

Lovells Reduces E-Discovery Costs and Time by 75%

The Challenge

Lovells, the sixth largest international law firm in the world, was tasked with evaluating potential conspiracy and fraud claims arising out of a complex multi-party transaction. During the investigation stage, the firm set out to review thirty-five gigabytes (two million pages) of restored e-mail data under tight staffing and cost controls.

Using traditional electronic discovery methods, the case was estimated to take one year and cost \$4-5 million. The only way Lovells could achieve their \$1 million cost and three month time-frame goals was to quickly target information-rich documents.

The Solution

To meet the strict budget and time constraints, Lovells leveraged technology to perform the massive document review. The firm began by inviting five litigation support providers, including FTI Consulting Inc., Kroll Ontrack and Lexis/Nexis Applied Discovery Inc., to propose solutions that would conserve attorney review time and preserve their work product for effective use in litigation.

Lovells selected FTI Consulting Inc., a premier provider of corporate forensic and litigation consulting and technology. A key to FTI's selection was the proposed use of Attenex Patterns software to help identify the most significant documents.

"The challenge in discovery is that whatever you are looking for – key facts, hot documents, privileged materials – is often buried in massive volumes of irrelevant material that consumes attorney review time and drives up costs," observed Kathy McFarland, Of Counsel at Lovells. "The more efficiently you can isolate what is important from what is not, the more effective you can be for your client."

The FTI team designed a two-stage review. First, using Attenex Patterns FTI identified potentially significant documents, eventually isolating five to ten percent of the restored e-mails and attachments. Second, they exported those key documents for review and subject matter coding in a Ringtail Solutions database.

"Discovery software has vastly increased review efficiency by substituting online review for the time-consuming process of thumbnailing through hard copies and penciling in coding sheets. Now the latest technologies, like Attenex Patterns, are offering law firms the power to quickly and cost-effectively focus that review time on significant materials, resulting in better preparation and stronger cases." McFarland says.

During the initial review, the team loaded, de-duplicated and reviewed custodian e-mail data. "Attenex Patterns groups information on concepts and relationships versus blind key word searches. By clustering related materials into a concept map, attorneys set aside irrelevant documents while tagging groups of highly relevant documents fast," McFarland noted. "We use this 'eyes on' advantage to tightly focus on selecting key documents while culling relevant from irrelevant materials."

Challenge:

Review thirty-five gigabytes of archived e-mail data. Using traditional review methods, the project is projected to cost \$4-5 million and take one year.

Solution:

Leverage Attenex Patterns' unique ability to group similar documents by shared concepts to help reviewers quickly identify and categorize relevant documents.

Results:

Seventy-five percent savings in cost and time over traditional electronic review.

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- Kathy McFarland, Of Counsel at Lovells

Lovells' reviewers worked on assignments of 2,500 e-mails, each requiring the attorney to master a discrete time period or fact pattern. Conversation groups were investigated in assignments limited by the To, From and Cc fields.

The assignments were also seeded with text from known key documents to force clustering of related drafts, presentations and discussion threads. The reviewers mined those clusters, marking documents that either explained a fact pattern or advanced a legal theory. The Attenex Patterns effort isolated nearly 4,500 highly significant documents.

Lovells attorneys then spent two weeks culling the e-mail record, selecting an additional 6,000 documents for review and assigning the balance of the relevant documents to one of seven subject matter codes to be carried over into Ringtail.

The Results

In just six weeks, five junior attorneys identified 11,000 key documents from nearly two million pages. Analyzing the data with Attenex Patterns enabled Lovells to take the project from review to detail subject matter coding in only three months at a cost of \$1 million, representing a 75% cost and time savings for their client.

McFarland adds, "Without the ability to target select documents, the projected \$4-5 million cost to review all the e-mail data would have been prohibitive and our client might well have passed on this opportunity. By adding a new technology to our arsenal, we were able to test our legal theories against the e-mail record, resulting in a stronger complaint and better opportunities for our client to reach a desired result either in settlement or in court."

Every time a case has large volumes of data and limited time or budget, technology is crucial. Attenex Patterns provided Lovells a quick and powerful tool for:

- Putting attorneys' eyes on all the documents.
- Increasing the proficiency of their Ringtail review by targeting higher-cost attorney coding on only the most productive materials.
- Cost-effectively culling out irrelevant documents.

"Unlike many solutions, as our data set grows in size, we see these efficiencies with Attenex Patterns continuing to scale," McFarland said. "And the client cost savings ensures that we continue to execute on our mission to provide the best client service possible."

About Lovells

Lovells is an international business law firm with offices in major financial and commercial centers across Europe, Asia and the United States. With 26 offices, Lovells is the fifth largest law firm in Europe and the sixth largest international law firm in the world.

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