After Adopting Document Tool, Danish Law Firm Considers AI

By Steven Lerner

Law360 (March 23, 2023, 3:12 PM EDT) -- From implementing a new document management system to weighing potential artificial intelligence use cases, Denmark-based law firm NJORD is trying to increase efficiencies with cutting-edge technology.

The law firm often turns to cloud-based tools to serve its clients in the Baltic region in practice areas that include criminal law, data protection and intellectual property.

Adopting these types of technology is not easy for a law firm in the smaller Danish legal market, says Conni Falkner, the chief operating officer for NJORD.

Falkner told Law360 Pulse that companies in Denmark are smaller and may have less data on which to train AI than firms in the U.S. or in the U.K., making it a challenge to develop AI tools.

"You can't do it in Denmark with 40 lawyers or 50 lawyers or 60 lawyers," Falkner said. "Even the large companies in Denmark [are] struggling with that."

So before it embarks on an AI journey, NJORD upgraded its document management technology.

A Dedicated Document Management Tool

For most of NJORD's time management and administrative needs, the firm turns to CapLegal, which was developed by the Baltic tech company EG A/S.

While CapLegal also has a document management system, Falkner said this tool lacked some features and functionality, such as the ability to work on different versions of the same document or to allow multiple employees to work on the same document at the same time.

This left NJORD's nearly 250 employees feeling unsatisfied with the system, and put pressure on management to get a new one, according to Falkner.

The firm decided to shop around for a new, dedicated document management tool around September 2021. By the next month, the firm had whittled down its choice to two: iManage and NetDocuments.

Falkner said that the firm ultimately went with the latter because it could integrate with technology it already had, including Microsoft's.
"We selected it because it is very user-friendly," Falkner said. "It's intuitive to use, and that was very important for us."

After picking this new tool in November 2021, NJORD began the implementation by the end of December.

The implementation took only eight weeks, until the end of February 2022. Falkner said that most software implementations typically take several months. In fact, Falkner said that it would have taken iManage six months to implement the tool.

"Six months is a long time to have a team working on a project because we have this kind of feeling that the longer the project runs, the more hours you put into it and you don't necessarily get better results," Falkner said.

During the implementation of NetDocuments with NJORD's existing technology stack, 2.2 million documents were migrated.

Software service providers Peregrine Cloud and Sicklaskiftet assisted NetDocuments with the implementation. After implementation was complete, Peregrine Cloud trained NJORD's staff in person and delivered video tutorials to ensure that employees could get up to speed.

While Falkner said the firm can't quantify the improved efficiency of the staff since the implementation, she said the employees are satisfied, can work with documents faster, and it is easier to train new employees with it.

**Bigger Ambitions**

With its document management implementation in the rearview mirror, Falkner said that the company is going to "take a deep breath" before choosing its next big tech project. But Falkner said that might include AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT.

ChatGPT, developed by OpenAl, is a generative AI tool that creates original text based on data. Since launching a few months ago, ChatGPT has taken the world — and the legal industry — by storm.

With other law firms and lawyers now using ChatGPT and other generative tools, will NJORD be next?

Falkner said that the firm is not currently using ChatGPT or similar tools on a regular basis, but it is examining the potential. Specifically, Falkner said that she is keeping an eye on the tools in the market, such as those that help legal as well as other sectors.

As NJORD researches the market, Falkner said there are questions about how the firm could use this technology and how clients could use it. Those questions include whether the clients currently use it at all, how the firm can support clients who use it, and how the technology can be customized for the firm.

And while some legal professionals in the industry might be opposed to using generative AI tools, Falkner is at least open to experimenting with them.

"You need to see it as a gift instead of a competitor, because it can help all of us," Falkner said.

--Editing by Robert Rudinger. All Content © 2003-2023, Portfolio Media, Inc.