
TRANSFORMING THE IN-HOUSE LEGAL TEAM

A report on past and planned activity of New Zealand in-house teams
December 2018

Introduction



Welcome to “Transforming the In-house Legal Team”, a report on the widespread transformation activity happening throughout New Zealand’s in-house legal teams.

Our principal objective with this research is to provide an accurate snapshot of the specific activity across the sector. It captures the positive results already experienced by many teams, key drivers and areas of focus going forward, as well as the common challenges faced by in-house teams when implementing transformation activity.

We hope that you enjoy reading this report and find it useful and relevant. We look forward to discussing it with you and welcome your feedback.

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Methodology

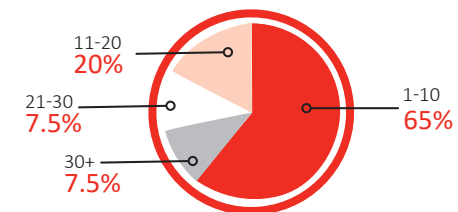


This research draws on 57 responses from members of in-house teams across New Zealand.

The respondents were from a mix of sectors including agribusiness, aviation, energy, financial services, insurance and local government.

The full range of in-house team size was represented, from sole individual up to 65 members.

Size of legal teams





Our 5 Key Findings



1: Lots of activity happening with positive results



2: Lack of time key challenge to delivering transformation activity



3: Technology developments essential but current focus is on getting the basics right



4: Contract lawyers dominate new resourcing models



5: Biggest priority going forward is to adopt new ways of delivering services

Key Finding 1



Lots of activity happening with positive results

The first set of questions identified the types of transformation activity that in-house teams have implemented over the past two years. Over 80% of respondents had implemented at least one of the five types covered.

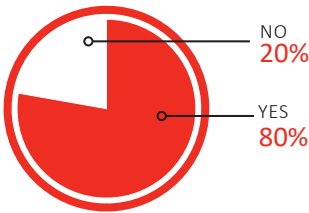
The main drivers for transformation activity included increasing efficiency (74%) and improving client/stakeholder engagement (64%).

The most popular types of activity related to implementing new technology (54%), introducing new skillsets (47%) and adopting new resourcing models (42%).

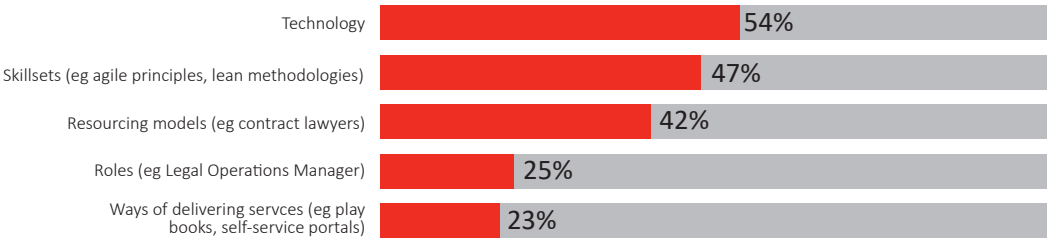
80% of respondents experienced positive results from their transformation activity.

Specific examples of positive results experienced include reduction in low-level/low-risk work, increased efficiency, empowered stakeholders, better team engagement and the legal team becoming change champions in the wider organisation.

Percentage of respondents that experienced positive results from past transformation activity:



Percentage of respondents that have implemented transformation activity over past two years - by activity:



Key Finding 2



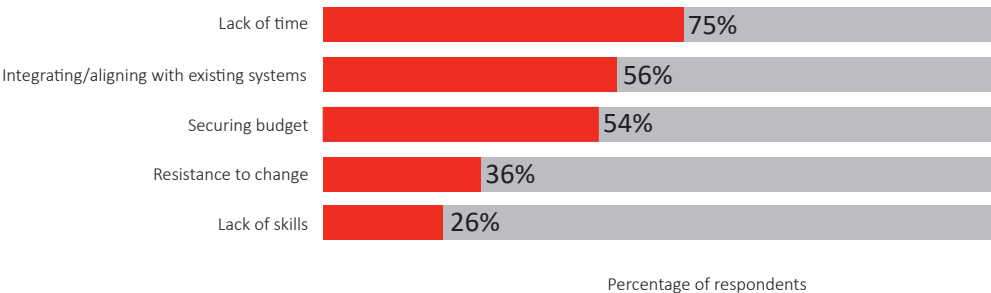
Lack of time key challenge to delivering transformation activity

“Doing ever more with ever less” is a common mantra for many in-house teams. This was reflected in the fact that 75% of respondents expect that lack of time will be one of the main challenges for delivering transformation activity going forward.

Interestingly 25% of respondents have introduced new roles over the last two years and there appears to be a specific focus on legal operation roles. These roles are focused on leading and facilitating transformation activity which should help alleviate the lack of time challenge.

Other challenges include integrating/aligning with current systems (56%) and securing budget (54%).

Respondents' expected challenges to delivering transformation activity going forward:



Key Finding 3



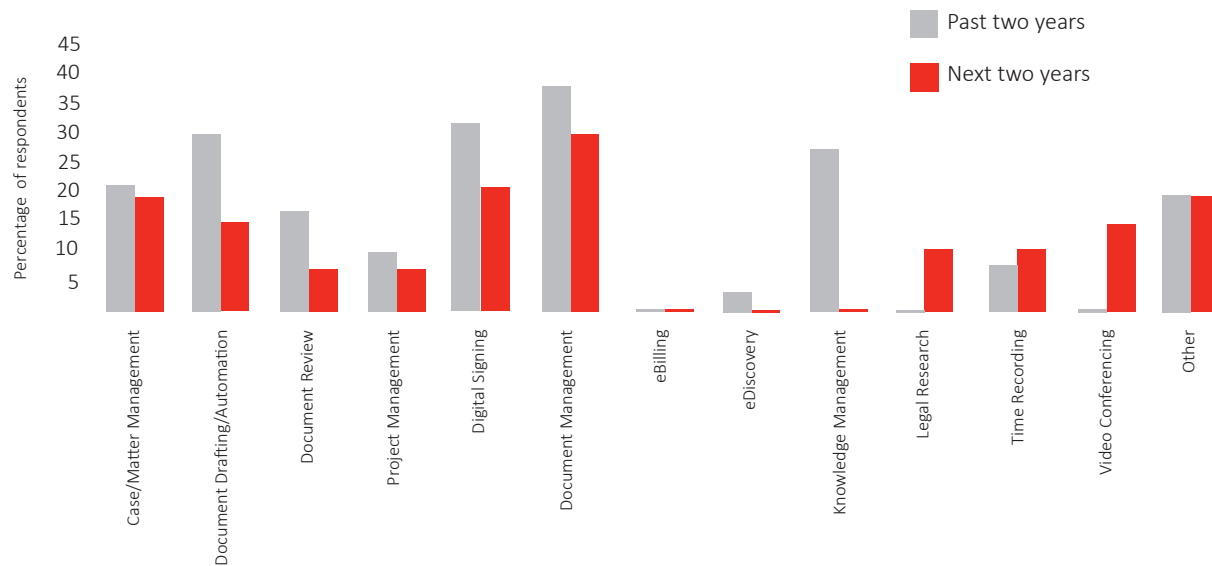
Technology developments essential but current focus is on getting the basics right

With 54% of respondents having implemented new technology over the last two years and 64% planning to go forward, there is no doubt that technology is an important focus.

Despite all the buzz around emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, most in-house teams are however focusing on getting the basics right.

Although a couple of respondents mentioned exploring chatbots and automation, Document Management and Digital Signing were the leading areas of focus.

Past and planned technology implementations



Key Finding 4

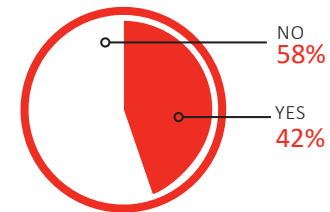


Contract lawyers dominate new resourcing models

42% of respondents have introduced new resourcing models over the past two years, and contract lawyers were the most commonly used option.

Given the growth of the gig economy locally and internationally, and the desire from individuals to work more flexibly, it will be interesting to track how this trend develops.

Percentage of respondents that have adopted new resourcing models:



Key Finding 5



Biggest priority going forward is to adopt new ways of delivering services

Playbooks, self-service offerings, risk matrices and flow charts - the number of respondents planning to implement new ways of delivering services like these is set to double.

Over the past two years, 23% of respondents introduced new tools to enhance how they engage with clients/stakeholders. Going forward, 48% of respondents are planning on implementing such tools.

This aligns with a global movement in the legal sector to adopt more user-centred design approaches that make legal processes more engaging, usable and useful for all parties.

Percentage of respondents implementing new ways of delivering services:

