



Case Study

Shearman & Sterling achieve 50% savings in deal structuring time

Global US legal firm overhauls corporate deal structuring with category-defining visual modelling and secure collaboration platform

**121**

User Accounts
Created

**236**

Projects Created

**6 hr vs. 10mins**

Incumbent Solution vs.
StructureFlow

- within 4 months of StructureFlow implementation at Shearman & Sterling

SHEARMAN & STERLING

Offices: 22

Headquarters: New York City

Year founded: 1873

Number of lawyers: 750

Annual revenue: \$1B (2021)

Ranking: 50th largest law firm
(global)

www.shearman.com



Proof of value

With a global presence and lawyers from over 80 countries, Shearman & Sterling support clients across the whole gamut of legal matters. The firm has a particularly active corporate and M&A team, handling matters with deal values up to at \$130bn.

The firm relies on the Knowledge and Research function to support its lawyers. A vital task of the Knowledge and Research team is to manage all the resources that the firm's lawyers use to practice, collaborate and communicate with clients.

Glenn LaForce, Global Director of the Knowledge and Research team, says, "we're very much focused on how the lawyers practice to help them increase profitable revenue, decrease costs and mitigate risks". His team is also responsible for other technology, such as the document management system, AI tools used for due diligence work, the research libraries and any legal tech such as StructureFlow.

When first learning about StructureFlow, they discovered thousands of structure diagrams saved in their document management system, and it was

clear that there was a need for a fit-for-purpose solution. But before any technology is implemented, it must pass both information security requirements and the “proof of value” test.



“We have very stringent requirements for any technology we implement, and the StructureFlow team really put us at ease - we felt very confident working with them. We knew that we could place our trust in them.”

- Glenn LaForce, Global Director of Knowledge and Research

Eleanor White, Legal Technology and Innovation Manager, who spearheaded the implementation of StructureFlow, is responsible for helping lawyers to understand what they have, how they can access it, and to make sure that they can use it and have the educational resources that they need. Eleanor also reflected that demonstrating value and driving engagement and adoption has been very easy.

The StructureFlow team was very helpful in supporting a “proof of value” exercise. The platform quickly demonstrated that lawyers could rapidly create beautifully designed and dynamic structure diagrams that easily mitigate the increased deal complexity that Glenn has observed over the last five years.

Ease of adoption

StructureFlow needed to meet several critical requirements before Glenn’s team would press on with a full implementation of the platform, namely:

- Compliance with stringent information security and data privacy standards set out by the firm’s global security and data privacy teams
- Demonstrable and consistent gains in efficiency and effectiveness to save lawyers’ time
- Seamless integration with the document management system to provide a single point of access for transaction documentation
- Enable secure collaboration within the deal team and with clients.

Eleanor shared that adoption can be challenging, so any potential technology investment needs a compelling use case. The Knowledge and Research team followed a structured internal process for evaluating new tools. They shared StructureFlow with their teams of professional support lawyers and knowledge management lawyers. These teams provide practising lawyers with operational and research support and loved what StructureFlow allowed them to achieve.



“Adoption can always be somewhat of a challenge when implementing new legal tech solutions, but we’ve seen a lot of lawyers speaking to each other and asking, ‘Are you using StructureFlow yet’? And the adoption rate is even greater than we would normally expect.”

- Eleanor White, Legal Technology and Innovation Manager

Of course a significant part of ongoing adoption and engagement is the working relationship between the Knowledge and Research team and the lawyers and the StructureFlow team. Ongoing feature enhancements and product evolution are also key for the Shearman & Sterling investment. Both Glenn and Eleanor emphasise this point and how closely the StructureFlow team have supported the implementation and roll-out.

The StructureFlow team had a highly structured customer success plan which the Shearman team found very helpful to use alongside their own plan. Communication has also been very strong. The implementation began with weekly check in calls, which have continued monthly since go-live, to keep adoption and engagement on track, and any ensure that any issues are resolved quickly. The StructureFlow team are always interested in hearing feedback from our legal teams which means that features specific to firm requirements are implemented, and this further increases the value of the platform.





The results

The initial proof of value trial quickly demonstrated that lawyers were able to complete typical deal structure diagrams in half the time it usually required when using incumbent tools. This is especially valuable when deal structuring effort and costs need to fit into a capped or fixed fee structure, which is more and more the case.

Usually, the implementation of new technology calls for much more effort and takes much longer to achieve a critical mass of firmwide engagement and adoption.



“Lawyers tend to have to do this dance of technology. They’ve got to go to one system to get this and another system to get that, but, from a visualisation standpoint, if I can just go click and have all the pieces of the puzzle at my fingertips - that’s value. That’s efficiency right there. And that’s what StructureFlow does for our lawyers.”

- Glenn LaForce, Global Director of Knowledge and Research

With the StructureFlow project, the implementation team was readily approached by partners and junior lawyers who were eager to exploit the capabilities of the StructureFlow platform. Ease of use, simple and straightforward visual modelling and secure collaboration empowered the deal teams with a multiplier effect.



StructureFlow enables painless deal structuring

At the heart of the StructureFlow platform is a platform that has been designed by lawyers for lawyers. It brings together all the critical elements of a matter in a way that is easy to understand, supports seamless data sharing and document management, and allows the team to collaborate in a quick and secure way.

The platform is intuitive and easy to use, so there is a minimal learning curve, and junior lawyers and partners alike are fully committed to using it. StructureFlow not only drives efficiencies but, more importantly, it makes lawyers’ lives easier, and teams working on deals can collaborate easily and securely and be even more effective.

With StructureFlow, Shearman and Sterling is empowered with a tool that makes work much easier - and more fun! As Eleanor puts it, “...there’s a lot less pain for everyone and, on a practical level, they can go home on time.”



“There was an existing problem that had not been highlighted before... and as soon as we put the word out that we had a solution with StructureFlow, we had Partners coming to us asking if their teams could use it - because they recognised that same pain of creating structure diagrams themselves.”

- Eleanor White, Legal Technology and Innovation Manager, Shearman & Sterling





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