

CASE
STUDY

How **Practical Law** and **Westlaw** enabled **Redington Gulf**'s legal team to strategically redefine their role within the business.

With Prasanth Pookot, Head of Legal & Compliance at Redington Gulf



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STRATEGIC BUSINESS ADVISORS

Practical Law's up-to-date legal developments and document drafting freed up time to focus on higher value work.

EFFICIENCY AND EXPERTISE

Westlaw's Middle East resources enabled the legal team with the tools to make better and more efficient decisions.

MIDDLE EAST LEGAL INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH

Westlaw Middle East's online English-language library contains more than 12,000 laws and regulations and more than 4,000 cases from the UAE, Qatar and Iraq.

Prasanth Pookot discusses how subscribing to online legal know-how service Practical Law is enabling Redington Gulf's legal team to strategically redefine their role within the business.

The Challenge: Time-consuming and labour-intensive legal research processes

The legal team at Dubai-based IT company Redington Gulf FZE were frequently asked by management to conduct legal research and provide guidance on specific business issues. However, the team's manual research processes were often laborious and time consuming, which sometimes resulted in delays in responding to urgent stakeholder requests.

To address these challenges, Head of Legal & Compliance Prasanth Pookot began investigating different solutions in the legal market that could support his team's efforts to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. "We wanted to find a portal or a tool that could easily guide us through certain research when required," he reflects.

After comparing various products in the market and testing demos of them, Prasanth determined that online legal research platform Practical Law and regional resource Westlaw Middle East provided the best solution to his department's needs.

The Solution: An expert online legal research platform with AI capabilities

Prasanth was impressed by the wide range of jurisdiction-specific legal content that is readily available in global legal know-how resource Practical Law and regional legal library Westlaw Middle East. He found invaluable Westlaw Middle East's vast online legal catalogue, which includes thousands of laws, regulations, case translations, books, journals, legal updates and news from across the MENA region.

“Westlaw Middle East’s resources give us the tools we need to make better and more efficient decisions”

“Research is a big part of the in-house counsel’s profile in order to provide appropriate opinions/ views/ advice to the management. Westlaw Middle East’s resources give us the tools we need to make better and more efficient decisions,” he says.

“We are able to obtain all the information we need in one platform.”

The expert English-language translations of all regional legalisation and cases contained within Westlaw Middle East provide Redington Gulf’s legal team with added comfort and security when assessing the best course of action for the business. “On Westlaw Middle East, legislation is very well translated into English without changing the intent of the legislation,” Prasanth remarks.

He also highlighted how Practical Law provides expert practice notes that are up to date, easily found through a search function, and can be incorporated into his notes to management. “At a click of the button, you can gain access to a host of legal guidance on a specific topic. You can take those materials and customise them to meet your requirements,” he says. “Practical Law makes it very easy for us to manage our legal research and to figure out what exactly is required from our end.”

“Practical Law makes it very easy for us to manage our legal research... In one snapshot, you get everything you want, which may not be the case with other tools”

Prasanth was impressed by how Practical Law is “very systematic” in its approach to legal research. He found it easy to find relevant how-to guides and precedents by leveraging the option to filter all searched-for content by type, jurisdiction, date and more. “Everything is available on one screen. In one snapshot, you get everything you want, which may not be the case with the other tools we were comparing. That’s one of the main advantages we found with using Practical Law.”

“Whatever legal research you want, you can get it from Practical Law in one stroke.”

For Prasanth, the breadth and depth of legal know-how available in Practical Law provides real comfort that his legal team will be well supported with whatever project they undertake in future. “For any topic you are interested in, you can access in-depth legal research covering the Middle East and the rest of the world. Practical Law’s team of in-house expert lawyers have already conducted extensive research and even created expert checklists to guide us,” comments Prasanth. “Whatever legal research you want, you can get it from Practical Law in one stroke.”

Another high-value benefit of the platform for Prasanth is that it provides market-leading standard documents, automation tools and expert guidance that enable the rapid drafting of agreements through the Fastdraft tool. “One of the features of Practical Law which we love is that it makes it pretty easy to draft an agreement. They have a large collection of automated documents. You do not need to start from scratch — you just need to answer a few questions and then it creates a draft agreement for you, which you can easily customise to your needs,” he says. “This saves us a lot of time as well.”

The Results: Dramatically improved departmental efficiency and effectiveness

Prasanth identified that the return on investment from using expert legal research tool Practical Law is substantial. Not only does it deliver major departmental efficiencies and cost savings, but it also strengthens managerial oversight and the quality of legal output.

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“Practical Law saves us a lot of time that would have otherwise been spent searching through various websites and drafting a legal research note on a specific case or matter. That was the major reason why we chose Practical Law,” says Prasanth.

Redington Gulf’s legal team now use Practical Law on a daily basis to support a wide range of work. In measuring the departmental efficiencies achieved, Prasanth estimates that the Fastdraft agreement drafting tool alone has made the solution worth the investment.

“Practical Law definitely saves us almost 30% of the time that we used to spend on drafting an agreement,” he says. “We now have easy access to draft agreements in standard formats that are easily tailored to specific transactions in different jurisdictions. We then focus on customising them to our requirements, spending a maximum of 24% of the time we would have previously spent doing so.”

Prasanth notes that before implementing Practical Law, the team spent many hours drafting agreements “from scratch” or searching for relevant old templates that could be customised to current business needs. He identified that, since implementing Practical Law, he has been able to significantly strengthen oversight of this work done by the team.

“When the documents come to him for review, we can go back to the Practical Law portal to determine whether the team has done the work properly or, in case of any doubt, whether they have taken the appropriate language from the legal research material.”

To learn more about Thomson Reuters Practical Law and Westlaw please visit:
<https://mena.thomsonreuters.com/en/products-services/legal/pa-expert.html>

The future of in-house counsel: Strategic business advisers empowered by legal tech

Prasanth discovered that an unexpected and welcome result of his legal team relying on Practical Law to conduct expert legal research, stay up-to-date on legal developments and draft new documents is that it has freed up their time to focus on higher value work. The legal team have been leveraging these additional resource capabilities to strategically reposition themselves as business advisers and enablers.

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“Practical Law is very clearly helping us to focus on the more important work of advising management. We are concentrating much more on how to be business enablers by helping the business get ahead, do more deals, and achieve organisational objectives,” comments Prasanth.

This approach reflects his own views on the future of in-house legal departments, which he believes must adapt to evolving business needs. “I believe that the lawyers of the future will be required to make themselves a strategic adviser to the business rather than being consigned to the traditional in-house counsel role.”

Prasanth believes that embracing the latest innovations in legal technology, including artificial intelligence tools, is key to ensuring the continued value and relevance of legal departments in future. “There is some legal work that is routine and operational in nature, and these tools can help lawyers to do much more important and qualitative jobs rather than being tied down doing legal research and drafting agreements,” he says.

Thomson Reuters recently signed an agreement with Microsoft to integrate generative artificial intelligence (AI) into Practical Law and other legal products. The new Ask Practical Law tool will substantially boost the software’s legal research and agreement drafting tools to help legal departments be even more efficient and effective. This includes rapid access to relevant guidance, market data and case law that can be used to customise automated draft agreements. By leveraging Ask Practical Law, in-house counsel will be fully equipped to complete legal work to a very high standard.

As legal technology continues to evolve and create new opportunities for innovative ways of working, the future looks bright for lawyers. “I’m sure that whatever new legal technologies are coming in future – including AI tools – they are going to enable lawyers rather than replace them,” says Prasanth.