Providing effective and relevant current awareness solutions to lawyers and business development executives has long been a challenge for knowledge and research teams in law firms.

In response to lawyers’ continuing need for ‘real-time’ current awareness and a desire to manage their own updates and alerts, the Knowledge and Research team at Herbert Smith Freehills recognized an opportunity to implement Manzama’s Intelligence Platform to meet that need, and to strengthen its relationship with - and value to - the firm’s Business Development team. This also allowed the team to become an integral part of the firm’s commerciality and innovation initiatives.

The innovative approach to the Platform implementation, developed in collaboration between the Knowledge and Research team, Business Development and Manzama, has brought greater efficiency, content relevance and strategic insight to its current awareness delivery. Manzama’s Intelligence Platform has allowed the team to capture diverse, online media, efficiently roll-out tailored current awareness to the firm’s extensive global network and has offered the flexibility for practice groups and individual stakeholders to control their own alert profiles and preferences.

**Strategic Approach**
The team’s objective was to ensure that the solution implemented was not ‘just another piece of tech’ on the desktop, and that it delivered relevant content to individuals that they had not previously been able to access themselves.

A global project team was formed, including a senior Business Development manager, who ensured that search terms and tokens were aligned with the firm’s strategic focus areas and clients. A major innovation developed by the team was to construct search profiles for groups, rather than just for individuals, based on lead partners’ client and industry focuses. This meant that profiles could be replicated and adjusted quickly for lawyers and BD staff working with that partner (and then ‘swapped out’ if they worked for other partners, eliminating the problem of people continuing to receive redundant alerts).

In addition:
- Knowledge and Business Development teams worked integrally with Manzama throughout the project both in person and using online collaborative worksites.
- Searches were customized for global client relationship management staff to align the firm’s search terminology with Manzama.
- A staggered implementation plan by region was developed to prevent overload to IT support staff.
- Face-to-face and remote training opportunities empowered users to set-up their individual accounts and create their own search and alert preferences.
- Traditional aggregated content newsletters and alerts were converted to Manzama’s conceptual search newsletters, catering to areas of law and news on a particular industry; This equipped the team to deliver alerts on new areas (e.g. AI and Blockchain) quickly and ‘on demand’, with minimal manual effort.

**Challenges**
- Current awareness was delivered using subject-based email alerts and newsletters.
- Neither solution was innovative nor personalized.

**Goals**
- Global scalability for 4000 users
- Implement a user-friendly platform
- Increase collaboration and support across the firm
- Capture a broader range of diverse online content, including paid subscriptions
- Offer individualized alerts and dashboards

**Approach**
- Form global project team
- Create group profiles for easy replication across the firm
- Search customization to align with firm’s search terms
- Manzama collaboration
- Staggered, regional roll-out
- Individual training for users
- Deliver customizable, conceptual search newsletters for firm
Inter-Departmental Collaboration
The key to the successful implementation was the Knowledge and Research team’s recognition that they needed to work closely with Business Development to identify areas of focus and growth, and to strengthen relationships with other strategic branches of the firm. Through the use of intelligent profiling, conceptual searches and algorithms, Manzama streamlined the process of delivering relevant news catered to each stakeholder’s needs, based on input from both the Research Librarians and Business Development staff.

Scalability, Usability and Ease of Self-Management
Many lawyers within Herbert Smith Freehills were interested in tracking the same company, but their perspective on what mattered most, or was most relevant, differed significantly. “Mountains of updates” from various current awareness services and user self-subscribed alerts were cluttering inboxes.

To streamline and better control the amount and nature of the content they received, a growing number of lawyers had requested the ability to self-manage their own alerts, as well as receive real-time updates instead of single daily emails.

Katie Albright, Research Librarian, Knowledge and Research team, comments: “Meeting legal practitioners’ need for easy access to information on competitors and clients brings new opportunities for library and information professionals: Delivering timely and relevant intelligence on clients and competitors, and engaging with the strategic business development and client relationship functions of our firms demonstrates their relevance and value to a broader range of law firm staff.”

Manzama’s single user-based interface allowed the firm’s global staff to easily on-board new users, and then customize their search and alert preferences for their region, clients, topics and practice areas. User-friendly and intuitive to all levels of technical ability for self-service, the platform’s content discovery tools were placed in the users’ hands, letting them track new companies or topics, as well as change their alert delivery settings. This in turn improved efficiency.

Research Librarians were also able to create ‘template’ or group profiles, based on common clients and legal subject areas, which allowed for swift on-boarding of new users in the same legal practice area. This meant less time was required to set those users up and to get them receiving relevant information.

Capturing Online, Individualised and Relevant content
Knowledge and Research staff had also been receiving increasing requests for online content to be delivered in updates and through the firm’s intranet. Using Manzama, they improved the relevance and timeliness of current awareness content to support worldwide strategic project initiatives, while at the same time reducing manual management, and eliminating ‘cut and paste’ email alerts.

Manzama’s platform offered a flexible system capable of dealing with a variety of use cases, supporting legal and Business Development staff to track what companies and competitors were saying and doing.

Katie Albright concludes: “Whenever we are approached with a question about how to stay on top of some legal issue, organization, industry or future area of development, Manzama is now our first ‘port of call’ to help us deliver a solution. Anecdotally, we have also been told that many of our partners and senior Business Development executives rely solely on their personal, daily Manzama alerts to provide them with everything they need to know first thing about their clients and industries.”

Manzama – A Powerful Intelligence Tool
Since 2011, Manzama has been the leading provider of web-based current awareness and market intelligence to legal and professional service organizations around the globe. Using its propriety platform and search algorithms, Manzama scours the web for information based on each user’s personalized preferences. Through an individually customized dashboard, the powerful platform analyses and classifies its aggregated and curated online content base, including traditional news sources, social media channels, and thousands of other web-based business and legal content sources for relevance and importance. Manzama then delivers highly customized, personalized news and information to the user via email alerts, a mobile app and his or her personal dashboard. With intuitive sharing tools and a user-friendly deployment process, it arms every stakeholder with a knowledge advantage, making the process of finding and sharing insights about clients, industries, practices and business and legal topics easy, which helps build and strengthen both new and existing relationships and drive new business opportunities.

To arrange a demonstration, please contact sales@manzama.com.