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Legal Knowledge Management: A Holistic Model

White Paper One

presented by

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Legal Research Center (www.lrci.com) has been helping corporate law departments and their outside counsel reduce their research costs and efficiently manage their legal knowledge for nearly 25 years. LRC's primary services are outsourced legal research, knowledge management, and compliance e-training. LRC's research attorneys are honors graduates who have practiced law for at least two years, and many for over twenty-five, in major law firms and corporate law departments throughout the United States. The corporate vision of LRC is to remain the nation's premier provider of outsourced legal research, knowledge management, and compliance e-training services, culturally committed to operational excellence, customer intimacy and product/service innovation.

I. Overview

A) Introduction

While the legal community slowly digests the large volume of knowledge management literature, some heartburn remains due to the subject's daunting complexity. With the additional challenges imposed by document management solutions, portals, change management, and other associated topics, it is no wonder that many law firms and corporate counsel are leery to bite off more than they can chew. What once seemed a simple proposition is now complicated by the varied menu of possible knowledge management solutions. But how hard can it really be to store, share, and reuse information within and between law firms and corporate legal departments?

To answer this question, two fundamental needs must be considered: (1) *Information Asset Management*, and (2) *Organizational Requirements*. Coordinating a dual response for these disparate issues is the key to knowledge management success, and solutions have now emerged that address both issues. In so doing, knowledge management solutions can finally achieve promised returns without the jarring effects of complex system implementations or organizational change management. The result is not only a faster path to a positive return on investment, but greater long-term, measurable benefits as well.

B) Background

Knowledge management (KM) is a complex topic, making it impossible to discuss comprehensively in a single paper. Mindful of this challenge, this paper is presented as the first in a series. This initial discussion provides readers with an overview of the central issues confronting lawyers and KM leaders, as well as the attributes required for a successful KM solution.¹ Future papers will focus more closely on specific solutions, their implementation requirements, and KM case studies. In addition, Legal Research Center, Inc. (LRC), and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

¹ A knowledge management glossary is provided at the end of this paper for the reader's reference.

will publish later this year the most comprehensive *KM Study* ever conducted. This series of White Papers is intended to assist practitioners in better understanding and successfully achieving their KM objectives.

To avoid becoming mired in technical and definitional questions, the legal sector should first focus on the KM value proposition. At its simplest, the only reason lawyers need concern themselves with managing their knowledge is so that it can be accessed or reused in the future, with the greatest benefit derived from reuse. Lawyers create workproduct to complete a transaction, defend against litigation, or participate in business operations. In pursuing these tasks, lawyers spend substantial time searching for and re-creating existing workproduct “content.” For example, BAE Systems commissioned a study that found 80% of employees spend an average of thirty minutes per day retrieving information, while 60% of employees spend an hour each day duplicating work previously developed.²

LRC’s experience with workproduct databases demonstrates a minimum hit-rate of 25% in searches for highly relevant, existing content. Additionally, as reported by Friedland et al., legal research and writing costs are reduced by a minimum of 25% when organizations effectively manage these functions.³ These last two statistics are measurable values derived from actual workproduct databases. The reported savings are derived not only from time and work-effort reductions and productivity improvements, but also extend to decreases in direct expenses such as online research utilization. Well-crafted legal KM solutions should only increase these benefits as the volume of material and number of sources that can now be effectively managed and searched increases.

² Kinsley Martin, *Show Me the Money: Measuring the Return of KM*, KnowledgeManagement 12, 13 (LawNet, Nov. 2002), [available at](http://www.peertopeer.org/pdf/knowledgemanagement.pdf) <http://www.peertopeer.org/pdf/knowledgemanagement.pdf>.

³ Edward A. Friedland et al., *Legal Research Management*, in *Successful Partnering Between Inside and Outside Counsel*, ch. 19, at 19-5 (Robert L. Haig, ed., West Group & ACCA 2002).

II. Information Asset Management

A) The Old Model—Information Asset Management Based on Structured Models

Existing KM solutions generally utilize technologies for managing structured data. Data is structured when the type of information that is entered into a system is *pre-defined*, and its *relationship* to associated information is *fixed*. Every day, professionals and consumers engage in untold numbers of transactions involving structured data. Time and billing systems, spreadsheets, and financial databases all involve structured data. In these applications, the user inserts specific information into particular columns or fields (client, matter, practice group, hours, cost, expenses, etc.). This type of system does very well for applications where all of the information that will be stored can be pre-determined, and where the user can repeatedly execute large numbers of similar transactions, as with a timesheet.

Relational databases are now the preferred tool to manage and store structured data. A relational database stores all of the information for a particular application in a set of tables. Relationships between data must be pre-defined by explicitly establishing a set of common keys. This is an inherent weakness in this model; such relationships are inflexible and impossible to achieve where content is constantly changing. Modern relational databases, and associated information asset management technologies, evolved from the earlier transaction-oriented model. Modern practice management systems are the most prevalent examples of this type of system in the legal industry.

Not only did this model become pervasive, but it also developed into the accepted norm for managing information. Using this model, organizations have spent the last thirty years largely focused on solutions that address structured content applications. Over the same period, however, organizations have also generated tremendous volumes of unstructured content, and management and retrieval solutions for this value-rich asset have thus far been lacking.

B) The New Model—The Real World is Unstructured

As its name implies, *unstructured* content is not easily pre-defined, and its relationship to associated information is *variable*, meaning it may change from document to document. A legal brief, opinion letter, contract, memo, or any other piece of legal writing falls into this category. This type of content represents the overwhelming majority of existing content in most enterprises, surpassing 80% by some estimates.⁴ While a contract or another formalized document may follow a particular format, imagine trying to organize all of the information it contains on a spreadsheet. Even if the effort was successful, it is unlikely that the way the information is organized for a contract will necessarily meet requirements for a brief on a different topic.

The real limitation of the relational model in an unstructured world is revealed when information in a document is organized for search, retrieval, and reuse within a KM system. Traditional solutions focus on coding the document, or on placing workproduct into physical hierarchies. These solutions force unstructured information into a fixed relational model, which negates many important and valuable attributes of complex and substantive work.

For example, consider the relevant legal topics included in a complex contract. Such a document is likely to include provisions regarding indemnity, damages, choice of law, licensing, intellectual property, confidentiality, and many other issues. The document is more than just a “contract”—its individual clauses are also a series of discrete information assets that exist within the contract’s larger construct. Most traditional solutions would require the document to be coded or placed in a set file location according to the contract’s topic or type. Most solutions make it difficult to find a discreet intellectual property transfer clause under California law without wading through an enormous number of irrelevant documents. Few lawyers have the luxury of coding all of their documents to find these concepts at a later point, and

⁴ See Martin, *supra* note 2, at 13.

forcing complex documents into a fixed hierarchy ignores the range of valuable clauses contained within a single sample. As a result, distinct assets may be ignored, despite their potential to reduce costs and redundancy and to improve quality.

C) Why Force the Unnatural?

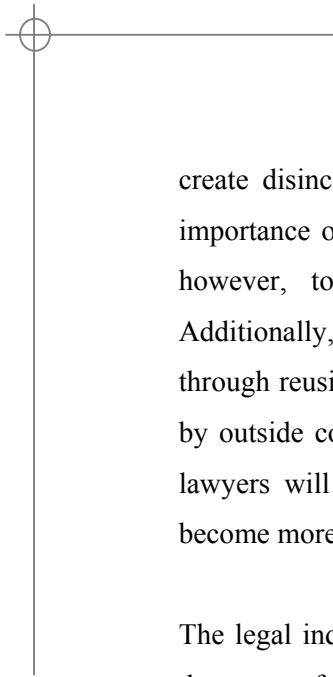
The best assets to access through KM systems are these complex and wide-ranging unstructured documents, but new types of KM solutions are necessary to effectively manipulate these resources. The neurons in the human brain form a complex *web* that permit messages to move from distant points in the network without a fixed path existing between the two. It is no accident that the World Wide Web employs that term, as it operates in the same way. Both were designed to allow for multiple means of passing information and establishing relationships, to limit bottlenecks and mitigate risk if one area is out of service or is damaged.

When lawyers evaluate information, write memos, or make arguments, they are constantly drawing on a wealth of information that has no specific, pre-defined organizational structure. Nonetheless, lawyers are able to aggregate this information, establish relationships, and retrieve relevant concepts. This complex thought process explains the difficulty in trying to categorize a particular document that comprises a series of discreet concepts with relationships to the topic at issue. It is relatively easy for a lawyer to see how intellectual property transfer, damages, and choice of law are all related to a contract, but most KM solutions cannot make that distinction without substantial coding or other costly manual processing.

III. Organizational Requirements

A) Paradigm Shift

Lawyers spend substantial time recreating knowledge that either already exists within their own organization or resides with associated firms or clients. Incentives have not always been in place for law firms working on a billable hour basis to be efficient and reuse information they already have. In fact, most law firms effectively



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create disincentives for their associates to reuse relevant content because of the importance of billable hours.⁵ Most law firms are now under increasing pressure, however, to be more efficient and to reuse work previously completed. Additionally, corporate counsel are increasingly looking at methods to limit costs through reusing existing content developed internally or on the corporation's behalf by outside counsel and legal research partners.⁶ In the current environment, most lawyers will agree that being more efficient and re-using information will only become more important in the future.

The legal industry of course predates technology. In the Anglo-American system, the roots of modern authority extend back to the Dark Ages. While most large corporations or law firms do not date back eight centuries, they may date back eight decades. Over many decades, long-lived law firms and corporate counsel develop sets of formal and informal processes to develop their legal knowledge. Many consultants view pre-KM history as irrelevant, rather than as a valuable lesson. But business processes that corporations and law firms have developed over time are immensely valuable. Intentionally or not, these practical processes develop because they consistently help organizations complete transactions, create contracts, and organize litigation. The best KM solutions integrate the lessons of these processes to achieve greater efficiencies without requiring a wholesale departure from existing practices.

Lawyers have not always been the on the leading edge of adopting new technologies to support their core business, but they have done so when it was to their benefit. For decades lawyers used typewriters to draft documents and prepare correspondence. In time, word processors and desktop computers replaced typewriters. For centuries, lawyers used cumbersome library and reference materials for legal research. Over time, online research tools augmented books.

⁵ See, e.g., Rees W. Morrison, *Law Department Benchmarks: Myths, Metrics, and Management*, 143-44 (2d ed. 2001) (describing hourly billing basis for outside counsel); Amy I. Stickel, *GCs Are Crunched By the Numbers*, *Corporate Legal Times* (May 2002), available at <http://www.cltmag.com/editorial/surveys/may02.cfm>.

⁶ See Stickel, *supra* note 5 (“ . . . nearly 60 percent of [GC] respondents never share databases But more than 60 percent plan to do so in the future.”).

Two important lessons can be drawn from the law's technological evolution. First, lawyers were willing to introduce technologies that improved productivity, albeit at varying rates. While law firms continue to emphasize billable hours, no managing partner would advocate a return to time-consuming typewriters as a revenue-increasing measure. Computerized word processing represents a minimum level of accepted efficiency. Second, the accepted tools were successfully introduced because they fit within existing processes, limiting the need for substantial reengineering activities. Word processing was a natural extension of typewriters, online research naturally complemented offline research. These lessons should be kept in mind when evaluating the effectiveness of KM solutions.

B) Core Requirements

Lawyers create “content” or “information assets” to address a particular question or issue. These assets are usually created by a lawyer evaluating a set of facts and applying applicable authorities in the appropriate format (e.g., memo, contract, or other document type). Lawyers are paid to complete this skilled task and not to code or organize their workproduct for KM purposes. Moreover, lawyers are challenged to complete their core responsibilities in the time allotted, in addition to the new tasks that continuously arise. Paralegals, law librarians, and KM staff may have more time allotted for such functions, but their time is not limitless either.

Another underestimated factor is the disruptive cost to an organization when implementing fundamental changes in their business process. It is relatively straightforward to estimate the expected return once fully implemented,⁷ but ROI calculations rarely contemplate the near- and intermediate-term disruptive effects, which may include:

- 1) Increased training cost for new tools and processes;
- 2) Increased document preparation time for KM repository use;

⁷ For a detailed overview of KM ROI Models, see generally Martin, *supra* note 2.

- 3) Increased overhead to supervise and “enforce” KM best practices;
- 4) Decreased efficiency in core responsibilities;
- 5) Increased technical infrastructure costs; and
- 6) Increased help-desk support requirements.

While any solution will have some organizational impact, the net short-term effect should be net-neutral. Many of the OCM-intensive solutions will result in significant increases in these attributes until changes have been fully implemented, at some distant point in the future. Consider also that over time, efficiency losses are cumulative for an entire organization. For example, disruptive effects that lead to an average increase of three minutes per information asset may easily mean an incremental increase of fifteen minutes per attorney per day.⁸ Over the course of a work-year this translates to sixty-five hours, or an opportunity cost of \$14,625 per lawyer.⁹ Some lawyers and corporate counsel may have higher or lower average estimates for the number of estimated information assets per workday, or billable rates. Regardless of the numbers used, ROI calculations may not start at zero, but rather from a net-negative value associated with the disruptive effects of a solution requiring significant process changes.

Given these disruptive effects, KM solutions should limit their impact on existing processes, and focus on improving efficiencies based on existing operational models. It is unreasonable to assume that the processes law firms and corporate counsel have adopted over the last several decades are purely accidental. And even if their adoption was accidental, the fact that these processes are ingrained in the way legal knowledge is developed and delivered remains important. Just as it took many years to adopt these processes, it will take many years to establish new norms. The task that remains before us is to find a means to organize and share legal knowledge with the least impact to existing processes.

⁸ Assuming an average of five documents/day/attorney or staff member. This average is not necessarily the number of documents that would be submitted to a KM solution, but rather the total increase in time per document that may result from any of the disruptive effects.

⁹ Assuming a 2400-hour billable target and a blended rate of \$225/hour.

Although this paper emphasizes the importance of existing processes and infrastructures wherever possible, it is important to articulate some basic organizational requirements:

- 1) **Law firms and corporate counsel need to clearly articulate KM strategies and objectives.** Articulating a clearly-defined strategy for knowledge management will show all participants how they will derive value from KM. If the solution provides the value promised, lawyers will join, albeit at different speeds.
- 2) **Lawyers have to believe that technology solutions provide a mechanism to achieve this objective.** KM is not solely a technology initiative, but effective technology is critical given the large volume of information that must be managed and shared. Lawyers need to identify technical solutions that achieve their objectives, while integrating with existing processes.
- 3) **Lawyers must be prepared to share information with others within their organization, or with their clients.** This requirement places an affirmative obligation on lawyers to share knowledge proactively. This subject is particularly difficult when outside law firms learn that a client legal department will make this knowledge—paid for by the corporation—available to its other outside counsel and legal supplier partners.
- 4) **Corporations and lawyers must be willing to commit a modest amount of capital to achieve their KM objectives.** Properly developed, a KM solution should achieve promised returns, but developing that solution still requires a commitment of fiscal and human capital. Carefully evaluating alternatives and mapping them to existing process and technical infrastructures will help limit capital requirements.

These requirements do not necessarily require a multi-phase change management program. They do take an organizational commitment to share and reuse information. But this commitment should not so occupy an organization that it impacts completion of normal business. With strong leadership, a progressive underlying technology, and proactive planning, the vast majority of an

organization's KM objectives will be met in a surprisingly short period of time at a reasonable cost.

IV. What is Required

In discussing the attributes required for a successful KM solution, a series of challenges should be addressed. Many solutions address these challenges with separate tools. For example, they may offer some mechanism to reduce manual coding and conversion, but still force data into a relational database that retains many of the same limitations. Or solutions with excellent long-term potential require change management so costly and onerous that viability is a real issue. In each case the promised benefits fall far short because solution providers focused on one part of a larger problem. Instead of trying to address each of these challenges in turn, it is necessary to take a more holistic approach.

In evaluating a more holistic approach, it is important to review the conclusions previously discussed:

- 1) Trying to force unstructured content into fixed-relational systems is not only difficult, but also generally inflexible.
- 2) The human brain uses and organizes information in patterns that are not fixed, or pre-determined.
- 3) Lawyers are often interested in discrete pieces of information within a larger construct, and not necessarily in the entire document.
- 4) Law firms and corporate counsel cannot rely on substantially new business processes, intensive coding exercises, or large-scale content conversions in order to access and reuse knowledge that has already been created.

A) A Holistic Approach

1) Taxonomies

The best place to begin a discussion of a holistic solution is with *taxonomies*.

Taxonomies are important because they allow us to categorize a set of



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information assets, usually along a logical or vertically-aligned hierarchy based on related concepts. Most taxonomies are vertically aligned and organized around legally meaningful terms and concepts. Where taxonomies fall short is where they form the *physical* manifestation of a KM repository. For example, a user must attempt to place an asset at a given point in that taxonomy (e.g., Agreements/Contracts/Software/Licensing). Aside from the difficulty in the ongoing management of this type of solution, most contracts have dozens of relevant provisions that are applicable across many areas. Taxonomies therefore need to be a way to logically organize information, or to identify what information should be organized, but they should not become a physical embodiment. In this example, “indemnity” may not be immediately apparent and unless properly coded, a valuable existing clause may remain buried and unusable. A related KM concept is the *thesaurus*. A thesaurus allows identification of concepts not explicitly set forth but associated with expressed terms. While “defect” may not exist within a particular document, “product failure” may. This connectability is crucial because lawyers draw these types of inferences when analyzing material, and failing to replicate this process in KM may leave important assets untapped.

There are three principal ways a taxonomy is created: (1) manually created by domain experts; (2) automatically generated by a software application; or (3) pre-packaged as part of a solution. Manually creating a taxonomy provides a level of certainty not typically available in automated tools, or when adopting a pre-packaged solution. A manually-created taxonomy remains fixed, however, and requires constant updates if it is to remain meaningful as content changes. Automatically-generated taxonomies are more efficient, and allow for rapid updates as content changes. Unfortunately, these taxonomies do not provide the same level of certainty, and quality rates are dependent on both the software and corpus of documents upon which the taxonomy is based. Pre-packaged taxonomies are useful for rapid implementation, particularly if they are based on content or practices similar to a given firm or law department. The downside is the inherent inflexibility of pre-packaged taxonomies, especially where the taxonomy serves as the basis for the KM solution, or fits poorly with a firm or

law department's practices. These pre-packaged solutions are generally over-inclusive to compensate for their lack of flexibility, resulting in a law firm or law department receiving a taxonomy with thousands of concepts. For most law firms or law departments, a taxonomy of this size is overkill, and leads to sparsely populated content areas when browsing through the repository. A preferred solution would facilitate the automatic generation of a taxonomy and related concepts based on analysis of a corpus of content, use a custom taxonomy, or employ some combination of both. Taxonomies can be quickly developed using the automated tool but provide a level of certainty through manual editing.

2) Concept Extraction

Once a taxonomy and thesaurus are developed, efforts can turn to organizing content based on these constructs. In order to avoid massive custom conversion efforts or never-ending manual coding, automated tools can accomplish this task. Current automated tools are much more responsive than those of even a few years ago. Individual documents no longer need to be manually coded, which is not only inefficient because of the manual nature of the process, but also because of the descriptive limitations of a handful of key words. In the alternative method, relevant concepts and information are extracted and managed by the KM system, negating the need for an individual to try and explain what information lay within the document. The efficiency benefits in using automated tools are obvious, though most lawyers are concerned with accuracy levels.

While automated tools are not perfect, it is widely held that manual coding is hardly perfect either. If different lawyers are asked to code the same document, there is no guarantee that they will code them similarly. Extend this variability to a large law firm or law department and its outside counsel, and accuracy as well as consistency rates are likely decline further. To understand more fully the potential of consistency problems with manual processing, consider the two variables in manual coding: (1) the number of documents, and (2) the number of

individuals. As the number of documents increases, potential errors multiply. A concurrent increase in the number of individuals results in a geometric progression in the error rate. Automated tools remove the second variable (people), which has a greater impact on potential rates of consistency.

There is another important topic to consider at this point. Recall that lawyers are really interested in identifying not just the type of document (e.g., a software contract), but also all of the discrete concepts within the document. Traditional full-text search engines may allow a user to find a particular word in a document, but they have no idea that the word “defect” is a legal concept any more than the word “dog” could be a legal concept. In order to gain an understanding of what particular words and phrases mean, the application must extract a document’s “metadata.” Metadata is simply information about information. Metadata allows a system to know that “defect” is a legal concept, “Ford Motor Company” is a corporation, “California” is a geographic attribute, and “6 U.S.C. 1482” represents a statute. This higher order of information about content allows the user to retrieve information that is more meaningful, reducing the “noise” often returned by traditional search engines.

Once a taxonomy and thesaurus are in place, the system knows what concepts to extract. In addition, the application can employ algorithms¹⁰ that help elicit patterns from the data that may not be readily apparent, and extract metadata such as names, corporations, statutes, cases, geographic attributes, and other information meaningful to lawyers. These algorithms help establish relationships between pieces of information that may seem obvious to a lawyer, but not so to software applications. For example, these algorithms may notice that “engine” often appears in documents related to “automobiles,” suggesting that these two terms are related, even though there is no fixed relationship. By using a solution offering these capabilities, the user can now extract relevant information from deep within a document without having to manually code

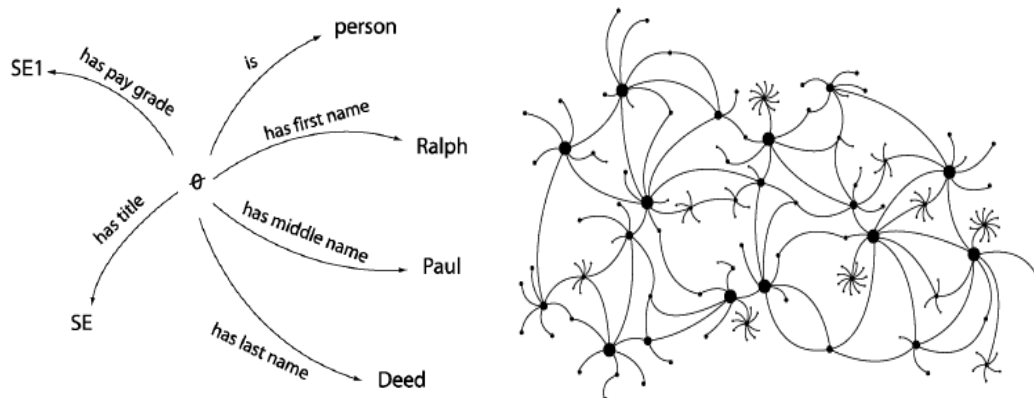
¹⁰ An algorithm is a method for evaluating a set of data, or for completing a particular task. Software applications use algorithms and mathematical calculations, constrained by assumptions, to arrive at a result.

these assets. In fact, the amount of information the user can extract from a given set of documents far exceeds anything that could be done manually without extensive processing.

3) Representing Information

The next logical consideration is the organization and storage of information. Most information has historically been forced into a structured form with fixed relationships. Instead of storing all of this metadata in a set of relational database tables, one model extracts and parses metadata into Resource Descriptive Framework (RDF). Like XML is a World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) standard for representing content, so RDF is a standard for representing metadata. Large quantities of information are then reduced to a series of short statements, whose relationship is represented by a mathematical concept known as Directed Graph, as illustrated in the figure below.¹¹

Figure 1. Logical Expression of Information Represented by a Directed Graph



In essence, discrete concepts and associated objects (like people) are a series of points connected by lines. But as one can imagine, there may be many concepts and objects that are related, and so it is possible to quickly start drawing a large web of

¹¹ David Wood et al., *The Case for a New Type of Database: A Plugged-In Software White Paper* (July 22, 2002), available at http://www.lrci.com/about/investor/TKS_white_paper_US.pdf.

dots and inter-connected lines. In so doing, a model for managing information is established that mimics how the brain organizes information. Some may ask how a system is able to manage all of these relationships without explicitly establishing them, as one would with constraints and joins in a relational database. The detailed answer to that question is for a more technical paper, but Westlaw's KeyCite[®] and LexisNexis's Shepard's^{®12} are useful analogies (although they do not operate on the same technical model). Both employ a series of algorithms that identify how cases are related, and whether precedent is still valid. Each does so without individuals explicitly establishing these relationships, or editors reading each and every case and its associated impact on all potentially related cases.

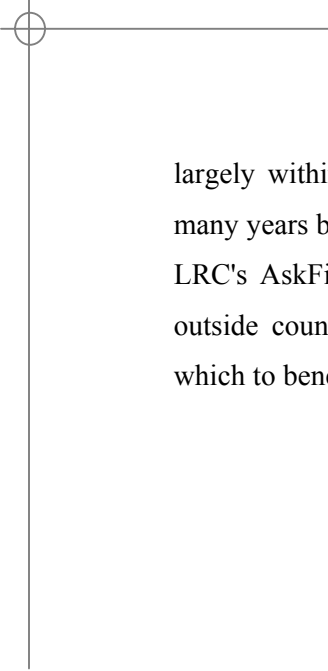
V. Conclusion

It is clear that the type of solution advocated here addresses many organizational issues. Under the new model, lawyers do not need to be concerned about proper coding or storage in a knowledge repository, nor must they materially alter their day-to-day processes. Technologists managing the KM infrastructure no longer have to monitor complex content conversion and migration projects, regularly update database models, or fight holding actions whenever content types or taxonomies change. As a result, the implementation cost and timeframe are significantly decreased and disruptive effects formerly associated with KM solutions are avoided.

The challenges posed here are uniquely interdependent. A solution that requires substantial coding impacts organizational requirements, and even when the coding and change management issues are addressed, the resulting solution often does not allow identification or reuse of discrete information assets within a larger construct. Most importantly, the disruptive effects associated with solutions for any single area are rarely incorporated into ROI analyses.

An integrated approach avoids many of the obstacles encountered in KM solutions. Technology now affords opportunities to improve knowledge sharing and reuse

¹² Each product name is the trademark of its respective corporate owner.



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largely within existing business processes. LRC worked with these concepts for many years before developing a solution based on the principles outlined here. With LRC's AskFirst™ Knowledge Management Solution¹³, law departments and their outside counsel now have an alternative, more holistic KM “best-practice” from which to benefit.

¹³ AskFirst™ is a web-based software suite that enables corporate legal departments to securely retrieve, share, and reuse workproduct among their preferred outside law firms, legal research providers, and legal publishing partners. Using metadata, peer-to-peer, and distributed database technologies to eliminate document coding and central repository databasing, the software delivers seamless searchability across multiple servers. AskFirst™'s methods for extracting and comparing metadata from distributed workproduct empower users to view these disparate resources as part of a single universe of related information, yielding a unique knowledge retrieval and reuse solution.

VI. Knowledge Management Glossary

Centralized Workproduct Repository	A central location (which may be as simple as a shared floppy disk, cd-rom, or network location or more sophisticated like a database system) in which legal workproduct is aggregated, organized, and maintained. More sophisticated systems could also include indexing, coding, and other metadata about the legal workproduct.
Content	Objects (like web pages, documents, video, etc.) containing or reflecting information or data that in the knowledge management context reflects insight, understanding, or repeatable processes or methods that you have either received from others or generated for others.
Content Classification	Systematic identification and arrangement of content into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules.
Cycle Time	The time required to complete a case, trial, negotiation, research assignment, or other legal work that has a defined start and finish.
Distributed Workproduct Repository	A database where all targeted documents and source materials are securely accessed in their native formats, on whatever server they reside, according to pre-established access and security codes. A distributed workproduct database does not require document indexing, coding, reformatting, or the transference of documents to a central location.
Knowledge Management (KM)	A term referring to the collection, organization, dissemination, and reuse of knowledge contained natively within documents and individuals' minds. The term specifically includes the development of standard forms, tools, and templates to streamline the delivery of service. Systems focused on knowledge management provide: a) value weighting to the results of internal and external document searches; and/or b) locating of the persons considered to be the "experts" on particular topics.
Legal Workproduct	Includes trial and appellate briefs, legal memoranda, pleadings, depositions, form templates, transactional documents like contracts, spreadsheets, or purchase agreements, emails, email attachments, letters; essentially any written compilation, communication, or product of your work.

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Metadata	Metadata is defined as data that describes other data. This can be understood in a limited or more expansive manner. A limited concept of metadata includes such basic elements as title, date of publication, and author; the simple data that is typically picked up in the properties associated with a particular document. A more expansive understanding of metadata includes extensive information about the contents of a particular document -- author and creation date, but data describing what the document is about and what it contains.
Metadata Extraction	The process by which specially-designed software can automatically extract meaningful information from documents. This information, or “metadata,” may include data as diverse as company and individual names, legal concepts, case law, statutory citations, or the substantive content of the selected document. Such software can identify and organize specific types of this information for a large set of documents to make them easier to find and use.
Quantitative Metrics	A measurement methodology that captures, tracks, and reports objective measurements of performance.
Qualitative Metrics	A measurement methodology that captures, tracks, and reports subjective measurements of performance.
Records	Documents created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an agency, organization, or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.
Records Management	Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, identification, receipt, organization, storage, retrieval, distribution, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information of business activities and transactions in the form of records.
Records Retention	The process by which records are kept or destroyed in accordance with business requirements, including operational, legal, regulatory and fiscal.
Task-Based Billing Codes	A system of codes used for managing legal services whereby attorneys record their time spent using specific task codes that describe the processes involved in a case or matter, as opposed to the traditional hourly figures with corresponding text descriptions. The defacto standards for these codes are the four code sets developed by a consortium of PricewaterhouseCoopers, ACCA, and the ABA in 1994 commonly referred to as the Uniform Task-Based Management System (“UTBMS”)

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Taxonomy	A structured list of meaningful terms and concepts that can be used for purposes of indexing and organizing a body of materials. A taxonomy used within an organization should ideally be reflective of the issues and business processes unique to that organization.
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