

McGUIREWOODS CONNECT

Unlocking our shared potential

Why McGuireWoods Connect?

Most corporate counsel recognize the benefits of technology and process improvement. To achieve these benefits, a corporate law department must blend technology and the law, while integrating outside counsel.

McGuireWoods LLP offers its technology and reengineering capabilities to corporate law departments on a "turnkey" basis. We have developed a cost-effective solution that can improve operational efficiency for litigation and transactional work through an extranet called McGuireWoods Connect.

Each client will have a secure Web site that only authorized users can access. McGuireWoods Connect contains electronic versions of forms, legal research, policies, pleadings, filings and contracts, and allows users to collaborate more effectively.

McGuireWoods Connect provides senior legal management with tools to make better strategic decisions and to supervise legal matters in an efficient, cost-effective manner.

McGuireWoods Connect Benefits

Complete & Easy to Use

- Users only need Internet access – no special hardware or software required.
- Use of familiar Web browser reduces training costs.

Access & Communication

- Immediate 24/7 access to all documents & related information.
- Fewer lost documents.
- Remote access to information & documents from any place.
- Hypertext linking provides intuitive access to related information.
- Better searching than with paper documents.
- Faster dissemination of information, decreasing cost & cycle time. Electronic documents can be shared, emailed, faxed or printed instantly.

Management & Control

- Superior monitoring & control of matters.
- More efficient discovery management in multiple cases.
- Elimination of duplicated effort in investigation, discovery, research & reporting.
- Standardization of forms & documents, including responses to discovery requests or inquiries from regulatory agencies.

Collaboration

- Improved coordination among law department & outside attorneys & consultants.
- Creation of institutional memory to preserve thought processes & collaborative activity.
- Development of virtual project teams with participants linked electronically, making time & distance increasingly irrelevant.

Process Improvements & Reengineering Benefits

- Automation of routine & repetitive tasks.
- Systematic reuse of prior information.

Documents Suitable for McGuireWoods Connect

Litigation

- Discovery documents
- Depositions & transcripts
- Pleadings
- Standard forms
- Legal research
- Memos and briefs
- Trial & deposition exhibits
- Witness backgrounds
- Expert lists & CVs
- Litigation policy manuals
- Joint defense agreements
- Case management orders

Employee Benefits

- Plan documents (current & historical)
- Summary plan descriptions
- Enrollment forms
- Statistical data
- Applicable regulations
- Prior administrative decisions

Corporate Transactions

- Draft & final SEC or other administrative filings
- Draft & final agreements & contracts
- Intellectual property inventories
- Status reports
- Real estate forms & transaction documents

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Frequently Asked Questions about McGuireWoods Connect

Q: What is an extranet?

A: An extranet is a tool for corporate law departments to manage legal matters and costs. It consists of a computer-based system containing important information about ongoing cases and projects. Corporate counsel, selected outside counsel and consultants can retrieve, contribute and comment on information in the system. This collaborative network improves the efficiency of the legal management process and ultimately reduces legal costs.

Q: What are the advantages of McGuireWoods Connect?

A: As experienced legal and business counselors, we understand the substantive legal issues clients face. We have also made significant investments in technology, and have improved our own practice by blending technology throughout the legal process. With this experience, we can produce measurable benefits to our clients that cannot be obtained from a paper-based system or technology alone.

Q: Why use McGuireWoods LLP to develop an extranet?

A: Consultants regularly offer technology solutions to companies. However, they are not usually involved in the client's legal work. They have more difficulty understanding and implementing an extranet on a day-to-day basis. Even if a consultant designs the perfect system, the client must shoulder the burden of implementing the system. In contrast, we offer our clients substantive legal knowledge and the follow-through needed to apply technology to each stage of the process.

Other law firms could provide a similar service, but generally do not. Most law firms providing technology-related services do so at the insistence of a corporate client. It is unusual for a law firm to propose a tool that reduces legal costs. We provide an integrated approach that starts with the electronic connection and manages all of the steps to provide a complete measurable legal solution.

Q: What do you mean when you say that McGuireWoods provides "turnkey" extranets?

A: We can do as much or as little as the client needs. We can provide servers, software, technical support, training, database population and maintenance. This alternative means that the client does not need technical expertise or resources. The only time investment from the client is with a short training session for users.

For clients with existing systems, we can work with the organization to provide the needed aspects of the system, and integrate them into the existing structure.

Q: Do lawyers in the corporate law department have to be avid technology users to use McGuireWoods Connect?

A: No. McGuireWoods Connect uses Web browser technology, so anyone who can point and click with a mouse can use the system. If they are unfamiliar with basic computer use, we can teach them. Because we use graphic interfaces, like Web pages from Internet sites, the learning curve is very low.

Q: Is McGuireWoods Connect large & complicated?

A: No. We can create a system for small projects tailored to the client's specific needs, which can grow as the client's needs grow.

Q: Can McGuireWoods Connect be used in areas other than litigation?

A: Yes. We can create an effective system to enhance most areas of law. For example, employee benefits, various types of transactional work, managing real estate documents and similar needs, are all document-intensive and require collaborative efforts between corporate and outside counsel. As such, they are ripe for the benefits of an Extranet.

Q: Who makes sure the system is up to date and that all current documents are present & in the right place?

A: Depending on the client's preference, either McGuireWoods or the client can handle updates and database maintenance. We can train the client how to do this internally, as may be desired.

Q: How is McGuireWoods Connect implemented?

A: We first conduct a needs analysis, followed by an interactive goal setting session with the client. In this session, we jointly define what McGuireWoods Connect will accomplish. We start with the client's specific requirements and then we will typically suggest additional approaches. The intent is to develop a series of mutually agreed upon goals consistent with the client's bottom line business objectives.

Q: Can McGuireWoods Connect be used with other law firms?

A: Yes. We have experience in connecting other law firms to our clients' systems and sharing information about the client's work. This can be a very effective means of coordinating efforts and pooling knowledge. It also encourages reuse of information and avoids duplication of effort by different outside counsel.