

Law Firm Extranet Survey Results

In July 2010 we posted a survey to various ILTA E-Groups to collect information from firms about their use of extranets and related technologies. This survey was done as research for our panel presentation at the 2010 Conference (INFO8) titled “Transparency: Beyond the Extranet.” The results from 49 responses are summarized here.

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Survey Questions







1. How many client extranets do you currently have?
2. What platform do you use for your extranets?
3. What third party or other technologies feed into your extranet(s)?
4. How would you describe how your extranets add value to your clients?
5. Have you added features to your extranet in direct response to client requests? If so, what features were added?
6. Do you "meet" with your clients on your extranet?
7. If yes, by what medium?
8. How are you measuring client satisfaction with your extranets?
9. Do you track how many clients you have won/retained based on your extranet capabilities?
10. For the following technology categories, indicate your firm's use/adoption for each on your extranet(s).
 - 1) File/Folder sharing extranets with clients
 - 2) Wiki/collaborative knowledge generation collaboration
 - 3) Task/Project Management collaboration
 - 4) Docketing/critical date tracking
 - 5) Social networking
 - 6) Workflow automation that captures firm policies/procedures/checklists/etc for dealing with certain types of matters
 - 7) Workflow automation that captures client policies/procedures/checklists/etc for dealing with certain types of matters
 - 8) Performance Dashboards/High level reports for large clients
11. Please tell us the size of your law firm
12. Please tell us where your firm is headquartered

1. How many client extranets do you currently have?

Less than 5		5	10%
6-10		4	8%
11-100		21	43%
101-500		14	29%
More than 500*		5	10%
Total		49	100%









For those who answered “more than 500,” the actual numbers were: 545, 600, 650, 750, 3000+

2. What platform do you use for your extranets?

SharePoint		22	45%
Lotus Live		0	0%
AMS Legal		8	16%
Google Apps		0	0%
DMS team workspaces		2	4%
Third-party Software as a Service (SaaS) apps		4	8%
Custom in-house applications		2	4%
Other*		11	22%
Total		49	100%

For those who answered “other,” the responses were: Lotus Notes, Netdocuments, Documentum – eRoom, SharePoint/PBWorks/Custom in-house, AMS Legal/Hubbard FirmConnect, FirmEx, SharePoint/AMS/FirmEx and Custom, FirmEx SaaS and in-house developed on Zope, AMS Legal/Oracle Aqualogic User Interaction (formerly Plumtree), Custom/eRoom/Hubbard Firm Connect/XMLaw One Firm Connect.

3. What third-party or other technologies feed into your extranet(s)? (choose all that apply)

Time and billing		7
Website		9
Experience database		2
Conflicts database		0
CRM database		3
Document management system		27
Docketing system		6
Internal knowledge databases		7
Other*		10

For those who answered “other,” the responses were: XMLaw, Case Management, IP database, Records, litigation application specific links, firm and client fields, budgeting tool, subscription-based tools, documents exported from DMS, CPI data.

4. How would you describe how your extranets add value to your clients?

Document management/sharing

Status/progress tracking, case management

Improved efficiency

Collaboration/communication

Knowledge sharing features

Interaction without the uncertainty of email

Fast set-up using built-in function of NetDocuments

Secure tools

Enables real-time business decisions

Matter-centric portal

Q&A forum with attorneys

Central document repository (contracts, etc.)

Access to documents otherwise not available

Shared calendars and contacts lists

Less email proliferation

Reduced costs (travel, postage, time, copying)

Perform reviews faster

Large file sharing in a timely manner

Transparency (docket information, invoices, unbilled time, case notes, etc.)

Customized solutions to meet the needs of the client/case

Self-service for clients to access information

Access for clients in different time zones

Close to real-time information/status

Expedited deal facilitation

Enhance client relationship







5. Have you added features to your extranet in direct response to client requests? If so, what features were added?

- Custom forms, lists/reports, content and databases
- Billing, budget and WIP information
- Case intake, case management and decision support tools
- Sharing with multiple law firms
- Q&A forum with attorneys
- Competitive intelligence reports
- Subpoena tracking tool
- Integration with Outlook
- Exposing some folders to opposing counsel
- Format/layout of screen design
- Map application to see locations of all plaintiff counsel for a large litigation
- Custom calendar docketing
- Expert testimony, content-specific articles, etc.
- Posting reports that used to be emailed to clients
- Limited to modifications to native SharePoint features
- Liability calculator, asset value calculator, due diligence workflow monitors

6. Do you “meet” with your clients on your extranet?

Yes		14	29%
No		35	71%
Total		49	100%

7. If yes, by what medium? *(choose all that apply)*

Wiki pages		3
Instant Messaging		1
Threaded email discussions		9
Video conferencing		2
Virtual meetings		5
Other*		8



For those who answered “other,” the responses were: in person, phone, e-mail, actual site visits, training, follow-up, tools too new to speak to adoption, requests received through attorneys.

8. How are you measuring client satisfaction with your extranet?

Summary of unique responses:

- By tracking the number of support tickets generated
- By tracking the “nice” emails we get from clients
- Informally
- By what our attorneys tell us
- Continuous involvement
- Follow-up interviews
- Repeat business
- Usage statistics
- Comments, suggestions and feedback
- Attorney bliss 😊
- Would like to use surveys
- Low utilization does not warrant measurement






9. Do you track how many clients you have won/retained based on your extranet capabilities?

Yes		5	10%
No		43	90%
Total		48	100%





10. For the following technology categories, indicate your firm's use/adoption for each on your extranet(s).

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Haven't considered	Interested but haven't investigated	Proof of concept	Low level deployment/usage	High prevalence of deployment/usage
File/Folder sharing extranets with clients	1 2%	1 2%	0 0%	8 16%	39 80%
Wiki/collaborative knowledge generation collaboration	14 29%	16 33%	10 20%	9 18%	0 0%
Task/Project Management collaboration	5 10%	16 33%	5 10%	16 33%	7 14%
Docketing/critical date tracking	10 20%	7 14%	6 12%	16 33%	10 20%
Social networking	23 48%	15 31%	7 15%	2 4%	1 2%
Workflow automation that captures firm policies/procedures/checklists/etc for dealing with certain types of matters	13 27%	14 29%	8 17%	8 17%	5 10%
Workflow automation that captures client policies/procedures/checklists/etc for dealing with certain types of matters	17 35%	18 38%	6 12%	4 8%	3 6%
Performance Dashboards/High level reports for large clients	13 27%	19 39%	4 8%	8 16%	5 10%

11. Please tell us the size of your law firm.

Less than 50 attys		1	2%
50 – 149 attys		10	20%
150 – 349 attys		10	20%
350 – 699 attys		12	24%
700+ attys		16	33%
Total		49	100%

12. Please tell us where your firm is headquartered.

U.S. – Northeast		11	23%
U.S. – Midwest		20	42%
U.S. – South		8	17%
U. S. – West		7	15%
U.K.		0	0%
Other	Ireland, Canada	2	4%
Total		48	100%