

LawSource™

“LawSource is organized so that you do one search and it covers everything. That’s a huge peace of mind thing for a lawyer.”

– Julie Tannahill Marcano, Associate, Maurice Law

BUSINESS PROFILE

INDUSTRY

Legal

CLIENT

Julie Tannahill Marcano, Associate
Maurice Law

THE CHALLENGE

- > Finding a cost effective way to compete with larger, more resource-rich legal firms

THE SOLUTION

WestlawCARSWELL LawSource

KEY BENEFITS

- > Allows a smaller law firm to avoid the costs of maintaining a library, and employing a librarian and research assistants
- > Does more, does it better, and doesn’t cost any more than the firm’s previous online search product
- > Offers all key information on one easy to use platform

LawSource helps boutique legal firms stay competitive

Maurice Law is a boutique law firm specializing in aboriginal and treaty rights advocacy. The firm has earned a strong reputation for providing top-notch legal advice and advocacy with a proven track record for delivering excellent results on behalf of its clients.

Maurice Law’s long-term vision is to recruit lawyers from across the country with a strong commitment to client service and to expand upon its areas of expertise to better serve clients’ diverse needs. One way that the firm attracts highly qualified legal practitioners is by providing them with access to the very best in online legal tools.

In the summer of 2005, Maurice Law signed on to WestlawCARSWELL’s LawSource on the recommendation of one of its lawyers, Julie Tannahill Marcano, who had used the service at a firm where she worked previously.

“When I joined Maurice Law, they had a competitor’s product. I’d used the product before in university, but I missed LawSource,” she says. “We had someone from Carswell come in to show it to us, and the senior partner, Ron S. Maurice, was quite impressed.” All four of the firm’s lawyers now use LawSource as their principal research tool.

The business case for LawSource

Marcano is very firm in her belief that LawSource is a necessary tool for all smaller law firms. “It’s essential for a law firm to have it. You need an electronic service in today’s world,” she says. “We don’t have our own library. We don’t have our own librarian like a lot of the big firms do, so we need as much advantage as we can get out of our technologies.”

LawSource offers several advantages over more traditional ways of researching legal issues, by letting lawyers get at information more quickly and more easily. “If it’s easier to use and it’s quicker and more intuitive, I think it can only make your job easier,” says Marcano.

LawSource compares favourably to competition

“There’s no real comparison between what LawSource can do and what the competing product we used can do, especially in terms of searching,” says Marcano, who uses LawSource two or three times a week. “It’s more user-friendly, the way the search screens are set up makes it really easy to navigate your way around, and when you do a search it calls up all the relevant information onto one screen.” Best of all, though, LawSource provides a more complete legal research solution, it doesn’t cost any more than other available services. According to Marcano, cost-wise, “it is on par with other services.”

According to Marcano, another chief LawSource differentiator is that all the information a researcher may be looking for is very easy to get to and use. “In the other product I used, you had to search a number of different databases to look up different case law. So I wasn’t always sure that I was getting everything. In LawSource you just do one search. This helps to save you time and gives you the assurance that you haven’t missed anything.” The search results include a full case history, all the positive and negative treatments, and all academic and the Canadian Encyclopedic Digest (CED) citations for the case, compiled into one place.

LawSource™

“You don’t have to think about how the service works, how the information is organized, you just search and get results.”

WestlaweCARSWELL

Expect more and get it, with the incredible power, flexibility and depth of WestlaweCARSWELL. We've combined the power of the Internet with state-of-the-art tools to create an online legal platform that is unmatched anywhere. Fast, simple, reliable and complete – our service reflects our philosophy. We fit your personal work style... so you really can work the way you think.

Many ways to get at necessary information

How Marcano uses LawSource really depends on what information she is looking for. If she just needs a quick answer to an issue, she will normally start with the CED. “I find the CED very helpful especially for searches where I need a quick answer on a general topic,” she says. The CED can be easily searched either through a simple-to-use template or by going through its table of contents.

“If I’m looking for a recent case and I already know the citation, then all I have to do is type in the citation from LawSource main screen and the case pops up,” she says. If she is conducting a search on a topic she is less familiar with, and doesn’t really know where to start, Marcano has several options to choose from. LawSource search templates offer one quick way to narrow down a search. Users can also opt for a Boolean search or a natural language search.

“How I approach the problem really depends on how I want to frame the search,” says Marcano. “If I want to be very specific, I’ll use the Boolean search, otherwise, I will use the pull down menus in the templates.”

Excellent training and support

Marcano gives high marks to Carswell’s training and support staff. “My impression is that Carswell offers a lot of technical backup to law firms,” she says. Whenever the firm brings a new lawyer in, Carswell is there to offer onsite training.

“It makes a big difference to have someone come in to your office for a training session. It’s much easier and more convenient for us than having to go to a training centre. It just seems that in terms of support, Carswell is willing to go that extra mile to make it hassle-free for us.”

More useful features

Marcano identifies the regular updates on new cases as a feature of great importance to her law firm. “That will be key for us, especially since our practice is in a very specialized area, and we need to keep up-to-date on the cases as they come out,” she says. “We do get lots of newsletters and things through other sources but this is a first hand source in a way. As soon as a new case is put on it comes to us without us waiting for someone else to do a newsletter and send it to us.”

“It’s a very attractive feature and I’d say it’s one of the reasons we got LawSource in the first place, because really it’s very impressive to be able to keep up-to-date on what’s happening in the practice areas that we focus on,” she adds.

Even the look and feel of LawSource adds to its utility. “The way LawSource looks, the home screen that you’re presented with and the options that you’re given – it all directs you in such a natural way that it’s not hard work to get your search done,” says Marcano. “You don’t have to think about how the service works, how the information is organized, you just search and get results.”

For more information visit www.westlawecarswell.com/lawsorce