

# Harnessing Legal Guidance and Research Tech to **Work Smarter, Not Harder**

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Empower Your Experts. Understand everything.  
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**Tim Pollard**  
Senior Manager, Primary Law



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# Harnessing Legal Guidance and Research Tech to **Work Smarter, Not Harder**

Lawyers with deep legal knowledge build on their level of subject matter expertise over time. It's only after years of serving clients and dealing with complex matters that they acquire their specialised know-how.

While turning into a practice area expert may not happen overnight, you can get there sooner with access to smart legal research and guidance technology. Plus, leveraging resources from real-life lawyers is more accessible than you may think. This whitepaper explores how harnessing legal knowledge tech can enable you to work smarter, not harder.



## **Working smarter, not harder**

If your firm or legal department is dealing with workload surges, reduced headcount, or pressure to deliver more value, how well is it keeping up?

According to the Thomson Reuters Institute, **corporate departments globally experienced a 58% spike in their workloads last year**, while the *2020 Australia: State of the Legal Market* Report discovered that law firm partners were working four more hours than associates per month.

## **Perhaps it's time to replace working harder with working smarter.**

Think of your practice or legal department like a car. You're the brains at the wheel but if the engine's not up to it, you're going nowhere. If you're driving a state-of-the-art limousine, its high performance and safety will enable you to devote time to the more valuable things in life – rather than fiddling with a spanner in a panic under the bonnet. In other words, if your research and guidance aren't up to scratch, your advice may be compromised.



**Cassandra Siciliano**  
Senior Content Manager, New Westlaw



## Legal knowledge to enhance your expertise

David Johnson, Account Director at the Thomson Reuters Institute, says that corporate clients require their legal advisers to be...

**“ practical, strategic problem solvers who can develop relationships and demonstrate strong technical understanding of the issues at hand. ”**

Strategic advisers are only as good as the engine that fuels them. They can't waste valuable time searching for information, sifting through ad hoc cases and legislation only to arrive at a dead end. Sure, the information may be freely available online but, without the full story from a trusted source, it's hard to determine whether you have what you need.

Trusted legal research and guidance will put you in the box seat to empower your business, enhance your (firm or department's) expertise and enable you and your lawyers to be the subject matter experts your clients need you to be.



## The market won't wait

Let's look at your legal research process. Your search methods are time-consuming and involve numerous attempts to find the answer via free search engines. Sound familiar?

**‘Free’ research comes at a cost. The confidence you get from conducting free research is generally low, while the time investment is high.**

This is due to the need for lawyers to cross-check for accuracy and currency, with little to benchmark on quality.

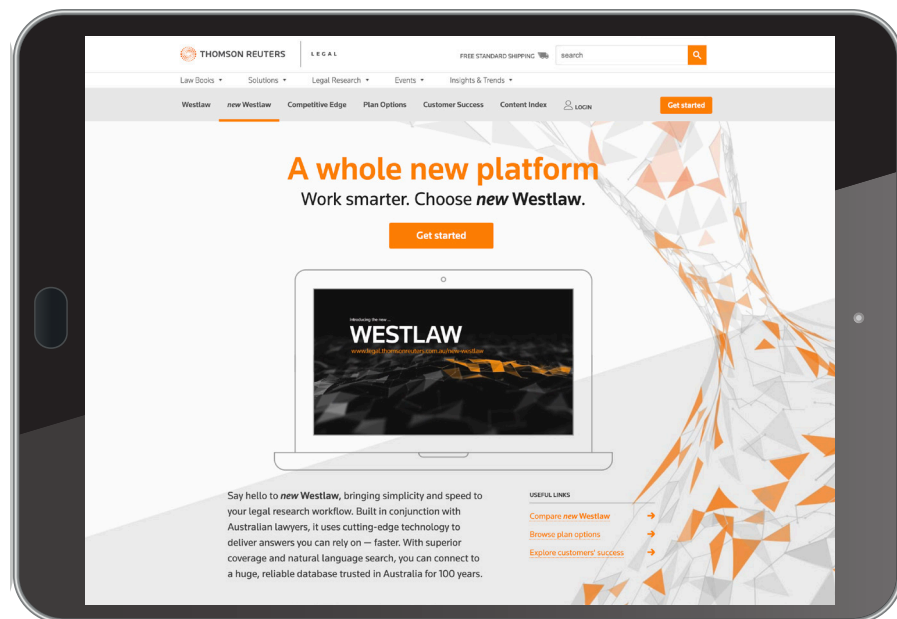
Paid legal research and guidance solutions can enable you to advise your clients more confidently than free alternatives can. Plus, your competitors may be paying for sophisticated solutions, even leveraging their investment to gain competitive advantage over your firm.



## Differentiators in legal research and guidance

Lawyers who have adopted the trusted legal research solution, new Westlaw and the legal guidance subscription, Practical Law experience the difference.

Michael Solari, Director Solari & Stock Lawyers in Sydney, who adopted [new Westlaw](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic, sees it as a market differentiator and will use it in his boutique firm's marketing to compete with the larger firms.



"We can market it that way, we can say we've got the most up-to-date research available to us."

Some law firm subscribers of Practical Law wonder how firms like theirs would manage without it.

"...I'm surprised when people start out on their own, and they don't subscribe to something like Practical Law," says Anthony Bekker, Managing Director and Principal of Biztech Lawyers.

**“I’ve looked at some of the other offerings. They are lacking in terms of the quality of the content, and the comprehensiveness. Unlike other offerings in the market, Practical Law offers comprehensive and insightful legal resources.”**

# Legal knowledge: **the essentials**

To arm your practice or department with the best legal knowledge solution, it is critical that it ticks the right boxes. **Here are the must-haves for every firm or legal department to consider:**

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## **Confidence in authoritative sources**

It is imperative that you trust your legal research and guidance materials and have confidence in the authority and comprehensiveness of its sources. Otherwise, you may miss out on the latest judgment or legislative change, leading to disappointment or even the loss of a client.

An advocate for Practical Law, Simon Bailey, CEO of Chefs on the Run Australia laments that “The trouble with everything else you find online is that it may not be the most current information. It may not have the level of detail and commentary in order for me to be 100% confident.”

Fortunately, that’s not the case with Practical Law resources, which he finds “fantastic because I can always get the most up-to-date interpretation of the law when I need to know everything is absolutely right.



**“The information is in one place, and it’s all indexed which allows me to draft any legal or procedural material quickly.”**

“The beauty of the way resources are written makes the information accessible to anyone reading it, so you can drill down as deeply as you need and still act quickly.”

For further peace of mind, your team can feel confident knowing their content has been created by lawyer writers and specialists with deep legal experience, supported by the Practical Law Advisory Board whose members advise on the direction of the service.

Michael Solari shares Simon’s confidence when speaking of his experience of new Westlaw, which features one of Australia’s largest collections of authorised and specialist law reports, including the Federal Court Reports and the Commonwealth Law Reports.

“I think that one of the best things is that it will mean that my lawyers will be more confident [in advising the client and] that their research is comprehensive and up to date. New Westlaw is user-friendly and they are able to find things easily.”



**Tim Perry**  
Director, Practical Law,  
Asia and Emerging Markets



## 2 Time means value

"If you have a boutique law firm and you've got staff who are stretched, where is their time better spent? Is it on the work that technology can do for a subscription?" asked Nancy Youssef, Founder, mentor and author from Classic Finance, in an interview with [Legal Insight](#).

Or is their time better spent on doing things that are actually growing their business and providing better customer outcomes?

For Michael Solari's lawyers, it's clear that client engagement is the winner. "For our business this means that they'll spend less time in doing research and have more time to serve clients."



**“ For those who have adopted new Westlaw, all the primary law, cases and legislation are now in one place, making searches more than **seven times faster**, ”**

explains Thomson Reuters' James Jarvis, Vice President  
– Legal Solutions:

**“ This means that for every 100 searches you run, you save one hour of time. ”**

Rather than you having to piece together all your legal research materials, new Westlaw does the work for you. By simply typing in your question in plain English it will display all the most recent cases, commentary and references.

"There is a lot of smart technology incorporated into Westlaw searches, even if the searches are simple," observes Danny King, Principal and Director, Danny King Legal. "The system displays all the useful sources related to what they have searched for – even questions."



**Christine Gray**  
Senior Manager Practical Law,  
Commercial Real Estate

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## Subject matter area expertise

If a client seeks advice on an unfamiliar issue, having access to the right, in-depth legal guidance may empower you to respond more proficiently. For Anthony Bekker, Practical Law's guides, checklists and templates enhance conversations with clients.

"There have been phone calls that I've had with clients where they're talking about something that I am not across and you can refer to it in real time, which can help at least point someone in the right direction," he says.

Additionally, firms and in-house teams with centralised access to specialised knowledge platforms are able to conduct streamlined legal research, where each lawyer is obtaining information from the same, trusted source. Such a set up means that experienced lawyers can top up their knowledge in a particular area, while acting as a training ground for young lawyers.

### **Danny King shares how new Westlaw has achieved this for her firm:**

"I need a legal research solution that enhances our flexibility and enables us to get to answers quickly in a way that is reliable, so that when juniors are doing work, I can trust they are getting the right answers efficiently."



**“ Since my firm began using new Westlaw for all their legal research and knowledge work, I’ve really noticed how simple it’s been for them to find what they need, when they need it. ”**



## 4 Interoperability the key to effective workflows

It is advantageous for lawyers to switch between new Westlaw's legal research search results and Practical Law's practice notes and other legal resources within the one user-experience. This is known as interoperability and is a stand-out feature to look for when comparing technologies, says Rob Head, Director, Proposition Lead, Legal Content Solutions at Thomson Reuters.

The good news is that when you use Practical Law, you can also access new Westlaw's analysis and commentary – and the essential law reports and court practice and procedure services – in the single interface on your computer screen, and vice versa.



**“ We’ve received positive feedback from our subscribers who use both solutions together in this fashion, as anything that simplifies the user experience can help you save time, ”**

adds Rob.



**Request a free demonstration today.**



# Minimise errors, maximise chances of a **bulletproof** argument

To reduce errors, new Westlaw offers KeyCite™, the Thomson Reuters leading global citator that enables you to [find citing references](#) to support your legal argument with confidence. Whether you're after the status of a particular case, statute, regulation, or administrative decision, patent or trademark, KeyCite™ will equip you with an unequalled competitive edge.

Combining this with new Westlaw's KeyNumber™ system, powered by the Australian Digest, you'll have seamless navigation through legal topics or issues in less familiar areas.



## Powering up your legal knowledge

Using premium technology to free up time means more can be spent on higher-value work. Advanced legal knowledge solutions are your enablers, giving you more time to focus on the bigger picture.

Leveraging a globally trusted legal research and guidance system is like having an on-demand knowledge partner in your team. With new Westlaw and Practical Law, you can enjoy the benefits of a vast, digital database.



**Kate Merrifield**  
Head of Corporate,  
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# Contact Us

Ready to harness legal guidance and research tech to work smarter, not harder? Chat to a Thomson Reuters' specialist today about the benefits of new Westlaw and Practical Law, or visit [legal.thomsonreuters.com.au/expert](https://legal.thomsonreuters.com.au/expert)



**Request a free demonstration today.**

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