

Tower Hill® Selects CounselLink® for Law Firm Bill Review, Expands its Deployment to Serve as Company's Litigation Management System

Tower Hill® Insurance

Overview

Location: Gainesville, Florida

Industry: Insurance

Customer Profile: Tower Hill Insurance is one of Florida's largest writers of residential property insurance and also provides comprehensive property, liability and other commercial coverage lines. More than 400 employees of Tower Hill serve the company's customers, who are both independent insurance agents and policyholders.

Business Situation: Tower Hill was searching for a technology solution to help them with the time-consuming process of reviewing law firm invoices. The company had a very narrow objective of finding a law firm bill review software system that could be customized in a way that would address their unique internal operations requirements.

Solutions: Tower Hill selected LexisNexis® CounselLink® to serve as their bill review software. Immediately after making this decision, however, executives in the company's law department and project managers in their IT department realized that CounselLink had broad capabilities that could be of use to them in other areas of their operations. In time, they expanded their use of CounselLink to include e-billing, matter management, reporting and contract management. CounselLink has become the portal that connects all functions of the Tower Hill corporate law department.

Benefits:

- Improved control over law firm bill review process, including ability to identify trends and gain deeper visibility into law firm spending;
- More effective management of cost structure for spending on outside counsel due to greater in-house counsel insight into billing details;
- Greater operational efficiencies as a result of more automated workflow and elimination of manual invoice entry;
- Objective assessment of performance of outside law firms with detailed management reporting;
- Consolidated scheduling of all matters in progress with use of calendaring function; and
- Migration to use of CounselLink as department's information management portal.

Product Summary:

Corporate Solutions

- CounselLink

Case Study

Founded in 1972 by W.T. Shively, Tower Hill Insurance has become one of Florida's largest writers of residential property insurance. Tower Hill Insurance Group, LLC, handles all aspects of the daily operations for multiple companies, including its affiliates: Tower Hill Preferred, Tower Hill Prime, Omega, Tower Hill Select and Royal Palm insurance companies. Tower Hill offers homeowners, mobile homeowners, dwelling fire, condominium, renters and flood coverage.

Through its commercial lines department, Tower Hill also provides comprehensive property, liability and other commercial coverages for the operations of mobile home parks, mobile home dealers, self-storage facilities, office/retail buildings, residential homeowner associations, hotels and other commercially owned residential properties.

Tower Hill corporate headquarters, located in Gainesville, Florida, includes the company's Customer Service and Policy Operations Center as well as the home office for Tower Hill Claims Services, LLC. In addition, Tower Hill Insurance Services, LLC is located in Lexington, Kentucky, to provide additional capacity and support in the event of a debilitating storm in Florida. The company employs more than 400 professionals.

Situation

"We were initially focused on finding a bill review software application to help us automate the process of reviewing law firm invoices, an important efficiency objective since we were manually inputting and reviewing as many as 1,000 law firm bills monthly," said Scott Rowe, general counsel of Tower Hill Insurance.

The company started out with a very narrow objective: finding a law firm bill review software system that could be customized in a way that would address its unique internal operations requirements.

Rowe enlisted the assistance of a paralegal to help with researching potential vendors, and brought in professionals from the Tower Hill IT group to confer with them regarding each of the prospective software tools they considered.

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One of the products they considered was LexisNexis CounselLink. The CounselLink bill review functionality is powered by the proprietary SmartReview® tool, which provides an automatic, consistent review of all invoices against a company’s unique billing requirements. The ability to manage all of the legal spend in one system is critical to getting a comprehensive understanding of the legal department’s financials. Most competitive solutions rely exclusively on industry-standard UTBMS codes, but SmartReview provides customers with a more consistent invoice review by reading the entire text of each invoice entry and automatically categorizing, comparing and adjusting each entry against the company’s unique billing requirements.

“After evaluating several products and interviewing representatives from each company, it was clear to us that the team from LexisNexis was the most focused on our unique needs and most willing to adapt their software to our operational requirements,” said Rowe. “We were also impressed with CounselLink ease of use and felt our team members would be able to adopt the system very quickly. But far and away, the most important factor in selecting CounselLink was the LexisNexis commitment to customer service and support.”

Solution

“The deployment of CounselLink as our new bill review software went quite smoothly and immediately provided us with the efficiency benefits we were seeking,” said Rowe. “Once it was fully adopted throughout the department, we realized there were some powerful reporting capabilities built into the CounselLink e-billing system. We decided to give those reporting tools a try and were pleasantly surprised by their ability to provide us with detailed management reports we could use to assess the performance of our various outside law firms.”

What happened next was as much of a surprise to Rowe as it was to the LexisNexis® sales and technical teams. It started innocently enough with some friendly conversations between employees at both companies about Tower Hill technology challenges in the law department, which were being fueled by the company’s fast-paced growth. Along the way, it occurred to Rowe that he could expand on CounselLink capabilities to play a much larger role in the operations of the legal department.

“We were excited to realize that there were multiple additional features in CounselLink that we could put to use in other areas of our operations,” said Rowe. “Perhaps the most important example of this was the reporting

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functionality, which I use extensively to track and monitor law firm performance, but another great example is the CounselLink calendaring functionality. The calendar function is much more efficient than the way we used to manage calendars with two different applications.”

According to Rowe, the next major area where Tower Hill began to utilize CounselLink in a more expansive way was with the company’s contract management requirements.

“Previously, we were using separate information management systems for our commercial lines, personal lines, calendaring and contract management,” said Rowe. “CounselLink is now our single platform for all of those functions.”

Results

Since their deployment of CounselLink, Tower Hill has been able to streamline its bill review processes and gain deeper visibility into outside counsel spending patterns. This has also led to transactional savings in the line-item review of invoices and more compliant law firm billings.

CounselLink also has allowed Tower Hill to realize greater control over law firm invoices and to improve internal operational efficiencies by helping the legal department establish streamlined processes and workflow that are pro-active. The company has increased automation and eliminated the time lost by previous manual invoice entry.

“CounselLink is a powerful software system that is bringing significant efficiencies to our law department,” said Rowe. “The use of CounselLink in multiple areas will allow us to manage the growth of our legal department’s needs without adding significant internal overhead.”

The migration of the Tower Hill use of CounselLink from that of a narrow bill review application to that of a comprehensive law department information management system was the direct result of close collaboration between the LexisNexis sales team, the LexisNexis technical team and the professionals at Tower Hill.

“We now view CounselLink as the portal that connects together all of our corporate law department functions,” said Rowe. “We originally selected CounselLink because of the customer focus of the LexisNexis team. The benefits we’ve received from this decision have been much wider and deeper than we could have possibly imagined.”

About LexisNexis

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