

How leading Scottish law firm Harper Macleod use Lexis[®]Draft to keep their clients – and their own people – happier

25 years ago, Harper Macleod was a modest Glasgow law firm with just 27 people. Since then, they've grown exponentially to become one of Scotland's leading full service law firms, with roughly 400 people, five offices from Edinburgh to Inverness, and a £26 million turnover. They've been named Scottish Law Firm of the Year a staggering eight times, and their client list includes everyone from the Glasgow 2018 European Championships to the Scottish Government.

Until recently, Harper Macleod had been using a range of suppliers for their practical guidance needs to uncover the right cases, legislation, forms and styles. Then in 2015 they decided to replace these with a single practical guidance solution Lexis[®]PSL covering 27 different practice areas. As Partner Donald Munro, Head of Corporate explains, LexisPSL "allows us to deliver as good a service, if not better – and at a better value point. So it puts us on a level playing field."

Having been won over by LexisPSL, the firm decided to explore whether Lexis Draft, the multi award-winning proofreading toolbar from LexisNexis, could deliver similar benefits. As Donald puts it, "Lawyers are a very expensive resource. So is proofreading a really good use of their time if a piece of software can do that job better, in less time?"

To discover how Lexis Draft can make your lawyers smile call **0330 161 1234** or visit www.lexisnexis.co.uk/lexisdraft

First impressions

The firm decided to take a phased approach to implementation, rolling it out to their Corporate team first. In Donald's words, "when someone else has something you want, it becomes very attractive. That was a key part of our strategy."

According to Donald the people from LexisNexis also played a key role in getting people to accept the change.

"The training and support from LexisNexis was fundamental. They spent a lot of time on-site with us. We had training, but they also spent time going around and visiting individual fee earners to deal with their queries. I think that face-to-face interaction and support was pivotal."

Paul Macdonald is one of the lawyers in the firm's Corporate team. Like Donald, he agrees that the people from LexisNexis played an essential role in ensuring a smooth transition.

"They were very helpful and very responsive in relation to getting Lexis Draft set up very quickly in our own house style," he says.

Endless possibilities

As part of the Corporate team, Paul uses Lexis Draft several times a week. And by his own estimation, it saves him somewhere in the region of five hours every week.

"Every document that I draft will be run through Lexis Draft before it's sent out. If the average document is ten pages long, it probably saves me about half an hour per document. And I probably send out ten to fifteen documents a week. So it does save a lot of time, which we can then pass onto the client."

"It's also very useful for me, personally, in terms of identifying issues with definitions" he continues. "A lot of the documents that we produce are quite long, and go through various iterations. Lexis Draft points out where definitions aren't being used correctly, or aren't needed any more."

Although Lexis Draft is still mostly used by Harper Macleod's Corporate team, they've found it useful in many other ways.

"We use it in Real Estate, and we've also started using it in our Litigation practice."

“There've only been two times that I can recall where we've introduced a product that made people smile. One was the iPhone – the other was Lexis Draft.”

- Donald Munro, Head of Corporate Services, Harper Macleod

Lexis Draft is helping Harper Macleod deliver as good a standard of service, if not better, in less time.



“Lexis Draft allows us to reduce the time we spend on documentation, while increasing the quality. So it has a two-pronged effect.”

Donald Munro, Head of Corporate Services, Harper Macleod

If we've got a document which is the subject of a dispute, for example, we might run it through Lexis Draft to find out if there are any other peculiarities or foibles in it. And we also do a lot of public sector work where we have to tender, so we use it to check our pitches too,” Donald explains.

According to Paul, they use it to check documents from other lawyers too. “If we get something through from the other side, we can run it through Lexis Draft. If we notice there are a lot of issues, we can send it right back and identify things that need to be tidied up before we can review it – which can buy us valuable time, if we're under the cosh.”

Happier customers

Like LexisPSL before it, Lexis Draft is helping Harper Macleod deliver as good a standard of service, if not better, in less time.

“Our customers are very aggressive in terms of pricing, they want cheaper services and fixed fees” Donald explains. “Lexis Draft allows us to reduce the time we spend on documentation, while increasing the quality. So it has a two-pronged effect.”

Fewer mistakes

According to Paul, the highly polished documents that Lexis Draft produces make a better impression on their clients too.

“It's very easy for someone who's drafting a document and buried in the detail to miss out on things which may seem superficial or secondary – numbering issues, punctuation, that sort of thing – which clients would notice right away. Lexis Draft catches those things,

which gives me more confidence in my documents.”

Donald agrees, “I see many oversights that our business makes. Some are understandable, but sometimes less so - cross-referencing errors, incorrect statutory references, those types of things. Lexis Draft really helps to reduce human errors. And it means Paul can clock off at 5pm!”

Happier lawyers

This raises a crucial point: it isn't just Harper Macleod's clients who benefit from Lexis Draft. It's helping their lawyers spend more time doing the things they do and love best, while enjoying a better work/life balance into the bargain.

As Donald puts it, “Paul's a highly talented young lawyer in my business. I don't want him sitting around proofreading documents, I want him to be engaging with clients, I want him to be adding value.”

“You've got to be pretty unusual if you're not going to enjoy a tool that makes your working life better, makes you look better as a lawyer and reduces the amount of time you have to spend in the office,” he adds.

“There've only been two times that I can recall where we've introduced a product that made people smile. One was the iPhone – the other was Lexis Draft.”

“It has been a pleasure for us to work with Harper Macleod on the deployment of Lexis Draft. This innovative law firm has been eager to grasp the value of Lexis Draft for them in terms of quality and cost savings. An important part of the success in the delivery of Lexis Draft has been through a real open partnership approach between ourselves and Harper Macleod to planning roll out, training and communications. That and having a really great product of course!”

- Ita Sherlock,
Head of Drafting and Productivity
Solutions, LexisNexis

Want to increase happiness in your firm? Then call **0330 161 1234** or visit www.lexisnexis.co.uk/lexisdraft to find out more about Lexis Draft