ServiceNow

ServiceNow transforms its legal function, leveraging workflow and automation with Legal Service Delivery
ServiceNow has grown to become a $3.5 billion business with 11,000 employees worldwide. You don’t get to that size and scale without encountering some inefficient or outdated processes that your solutions were designed to solve.

NowX is a ServiceNow internal work group. Its task is to develop new concepts for digital workflows powered by the Now Platform. It has identified an area of business ripe for digital transformation. A function that wants to be more mobile, transparent, and efficient: legal.

**Bringing transparency to legal workflows**

No professional services team or sizeable operation can get away with not operating efficiently. There is too much scrutiny on cost and SLAs. The impact of inefficiency – the allocation of the wrong resource, hazy data, haphazard reporting.

There is an opportunity to rethink the way legal services are delivered within large, medium, and small organizations. Progressive heads of legal see it. The legal function at ServiceNow certainly see it. ServiceNow’s product team saw it.

An absence of real-time visibility, the use of ad hoc tools for reporting, manual tracking, and multiple conversations to clarify a legal ask before action is taken are common refrains. Andrew Brereton, Leader of Legal, Compliance, and Ethics Operations, ServiceNow, says the situation at ServiceNow was no different to any other large organization. The way legal functions are operationalized is ready for an overhaul.

“This told us that there was a market demand for legal workflow technology, but we needed to innovate to better meet this demand,” says Nagib Tharani, Product Management – Legal, ServiceNow.
Establishing clarity around operations

ServiceNow Legal Service Delivery is the first step in streamlining legal operations. It replaces manual email and spreadsheet processes with a high-velocity digital experience. In effect, it creates a ticketing system for legal. Andrew describes it as foundational:

“The foundation for building a successful legal function is understanding some very basic legal data. For example, what are the types of requests our lawyers are working on? What teams are they serving? What is the true volume? Only when we truly understand the basics can we move onto the more complex solutions.”

In simple terms, Legal Service Delivery brings clarity to legal operations, and allows managers to allocate the right resource to the right task. Highly paid senior lawyers need no longer be tied up with simple tasks or even moderately complex tasks. Managers can see to it that they are not.

“It establishes a logical process, with clear visibility over work requests,” Andrew explains. “We can then start to make inroads into working effectively and efficiently.”

Providing quantitative data on demand

The question is not why legal has taken so long to get to this place, but why the time is right for Legal Service Delivery. Many heads of legal now have a c-suite-level position – and with that is a greater expectation on service delivery.

“We’re giving heads of legal the ability to back up their transformation initiatives with data. Organizations are no longer prepared to throw headcount at legal without justification. They expect to see ROI,” Nagib points out.

This takes place against a backdrop of increasing workloads, raised expectations and tighter budgets. Business transformation requires an agile legal function. “The regulatory complexities of the world keep getting heavier,” says Andrew. “Legal has to evolve. We can’t avoid it.”

80% reduction in instruction emails
35% of contract requests deflected to sales operations
20% avg. savings in managing counsel instruction

The user experience, mobile experience included, has the potential to be a game changer for the legal industry.

Andrew Brereton
Senior Director of Legal Operations, ServiceNow
Inevitably, the operationalization of legal will attract new talent to the profession. The future heads of legal will expect streamlined workflows and mobile access to up-to-the-minute data, the same as the heads of IT, HR, and finance.

“Legal Service Delivery provides a dashboard and metrics relevant to each stakeholder,” says Andrew. “It shows the pulse of legal.”

**Fast-tracking contract commercial deals**

Legal Service Delivery enables ServiceNow to automate responses for common legal questions with virtual agents and knowledge base articles. New legal scenarios can be accommodated, deploying out-of-the-box functionality.

The future will involve greater automation and self-service. It may include the use of Artificial Intelligence to prompt or complete tasks. Where possible high-volume work takes a low-touch approach; high-cost human expertise is brought to bear on non-conventional tasks.

ServiceNow implemented Legal Service Delivery in December 2019 and has processed nearly 1,200 commercial legal requests. It has deflected some work away from legal entirely as well as increasing the use of shared services; commercial contract deals have been categorized, with a clearer process around legal priorities. As a result, small and midsized deals are fast-tracked.

“The platform is not only providing elevated transparency into legal operations that we haven’t seen before, but meaningful results,” says Chris Bedi, CIO, ServiceNow. “Through centralized and structured requests to our commercial legal team, we are approximately 80% faster getting started on the requests and have identified almost 25% of requests that will be automated via self-service.”

“I believe that Legal Services Delivery has been overdue for modernization for a long time,” says Russ Elmer, General Counsel, ServiceNow. “We are streamlining the workflow and now have analytics that help us distribute workload and craft solutions that make it easier for customers to do business with us while protecting our business. This truly is a game changer for how we manage legal operations.”