity every time a party or counsel logs in, and it sends a signal about the caliber of the practice.

"Every time somebody accesses the hub, it's branded with our logo. It drives home who we are and what we're trying to do — and sets us apart."

Shawn Aiken, Arbitrator

Since refocusing on arbitration in early 2026, the private label has also enabled Shawn to market his standalone arbitration practice independently, without affecting the Aiken Thomason brand. He actively promotes his Case Anywhere hub in bar association presentations and on both of his websites. "It's not something to hide; we market it."

5 | Enterprise-Grade Infrastructure, Without the Enterprise Overhead

For most independent neutrals and mid-sized ADR organizations, the operational infrastructure that large institutions take for granted has simply been out of reach. The majority are still managing cases through email, disconnected systems, and manual processes.

"I can operate cases with thousands of pages, confidential uploads, redacted documents, privilege logs — all in a secure and manageable way," Shawn notes. That kind of capacity, without dedicated IT infrastructure, is precisely what Case Anywhere makes possible.

Solo arbitrators, two-person shops, and mid-sized ADR organizations can now access case administration capabilities that previously required significant in-house technology investment. The infrastructure scales to the practice, not the other way around.