

Save significant time on research using LexisNexis products

Advocates Smith Taubitz Unsworth Ltd (ASTU) is a specialist litigation practice in the Isle of Man. Established in 2012, it offers legal services that span multiple practice areas.

For years, ASTU associates would trek to the island's Law Society offices so they could access LexisNexis' online research and guidance solutions. However, as the firm's workload grew, going offsite became inconvenient. So in 2018, ASTU purchased its own subscription to Lexis® Library and Lexis®PSL.

LexisLibrary is an online research platform that provides access to a wide range of cases, commentary, legislation, forms and news. LexisPSL provides practical commercial advice across 35 practice areas, featuring practice notes, document templates and checklists. The online product also contains direct links to underlying case law and primary sources in LexisLibrary, so solicitors can quickly conduct research.

Easy access to precedents

Although the Isle of Man falls under the British Crown, it is its own jurisdiction with its own laws.

“If we don't have a judgment on a particular law here on the island, we're able to use LexisPSL to see what's happened in the UK. UK judgments are highly persuasive in our arguments.”

Sara-Jayne Dodge, Trainee Advocate

Dodge says having access to the UK precedents is extremely helpful, especially for cases regarding family law. “The authorities in that area are excellent and the English precedents easily adapt to the Isle of Man,” Dodge says.

Enhanced efficiency

ASTU appreciates the speed and ease with which they can conduct research using LexisNexis solutions.

“Everything at Advocates is done on a timed basis, so we need to conduct our research efficiently. We don't want to charge clients unnecessarily or write off our time. With Lexis products, we can get more research done each day,”

Prior to using LexisPSL, Dodge says they had to search through archaic content books, which would then direct them to other books for the specific cases they wanted. Not only was this process tedious, it was also time-consuming reading through each case to determine if it was germane and current.

“It was a lengthy process,” Dodge says. “Now, LexisPSL gives us the most relevant and recent cases and always has the latest information on them. It makes research so much easier. We're more cost-effective for our clients and more efficient each day.”

Easy search for relevant cases

Dodge, who does much of the law firm's research, says she uses LexisLibrary and LexisPSL almost daily. She especially likes that once she's found a relevant case, she can easily download it for future reference.

“LexisNexis products work well with our practice management system. We can save downloaded cases and our client's data all in one place.”

Dodge believes the LexisNexis products provide significant value. She cites a recent project in which she found a relevant judgment.

“Some 20 odd cases were referenced in the judgment,” she explains. “I went onto LexisLibrary and downloaded the case analysis for each one so the senior lawyer I was working with could pinpoint influential judgments. The analysis referenced the area of law, gave an overview of the judgment, explained the outcome and specified the court that made the decision.”

Quick tracking of legislation changes

One of the features that Dodge especially likes on LexisLibrary is the coloured highlighting system, which identifies any changes in a provision and indicates whether a relevant case exists.

“I was researching an employment matter and noticed the green highlight. It took me to a relevant case that was identical to our client’s situation.”

Fast answers to legal questions

ASTU frequently references the authoritative Halsbury’s Laws of England. Unique to LexisNexis, it is viewed as the encyclopedia of law in England and Wales, and answers questions across all areas of the law via LexisLibrary.

“It’s easy to navigate so you don’t find yourself wasting time in unnecessary sections,” Dodge says. “It targets the definitions you put in and defines terms accurately.”

Plans to use additional LexisNexis solutions

Although ASTU’s office is based in the Isle of Man, many of its clients are from other jurisdictions. “We need to know what the legislation is in those foreign jurisdictions so we can advise them,” Dodge says. ASTU intends to explore the LexisNexis International Comparator tool, which identifies differences between jurisdictions and issues in cross-border matters. Dodge is also interested in Lexis’ Getting the Deal Through guides, which provide direction around specific topics.

“Our goal is to provide the best legal advice for our clients and ensure the best possible outcomes,” Dodge says. “We need to be up to date not only with judgments in our area but also elsewhere. I would definitely recommend LexisNexis. Having relevant information at our fingertips helps us to be more effective for our clients.”

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