

GLOBAL FIRM LAUNCHES AWARD-WINNING INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE SEARCH PLATFORM

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner creates an expertly curated knowledge base for 1,300 lawyers with iManage Insight



Industry:

- Legal

Headquarters:

- St. Louis, US and London, UK

iManage footprint:

- iManage Work 10
- iManage Insight

When two law firms merged to become Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner (BCLP) in 2018, they vastly expanded the range of legal services and expertise provided under one roof. To tap into that wealth of knowledge, they needed to break their data out of silos and implement a standard document management system and strategy.

Partnering with iManage, the firm built an intelligent legal search platform combining the document management capabilities of iManage Work with iManage Insight. The BCLP platform integrates with the firm's legal experience management platform, Litera Foundation, and centralizes all relevant documents. Powerful iManage search guides lawyers quickly to the documents, experts, and best practices they need, enabling the firm to give clients the full benefit of its collective experience. Globally distributed lawyers can now routinely unlock insights on a worldwide scale using the iManage-based platform to achieve results that were previously out of reach.

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner (BCLP) is a fully integrated global law firm with more than 1,300 lawyers across North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. With roots dating back more than 140 years, the award-winning firm helps customers – including 35 percent of the Fortune 500 – to protect their interests and achieve their ambitions, offering one of the most active M&A, real estate, financial services, litigation, and corporate risk practices in the world.



iManage gives us a competitive edge. Our lawyers can work smarter and meet their clients' highest expectations across all service areas.

David Boulds, Head of IT Solutions, BCLP

Benefits:

- Enriches client services with firm-wide experience
- Enhances staff productivity and satisfaction
- Promotes digital leadership in the industry
- Gives the firm a competitive edge

The challenge

Making decades of legal experience more accessible

Formed from a merger in 2018, BCLP greatly expanded its in-house expertise, but lawyers working across the 32 offices and serving clients across 11 countries needed to learn to operate as one global team. The opportunity to tap into more knowledge and data and build stronger cases relied on the ability to surface the right documents at the right time and knowing which experts to call on to help them make these new resources add up to a better-than-ever client experience.

“Our merger brought together two businesses with different approaches to document management and technology. We had great systems available to us, but data was siloed, and we lacked a central document management strategy,” explains Hayley Harris, Global Director of Central Knowledge Management at BCLP. “We needed to define a standard way of working on one platform to help lawyers find relevant information quickly and use historical data to shape their strategies on deals and litigation.”

The IT team decided it needed an intelligent legal search platform to give lawyers and other business professionals a curated database of knowledge assets. But finding the right solution to meet its needs proved challenging.

“We tried a number of different vendors without really achieving what we set out to do. They couldn’t give us the level of support we needed or fully understand the importance of what the technology could deliver to the firm,” says David Boulds, Head of IT Solutions at BCLP.

The solution

Discovering relevant insights faster

One of BCLP’s founding firms had used iManage for document management for 23 years and the whole firm was being consolidated on iManage Work. When the IT team learned about iManage Insight and the Knowledge Unlocked solution, they realized that the discovery search iManage Insight offered was exactly what they were looking for to proactively guide users to relevant documents.

BCLP brought iManage Insight and the firm’s legal experience management platform, Litera Foundation, together with iManage support, integrating it with iManage Work. The solution, which they white-labeled BCLP Discover, gives lawyers a single point of entry to a hub of data and tools that help them work smarter.

“BCLP Discover needed to appeal to our lawyers to achieve strong adoption. iManage products are intuitive to use straight out of the box and easy to customize for our brand — a big selling point,” says Harris.

When they launched Discover as a pilot, users were delighted to find it was completely tailored to their needs, reporting that it “felt like it was designed by lawyers.” Which, in many regards, it is.



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Hayley Harris

Global Director of Central Knowledge Management, BCLP

The solution's broad range of functionality helps lawyers at every level: from junior associates using the pen tool to lift text out of preview mode into Word documents, to senior lawyers enjoying the powerful search function, to partners who can get an overview of all business activities in just a few clicks. More than 700 lawyers are already using the platform, with plans to onboard another 300 employees over the coming months.



A well-designed user experience

Discover's dashboard features several tabs to help lawyers easily navigate the platform. Under the Knowledge tab, for example, lawyers can search for curated documents such as pleadings and closing binders. Similarly, lawyers can go to the Matters tab to locate experience with similar matters from a specific period, find relevant documents or subject matter experts, or browse earlier versions of files.

A custom link takes the user to Litera Foundation, where the firm's intelligence data resides. Harris explains that when a lawyer clicks on the Foundation link on a US litigation matter, for example, the profile is enhanced with Thomson's Reuter's docket data via an API. "Lawyers can toggle easily between litigation results and underlying documents, and we can use that data to perform analytics on our own systems." This capability is setting the firm up for identifying patterns across data sources in the future.

In the first six months of 2023, lawyers performed 14,000 searches powered by iManage Insight. These searches go well beyond a typical search function, making connections between relevant documents such as prior work, knowledge, best practices, templates, and research that were previously stored in multiple locations.

"Searching for relevant documents manually would be incredibly slow and frustrating. iManage is making it feasible for us to tap into decades of legal expertise in depth," says Harris.

Adopting a culture of knowledge sharing

BCLP is also empowering lawyers to assist each other by using tagging. The Tagged Knowledge tab lists templates, forms, closing binders, and documents that employees have tagged as useful to a particular matter or topic.

When nominated for tagging, items are automatically added to a shopping basket for one-click submission. Nominated tags are reviewed by the KML/PSL, who can accept, reject, or revise the tags. Tagged documents are easy to identify by their green color when browsing, which helps lawyers work faster and gives trainees greater confidence that they're working on approved content.

"The tagging tool that connects to iManage via an API enables us to enrich knowledge content using the integration points that the solution automatically provides, which is really helpful," observes Boulds.



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Business outcomes

Award-winning platform boosts competitive edge

iManage Insight makes the firm's collective knowledge easily accessible and available to lawyers across BCLP's global network. One of the most popular features is being able to search library-agnostic documents from the last 10 years and filter in so many different ways. The firm is building an expertly curated knowledge base to help them tap into the experience of thousands of experts and learnings. For clients, that means connecting to the correct experts faster.

"iManage gives us a competitive edge. Our lawyers can work smarter and meet their clients' highest expectations across all service areas," says Boulds. "It's not just about speed – the quality of the searches is so much better, guiding lawyers to a broader range of relevant documents and helping them to seek advice from the right people across the firm."

And it's not only the staff who appreciate the firm's next-generation knowledge work platform. BCLP Discover won three industry awards in 2023 and is shortlisted for three further awards.

"We're thrilled to be recognized as digital leaders in the industry. We can demonstrate our innovative credentials to clients and get greater buy-in from within the firm as we onboard more staff," notes Harris.

Looking ahead

BCLP is currently undergoing an iManage Work cloud migration and is working in partnership with iManage to bring Insight to the iManage Cloud to drive further collaboration. In the meantime, the team is continuing to enhance Discover. Next to launch is a new tab called "All Matters Documents," wherein automated workflows make finding and populating documents such as filed pleadings even more seamless for users.

"We're keeping a close eye on how the iManage product suite continues to evolve," says Harris. "The more functionality we can centralize on Discover, the better it is for our lawyers." She adds that there's still a huge amount of potential to incorporate generative AI and take it to the next level. "It would be amazing if we could roll out auto-tagging and expand data indexes. We'd also love to use AI to proactively suggest content to staff in a more targeted and personalized way."

About iManage™

iManage is dedicated to Making Knowledge Work™. Our cloud-native platform is at the center of the knowledge economy, enabling every organization to work more productively, collaboratively, and securely. Built on more than 20 years of industry experience, iManage helps leading organizations manage documents and emails more efficiently, protect vital information assets, and leverage knowledge to drive better business outcomes. As your strategic business partner, we employ our award-winning AI-enabled technology, an extensive partner ecosystem, and a customer-centric approach to provide support and guidance you can trust to make knowledge work for you. iManage is relied on by more than one million professionals at 4,000 organizations around the world. Visit www.imanage.com to learn more.