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Findings from the 7th Annual Law Department Operations Survey

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Facing New Challenges and Opportunities

By **David Cambria**
Global Director of Operations – Law, Compliance and Government Relations, Archer Daniels Midland Co.

Since the inception of the Law Department Operations Survey seven years ago, we have carefully tracked the fresh challenges faced by LDO directors. As the 2014 survey clearly shows, managing data and cybersecurity—particularly once companies send their highly sensitive, confidential data to law firms—remains a growing concern. The survey also bears out how LDO directors are still grappling with the hourly billing rate and effective alternative fee arrangements.

However, the concerns that worry LDO directors today can be seen as progress. In years past, LDO directors have struggled with budgets, e-discovery and earning the respect of our clients and those at the upper levels of our organizations. While these items remain a key component and focus for LDO function, this shift in focus and priorities represents yet another pivot point in the ever-evolving role of law department operations. Over the years, LDO directors have become more proficient and consistent with many baseline activities such as organization design, budgeting and process re-engineering. Because of this, we no longer need to build entire monolithic processes to determine how to manage smaller processes. We are continuing to find value in ways that are evolving with business and operations, and to tackle fresh challenges within the legal department and throughout our organizations. While our day-to-day duties and long-term strategic focuses may change, we continue to focus on the value we provide.

Read on for more results and insights into the 7th Annual Law Department Operations Survey, which has been developed once again with *InsideCounsel* and the Blickstein Group, in consultation with our advisory board members. This survey provides unique insights and benchmarks into how law departments manage their operations functions.

SEVENTH ANNUAL LAW DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS SURVEY

Creating Predictability and Security in an Increasingly Unsafe World

Since the inception of the Annual Law Department Operations Survey seven years ago, law department operations managers have grappled with a host of issues. Those have ranged from establishing the credibility of their role to grappling with budget crises. However, as LDOs have proven their worth and the economy has slowly emerged from the long recession, new worries have presented themselves, including existential ones. “In a lot of companies, the role seems to have moved ‘downstream,’” said Brad Blickstein, principal of the Blickstein Group and publisher of the survey. “As we get further from the recession, LDO managers seem to be again having trouble getting their concerns heard.”

Chief among the new concerns is the increasing rise in the threat of cybersecurity and the ability to grapple with technology and move away from the billable hour. Along with those challenges, today’s LDO managers also continue to work tirelessly to find new ways to improve value and increase services to their clients in the legal department and on the business side.

The Seventh Annual Law Department Operations Survey once again provides a unique glimpse into the opportunities, challenges and pressure facing those who manage the LDO function.

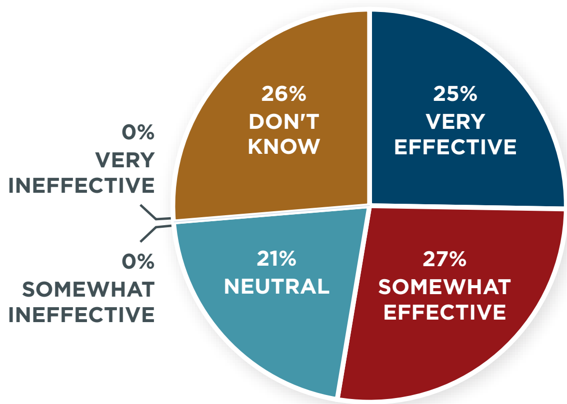
CYBERSECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY

Cybersecurity has been in the news and has been weighing heavily on the minds of consumers, general counsel, those in the C-suite and on the boards of directors. For example, during a panel session at the 2nd Annual Women, Influence & Power in Law conference, Susan L. Lees, executive vice president and general counsel of Allstate Insurance Co., was asked what keeps her up at night. She promptly listed cybersecurity as her first concern. “I used to say ‘reputation,’ but now I believe reputational concerns are wrapped up in cybersecurity,” Lees said.

While data breaches at companies have been in the glare of the spotlight, less attention has been paid to the potential weaknesses that exist within law firms. Yet LDOs seem surprisingly unconcerned about their law firm’s cybersecurity provisions in terms of protecting client data, based on responses to this year’s survey. When asked to rate their law firm’s effectiveness in this area, 26 percent responded with “don’t know” and another 21% responded with “neutral.” “That respondents don’t have a basic sense of whether their data is safe is unconscionable,” said Blickstein. “The good news is that one in four respondents rated their law firms’ provisions as very effective, and another 27 percent rated their response as somewhat effective (though I worry that ‘somewhat effective’ will not be good enough.)”

Few legal departments are giving the issue the attention it deserves, “I don’t think most legal departments are

Q25. Please rate your outside law firms’ ability to protect your data.



LOOKING BEYOND COSTS?

By **Nancy A. Jessen**
Huron Legal

By **Nancy A. Jessen**, Managing Director, Huron Legal

For many years, law department operations managers focused extensively on costs, a natural result of a struggling economy. However, now after years of reining in budgets, many law departments are ready to think beyond cost containment.

Today's general counsel are increasingly interested in a much wider perspective. They are looking to define the value of their departments and the services they provide in terms of managing corporate risk and, even more importantly, contributing to the success of the organization.

Just as the GC needs to operate as a strategic partner who provides broad business guidance through the legal lens to company leadership, the operations manager has the opportunity to contribute beyond driving cost management initiatives. A law department operations manager can support the department's value contribution by understanding the corporate goals and adopting a comprehensive approach to managing the department in alignment with these goals. Many are eagerly pursuing those opportunities: More than half of the respondents to this year's Law Department Operations Survey are frequently or very frequently involved in corporate (outside the legal department) strategic initiatives.

This new perspective requires LDO managers to rethink their role in how they can enable their law departments to meet evolving expectations of internal clients. Today's in-house lawyer must have technical expertise and solid legal skills that are delivered using business acumen to provide recommendations and solutions along with an appreciation of their role as financial stewards. This requires LDO managers and in-house attorneys to become adept at setting priorities and perhaps referring some activities.

Finally, in-house counsel need to act as corporate leaders, playing a role in determining where the company is headed and how the law department fits into that vision, and then providing legal advice that moves the company further along that path. To reach this stage, law departments must spend a great deal of time considering their relationship with other departments within the organization.

Helping the department and lawyers operate in this new approach is where LDO managers can play a critical role. LDO managers can combine their process improvement experience and analytic thinking to support in-house lawyers in developing needed business skills, such as better project management and client communication. Another key element is analyzing and prioritizing legal work and ensuring that work is allocated to the right internal and external resources. LDO managers can help guide the prioritization process and the formation of an outside counsel team that complements the roles and skills that exist in-house.

As businesspeople themselves, LDO managers can bridge the gap between the lawyer mentality and the business perspective.

focused on this internally," said David Cambria, global director of operations – law, compliance and government relations, Archer Daniels Midland Co., and chair of the LDO Advisory Board "But where are your deepest, darkest secrets kept? They are at your law firms," he said. "Whether you are being investigated, looking to purchase a company or hire or fire someone, there is nowhere else you would send that type of information. And most legal departments don't even think about where that information is going."

Responsibility of the issue is part of the problem. At many organizations, it's not clear who "owns" cybersecurity, and whether the legal department or IT should take the lead, according to Cambria. "This is still an orphan child in most organizations. The two concentric circles of IT and legal need to overlap."

Cambria suggests legal is the most logical candidate to take over the function. "This is really the type of issue where LDO managers cut their teeth," he said. "Operationally, LDO managers know how to improve processes, whether it's matter management or enterprise-wide legal systems. This is the chance to step up and take a real leadership role again, and carry that front and center."

For many respondents, the law department's inability to wrap their heads around technological matters extends to long-term planning as well. Fewer than 25 percent—23 percent—of respondents have or plan to develop a legal department technology strategy or three-year road map which addresses how the LDO integrates, evolves and replaces the systems to support the legal departments processes and needs. Another 37 percent are planning or developing a strategy. That leaves 40 percent without any plan, or any plan to develop a plan.

However, many respondents are planning to update, evaluate or implement new technologies in the next 12 months. Among the new technologies respondents are considering:

- E-billing — **33.7 percent**
- Matter management — **50.6 percent**
- Document management — **55.1 percent**
- Contract management — **50 percent**
- IP management — **21.6 percent**
- E-discovery — **41.4 percent**
- Legal hold — **38.2 percent**

"These are big numbers," said Blickstein. "And if you think about the process from evaluation through implementation, these are often major, four-year projects."

Q27. Do you have or plan to develop a legal department technology strategy or three-year road map which addresses how you integrate, evolve and replace your systems to support the legal department's processes and needs?

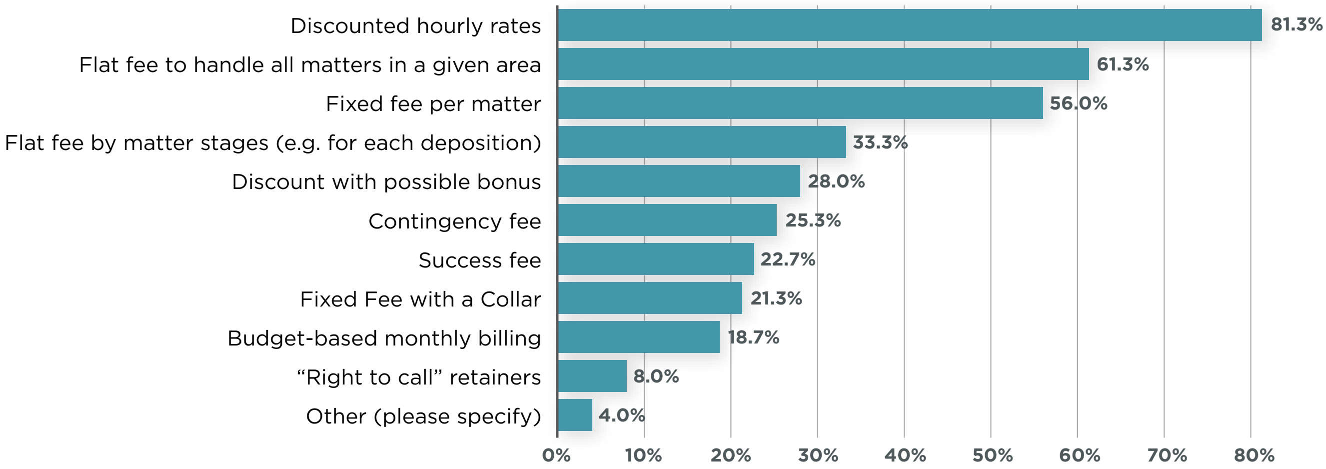
Effective use of technology tools can help address the ongoing need to streamline practices and tightly control cost, according to Stacy Wilkins, legal operations director at Dell Inc. Her legal department continuously looks for new technology-leveraging opportunities, often benefiting from exchanging experiences and best practices with others in a legal operations peer network she engages with. "Technology solutions can be transformative and provide a high ROI, but successful adoption often requires culture change so clearly understanding the department's past practices and the rational for doing things a particular way is essential."

LEGAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Along with increasing the use of technology solutions, Dell's legal department is also focused on developing its people, according to Wilkins. To help them meet business demands and professional development goals, effective legal project management is another priority. "We are exploring increased use of dedicated project managers and other staff to reduce the amount of attorney time spent on PM-related tasks and create opportunities for non-lawyers to expand their skills and get exposure to other career paths."

Legal project management has become an integral part of LDO at Baxter International, according to Aaron Van Nice, director, operations, law department. "Next to a cost-effective e-discovery program, legal project management has the greatest return on investment of time and resources," he said. "At Baxter, we have implemented legal project management for all of our major matters. It is an

Q64. What types of Alternative Fee Arrangements have you tried? (Check all that apply.)



essential process for us to actively assess what our outside counsel should be working on and how it is staffed."

Other respondents to the survey seem to agree with Wilkins and Van Nice that legal project management programs are among the more effective approaches that the legal departments of respondents have implemented. Slightly less than two-thirds have such a program in place. Of those who do have them, only 6.5 percent said they were somewhat or very ineffective.

AFAs

When it comes to controlling costs, alternative fee arrangements still rank high among respondents, and most have experimented with AFAs. (Q64) Eighty-one percent have used discounted hourly rates, and 61 percent have used flat fees to handle all matters in a given area. Fifty-six percent have used AFAs for a fixed fee for a matter. Most respondents—66 percent—believe that work done under AFAs is more cost-efficient than work done hourly (Q72).

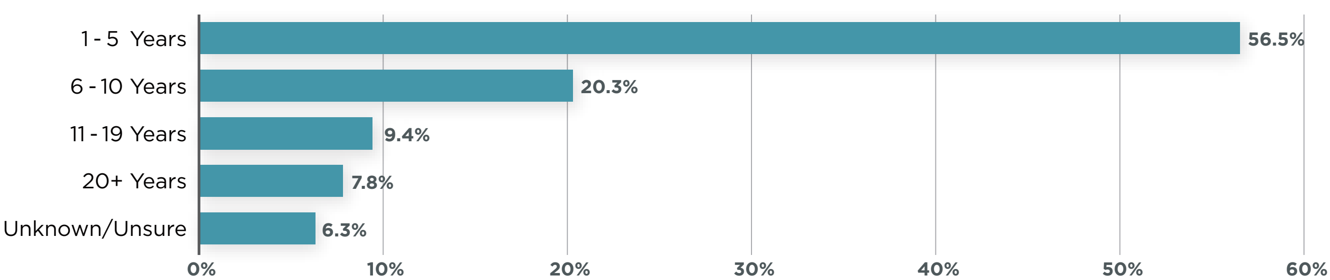
Since the recession hit, AFAs have become increasingly attractive to law departments. Slightly more than 56 percent of respondents began using AFAs in the last one to five years; 20.3 percent have used them for six to 10 years; 9.4 percent have used AFAs for 11-19 years; and nearly 8 percent have had them in place for 20 or more years.

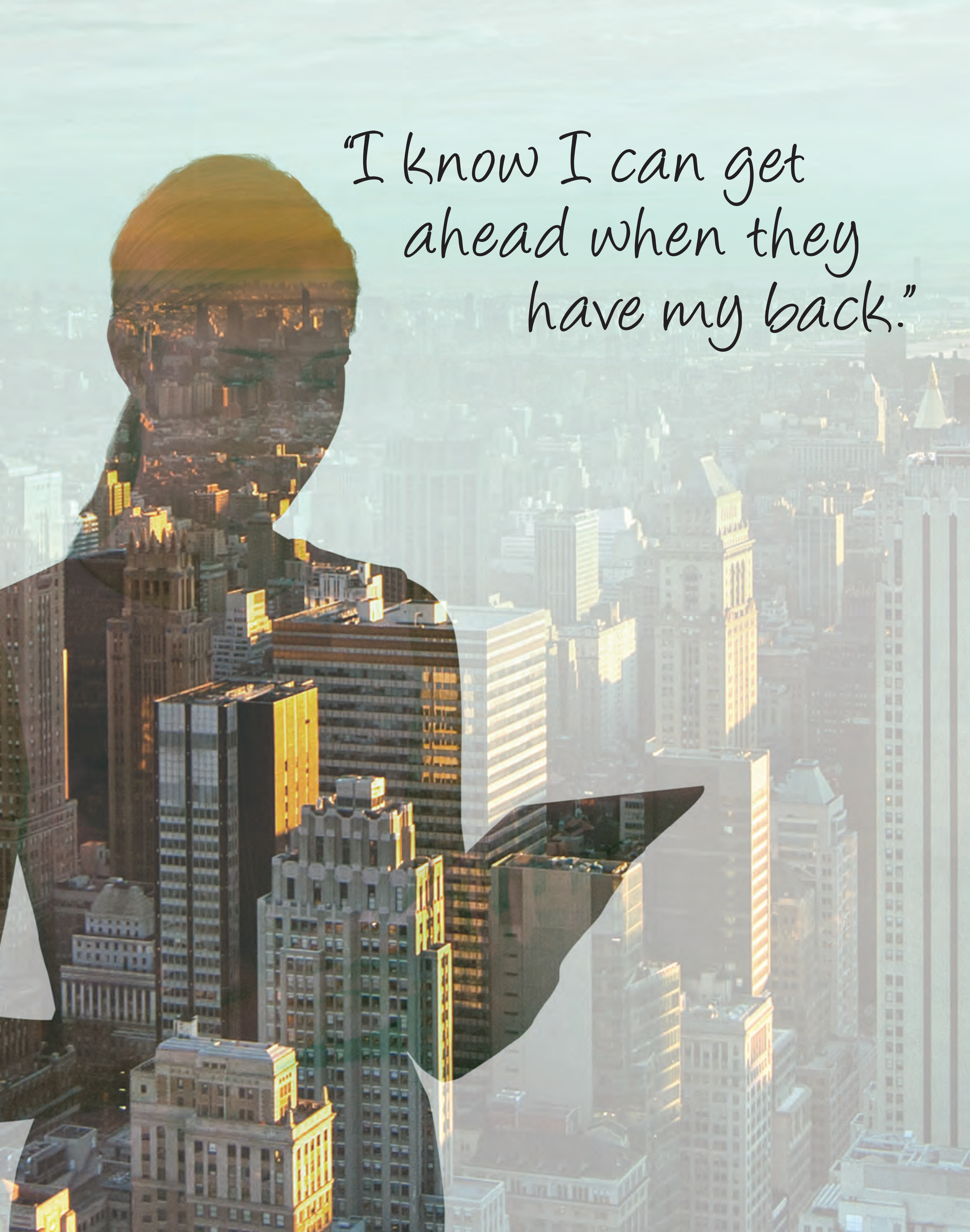
Yet respondents listed multiple challenges to using AFAs, from cultural to logistical issues (Q69). The unpredictable nature of matter activity was the single greatest impediment, cited by 37.8 percent of respondents. Other issues also exist both in-house and outside, the survey found. Twenty percent mentioned firm acceptance as the greatest barrier, and another 5 percent said their firms cannot budget for AFAs. Seventeen percent said there was no internal impetus to change the current system. Another 12 percent listed lack of data, while 3.7 percent said they were not sure which AFA to use.

Fewer than a quarter of respondents said that their law firms do a good job of suggesting AFAs that meet the department's needs. And few respondents expect to get away from hourly billing anytime in the near future—only 26 percent agree that the hourly billing model will be dead in the next five years. (Q72)

According to Cambria, this type of response indicates that law firms are becoming willing participants, but not active participants, with AFAs. "They are not coming to table with

Q66. How many years has the department been using Alternative Fee Arrangements?

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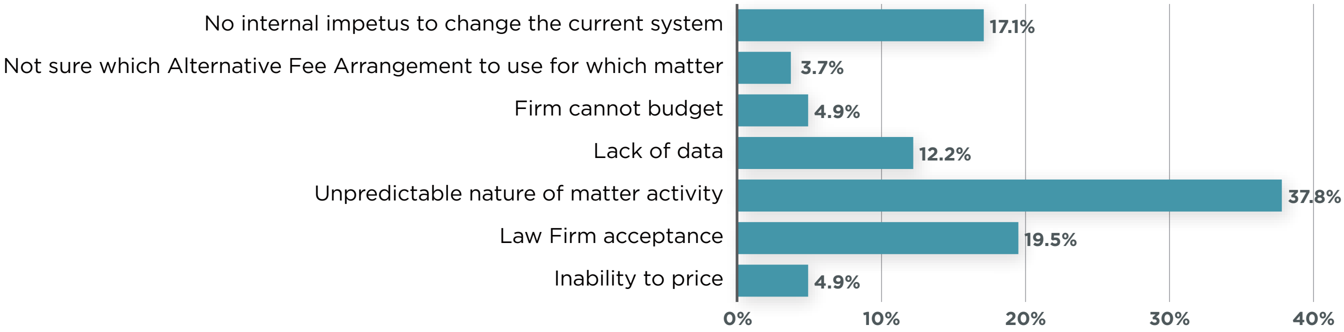
Q69. What is the biggest impediment to using Alternative Fee Arrangements:



any ideas," he said. "It's like ham and eggs—the chickens are involved, but the pigs are committed. Involvement is nice, but firms are sitting on all this data, and this is where their expertise is. But they are offering very little."

For Reese Arrowsmith, vice president, director of operations, legal at Lincoln Financial Group, AFAs have worked well in some circumstances, but less well in others. His legal department has become more sophisticated and nuanced with which firms and matters it approaches with AFAs.

"With AFAs, you have to decide what you are trying to accomplish. Are you looking for predictability or to reduce costs or a hybrid," said Arrowsmith. His legal department has worked out an excellent fixed-fee arrangement with one firm, which he calls a "success story." That arrangement involves targets and collars, with the firm receiving bonuses for coming in under the target. "In theory, the target comes down over the years and ultimately saves us money," he said.

However, not every fixed fee arrangement has worked out so well. "We did try to work with another firm on flat fees for litigation. Everyone had good intentions going in, but it just didn't work out," he recalled.

E-DISCOVERY

While e-discovery was top of mind for many years for LDO directors, their concerns seem to have slowed down. "For example, nearly two-thirds of respondents feel in control of their e-discovery processes today," said Blickstein. (Q42)

Slightly more than half of respondents, 54.4 percent, believe that e-billing and matter management providers are keeping up with the department's needs (Q72). Slightly more than 70 percent of respondents—71.6 percent—reported that their law departments have dedicated e-discovery managers (Q36).

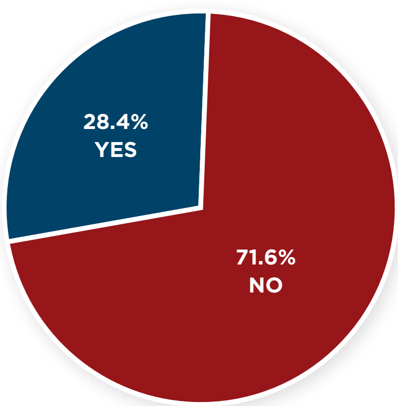
For departments that don't yet have a dedicated e-discovery manager, 15 percent said they are considering hiring one in the next 12 months (Q37)

Respondents were also questioned about the e-discovery processes they handle in-house (Q39). Across the board, the elements that are further to the left in the EDRM model are more likely to be handled in-house. For example, most respondents (65.1 percent) handle their preservation/legal hold processes entirely in-house, while 10.8 percent sometimes handle it in-house. When it comes to collection, 37.8 percent handle it entirely in-house and 32.9 percent sometimes handle it in-house. But only about 20 percent manage document review without any outside help.

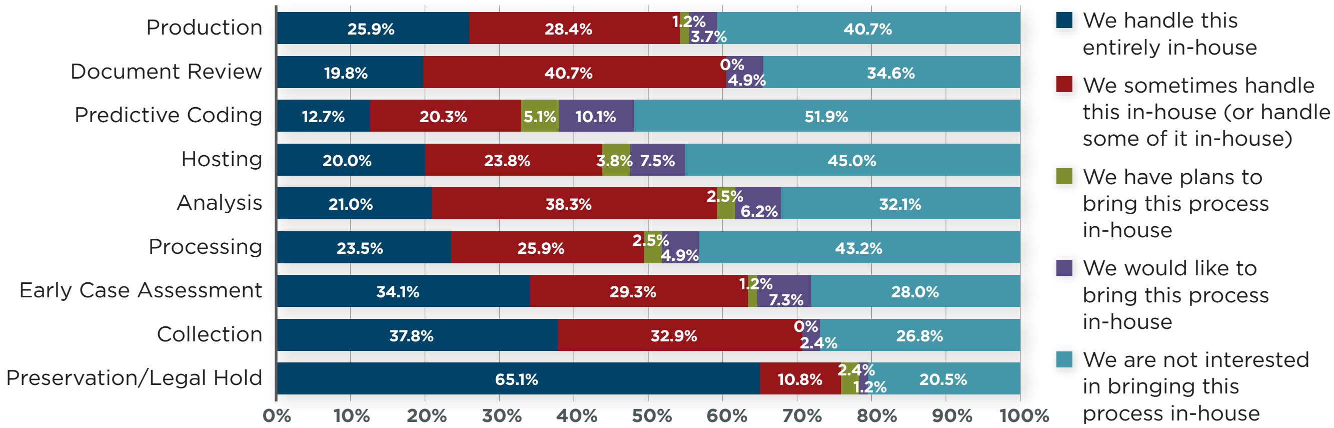
Among other activities most commonly handled entirely in-house: 25.9 percent oversee their own production; 23.5 percent do their own processing; 21 percent do their own analysis; and 20 percent host their own data.

At the other end of the spectrum, slightly more than half of respondents have no interest in bringing predictive coding in-house, while 43.2 percent plan to keep their processing functions with outside providers, and nearly 41 percent have no plans to bring production in-house.

Q36. Does your law department have a dedicated e-discovery manager?



Q39. Which of the following e-discovery processes do you handle in-house?



Most respondents, 70.6 percent, said they are not planning any new initiatives during the next 12 months to improve their discovery process. (Q40) That nearly matches the 71.8 percent of respondents who say they expect their e-discovery budget to stay flat over the next 12 months (Q41). Another 7 percent expect their budgets to decrease, while a little more than 20 percent expect their budgets to increase between 1-6 percent.

DATA MINING/ANALYTICS

With today's robust tools and technologies, LDO directors have greater access than ever before to data mining and analytics. Yet based on responses to this year's survey, many legal departments are struggling to fully utilize that information. Only 34.4 percent said they have a formalized metrics/reporting program (Q45). Fewer than two-thirds of respondents feel that their law department makes effective use of the information that metrics

Inside the Numbers

LEVERAGING BROAD DATA, NOT DROWNING IN BIG DATA

By **Harrison Underwood**,
Premier Implementations Center of Excellence Manager, Bridgeway

In today's world, data is more available than ever before. In fact, so much data exists that legal department operations managers often struggle to corral all the data they receive and turn it into useful information.

Consider responses to this year's Law Department Operations survey. When asked to what extent they use data mining and analytics to predict case outcomes, more than half of respondents, nearly 56 percent, said they never do, and only one in four said they sometimes do. Another 52.5 percent said they never use data mining and analytics just to predict discovery costs. Why? Perhaps the answer lies in the data itself.

While many legal technology vendors have focused on Big Data, Broad Data is actually a more helpful tool. Broad Data

Harrison Underwood
Bridgeway

encompasses more than a single source of metrics such as invoice data. Broad data includes data pertaining to matter outcomes and timeframes as well. Some of the most useful information blends quantitative and qualitative data across a myriad of sources to drive strategic and operational decisions. Armed with this actionable information, legal departments can determine things like staffing levels and better predict outcomes, in addition to choosing the right law firms for specific matters. As a result, LDO managers can better help attorneys provide sound legal advice and move beyond the impossible goal of eliminating risk to the more practical work of managing risk.

For many years, lawyers were often considered some of the least tech-savvy people within organizations. That is changing as in-house counsel and LDO managers realize the full benefit of today's technology and how leveraging Broad Data enables them to deliver greater business value.

provides (Q46), and only 23 percent base compensation ramifications on law department metrics.

Among the primary objectives that drive the metrics that law departments track, 63.3 percent do so to reduce costs and 62.2 percent use them to manage outside counsel. Another 51 percent use metrics for priorities set by law department operations.

RISE OF NON-LAW-FIRM PROVIDERS

Some respondents are also exploring alternative staffing/non-law firms for different services that have been traditionally handled by law firms. (Q60) Among those using alternative staffing approaches:

- Document review — **27.3 percent**
- Contract review — **17.9 percent**
- Contract drafting — **14.1 percent**
- E-discovery collection — **25.3 percent**
- E-discovery hosting — **33.3 percent**
- E-discovery processing — **37.2 percent**

COST SAVINGS

For many respondents, pushing expenses back to the business units has been an effective way to control internal costs. Departments also have been using travel limits, headcount reduction and delaying and eliminating projects to control internal costs. (Q62)

CHALLENGES FACED

As the survey demonstrates, LDO directors are focusing on many issues and face a host of challenges in the short- and medium-term. When asked about the biggest challenges they expect to face in the next one to three years, respondents ranked containing/reducing legal costs as their greatest concern. An almost equal number ranked identifying key technologies to drive productivity and in-house talent development and retention second. Compliance matters also weigh heavily on the minds of respondents. And only slightly more than half of respondents feel they have access to the right technology to do their jobs.

Inside the Numbers

ACHIEVE LDO OBJECTIVES WITH THE HELP OF BENCHMARKING, HIGH-QUALITY DATA

By **Dave Gorman**,
Director of Legal Analytics, Datacert|TyMetrix

For most respondents of this year's LDO survey, two objectives drive metrics tracked—reducing costs and managing outside counsel. In pursuit of their objectives, over half track "total expenses by law firm for particular types of matters" and "legal spend as a percentage of revenue and total expense." While these *are* key high-level performance indicators, in order to effectively manage outside counsel spend and reduce costs, it is critical to understand underlying factors.

Dave Gorman
Datacert|TyMetrix

Less than a quarter of respondents track days to resolution by law firm or by matter. Yet the length of a matter (measured in hours rather than days), as well as what providers are chosen, dramatically affects total matter cost and predictability. The key measure is the efficiency of matter performance. Not only do total matter costs rise with the number of hours, they are much more variable—and thus, more difficult to forecast and manage as matters drag on.

To monitor matter duration, legal departments are applying tools such as formal budgeting, e-billing and early case assessment to inform decisions on firm selection and when to settle or push forward a matter. Analytics and benchmarking, using industry data sources, are also essential tools. Valuable insight into a law firm's relative efficiency can be gained by comparing its performance to aggregate market data—on both the average and range of hours for a particular matter type to account for variables among individual matters. Other key cost drivers to explore in this manner include staffing mix, firm size and firm location.

Benchmarking intelligence provides proactive insights for better certainty in budgeting and advances the ability to predict expenses and resource requirements in order to realize efficiencies and cost controls. Not all sources of benchmarking data are created equal! Invoice-driven data provides a wealth of options—and greater confidence—compared to survey-based information. The size and granularity of data affects ability to make deep, apples-to-apples comparisons and perform analysis across multiple dimensions, such as: industry; practice area; matter type, phase, task/activity, duration; staff allocation; geography; firm attributes, and more.

To learn more, visit **www.tymetrix.com/RRR2014**.

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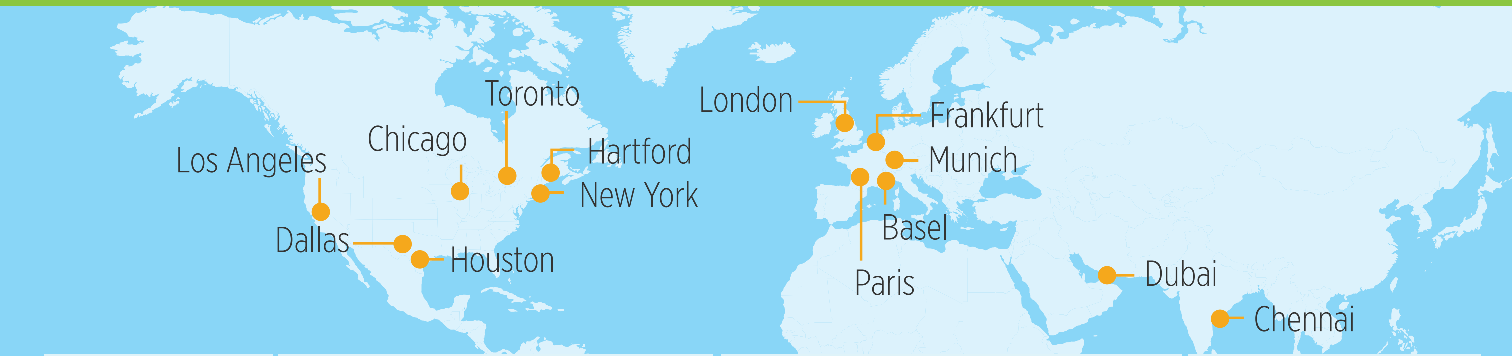

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LAW FIRM RELATIONS

The survey offered insights into respondent's relationships with their law firms. More than half of respondents said they have fired or stopped working with a law firm because they have ignored department instructions or billing guidelines. However, most agree that outside counsel generally make strong efforts to understand the problems that law department faces.

Yet fewer than half of respondents believe their law firms are innovative or that they are leveraging technology to deliver legal services more effectively and cost-efficiently. However, law firms probably don't even know how respondents feel. Only a quarter agree that generally speaking, law firms and service providers ask for feedback about how well they are doing.

WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS INDUSTRIES

As LDO directors have become more common and established, they are beginning to share their own expertise, which benefits everyone, according to Danette Gallatin, business manager at The Williams Companies, Inc. "It used to be that legal operations tended to operate in their own little siloed world, but that's changing," she said. "We all do such different things, and we have unique issues from company to company. But those differences are really pretty limited. To not leverage the knowledge of others is a mistake."

In fact, according to Gallatin, any LDO director who doesn't actively network with peers in other companies is limiting the level of expertise they are able to provide to the general counsel and legal department. "I can't tell you the number of times my GC has asked me, "Will you reach out to your group to see what's happening with a particular issue?" LDO directors are becoming so influential in their own departments that the GC can share their insights with the executive team. "If some of these well-known companies aren't taking a particular course, my GC can say to others, 'Why would it be appropriate for us to do that?'"

Inside the Numbers

THREE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR GC LOOK GOOD

By **Cole Morgan**, Director,
Client Solutions Serengeti Law, Thomson Reuters

There are never enough hours in the day for legal department operations managers to accomplish every task. But you should always be thinking of ways to help your General Counsel do his or her job better, smarter and more strategically. Here are three ways to use skills and leverage tools to accomplish this:

Cole Morgan
Serengeti Law

1) Establish a budget and always know where the department lines up: While legal departments are largely considered a cost center, they are also a steward of assets. By establishing a budget and knowing exactly where the legal department is tracking within that budget, LDO managers can provide their GC with an information advantage.

2) Establish a regular reporting status mechanism: When the GC is called into meetings with the CEO and others, he or she will be asked about the status of various legal matters. By creating a regular reporting mechanism, the LDO manager can provide the GC with a 20,000-foot view at a moment's notice.

3) Establish metrics that matter: Different metrics will matter to different organizations, so this is an area where LDO managers can bring their expert knowledge of their company and industry. Those metrics should be tracked consistently over time to provide insights into trends. When the GC has this information readily available, the legal department can offer tremendous insights into strategy operations. There are several excellent technology solutions today that make compiling analysis easy.

LDO managers wear many hats, but they don't always think about their role as Chief of Staff to the General Counsel. Whether the subtext is politics, operations, budget or technology, LDO managers can delve into the numbers that matter to the business and keep the GC regularly supplied with relevant data. This will allow the legal department to function in the context of the business and as a true business partner.

To design your strategy on how to enhance your department's effectiveness, download our free whitepaper, "Savvy GC's Run Their Legal Departments Like Businesses," at **www.serengetilaw.com**.

Results of the Seventh Annual Law Department Operations Survey are based on responses from large U.S. companies*

* Most companies surveyed are listed among the *Fortune 500*.
This year's survey was conducted online June 23–July 29, 2014.

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The Seventh Annual Law Department Operations Survey

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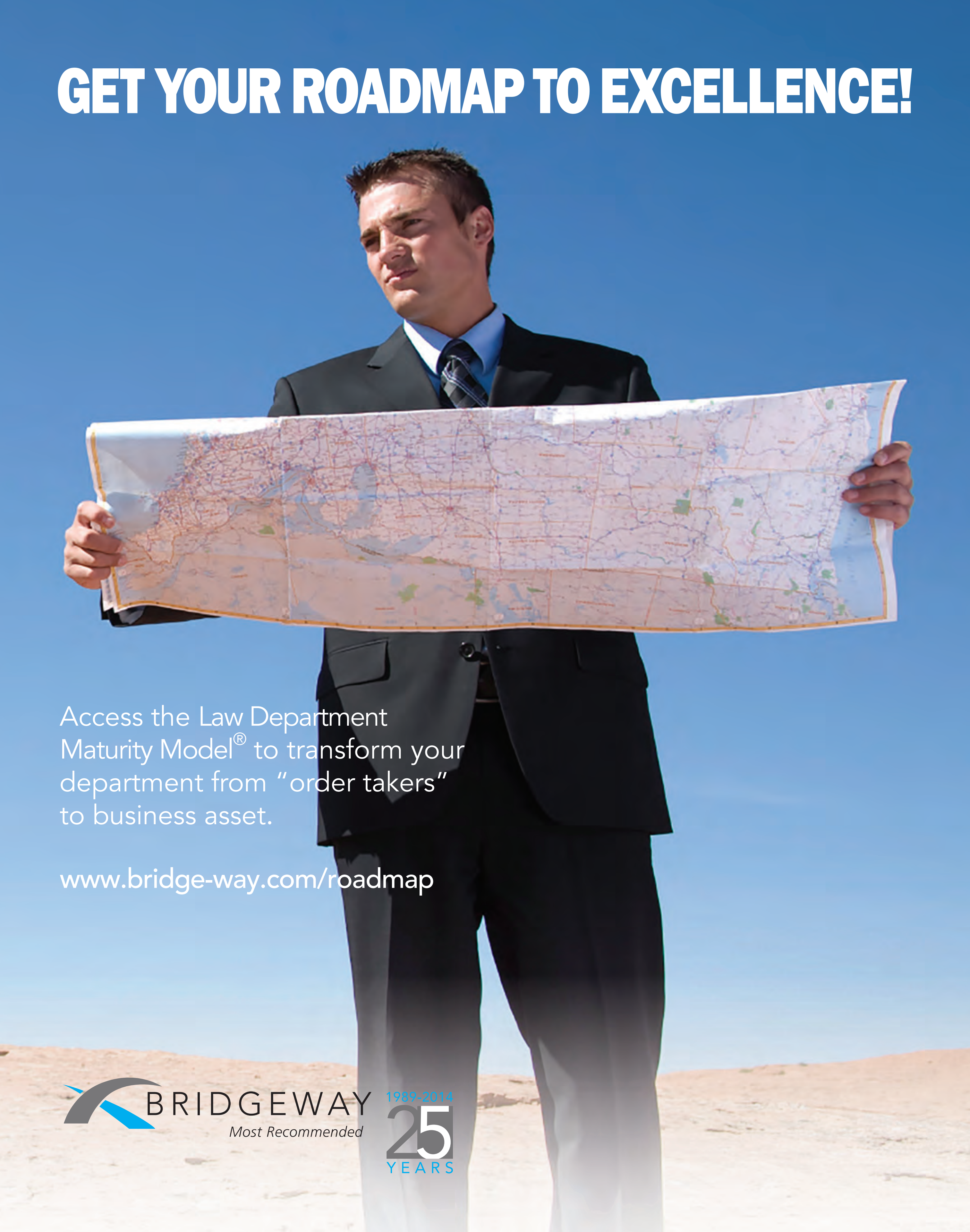
For more information about the survey, or to purchase the full LDO survey results package, please contact Brad Blickstein at brad@blicksteingroup.com or 847.256.5298.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