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Findings from the Ninth Annual
Law Department Operations Survey

An Evolutionary Paradigm Shift in Enterprise Legal Management

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For quite a few years, enterprise legal management (ELM) has focused on matter management and spend management. It's fair to say that effective ELM platforms were, and still are, good at what they do best: only matter and spend management. But many of these platforms were designed solely for the storage and access of data and not a whole lot more than that. This is the problem, and these systems need to be laid to rest.

Now for the good news. There has been a distinct paradigm shift and evolutionary branching off from those older ELM systems. Nowadays, the best ELM platforms facilitate engagement, are focused on process, offer an environment where the user experience is crucial and can be augmented to manage other legal processes.

While matter management tracks various details in a centralized database and spend management gives good visibility into financial information, it would hardly be accurate to say that these areas make up the totality of what law departments need to track and manage. In truth, there is so much more. Today's definition of ELM includes all of the following tasks:

- Contract management
- Legal service requests
- NDAs
- Legal holds
- Knowledge management
- 10-Q/K reporting
- Compliance
- Settlement requests
- Ethics violations
- Invention disclosure

There are solutions available that are highly focused on each of these tasks. Many innovative legal departments have acknowledged the evolutionary ELM paradigm shift and have augmented their matter and spend management arsenal with this cutting-edge technology.

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Blickstein Group 9th Annual Law Department Operations Survey

According to Blickstein Group's 9th Annual Law Department Operations Survey, LDO professionals now handle almost everything but the practice of law. They must divide their time into small chunks in order to impact many areas. On average, they spend between 4 and 13 percent of their time in nine different roles, ranging from financial reporting to outside counsel management. This points toward law departments' move toward more process and professional management. Law departments can no longer say, "we're different," and exempt themselves from normal company scrutiny.

81% of respondents agree that corporate law departments will be the primary driver of innovation and change in the legal sector.

Q: What percentage of time do you spend on law department administration?

19%

Q: What are the top challenges you face related to managing law department functions?

Top answer: Driving/implementing change

Second top answer: Identify opportunities for business improvement and cost savings

Q: What are the top challenges you expect to face over the next three years?

Top answer: Driving/implementing change

Second top answer: Identify opportunities for business improvement and cost savings

Q: What other systems are not integrated with your ELM technology but would like them to be?

Customer relationship management

Q: Do you have a plan to develop a legal department technology strategy or three-year road map which addresses how you integrate, evolve and replace your systems to support the legal department's processes and needs?

Yes: 18%   No: 34%   Planning: 48%

Q: Are there plans to update, evaluate or implement any "other" (including workflow management/automation) technologies in the next 12 months?

Yes: 8%   No: 49%   Don't know: 44%

Q: Do you have a formalized metrics/reporting program?

Yes: 36%   No: 63%

Q: I have access to the right technology to do my job:

Agree: 57%   Disagree: 43%

Q: Corporate law departments will be the primary driver of innovation and change in the legal sector:

Agree: 81%   Disagree: 19%