

Serengeti Makes the Grade: Stanford Manages Outside Counsel More Efficiently with Automated Tools

CASE STUDY

Stanford University

Stanford is recognized as one of the world's leading universities. Its renowned professors offer students a remarkable range of academic courses that are paired with an extraordinary breadth of extracurricular activities and opportunities for research, independent study and public service.

STANFORD
UNIVERSITY

► The Challenge

Stanford's law department manages a trusted panel of outside counsel for a range of work including litigation, transactions, and intellectual property.

The department needed an automated solution to ensure that firms would submit matter information, budgets and status reports on time. With that data, the law department could more closely manage costs and deliver timely reports to the various groups it serves, including Stanford Hospital and Clinics, the Office of Intellectual Property, SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and the Stanford Management Company.

Despite receiving consistently good work from its outside counsel, Stanford was spending too much time reminding firms to follow up on information requests and then manually turning the responses into spending analyses and management reports.

► The Solution

Stanford solved the problem with functionality only available in Serengeti. "We require budgets for every matter over 10 hours, and the firms cooperate to get the budgets into Tracker on time—without any work on our part," said Linda Woodward, Director of Legal Services at Stanford. That's because the integrated system ties required tasks to outside counsel's invoice delivery.

With Serengeti, a firm's invoices are not routed for approval until all required matter information, budgets and status reports have been submitted. Now, Stanford produces more complete and timely management reports in a fraction of the time.

"The internal efficiencies created by the system are huge," Woodward said. "Because firms are required to update the system on their own, we can pull up *reliable* reports at any time. That's a tremendous value to us and the clients served by this law department."

"With Tracker, we don't have to go to our firms to get information; it is always right there at our fingertips. That helps us provide better legal service to the university."

Debra Zumwalt
Vice President and General Counsel
Stanford University

► The Serengeti Advantage

The number one challenge of any matter management system is keeping information up to date. Serengeti is the only vendor to address this problem with unique functionality that ties law firm data input to invoice delivery. If a client requires a firm to provide matter information, budgets or status reports, the system automatically notifies the firm and then holds invoices until the requirement is complete. This feature reduces the burden of constantly following up on data requests, thus creating a better working relationship between in-house and outside counsel.

"Using Serengeti works from both sides. From the firm perspective, it's much better to work with clients who don't receive unexpected billing surprises. Tracker helps us avoid those situations because everyone has access to the same information. The system creates a platform for communication with clients regarding expectations and realistic conclusions to matters. It gives us a way to communicate with clients in a consistent, methodical fashion that's really beneficial to client relations. We see Tracker as more than a billing tool; it's also a great marketing tool."

Carol K. Dillon
Partner
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