

How Sharrock Pitman Legal unified their research

with Lexis Advance®



Sharrock Pitman Customer Story



**Sharrock
Pitman
Legal**



Mitchell Zadow, Principal (L) Andre Ong, Principal (R)

Background

Sharrock Pitman Legal (SPL) has been servicing the needs of Melbourne's eastern suburbs for over 50 years. The boutique law firm has always had a strong focus on community and getting the best outcomes for their clients by removing stress in what can often be stressful situations.

Since the firm was founded by Richard Pitman (now retired) as a solo conveyancing and probate practice in 1967, SPL grew steadily for many years under the leadership of David Sharrock (also retired). During that time, the firm developed into a boutique commercial and property practice at the forefront of technology and innovation. The SPL team now stands at 23 lawyers and support team, practicing across numerous areas of law. The firm's Principals, Mitchell Zadow and Andre Ong, joined the firm over 15 years ago and are Accredited Specialists in Commercial Law and Property Law, respectively - but the firm also specialises in Wills and Estate and practices in Not-for-Profit Law, Employment Law and Litigation.

Challenge

"Offering expertise across so many areas of law comes with its challenges," says Mitchell Zadow. "Ensuring our lawyers have a rich and diverse knowledge base can be tricky. But as any lawyer in a boutique firm like ours will tell you, having a diverse knowledge base is absolutely essential in ensuring not only the best client outcomes, but also the ongoing development of our team's skills and expertise."

In the past, the firm conducted research using a network of disparate sources - free sites like Google and AustLII, some paid subscriptions, area-specific online resources, and their own onsite library. "Doing things this way was time-consuming, and inefficient from a cost perspective," says Zadow. "Our lawyers are highly skilled and incredibly dedicated to their work, and we needed a unified research solution that would save them time and effort and deliver a high standard of excellence - and allow them to focus on some of the more people-centric aspects of their jobs. As a firm whose mission is grounded in helping our community, that's essential for us."

The solution SPL was seeking had to be affordable, easy to use, and extensive enough to cover the various areas of law they practice.



The Solution

“We decided to implement Lexis Advance for a number of reasons,” says Zadow. “It gives us access to a vast database of legislation, cases, and precedents. It’s unified and central, which means our lawyers only have to go to one place to conduct their research. And it integrates seamlessly with our practice management system, Lexis Affinity.”

The integration of the firm’s research and practice management solution also allows them further efficiency gains by enabling greater visibility and sharing of information amongst staff. Multiple lawyers can share resources on a particular client matter, and research on Lexis Advance can be saved within the respective matter on Lexis Affinity, to be picked up at a later time.

The solution has provided a range of tangible benefits to SPL, which have been felt right across the firm. “Our litigation team has found Lexis Advance makes it much easier to assess whether a case has been overturned or is still relevant, and to quickly ascertain the most relevant cases when using the general search function,” says Zadow. He notes that in a recent matter the litigation team were able to quickly determine whether contributory negligence can be awarded in misleading or deceptive conduct claims.

“Our employment lawyer has found Lexis Advance particularly useful for researching decisions with respect to the termination of employment of injured employees,” he continues.

According to Zadow “Lexis Advance has proved to be a game changer in supporting the growth, research skills, and professional development of the firm’s junior lawyers.”

“One of our junior lawyers said she uses Lexis primarily for the guidance section in order to gain access to a great summary of relevant legislation and case law. Another says he has found it useful finding precedent clauses for deeds or agreements.”

Implementation and outcome

There’s no doubt that for many boutique firms who are already time-poor, the idea of any productivity decrease or downtime is a scary thought - even if it stands to benefit the business in the long run. But ease of implementation and strong partnership from LexisNexis have characterised Sharrock Pitman Lawyers’ journey and made the process as smooth as possible. “Our experience implementing Lexis Advance has been seamless from start to finish,” says Zadow. “Our Relationship Manager has been helpful, supportive, willing to answer any questions, efficient, friendly and always returns emails and calls quickly. The implementation of Lexis Advance was quick and easy. The training was extensive and certainly helped our team navigate their way around Lexis Advance.”

“We would happily recommend Lexis Advance to other practitioners and rate our experience as excellent.”

What SPL loves about Lexis Advance

- Easy to access, extensive research across all our areas of law, and easier researching of case law
- Provides information in one place, including full access to cases, rather than trying to find information across various sites
- Encourages knowledge sharing across all lawyers through research saved to client matters in Lexis Affinity
- Support provided by Lexis to assist with finding information needed
- It’s important for us to provide the team with up-to-date, quality technology and resources to draw in talented lawyers to inevitably provide service excellence to our customers
- CaseBase has powerful search features and a useful interface for showing the connections between cases



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