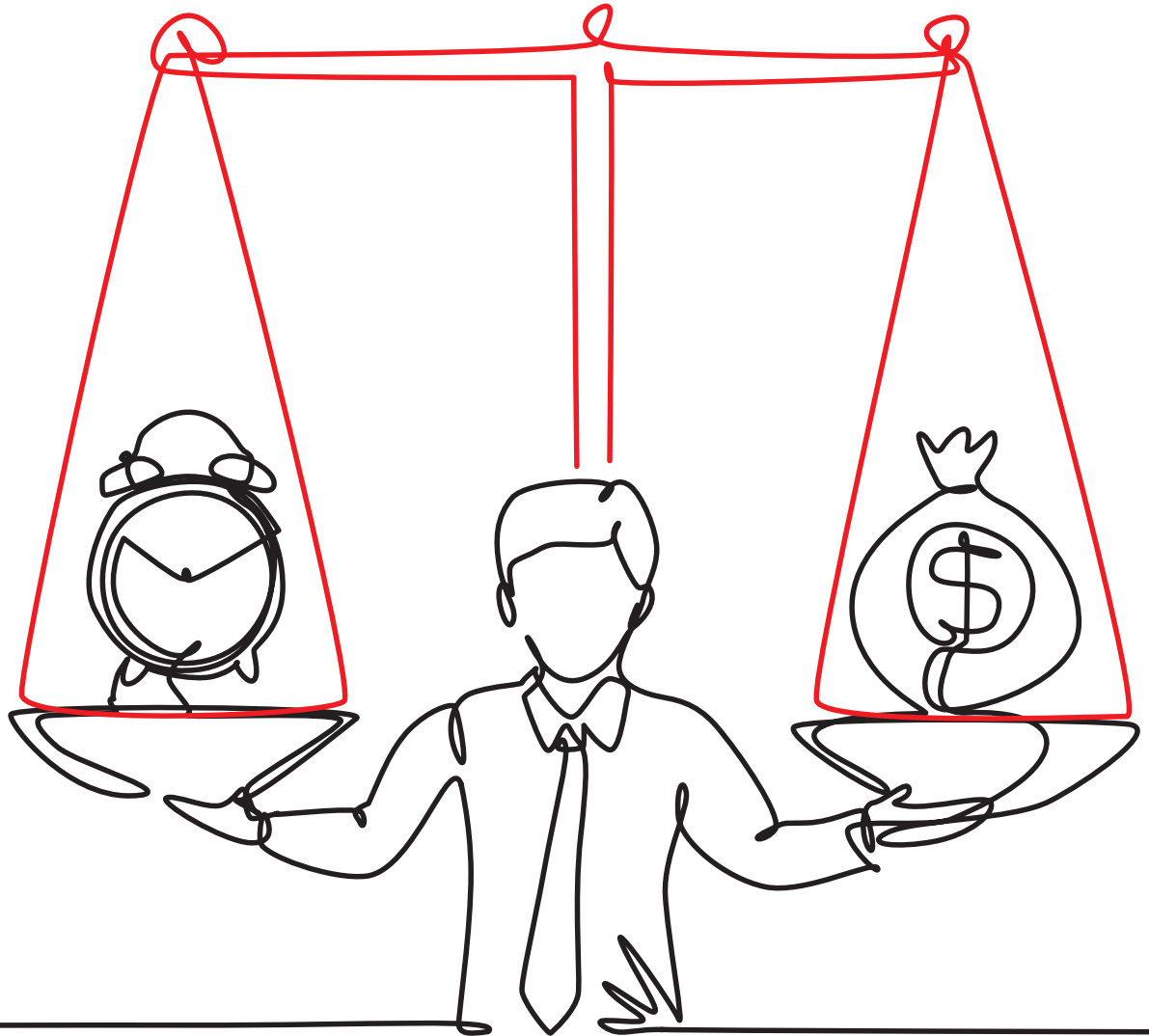
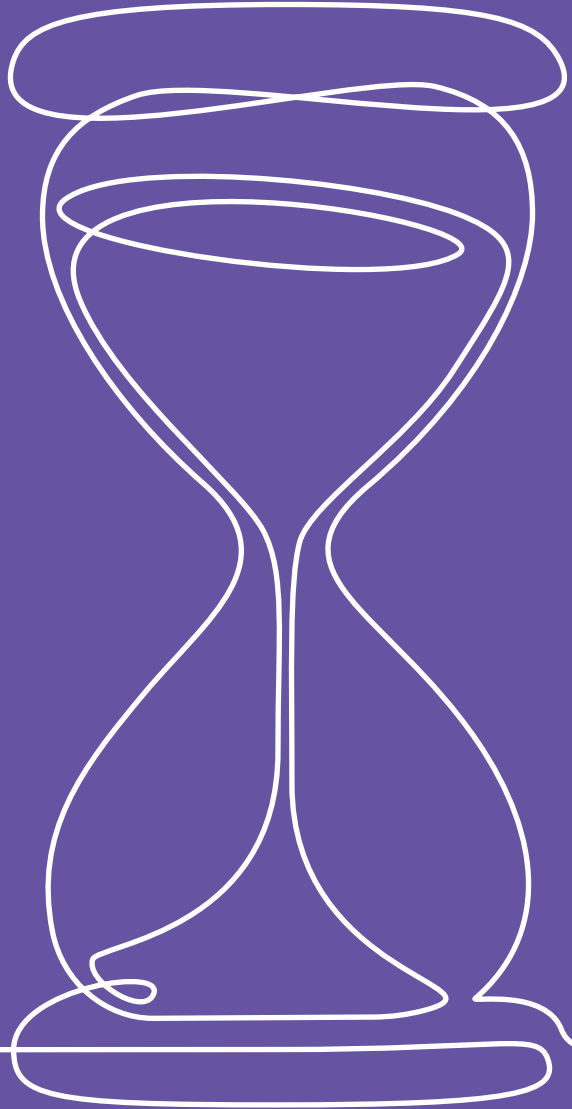


# The Cost of Free Legal Research

What's the Real Cost To You?





## Introduction

**TIME** remains a precious commodity across the legal industry, whether working in a large or small firm, or as a sole practitioner.

Wasting hours on inadequate tools can lead to reduced profits and client attrition.

We explore the challenges faced by small law firms specifically, and how free research tools stand up against paid legal resources.

# The cost of free legal research

What's the Real Cost To You?

**Efficiency**

Search-ability of information

**Accuracy**

Reputation risk

**Currency**

Timeliness of information

**Comprehensiveness**

Depth and breadth of data

*"You wouldn't recommend free legal advice to clients,  
...and your client don't expect free legal research".*



## Challenges faced by small law firms

The legal industry has undergone a rapid transformation in the past few years. These changes have been accelerated by the pandemic, the need to adapt to online transacting, increased competition from outside the industry and the need to meet clients' changing expectations to name a few.

For many small law or sole practitioners, additional time and cost constraints have directed them to freely available legal research. Free tools, however, may not be the most beneficial resources for time-strapped lawyers. The return on investment (ROI) from paid tools has the potential to offer dramatically greater benefits.

Research products offering legal workflows and guidance in multiple practice areas are valuable to sole practitioners and small firms, allowing them to increase efficiency, diversify their legal knowledge and offer additional services across a greater number of practice areas.

Sole practitioners must also wear multiple hats, juggling various roles that lawyers in a team setting need not contend with. Because they run multiple aspects of their business, a common pain point exacerbated by the time spent on non-billable activities, technology and research tools play a crucial role.

Recently, small law firms have moved towards adopting fixed fee billing, prompted by advancements in legal technology and a client desire for predictable legal costs. Clients are demanding certainty of their bill in uncertain economic times. While fixed fee billing is advantageous for clients, the shift away from the billable hour requires law firms to be competitive and streamline their operations.

Your clients are also seeking a high level of expertise within the practice area related to their case. Therefore, in a fixed billing context, charging for legal research will be limited to highly specialised cases. Professional, commercial research will help firms absorb the time spent conducting legal research, maximising efficiency, improving the bottom line, and keeping up with pricing trends in the industry.

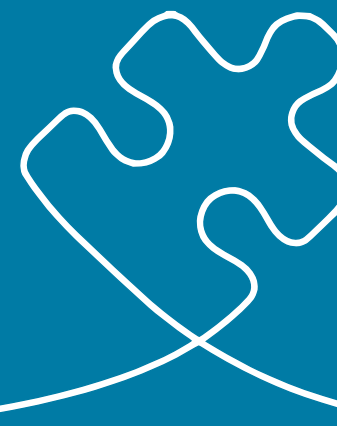
When a time-strapped lawyer is seeking historical data quickly, a paid solution with an intuitive AI powered search engine will deliver accurate, reliable data from a single search, whereas someone using only free solutions may spend hours trawling Google for the correct information. Even when something relevant is found, it rarely has the currency and depth of content that a paid solution provides - and may even be paywalled.

The accessibility of free legal research makes it an attractive resource; however, the quality of the research is difficult to measure. Above all, the risk of providing inaccurate advice could involve liability for damages, reputational loss, or in rare but significant cases, a lawyer being disbarred. Finding a product not only cost-effective, but relevant and easy to use is critical.

Relying on freely available AI technology such as ChatGPT, a natural language processing tool, is also fraught with danger. Some of the legal issues of using ChatGPT include copyright infringement, data privacy and biased or inaccurate information.

***A U.S. judge recently imposed sanctions on two New York lawyers who submitted a legal brief that included fictitious case citations generated by ChatGPT. The judge ordered lawyers Steven Schwartz, Peter LoDuca and their law firm Levidow, Levidow & Oberman to pay a \$5,000 fine. The judge found the lawyers acted in bad faith and made “acts of conscious avoidance and false and misleading statements to the court.”***

Another invaluable feature of paid platforms is the capability to uphold legal awareness and provide timely notifications regarding changes in the law. These features are integral components of comprehensive research platforms such as **Lexis Advance** and **Lexis+**.

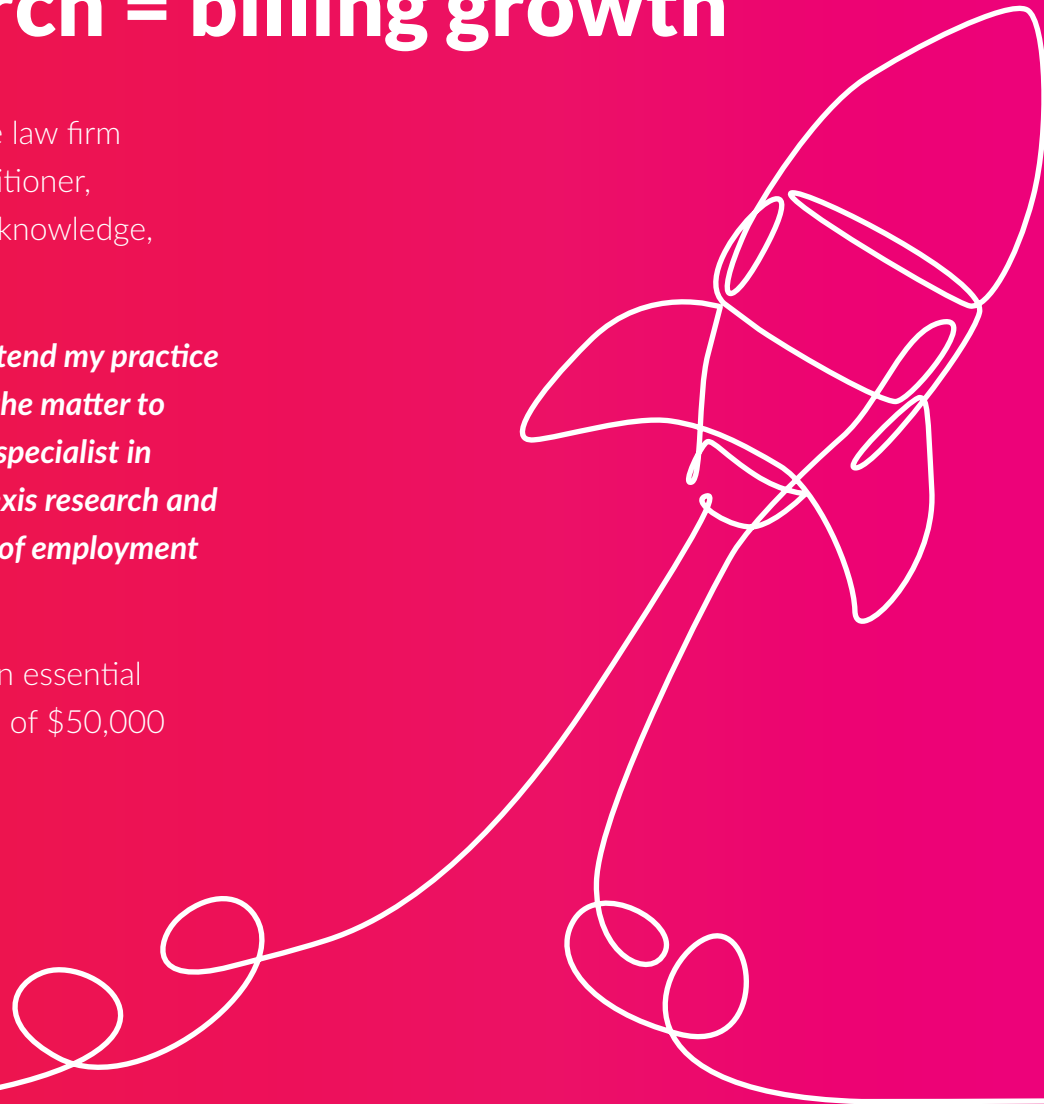


# Paid legal research = billing growth

David Sigler runs Curlington Legal, a boutique law firm specialising in technology law. As a sole practitioner, David uses LexisNexis® research for practical knowledge, workflow, and guidance.

*'LexisNexis Practical Guidance allows me to extend my practice into areas of law where traditionally I handed the matter to a specialist in that field. I don't profess to be a specialist in employment law for example, but with LexisNexis research and guidance resources I can do about 80 per cent of employment issues that come up with my clients.'*

**LexisNexis Practical Guidance** has become an essential resource for David, driving additional revenue of \$50,000 in the last 12 months alone.



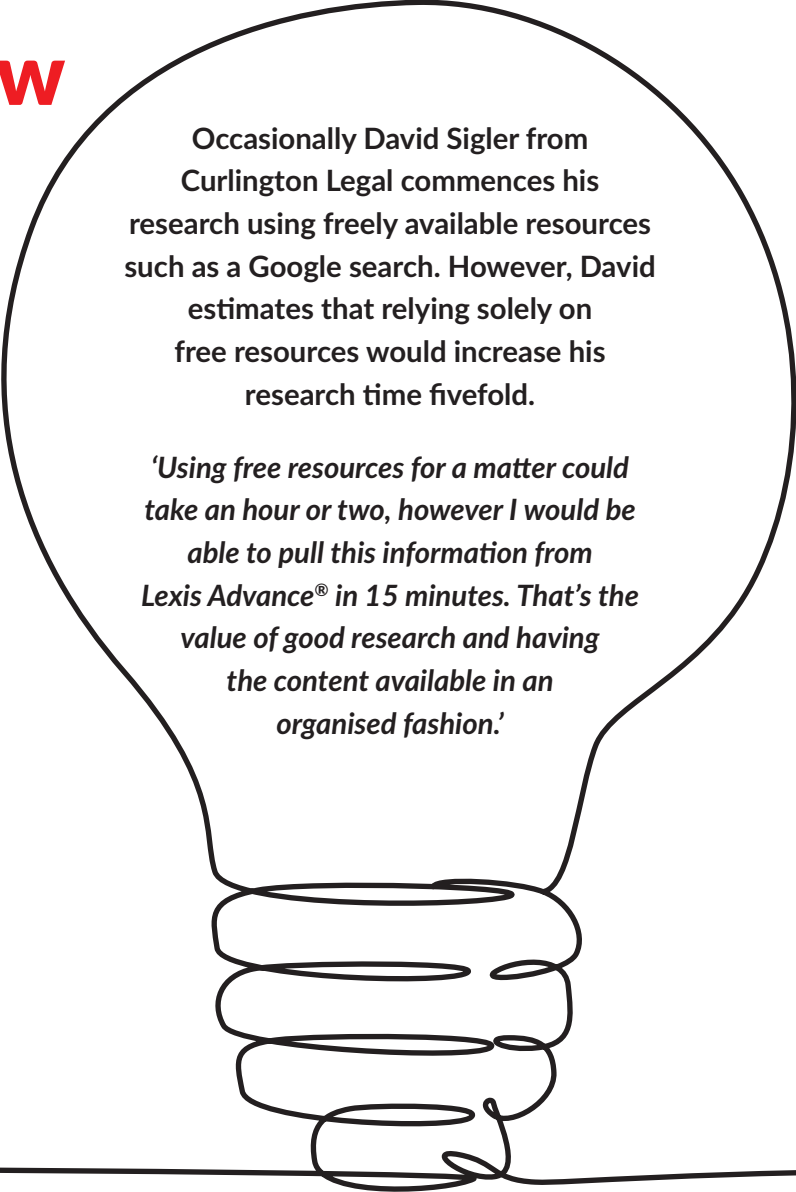
# The right tools for small law

Amid the ongoing economic challenges, small law practitioners are evaluating their spending habits, leading to an appetite towards free tools. This inclination is further bolstered by the abundance and accessibility of cost-free resources in the legal sphere.

Besides resources found online, free sources of legal information include personal resources accumulated over time, law society libraries, court and government resources, events and collaboration with professional colleagues.

Utilising free legal research tools can assist small law firms to reduce their costs. But there are more significant factors beyond cost to consider. What are the hidden costs that could shift the balance of the debate between free and paid resources and what are the potential costs to your firm and your clients? Legal firms must consider the currency, efficiency, and accuracy of their choice of legal research.

While the internet is an expansive resource for lawyers, the time spent seeking specific information could cause significant lost hours for lawyers.

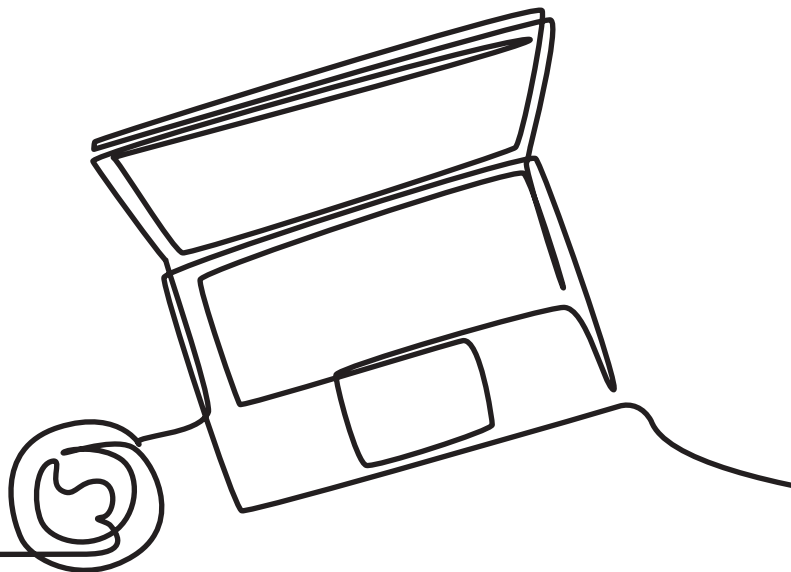


Occasionally David Sigler from Curlington Legal commences his research using freely available resources such as a Google search. However, David estimates that relying solely on free resources would increase his research time fivefold.

*'Using free resources for a matter could take an hour or two, however I would be able to pull this information from Lexis Advance® in 15 minutes. That's the value of good research and having the content available in an organised fashion.'*

# Legal Research, Free or Paid?

How do they compare?



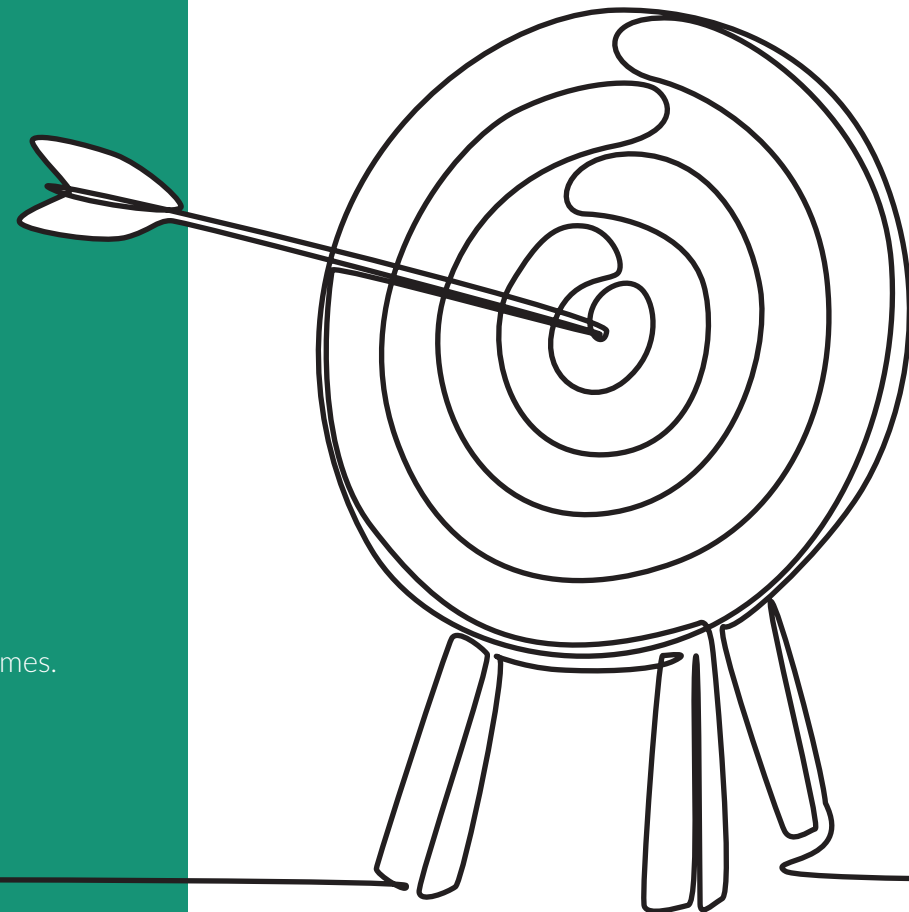
## Free legal research

- 1 Research motivation**  
Cost is the main motivation.
- 2 Training and support**  
Few effective training options.
- 3 Primary research**  
Some legal judgements freely available.
- 4 Secondary research**  
Various sources available including law libraries, court resources and online search.
- 5 Managing workflow**  
Free automation tools and workflow solutions offer limited functionality.
- 6 Return on investment**  
Little upfront cost, however, may end up costing you time and money in the long run.



# Paid legal research

- 1 Research motivation**  
Efficiency, searchability, accuracy, and currency, of research.
- 2 Training and support**  
Ongoing training and support.
- 3 Primary research**  
Rapidly find and interpret court judgements.  
**LexisNexis Case Base®** allows you to search more than 150,000 cases.
- 4 Secondary research**  
Our products provide seamless access to answer questions across all areas of law – with confidence.
- 5 Managing workflow**  
Practically focused content, underpinned by primary law. **LexisNexis Practical Guidance** provides step-by-step and authoritative guidance within your workflow.
- 6 Return on investment**  
Positive return on investment, facilitating best client outcomes.

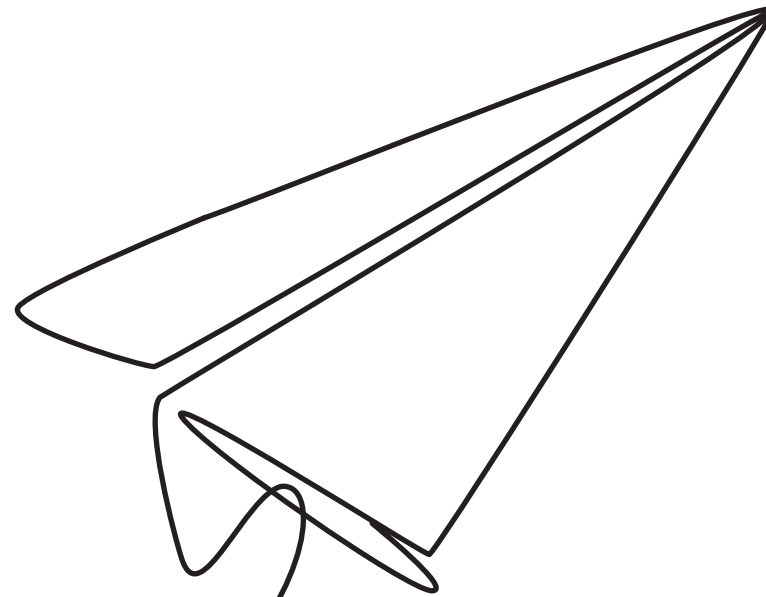


## In Summary...

In an online world where information is free and legal resources are widely available, it is easy to get stuck in a rhythm of using free tools to provide legal expertise. After all, margins for small law firms are tighter than those of the larger legal players and current economic conditions have put further pressure on resources.

While there are cases to support the use of both free and paid legal resources, the benefits of a solid paid research solution more than justifies the initial investment and can reduce overall costs for firms in the long term. This is achieved, not only by providing authoritative information in one seamless platform, but by reducing the time spent searching for data in what is an ever-more-congested and unregulated free market.

With small law firms demanding a research platform that delivers simplicity and dependability - a paid resource is the optimum solution. What is 'free' may actually cost firms both time and money.





beEXCEPTIONAL

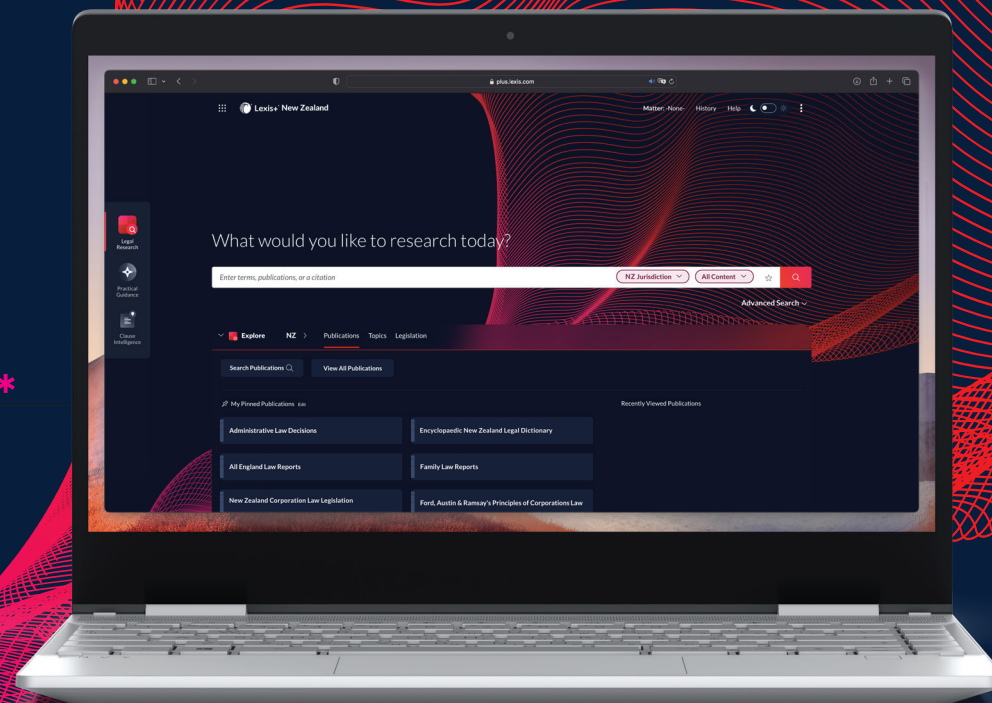
# Lexis+

## A NEW ERA OF LEGAL RESEARCH

POWERED BY EXTRACTIVE-AI

### SAVE OVER AN HOUR PER DAY\*

Experience a New Era of Legal Research that will give you time back, reduce non-billable hours and maximise your fixed price matters. Ensure you deliver fast and decisive legal outcomes – *every time*.



→ BOOK YOUR FREE DEMO



VISIT WEBSITE



WATCH VIDEO

\*LNUK 2023 User Testing | 7 out of 10 legal professionals were at least 10% faster, saving 8 hours and 28 minutes a week on an average 10-hour day.



#### LEXIS ANSWERS

Natural language technology helps you build a fast and deep understanding of any matter



#### LEGISLATION COMPARE

Save time and streamline your advice process by comparing different versions

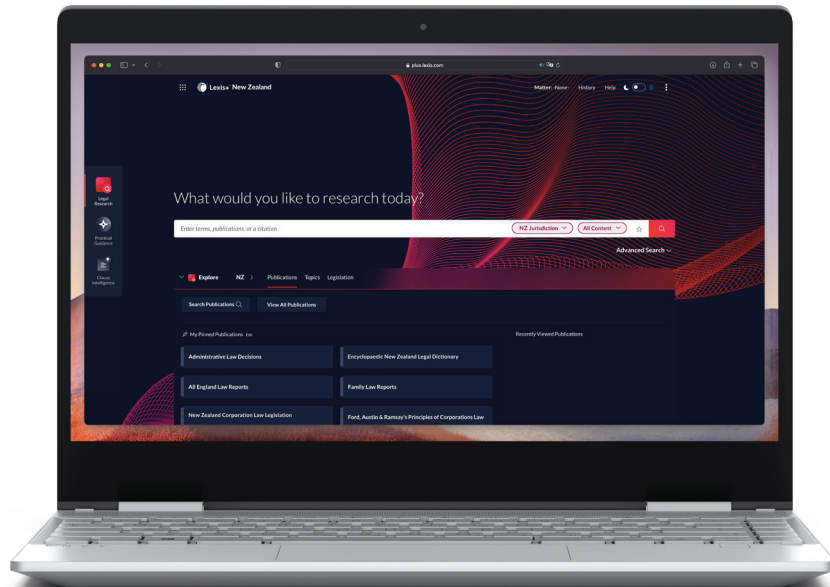


#### LEADING CASES

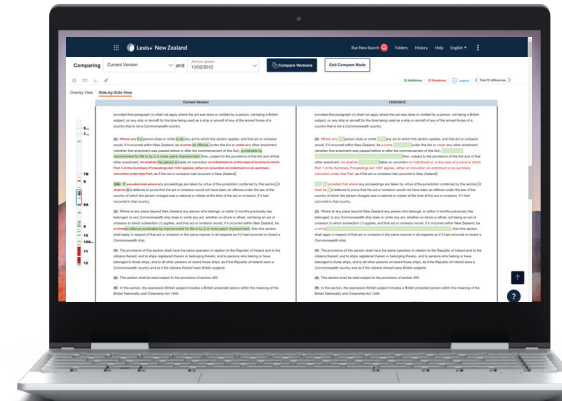
Instantly locate the critical cases most relevant to your search in a clear and compelling view

## THE COST OF FREE LEGAL RESEARCH

# Lexis+<sup>®</sup> POWERED BY EXTRACTIVE-AI Has Arrived!



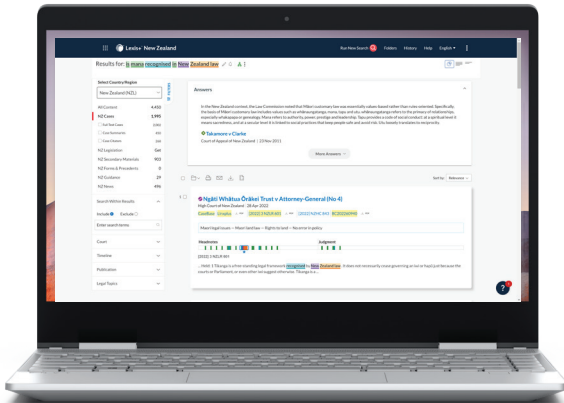
**A powerful and intuitive interface  
that lets you be more strategic and  
deliver exceptional client outcomes.**



## \*Real-World Time Saving

Our Lexis+ Insiders and Beta Testers have experienced remarkable time-savings.

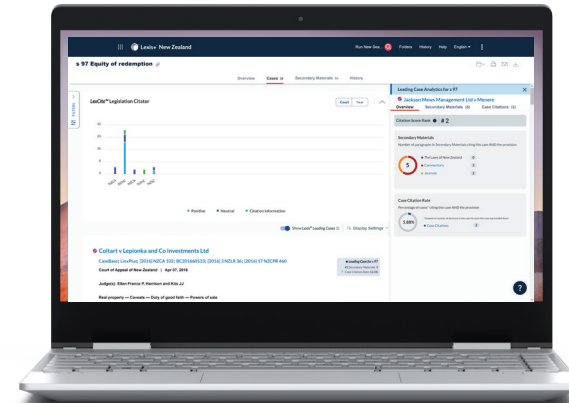
- LNUK January 2023 User Testing | 7 out of 10 legal professionals were at least 10% faster. 8 hours and 28 minutes savings a week on average 10-hour day.
- LNNZ May 2024 Beta Test | Lane Neave beta tester experienced 4 hours saved on legislation comparison.
- LNNZ May 2024 Beta Test | MinterEllisonRuddWatts beta tester experienced 30-45mins saved on each leading case research and 1.5 hours across three research matters.



## Experience Efficiency

Lexis+ is the fast, accurate and reliable research assistant every successful lawyer needs.

- Accomplish tasks faster with a uniquely integrated workflow solution that delivers the most relevant content every time.
- Minimise steps and effort by having comprehensive information presented in an intuitive screen display.
- Create better client outcomes and more billable hours with faster and more accurate search results.



## Experience Confidence

Legal professionals need complete confidence in the output and outcomes of their work. Lexis+ delivers it.

- Superior research, data-driven insights and practical guidance are integrated to show the most relevant content in a single experience.
- On unfamiliar matters, Lexis+ gives you the confidence you are delivering the very best advice.
- Present your recommendations knowing you've covered every base.



Are you taking advantage of new technological developments to allow you to work smarter and invest more of your time with your clients to exceed their expectations?



Work smarter  
and faster



Reduce  
non-billable hours



Maximise fixed  
price matters



Deliver fast and decisive legal  
outcomes confidently – *everytime*

## JOIN OUR OFFICIAL LEXIS+ LAUNCH WEBINAR

The most exciting product launch of the decade to find out how we can simplify your research needs and help you deliver exceptional client outcomes.



**CLICK TO REGISTER NOW**



Or to discuss your  
legal research needs  
and pricing, please  
**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**



**www.lexisnexis.co.nz | 0800 800 986**

**beEXCEPTIONAL**