

CASE STUDY: DAVID KIM

from Owen Dixon Chambers
Barrister



1.

The Challenge

As a Barrister, it's critical for me to stay up-to-date on legal developments, including niche practice areas.

Every dispute is different and may give rise to a number of legal issues. For example, I'm by no means an employment lawyer. However, there may be a situation where although a client may have come to me because of a commercial dispute, there may be underlying or associated employment issues that I may need to be mindful of. In such situations, it is reassuring to have a research tool that can provide me with critical knowledge and guidance. As I'm also running a business, it's important for me to find the right information without having to write-off time or be consumed by legal research.

Depending on the circumstance, there are times when I don't charge for legal research, or I don't charge for all the time that I have spent. It might be because I don't consider the task as one that I should charge the client for, or I may have provided a cap on my fees for a particular task and I've underestimated the time it was going to take me. In situations like that, it's very important to me that I'm able to undertake legal research as efficiently as possible. That's why I and others like me can get frustrated or annoyed with traditional legal research tools that may be cumbersome to use or take time to master.

In litigation, a key focus in building your client's case should be to convey the case in a clear and persuasive way to the decision-maker, not being bogged down by cumbersome research tools or being stuck in a research rabbit hole chasing crumbs of correct information across the Internet.

2.

The Solution

Other research tools may give me similar outcomes in terms of content, however, Westlaw's intelligent built-in system is smarter and faster - everything I need is now under one roof and simple to reach.

Sometimes with legal research, you can do one search that requires you to do another search, or multiple searches. For me now, legal research is no longer a hindrance because Westlaw is intuitively responding to the way I think. It provides me with what I need in an efficient way. For example, the system intuitively displays not only documents that match my search parameters, but it also provides suggestions for further reading or issues related to the one I am searching. It therefore cuts down the time I would usually spend.

The marriage of the smart citator, built-in classification system and the intuitive approach adopted by Westlaw compliments the way lawyers think about and conduct legal research. At times it has provided me with concise answers, in seconds. For example, I was recently faced with a situation where I wasn't exactly sure how to begin my search, so I began by just typing a question. Within seconds the Westlaw gave me not only the relevant section of the applicable act, but some very useful case law. Such experiences have shown me the value it can add to my practice.

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3.

The Future

My clients' needs are changing with the times, as are their expectations of my work and how I actually deliver value to them. With this in mind, a tool like Westlaw feels right for now.

I feel confident and ready for the next matter, as I know I'll be able to focus on providing tailored and strategic solutions for my clients. I can shift the burden of undertaking difficult research tasks, which sometimes feels like finding a needle in a haystack, to technology.

I'm looking forward to further discovering the full depth of Westlaw's smarter citator capabilities, whilst also growing my capacity to focus on what really matters in my practice.

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