

Lawcadia Case Study: Uniting Church in Australia - Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

THE CLIENT

The Victorian and Tasmanian arm of an Australian community and faith based not-for-profit organisation.

THE OBJECTIVE

After a critical examination of their engagement and spend management practices, the organisation identified a need for more coherent, disciplined processes. With no framework in place, there was no visibility over the provision of external legal services, their cost or resultant value. Partnerships with law firms could also be improved, with a view to fostering more collaborative working relationships.

THE APPROACH

The implementation process began with UCA establishing a formal legal panel. Tenders were put out to 15 law firms, with the Lawcadia Platform facilitating and accelerating the tender and communication process. This took approximately 3 months, with the successful firms trained and onboarded at the conclusion of the process. The Lawcadia Platform became 'business as usual' for the legal department and their law firms from that point onwards.

THE CHALLENGE

One of UCA's initial challenges was clearly identifying and categorising the services they provide to a wide range of stakeholders and clients. The next step was to identify the kind of external legal support (and specific legal service providers) that would help them deliver the best possible outcomes. This helped inform the panel establishment process and set clear expectations for service delivery going forward.

There was also a clear understanding of the economic case surrounding implementation, so resistance to introducing technology designed to improve processes and manage spend was low. The organisation was genuinely enthusiastic about change and stakeholders were empowered to play a direct role in shaping relationships with service providers and creating a strategic vision and plan for the future.

THE BENEFITS

UCA realised two significant and specific benefits upon implementing the Lawcadia Platform – cost savings and visibility over engagement and spend.

Reduced legal spend

Establishing a formal legal panel, introducing competition into the framework and implementing technology designed specifically to help lower spend has resulted in tangible cost savings for the organisation. Having disciplined processes in place and a clear

requirement for fees, scope and prior approvals to be confirmed before work begins has resulted in savings of 30 to 35%.

Transparent engagement and spend practices

Previously, legal spend was caught in a generic 'consulting bucket', leaving the organisation with no visibility into their total legal spend. With the Platform fully implemented, they can now take a macro or micro view of their activities, breaking down engagements and spend by month, firm, category or division.

As a result, they are able to track how much is being spent, on which matters, by which business unit and with which firms. Any leakages can be easily identified and managers across the entire organisation have access to tools they can use to proactively manage their legal spend.

THE FUTURE

The Lawcadia Platform has been fully implemented across the legal department and their legal service providers and will continue to guide their legal operations into the future. With a sophisticated reporting capability at their fingertips, they plan to mine their data more fully in the future which will positively impact both spend and resource allocation.