

2019

CONTRACT EXPRESS

AUTOMATION CHAMPIONS

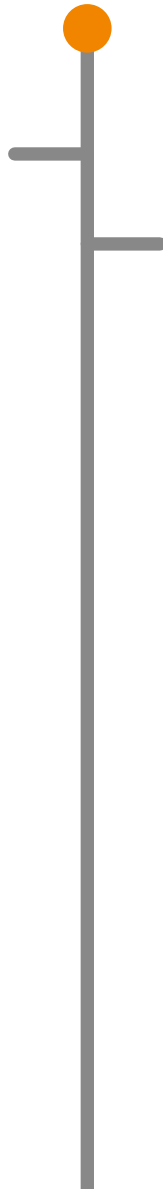


TUNA KUTSAL Herbert Smith Freehills



Background

People often describe me as an automation evangelist. I've lived and breathed document automation for the past few years and it's something I'm really passionate about, having seen first-hand the value it can create. In my previous role as an in-house Lawyer at Thomson Reuters, one of the first things I did was to automate a series of non-disclosure agreements so that they could be self-served by the business. When I moved to Herbert Smith Freehills as the firm's Legal Automation Consulting Lead my remit involved accelerating the firm's automation journey, solving problems and exploring new ways of working to streamline legal service delivery.



Getting started

We focus on user-centred design and involve various stakeholders throughout the end-to-end process. This includes identifying and scoping an opportunity, through to preparing the documents and creating a proof of concept; and ultimately building, testing, iterating and using. We believe this approach leads to the most successful outcomes and allows us to better operationalise change. Our automation team is also very diverse. We've got practising lawyers, people who have worked in-house, in private practice, knowledge management and even in tech companies. Everyone brings something different to the table. We've also identified lawyers within the practice groups who will champion document automation. These are people who'll take the time not just to be involved in a project's design phase of building the questionnaire and testing the documents, but also to try and understand how the backend works in order to spot other opportunities internally and for our clients.

Measuring success

When an automation opportunity is initially raised, we work with the instructing team to gather both current state and predicted future state qualitative and quantitative data. Once we have launched an automated product, we will regularly report on usage to measure ROI on time saving and obtain feedback from users to iteratively enhance the product.

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Key learnings

Whilst it is important to have a consistent underlying process, there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to automation. By adopting a design-thinking methodology and really listening to your stakeholders to understand their pain points and what they are looking for in a solution you will be far better equipped to solve their problems in the best way possible. Never underestimate the importance of building a relationship of trust and openness with your stakeholders. And lastly, I'd say be positive and keep an open mind. And sleep!

