

TOWN of CARY

Increasing the speed and efficiency in how we access knowledge is an ever-increasing priority – which is why Matt Pentz, Assistant Town Attorney of Town of Cary, worked with his in-house legal team to bring in LawVu.

The need to get organized

Cary operates extremely efficiently given its allocated resources - three in-house attorneys, a legal assistant, and a budget for outside counsel for specialized matters. As the 7th largest municipality in North Carolina with a population just under 175,000, Cary has fewer attorneys per capita than many of the other large cities in the state. After the recent retirement of the Town Attorney who had served in that role for over 15 years, Pentz credits a large part of the department's success in dealing with the volume of work after a leadership change to the use of LawVu.

“Our primary goal was to provide a system for our own individual convenience and efficiency that would give us a one stop shop for our own documentation and everything related to a matter.”

The team was operating “rudimentarily,” using running lists and searching through Outlook and OneNote to manage matters, so the biggest issue was organization.

“It was very inefficient. We were dependent on everyone being present to handle matters assigned to them; otherwise, we would have to postpone until they returned“.

“LawVu is providing a consistent, unified legal department.”

Matt Pentz, Assistant Town Attorney of Town of Cary



Pentz and his colleagues did research, demoed different offerings, and talked to other municipalities - most of whom were also not using any matter management software or didn't like the software they were using. "Many of the other solutions out there were heavily litigation and e-billing focused and this was not going to work for our team," he said. The eye-catching thing about LawVu was a testimonial given by another local government customer which proved that LawVu could work for the Town of Cary, "they had legitimate local government experience."

Diving deeper, what really appealed to Pentz was the modular nature of the platform.

"I never felt like we were talking to a salesperson who was just trying to close out and make their commission at the end of the month - LawVu's approach was to assess our needs and recommend what modules we needed and what we didn't."

Ultimately, what really sold Pentz on LawVu was that the team was "game for anything". "The LawVu team was collaborative and we got what we needed from a compliance standpoint and so we've had a really good relationship."

Buy-in from the get-go

"I had heard from other municipalities that, if they do have software, not everyone on the team uses it. The fact is, if not everyone uses it, you're done." Pentz ensured that he had buy-in from the whole team. "It's part of the reason we vetted LawVu to the level we did to make sure everyone was on board up front."

Town of Cary took a flexible approach to implementation. "One thing we liked about LawVu is its intuitiveness. I could just get in there and play around with what we needed to do and if I broke something, LawVu was there to help." This approach did wonders for them. "You only get the buy-in if the tool actually works and [the team] saw the tool working and so they began using it more."

A true sense of collaboration

The use of legal software has played a key role in providing a consistent, unified legal department. Cary's team is incredibly busy - as most in-house and government legal teams are - and having the right knowledge at their fingertips also means that Pentz and his colleagues can better manage delivery expectations within the Town of Cary.

The full text search function means the team can search absolutely everything they need across a wide range of projects throughout the Town, says Pentz. "The full text search alone has saved me so much time - it works so well."

On top of this, Pentz highly regards the conversation system. "The @mention people capability paired with the ability to attach documents directly to that conversation allows us to quickly point each other to what we need each other to look at. It's just so quick and so easy."

The platform provides consistency in representation and allows multiple eyes to see things, extra eyes that can either catch potential mistakes or provide new ideas.

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Key Outcomes for Town of Cary

- Clearly demonstrated value and role of the in-house legal team
- Increased efficiency in performing in-house functions
- Full text search has resulted in huge time savings
- Better management of internal stakeholder expectations
- Consistency in representation to stakeholders
- We have full transparency over team metrics:
 - How many matters per department came in in the past month
 - How many active matters we have at any one time
 - How many matters there are from specific departments within a specific time frame
 - Matters broken down by matter types

Still, Pentz embraces a growth mindset and has areas of their matter management that he wants to improve - such as how they capture their data. “We’re still figuring out how much we put in, like agreeing on what defines or rises to the level of a matter.” For Pentz, it’s an “all-in” situation. “Every single thing is going in there to start with”, as Pentz believes the point of the exercise, now that they have established a system of record, is to make use of their data.

The LawVu legal software has been a game changer in enhancing the function of the in-house legal team and demonstrating the value of the legal department to the rest of the organization.



“Knowledge is power and LawVu increases our knowledge. It increases the speed and efficiency of accessing the knowledge that we have, as well as leverages the experience of team members in a more efficient and standardized manner.”