

# Professional Review

A Publication for professional services executives



**Graham Seldon**, *Manager - Mahlab Professionals*

## Introduction

Welcome to the second issue of *Professional Review*. Our focus for this publication is knowledge management and in particular how knowledge management is viewed by professional service firms.

Knowledge management can be interpreted in many ways and though a debate rages about knowledge management versus information management, the underlying aim, to implement more effective ways to capture intellectual capital, is one that is embraced by most commercially astute organisations.

This has been witnessed at Mahlab by the increasing number of job opportunities that have been created over the past few years and the growing acceptance of information/knowledge professionals as part of a vital management team working in collaboration with Human Resources and Marketing departments.

The roles of the traditional corporate librarian and precedents professionals are slowly changing as issues around organisational change, technology, training & development and internal communications become key parts of job descriptions.

## MAHLAB CAREER SURVEY

Mahlab *Professionals* (a division of Mahlab Recruitment) specialises in recruitment services, career development and advice to executives in professional service firms. As part of our annual salary survey we are currently researching the salaries and job responsibilities of knowledge workers.

**The results will be published in August 2002 and will be available on our website.**

In this issue, leading consultant **Matthew Parsons** identifies the common KM questions currently facing the legal profession and gives an excellent insight into how the dramatic changes in the global legal landscape have driven the need to take KM seriously.

**Ruth Bird**, Legal Information Manager at Phillips Fox, takes us through some key steps that have led to more effective information sharing capabilities of the firm.

**Adam Seskis** from LitSupport looks at how technology can play a critical role in voluminous information-generating litigation and why IT training is becoming an essential KM management tool.

**Cris Townley** from Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu shares her firm's current smart recruitment and people development strategies which enable a more knowledge sharing culture.

Finally we provide useful contacts and interest groups for those of you who want to know more and those who need to know more. Either way KM is here to stay and is changing the way we manage our businesses!

This research is supported by the Knowledge Management Leadership Forum and the Legal Precedents Network.

If you wish to take part in the study and receive a hard copy of the research on publication please go to [www.mahlab.com.au/mpsurvey](http://www.mahlab.com.au/mpsurvey)

## ISSUE TWO: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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# Mahlab

# UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE: The KM questions for service firms

Matthew Parsons, *Consultant and Author*

*An extract from the coming book "Effective knowledge management for law firms: How law firms can get knowledge management right at last" to be published in late 2002.*

The latter part of the twentieth century witnessed a profound shift in the nature of organisations, and an increasing recognition of the importance of knowledge as the only form of sustainable competitive advantage. The other traditional factors of production, land, labour, and capital were capable of acquisition, on either a temporary or permanent basis, as required. Even technological innovations, once the domain of proprietary and expensive equipment, provided at best short lived tactical advantage, as competitors quickly mobilized to match innovations using cheaply available industry standard software and computers.

The knowledge and technology component of industrial, manufactured, and financial products increased dramatically. The value of products became increasingly dependent upon the intellectual effort embedded in the product, rather than the value of the physical goods that were assembled and sold. Software, for example, has marginal physical cost – the disk on which it is carried and the box in which it is sold. The value in software is not in the physical components assembled, but is in the huge intellectual costs in programmers, research and development, and design.

**With the intellectual and knowledge component of goods and services becoming of increasing importance, the acquisition, nurturing, development, and management of human intellect within organisations acquires a much higher priority. Better quality and efficiency of intellectual processes promised better decisions, shorter cycle times, and decreased costs through greater productivity.**

To help organisations with this transformation from industrial to knowledge based enterprises, the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of a range of management concepts, including:

- Senge's "learning organisation"<sup>1</sup>,
- the discussion and measurement of "intellectual capital" to explain the difference between a company's market capitalization and book value<sup>2</sup> and
- the emergence of a new discipline of "knowledge management".

In 1997, Davenport and Prusak, in perhaps the most famous (and useful) knowledge management book, distilled their core message "the only sustainable advantage a firm has comes from what it collectively knows, how efficiently it uses what it knows, and how readily it acquires and uses new knowledge".<sup>3</sup>

**Law firms have always been pure knowledge businesses, always conscious of the fact that their sustainable advantage is the expertise and knowledge of their lawyers, and their firms, rather than any physical factors of production.**

Unlike the impact of the knowledge economy on transforming industrial businesses, the "knowledge economy" is not reshaping the extent of law firms' dependence on intellectual endeavour: it has always been extremely high. The value of lawyers' products has always been dominated by the intellectual rather than the physical component of the 'goods' sold.

Indeed lawyers have always only ever produced but two tangible products: documents and airtime (when they speak). Lawyers are called upon to produce documents that record advice, documents that allocate risk between parties in agreements, documents that

represent clients to regulatory agencies, and documents that commence or defend disputes and proceedings. Lawyers also speak, providing advice and representation orally in meetings, on telephones, in video conferences, or before courts and tribunals.

The physical value of these two goods sold by lawyers has always been de minimus compared with the value of the underlying and embedded intellectual effort and expertise. The physical cost of documents was once the paper and postage – now it is the almost zero marginal cost of email transmission of an electronic document. For airtime, face to face discussion has no physical cost, and for non face to face communication there is only the ever reducing cost of signal carriage and transmission in telecommunications networks.

The balance sheet of law firms has always reflected a knowledge intensive business. As the Chairman of a major international law firm rightly said "our assets go home at night". Law firm balance sheets normally show but four major asset classes. The first is accounts receivable, the value of outstanding and unpaid bills. The second asset class is work in process, the value of time spent on client matters that has not yet been billed. The third is cash, and finally, the fourth asset class is the diminishing value of books in the library.

Like most professional services firms, law firms own very little. They rent their premises, rent their technology, and rent their people.

As essentially knowledge businesses, lawyers have always been dealing with assembling and managing intellectual resources, and charging clients for the use of those resources. Once upon a time, legal services were charged on the basis of the number of words written, which some claim as the cultural seed for lawyers supposed pre-disposition to verbosity and complicated language. With increasing computerisation of record keeping in the last half of the twentieth century, the six minute unit, and the hourly rate, emerged as the dominant method of measuring the cost of legal services, and the revenue of law firms.

That is not to say that firms have not been flexible in exploring fixed rate agreements, risk based premiums, contingency fees, and even equity in lieu of fee arrangements during the dot com boom of the last five years of the 20th century. However, the dominant method around the world upon which law firm revenue is calculated today remains hourly rate billing.

Unlike law firms, organisations that do not charge for their services on the basis of hourly rates can derive revenue increases, and cost reductions, from organisational learning, knowledge management and technology. These transforming organisations can:

- **increase revenues** from better innovation, enhanced customer targeting and increased service quality, and reducing product development cycles, and
- **decrease costs** with knowledge driven increases in employee productivity, and the application of knowledge enriched technology to replace human cost factors in everything from invoice processing to call centres.

Whilst these benefits are available to transforming organisations, not all projects launched by them in the name of technology, and knowledge management, have delivered favourable bottom line results. Many databases have been built, intranets rolled out,

websites created, and portals launched with the best of intentions in seeking these benefits. Karl Eric Sveiby, the father of the Intellectual Capital movement, has estimated that the confusion between knowledge and information has caused managers to sink billions of dollars in information technology ventures that have yielded marginal results.

For law firms, however, knowledge worker productivity improvements prima facie reduce revenue, and therefore reduce financial performance. As Thomas Davenport has observed:

“Lawyers generally bill by their time. So what happens if they can do a lot more productive work in an hour because of knowledge management? If competitive law firms adopt such KM approaches, they may all be forced to pass the savings on to their clients, and hence lower their own incomes. It's fine to talk about “value billing,” but calculating the value of the 47th use of a client letter's content will never be easy, nor invisible to the client. Like many IT innovations, knowledge management may be good for individual productivity but bad for industry economics.”<sup>4</sup>

The same factors that have been driving knowledge management, technology and globalisation, have also had a profound impact on the size of firms, and the knowledge environment in which lawyers operate. Lawyers may actually have become less knowledge confident since the term “knowledge management” entered the management dictionary.

In simpler times, not 20 years ago, law firms were significantly smaller, less than the 200 people level accepted by many as a barrier to the quality and scope of informal organisational communication. Firms were generally in one principal location, not dispersed nationally and internationally, as are the larger firms today.

**In simpler times, a lawyer was confident that he knew the sources of knowledge in his profession. He knew where to find the case books, which he first met at law school. He knew where to find the textbooks in the library. He knew where to find the one filing cabinet of the firm's previous important advices. He knew where to find the precedents that had been created for use by the firm's lawyers.**

Today, firms are much larger and growing larger by international merger. The English firms have led the way in international merger activity to build very large, high quality, multi-jurisdictional commercial law firms. As the table below indicates, the leading firms now have in excess of 2,000 lawyers, allowing increasingly global coverage.

FIRM	NO OF LAWYERS
Clifford Chance	3,600
Baker & McKenzie	3,000
Linklaters	2,505
Freshfields	2,314
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	1,441

Personal computers came to lawyers' desks for the first time in the 1990s, and most firms will shortly celebrate their first decade of lawyers working with personal computers.

During that decade, the legal information landscape has exponentially increased, often with multiple sources carrying the same content. Lawyers can become bewildered by the blizzard of information – is the right information on a CD-Rom, on a website, or in a book in the library? Librarians complain that new graduates suffer electronic blindness – if the young lawyer cannot find the resource on the internet it does not exist to them. An avalanche of special interest websites and email lists emerged, with some lawyers now receiving more than 100 emails a day from professional email lists to which they belong. Documents are

created faster, larger and more complex than ever before.

At the same time as the information explosion was occurring, more efficient management has focused increasing attention on billable hours, diminishing the opportunities for informal knowledge acquisition and dissemination. Much ‘slack’ time has been cut out in the name of productivity and profitability.

Rather than having been assisted by the coming of the “knowledge economy”, the blizzard of choice, the explosion of content and the increasing demands for speed in the provision of legal services has actually made lawyers less “knowledge-able”. New professional dysfunctions have been identified - information anxiety<sup>5</sup> and attention deficit<sup>6</sup>. The production and dissemination of information has become so cheap and easy that the flow has become greater than one's ability to process.

**Ask any lawyer of 15 years' experience how “in control” of the knowledge and information of their profession they feel today, as against 15 years ago. Ask a five year lawyer the same question, and you will be amazed that the response is the same. The quantity of legal and professional information, and the continuing changes in the publishing and delivery mechanisms (and interfaces) for that information, challenge even the best librarians – who do not face billable hour targets. Lawyers now often rely on the research skills of newly qualified lawyers, hoping they are familiar with the latest tools.**

In its 2001 Annual Report, English based international firm, Freshfields, said of its intellectual capital program:<sup>7</sup>

“But as firms are successful and grow, and colleagues are more spread out – sometimes even within the same office – there can be a tendency towards intellectual inertia and the loss to the firm, through compartmentalisation, of valuable information.

Technology offers the chance to overcome some of these difficulties. But we are very much aware that if we fail to manage our technology well, it will become another part of the problem. Email, intranets, video conferencing and similar tools enable us to share know-how; they also make it possible for us to drown in data if we do not use them wisely. That is why we are investing heavily not only in top-quality IT systems and people but also in an extensive and growing team of knowledge management professionals.”

The balance between knowledge management and information overload is a key, and often overlooked, part of a law firm's knowledge strategy.

The key questions that arise for law firms to address in the coming decade are:

- What can we learn from the origins, the history, the lessons, and the thought leadership of knowledge management that can help Managing Partners, Executive Committees and knowledge partners approach and execute value creating knowledge management for their firms?
- What are the business and economic fundamentals for law firms the improvement of which should be the subject of knowledge management initiatives?
- How does one approach a cohesive knowledge strategy at law firms, addressing the productivity paradox of hourly rate billing?
- How do firms address both their legal and non-legal knowledge needs? What should a law firm invest in, and why?

*continued on page 4*



## LET'S TREAT KNOWLEDGE LIKE THE PEOPLE THEY ARE

Cris Townley, *Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu*

Quite simply, knowledge management is about people. Particularly in professional services, we are selling the expertise of our people. That is our knowledge asset. To do well we must grow and renew what our people know how to do, and design our organisation to support this. That sounds suspiciously like the mission of human resources.

Has knowledge management recognised this? We're getting there. We've all looked at document management, and we now store files better. It's important to have methodologies, make them easy for your people to access, not reinvent the wheel when giving advice, ensure your people are up to date with their technical expertise. Then we realised that all that work in knowledge capture, codification, storage and so on was all focused on explicit knowledge. We started to look at tacit knowledge, the stuff that was in people's heads. We saw that experience was valuable; to lose key people is to lose knowledge. You can document the process of making coffee, but never capture that elusive something that a good barista will add.

**The implications for HR are that we cannot leave knowledge management to other parts of the business. HR needs to be involved. Whatever our processes and methodologies are, it is only when people can put them into practice that they are valuable to us.**

How do we ensure that our people learn what they need to know? We have to make sure we have the right people with the right skills. Are we recruiting in the best way? Our people must be motivated to use the knowledge they have, and add to it as they grow and develop. How do we build a knowledge sharing culture? These questions are key to managing knowledge in an organisation.

At Deloitte we have combined our 'knowledge' work with our HR group – collectively we are People & Knowledge. In this way our efforts around knowledge are closely linked with the more traditional HR work, and our learning group. This gives

KM a central role in the combined approach to building a knowledge sharing culture from a strategic level right down to details such as the content of training courses, the feel of the induction process, or the posters encouraging use of the contacts database.

I think that we have to go further again. Knowledge is whatever makes us better able to act. In professional services a small part of that is access to explicit knowledge. Then there is knowing what to do with that explicit knowledge, learning from experience, doing things with more senior people to gain a deep understanding. That's the tacit knowledge. I believe that the knowledge in an organisation is also held in the networks of the organisation, by which I mean who knows who. This is certainly something that helps our people get things done.

It is not only the extent but the quality of the networks that determine how well the networks enable people to act. The trust that exists between people and the nature and richness of people's interaction affect how great a knowledge asset they are. Our mentoring program gives people specific insights and skills as to how they can improve their interpersonal interactions. The contacts database and the intranet give people access to those with specific skills that are not yet in their individual network. Our Signals, or values, set the scene for a culture of openness and collaboration that encourages good knowledge sharing.

**So if your knowledge management people aren't closely networked with your human resources people, invite them all to lunch together. We're trying to do the same thing.**

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## UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE: The KM questions for service firms (from page 3)

**Matthew Parsons, Consultant and Author**

<sup>1</sup> Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1990)

<sup>2</sup> Leif Edvinsson and Michael S Malone, *Intellectual Capital: Realizing Your Company's True Value by Finding Its Hidden Roots* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1997), Karl Erik Sveiby, *The New Organisational Wealth: Managing and Measuring Knowledge Based Assets*, (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1997)

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Davenport and Laurence Prusak, *Working Knowledge: How Organisations Manage What They Know* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1997), page xv

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Davenport, "Better Late Than Never" *CIO Magazine*, April 1, 2000, [http://www.cio.com/archive/040100\\_jaw.html](http://www.cio.com/archive/040100_jaw.html)

<sup>5</sup> See Richard Saul Wurman, *Information Anxiety 2*, (Indianapolis: Que, 2001)

<sup>6</sup> See Thomas Davenport and John Beck, *The Attention Economy: Understanding the New Currency of Business*, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2001)

<sup>7</sup> *Reporting the Future*, (London: Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, 2001, page 13) <http://www.freshfields.com/publications/pdfs/ANNUALREPORT.pdf>

*Matthew Parsons has been involved with professional service firms since 1985. An accountant and lawyer, Matthew practiced with Price Waterhouse and Malleons Stephen Jaques, and was formerly the Director of Know How and Online Products with Malleons Stephen Jaques. Matthew is a freelance writer and is currently consulting in information architecture, financial analysis, and knowledge management. His book is to be published in late 2002.*

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# INFORMATION MANAGEMENT STEP BY STEP – A LAW FIRM CASE STUDY

Ruth Bird, *Legal Information Manager, Phillips Fox*



Phillips Fox is a large law firm with offices in 6 capitals in Australia, as well as 2 offices in New Zealand. The firm restructured several years ago to allow for a greater degree of information sharing, taking advantage of the developments in technology to provide common access to legal staff irrespective of location or hardware.

Initially, the firm targetted one area which would benefit immediately from an information sharing approach – the precedents. Each office had its own collection of precedents; with the introduction of a firm wide intranet it was now possible to aggregate the collection onto one site and make it accessible to all staff.

Six months into the project, there are over 2,500 precedents, and the next areas of in-house information to be targetted in a similar way are the advices/opinions, the in-house seminar papers, and the newsletters to clients.

## 1. Strategy

This is actually the end part of a structured process. A precedents strategy was developed and refined 15 months ago, and my appointment was result of implementing the first phase of the strategy. Then 9 months ago it was decided to develop a library strategy which could complement the development in precedents. In both instances the strategies were the outcome of meetings of those involved in managing these areas.

Formulating a strategy in this way ensures that those who have to implement changes feel a sense of ownership of the process. Precedents lawyers were appointed in each centre who could act as managers of the system, and also work with the legal teams.

## 2. Structuring information

The next step was to decide on a system to store the information, and a way of making it easily accessible to the users via the intranet. Several document indexing systems were investigated, and we settled on a web based solution which will allow indexing of a huge range of in-house material. We have decided to undertake some indexing of material, to complement full text searching, which is available on the Document Management System, as well as across the intranet.

The intranet also brings together all the research and database sites used for legal and marketing research. This has necessitated revisiting all the database contracts with publishers, because many of the databases were centre specific, and will now have to be accessible in each centre.

## 3. Reviewing content

Once the precedents are on a central system it is possible to

- review the collection
- evaluate the quality
- eliminate duplicate documents, and
- identify gaps.

To do this properly, we need to involve the legal teams, and encourage their participation. Luckily, we have support from the Board in our endeavours, so we are quite positive that we will have buy-in for this stage of the project.

## 4. Avoiding rework

The aim of the information management system is to collect work done once in one centre, and make it available to everyone in the firm. This includes seminar papers, newsletters to clients, advices, as well as precedents. It should also include all the common forms, the contact lists, having a common email system so that everyone is listed in one spot, with position and phone number as well as email address.

## 5. Asking the questions

Our role is to create a system which makes the information easily accessible. This means talking with the authors and learning how they use information. We undertook an Information Audit early this year to clarify some of the issues.

In many instances, the plans we had for managing the information were confirmed, but there were some surprises, and these are helping us form the next phase of our planning. **We are working closely with marketing as well, to ensure that we have a common approach to research of companies and industries, and we share all our work, but don't duplicate it.**

## 6. The intranet etc.

This single tool makes everything so much easier. We can provide and share uniform information across the whole firm. We are able to author pages individually, and add them to the system, so we don't rely on centralised up-loading of data – it can be as up-to-date as is needed. In addition, we have common email, word processing and practice management software, even though we still have Mac as well as PC's. The phone systems are also uniform, and we use teleconferencing a great deal to discuss ideas and plans.

## 7. The culture

Perhaps the greatest challenge in law firms is to encourage sharing and collaboration, be it documents, clients, whatever. Once a firm can agree that this is the way to achieve economies of scale, support grows greatly for sharing information. A good structure then enhances the process, and people contribute voluntarily.

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## LITIGATION SUPPORT AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Adam Seskis, *LitSupport*

Knowledge management ("KM") focuses on the ability to make available the precise information when you require it. Technology has become integral in the implementation of KM as it automates the storage, indexing, retrieval and archiving of large amounts of information.

A critical hot-spot of legal knowledge management is litigation support. Firms are increasingly realising that a voluminous discovery is much better managed in a controlled and centralised electronic environment. Recent surveys have shown that almost one quarter of all law firms are now using litigation support software ("LSS").

**KM is of enormous importance in the legal sector where there is a constant flux of legislation, legal precedent and opinion. It is crucial for the lawyer to have access to current and accurate information.** To achieve this end, law firms have been using technology for many years. Current legislation and case law can be accessed through resources such as Butterworths and Halsbury's Laws of Australia over the internet or intranet via CD-Rom. Law firms also extensively use document management systems to catalogue precedents and make correspondence, memoranda, advices and so forth easily available.

Recent times have seen a significant increase in law firms implementing KM systems to assist them in the preparation and conduct of litigation.

Managing litigation without the use of LSS means that huge costs are incurred in document and information transfer even before any expenditure outlay on legal analysis. The key principle of effective litigation management is the centralisation and control of information. By utilising LSS a law firm gains greater control over the information stored and the retrieval of that information if and when required.

The benefits of electronic litigation support technology are almost immeasurable; with dramatic savings compared with paper-based systems. Other common benefits enjoyed by law firms upon implementation include the following:

- Faster, more complete access to critical information
- Certainty – increased chance to locate critical documents
- Competitive advantage – through efficient & thorough case preparation, more time can be spent analysing the evidence rather than organising the evidence, increasing chances of success
- Efficient collaboration of information between firm, counsel and client
- Time savings – no more time wasted searching for hard copy documents
- Continuity of information – easier to bring new staff up to speed
- Intellectual capital is centralised
- Increases in business capacity – reduction in non-billable mechanical tasks creates ability to spend time on higher value business
- Electronic trials reduce trial duration

In order to take advantage of the benefits of LSS it is imperative that the features and benefits of the software be effectively explained and matched with the needs of the firm or legal department.

Software products like Summation's Blaze family of products and Ringtail's CaseBook - both very powerful LSS packages - give the litigator all the information he or she requires to prepare and conduct litigation.

These tools provide a central storage of knowledge regarding a particular case. This will include images of discovered documents, lawyers' comments regarding those documents, witness statements, affidavits and links to legal research sites (Internet or intranet). Lawyers are able to access these systems over the intranet or Internet and review documents collaborating with a legal team, sharing their collective knowledge. Without these types of systems, effective management of large complex matters is almost impossible. The amount of documents both paper-based and electronic, produced by companies in today's climate of regulation makes it difficult for lawyers to see the forest for the trees.

As with all KM systems the tools alone will not result in successful implementation. Strategic planning, expert advice and continued training are just some of the many ingredients required.

LitSupport specialises in assisting lawyers with strategic planning regarding the management of documents associated with the discovery process. We also consult to establish the best methodologies to ensure the required information is captured thoroughly and accurately.

Consistent and error free information is one of the greater challenges in the implementation of a LSS. A carefully planned and executed methodology is integral. For example, a search of your system for the author 'Smith J' will only bring back results if every user has adhered to the methodology, which might require you to entered 'Smith J' where the author is 'John Smith'.

Training, another important ingredient, flows on from this as the users of your LSS must be given the requisite skills to not only use the implemented systems, but to also understand the concept "garbage in, garbage out." If users don't take care and adhere to methodologies when inputting information, the system's benefits are eroded. The benefits of knowledge management need to be clearly stated. Ownership must be given to all users in order to motivate people to work with your implemented systems.

**LSS will continue to have an ever-increasing role to play in firms' and legal departments' KM strategy. A law firm's greatest resource is their employees and the knowledge they bring to the law firm. Over the years we have seen a greater recognition of this resource as law firms now take the role of the Human Resource department in managing their people very seriously.** The work produced by lawyers and the tools they require to create it are just as critical. Even today, many firms' approach to KM is disparate, relying often on mutually exclusive departments to manage different aspects of KM. This is where I see the biggest change, the implementation of KM leadership to ensure that not only are the many KM systems compatible but that a consistent approach is taken firm wide.

The sophistication and flexibility of packages such as Summation Blaze and Ringtail enable firms to re-direct their valuable resources (and their client's fees) away from paper crunching and towards successful legal strategy.

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# INTEREST GROUPS

## LEGAL PRECEDENTS NETWORK

The Legal Precedents Network is a discussion and support network with affiliated members in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Membership is open to precedent lawyers, managers and administrators as well as knowledge managers and technicians working in legal firms, companies or government bodies.

**The group aims to provide those knowledge management professionals with a forum to meet and share information about precedents systems and management, software, legal developments, court forms, drafting, plain language and knowledge management. It also enables members to meet others who work in similar environments and face similar issues.**

Each regional group has volunteer administrators or a steering committee who arrange regular meetings in each city. The format is usually a presentation of a relevant topic followed by discussion.

A group email address has been established on Yahoo Groups. Members use this as an inquiry and help line and also to advertise meeting agendas, membership detail updates and job vacancies.

**Melbourne** members meet each month at the Law Institute of Victoria. For membership inquiries, please contact the Melbourne moderator Jacinta Efthim at [jefthim@optushome.com.au](mailto:jefthim@optushome.com.au)

The **Sydney** group meets about 4 times a year and member firms take turns to host the lunch meetings at their offices. Contact Maryvonne McKey at [maryvonne\\_mckey@hdy.com.au](mailto:maryvonne_mckey@hdy.com.au)

Similarly, the **Brisbane** group take turns to host meetings at their members' offices. Contact Anne-Maree Coyne at [Anne-Maree.Coyne@aar.com.au](mailto:Anne-Maree.Coyne@aar.com.au)

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP FORUM

The Knowledge Management Leadership Forum (KMLF) is a network of around 400 individuals with one key characteristic in common – they are passionate about knowledge management!

**The Melbourne Chapter of the KMLF is made up of a range of different 'interest' groups including but not limited to, knowledge practitioners in the private sector, knowledge practitioners in the public sector, software developers & sales people, academics and knowledge management consultants. This mix of 'interest' groups is responsible for the dynamic tension and high level of debate that characterises the forum.**

Meeting on a quarterly basis, usually in the offices of the current Chairperson, each forum is attended by anywhere between 40 and 140 members. A wide range of formats and topics keeps the meetings interesting and caters to the often very diverse interests of the group. Case studies on everything from intranet deployment to data mining to establishing communities of practice enable members to learn about the experiences of others. Workshops facilitate open debate and provide all members with the opportunity to talk about what they are doing and to ask questions of other members. Debate panels add a little spice to proceedings and encourage members to consider key issues in knowledge management from different perspectives.

Over the past 15 months attendees have had the opportunity to learn about how knowledge management is being conducted at some of the largest companies in Australia such as Telstra, ANZ, KPMG and Village Roadshow and have had the chance to discuss and debate hot topics in knowledge management such as 'can tacit knowledge be transferred?' and 'how can large hotel groups best manage their knowledge when the great majority of staff do not have access to personal computers?'

**One of the key attractions of the forum is the opportunity to network and build relationships with others interested in this relatively new field. A significant amount of time at the end of each meeting is dedicated to networking over drinks and nibbles.**

For those interested in joining the KMLF, the only criterion is that you have an interest in knowledge management. There is no membership fee as sponsors provide the refreshments. To register as a new member, go to the Knowledgepoint website <http://www.knowledgepoint.com.au/KMLF.htm> and select the 'join the KMLF' option. Emails containing the forum details will be sent to you prior to the meeting once you have registered.

If you have any further queries about the KMLF, please contact **Jo Parker-Whiting**, KMLF Chairperson on **(03) 9288 5189**.

## AUSTRALIAN LAW LIBRARIANS' GROUP

The Australian Law Librarians' Group is a national body with Divisions in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

**Its members, in excess of 700, are librarians, information workers and publishers working in all sectors of the legal industry including private law firms, universities, government departments, courts and tribunals and other private organisations.**

The ALLG aims to provide a national focus for law librarianship and legal and business information. Its primary objectives are to provide:

- a network for law librarians in Australia,
- continuing education programs and conferences,
- a coordinated voice on issues of concern to the legal industry in the areas of legal publishing, and
- lobbying to promote the interests of law libraries, law collections and legal information services in the wider community.

The ALLG publishes a quarterly journal, the Australian Law Librarian, while a number of the Divisions also publish regular newsletters.

For further information please visit the website <http://www.allg.asn.au>

# Recruiting with Knowledge



**Graham Seldon**  
Manager - Mahlab Professionals

Graham trained in information science and has over 7 years experience working in the legal profession. He worked with law firms in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States before moving to Australia.

Since joining Mahlab Professionals in January 2000, Graham has successfully recruited management professionals in HR, Marketing, IT, Information and Knowledge Management across Australia and Asia.

He is a member of the Australian Law Librarians Group, the Australian Human Resources Association, the Australian Institute of Management and is the Treasurer of the Australian Professional Services Marketing Association.

Graham recently successfully completed the 1st stage of a Certificate in Knowledge Management at The University of Melbourne.

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**Erin Wheelahan**  
Consultant - Mahlab Professionals

Erin has a Bachelor of Business and Diploma of International Hotel Management, beginning her career in five star properties in Australia and Switzerland.

On her return to Melbourne, Erin worked in event management and marketing before establishing the Victorian office of an executive recruitment and training consultancy in 1999.

Erin joined Mahlab Professionals in March 2001 and as a Consultant focuses on Marketing, Human Resources and Information Management recruitment within professional services.

Erin recently placed a Litigation Support Manager and a Knowledge Analyst with one of Australia's leading law firms.

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**Kelly Warner**  
Consultant - Mahlab Professionals

Kelly has 3 years experience in legal recruitment. She began her career with UK law firm Denton Wilde Sapte, later joining a London legal recruitment specialist where she was responsible for the recruitment of support staff, accountants and paralegals within US and Canadian law firms.

Since joining Mahlab Professionals in 2001, Kelly has been working with Sydney firms recruiting executives into HR, Marketing and Information/Knowledge Management roles.

Kelly recently placed a senior business manager into a litigation support role.

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