

LITTLER'S CASESMART PLATFORM DRIVES EFFICIENCY, WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Solution gives clients intelligence to manage business risks and provides greater quality and consistency in the legal process.

By Chris DiMarco

The legal technology market is full of options that claim to bring efficiency to every facet of practice, driving down costs by shifting reliance on manual and time-consuming processes to automation. But despite the increased efficiency, lawyers do not necessarily agree on what to do with that extra time.

“More and more we’re hearing from lawyers that work/life balance is a primary factor considered in job satisfaction. I think the idea of that satisfaction has evolved considerably over time. The goal of only wanting to be a partner or have the corner office has changed. There are still plenty of lawyers who want to be on a partnership track, but there are also those who say ‘I want to be a lawyer, but I want to have a life,’” said Scott Forman, shareholder at Littler Mendelson and co-chair of the firm’s innovation council, in an interview with Legaltech News.

This increasingly common workforce goal was the



Illustration via iStock

genesis of Littler’s FlexTime Attorney (FTA) program, which in conjunction with its Littler CaseSmart software package aims to offer a less expensive option for clients, while providing better work/life balance for attorneys who want it.

The Littler CaseSmart platform compiles a client’s

Equal Employment Opportunity charges and single-plaintiff employment litigation cases, including information on the types of claims pending, the plaintiff's attorney and venues involved, as well as other case specific data, such as what client policy formed the basis of the charge or lawsuit, the alleged bad actor(s), and what is the legal theory of the claim. This information populates a dashboard that allows clients to see their portfolio of charges and litigation and to identify the potential trigger points for causing those charges and lawsuits to be filed so they may proactively manage possible areas of exposure, address perception or compliance issues, and reduce the risk of future litigation.

"We created Littler CaseSmart as a direct result of the recession," Forman said. "We were trying to figure out a way to provide low cost solutions to our clients, and leverage technology to provide better legal services."

During the conception phase, Forman says Littler addressed four areas to drive efficiency for its clients; reengineering the process of providing legal services, focusing on getting dedicated alternative staffing for clients, driving the use of technology, and providing better intelligence through data analytics.

CaseSmart was the resulting tool of that deep dive, and FlexTime is its complementary staffing model, allowing clients to connect with a dedicated attorneys. Forman said that the typical FlexTime Attorney generally falls into one of two camps; those with young children, and those who want to continue practicing but no longer

want the full rigors of litigation. The program is a win for those lawyers due to the flexibility of scheduling, and Littler, which outfits each attorney with a secure remotely managed workstation, saves on the cost of office space.

"It's also a win for our clients because those lower costs are passed on to them. They pay lower rates when they use a FlexTime Attorney (FTA) and benefit from using lawyers with a singular focus," Forman said. "They may handle administrative charges for example, or in litigation they only handle a discrete path within litigation. So we have brief writer FTAs who only do brief writing, or legal research FTAs who only do research. The idea there is they become true subject matter experts, making them more efficient. And because they're dedicated to a single client, it drives up their consistency further."

In terms of where Forman sees this type of solution taking the practice of labor law in the future, he says that the explosion of technology options coupled with the modern workforce's calls for better work life balance will likely make the type of option more and more frequent in the space. He summarized: "There is no doubt in my mind that this is the future of labor and employment, we started with administrative charges, and have been able to roll this out to other subspecialties we cover."

Reprinted with permission from the March 13, 2015 edition of Law Technology News. © 2015 ALM Media Properties, LLC. All rights reserved. Further duplication without permission is prohibited. For information, contact 877-257-3382 or reprints@alm.com. #010-03-15-01