PREVIEW

Beyond Virtualization:
Transforming the Law Library

Feit CONSULTING

MARKET TRENDS SERIES

PREVIEW

Beyond Virtualization: Transforming the Law Library is a resource for both the Administrator and the Librarian. This ***Preview*** is intended to provide a brief glimpse into the detailed report.

Provided in the following pages are the Introduction, Table of Contents and Research & Methodology – pulled directly from the report. In addition are excerpts from the paper.

Introduction

What exactly is a modern law library? What steps does an organization need to consider if it wants to modernize its law library? How is its return on investment measured?

When defining the modern law library, a few descriptions come to mind: Cutting Edge, State of the Art, Unconventional, Effective, Best Practices, Innovative Technology, Value Based Metrics, ROI.

The concept of library modernization is more than downsizing space, cancelling print and right sizing resources. It is a paradigm shift in the way law librarians and knowledge managers assess and deliver information to support their organizations. As clients demand better value for the dollars they spend, firms are taking a hard look at how they do business; analyzing their organizational structure and evaluating the way services are delivered with an eye towards process improvement.

The role the library plays has shifted. No longer passively awaiting requests for assistance, librarians have taken on the role of innovator and change agent as they assist their organizations in assessing and creating information strategies to improve workflow and cut expense. Librarians are interdepartmental collaborators taking on new roles in competitive intelligence, client intake, and knowledge management to name a few. Staffing models now run the gamut from embedded researchers in practice groups to reliance upon Membership Libraries for additional research support. As library responsibilities continue to evolve, so do the core competencies demanded of the library staff.

In this white paper, our team of experts discuss challenges and opportunities for becoming a Modern Law Library as well as the various approaches to the changing role librarians and administrators play in the context of the Modern Law Library.

Don't discount what your law library can do. If you are an administrator, be open to considering business cases for new ideas, products, or processes. If you are a librarian, think about what solutions or new value the law library can bring. As an attorney, consider the roles your legal researcher can support in terms of business development and the general business of law.

The Modern Law Library continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of its organization. By being proactive to change, the law library can help its organization identify needs and solutions to aid in facilitating the flow of information to streamline workflow. Are you ready to take the challenge?

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Vice President, Library Strategy and Innovation

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Section I   Process & Methodology

This report is a culmination of intel from a wide array of individuals and resources. Going beyond our own scope of thinking of what defines a Modern Law Library, we interviewed and surveyed law librarians, attorneys, administrators and individuals in various departments. Interviews were conducted with leading experts in the field. Our team of Legal Information Expert Panelists provided input on topics throughout the report.

Just as the Modern Law Library is multi-faceted and ever-changing, we took a multi-faceted approach to develop an expansive definition and perspective provided here.

Market Research Approaches
Data and insights were collected through the following methods:

> *Interviews:* Conducted in October 2017 with 12 librarians, 24 attorneys and 15 administrators in the legal information arena, including leading experts.   These interviews revolved around how the Modern Law Library is defined, what steps the modern law librarian and administrator should take to modernize their library, and how best to overcome obstacles to library modernization.

> *Surveys:* The Library Modernization Survey was conducted from July through October 2017 and was open to legal information professionals. The survey was conducted online. There were 80 total responses to the survey. Survey results and responses are located in Appendix I.   Additional surveys were conducted with the following number of respondents: 102 attorneys, 13 respondents in the Marketing Department, and 6 administrators.

> *Legal Information Expert Panel*: Feit Consulting has a team of experts who provided further detail and input on key topic areas covered in this report.

Accuracy
To ensure accuracy, online surveys required individuals to share their contact name and firm/organization. Any survey with erroneous information was deleted and discounted from the survey data.

Feit Consulting has taken additional steps to ensure accuracy through random verification checks.   In the verification, Feit Consulting followed up with individuals who had been surveyed. Any discrepancy was reviewed and corrected.

Confidentiality of Clients
No data was utilized directly from any specific Feit Consulting engagement, although clients of Feit Consulting were offered the opportunity to participate.

Section II   What is the Modern Law Library?

The Modern Law Library is an evolving unit. It expands its services and role within the firm to meet new demands and offer enhanced value. It requires individuals working in and with the library to have an open mind of how the skills of the law librarian team can be optimized. To realize a Modern Law Library requires innovation of new ways the library can add value, collaboration with new departments within the firm, the utilization of metrics to showcase value and articulate ROI, and the leveraging technology to improve the delivery of information.

Feit Consulting surveyed librarians and administrators asking what words came to mind when describing the Modern Law Library. The "word cloud" below depicts a summation of those responses. Is your current law library reflected here? As an administrator are these words the same ones that come to mind when you think about your library? The Modern Law Library is not a destination but rather a moving target requiring continual change and on-going work.
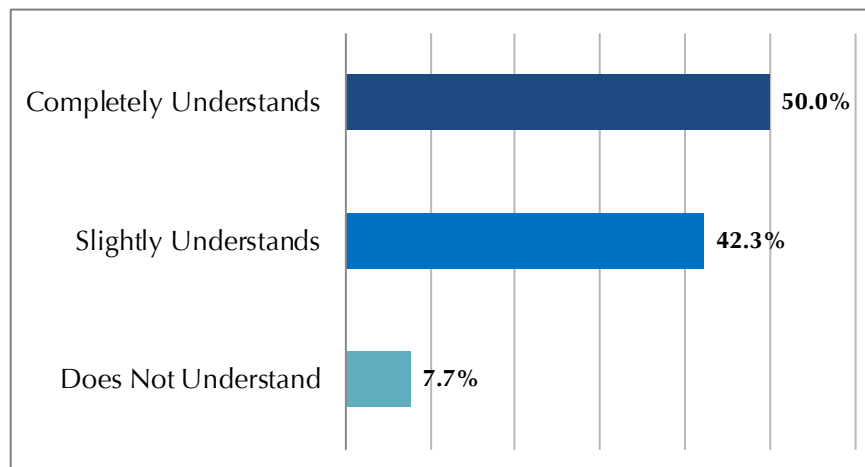
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Section III   Overview: Survey Results and Analysis
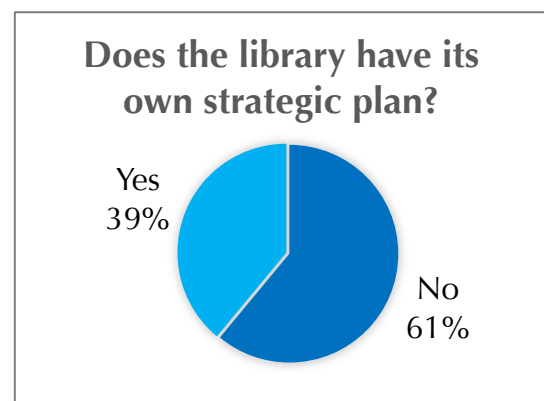
Understanding the Current Role of the Library

A common theme amongst administrators interviewed in our research is, "I don't know what I don't know. I rely on my librarian to tell me." This sentiment is reflected in our survey in which 50% of respondents indicated that the person they report to either "slightly understands" or "does not understand" the role of the library, revealing a serious disconnect.

Completely Understands	50.0%
Slightly Understands	42.3%
Does Not Understand	7.7%

To address this communication gap, librarians need to consider their current messaging to administrators, and reframe those messages to better convey the value of the library. Administrators also need to rethink the questions they ask their library team, to understand the return on investment in the library. Transforming the library into the Modern Law Library will require new ways of presenting information and thinking about how that information can be used to illustrate value.

Strategic Plan

While a library can modernize without a strategic plan, having a strategic plan provides direction and concrete goals and objectives to reaching this vision. A surprising 61% of survey respondents indicated the library does not have its own strategic plan. (shown right)
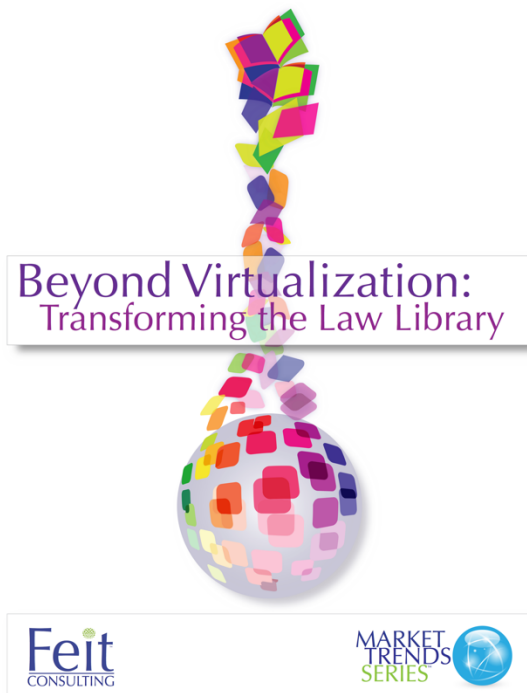
Does the library have its own strategic plan?

Yes
39%

No
61%

Surprisingly, only 37% of respondents indicated the library's strategies are derived from the firm's larger strategic plan as illustrated below.

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Beyond Virtualization:
Transforming the Law Library

A resource for both Administrators and Librarians sharing best practices and innovations for modernizing your law library.

For more information and to purchase your copy, visit:
http://www.feitconsulting.com/beyond-virtualization/

As a thought leader and partner to firms in managing their legal information, Feit Consulting developed the **Market Trends Legal Information Series** with the intention of providing objective guidance to administrators and librarians at large and medium sized law firms on best practices relating to the management of legal information resources. This unique set of resources provides law firm administrators and librarians with market analysis, expertise, and future trend forecasts.

In each report and resource, the collected data is synthesized with knowledge from leaders in the legal information market, with a goal of providing clear, reasoned counsel. Each report covers a current topic, pertinent to both administrators and librarians. Collectively, the *Market Trends Legal Information Series* explores the most important components integral to a law firm's legal information strategy.

The current resources in the Series include:

Westlaw & Lexis: Path to Commoditization

Westlaw & Lexis Sentiment Survey Results

Sole Provider Viability Decision Guide

The Sole Provider Playbook
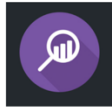
Sole Provider Survey Results

Optimizing Legal Information Pricing

Beyond Virtualization: Transforming the Law Library

MODERN LIBRARY SOLUTIONS

Feit Consulting can fully support the shifting role of your Firm's Library. Some of the Library Modernization Services we offer:

Modern Library Audit

An evaluation of all legal information functions in the library and the support provided for various departments and practice groups. Receive a detailed plan with clear action steps and ROI for improving your Law Library's value and role.

Collection Audit

Evaluation of content and usage to ensure proper collection mix for online and print resources. The goal is to mitigate the redundancy of resources to save your firm money.

Library Support Services

Includes: Assistance with on-boarding and training of staff, a Virtual Library Consultant available for on-call questions about Library management, or guidance on the development of standard operating procedures and best practices.

Metrics Development & Reporting

A key component to running the library as a business within a business is metrics. Feit Consulting partners with Administrators and Librarians to review current metrics and develop new metrics for improved reporting and assessing ROI of the Library.

Technical Library Services Support

Providing support and planning to ensure your organization's technology is optimally working for the Library and its users; such as evaluating workflow or maximizing the functions of your Electronic Resource Management (ERM) or Integrated Library System (ILS).

ERM Selection Assistance

An Electronic Resource Management (ERM) tool is a worthwhile investment, but there are many elements to consider. Our team provides an agnostic view, and shares guidance on what your firm needs to consider when evaluating options and upgrades.

Learn more here: http://www.feitconsulting.com/consulting/modern-library-solutions/

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