

McNair Law Firm, P.A. Taps Into Its Wealth of Knowledge with West km

CASE STUDY

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BENJAMIN E. (NED) NICHOLSON V
Attorney
McNair Law Firm, P.A.

With more than 110 attorneys in ten offices in the Carolinas and Kentucky, McNair Law Firm, P.A. is a full-service firm serving businesses, non-profits, government, and individual clients in a variety of practice areas. The firm's diverse client base stretches not only throughout the Atlantic Seaboard, but across the nation.

McNair's attorneys and staff have accumulated a tremendous body of institutional knowledge and experience. Thanks to West km® and WestlawNext®, they can now tap into the full breadth of that experience across the firm, and seamlessly combine it with the best legal research. And they can do this whether they are in the Columbia main office or any of the nine other McNair locations.

The end result is greater efficiency and productivity for the firm, and reduced time and costs billed to clients.

FIND ANSWERS THROUGHOUT THE FIRM

From within the familiar and easy-to-use WestlawNext interface, McNair's attorneys and staff members can use West km to search the vast storehouse of the firm's best thinking and experience. They can find existing work product that can support new cases and projects, and



evaluate its applicability, taking into account work product that may be proprietary to clients and other confidentiality considerations. They can also combine the West km results with the power of WestlawNext legal research.

Attorney M. Elizabeth (Liz) Crum says she frequently uses West km and WestlawNext. "If I'm looking for an issue, I can easily locate the McNair attorneys and offices that previously worked on similar issues. I can take what they've done and use it as a starting point in developing new documents built around the unique facts of my case. I can quickly confirm that the case law is still good, and do additional research for my specific issues. The system is very efficient."

While use of prior materials is limited and carefully controlled to accommodate sensitivities to client confidentiality and proprietary materials of clients and third parties, they can be very helpful reference resources in building new materials for cases.

Liz cites a recent example in which she accepted a case that was due to be argued in less than two weeks before the South Carolina Supreme Court. She needed to quickly file a cross claim in response to a Petition



for Original Jurisdiction; it was the first time she would be filing a cross claim in that particular court. Using West km, she was able, within minutes, to locate previous cross claims that the firm had filed with the Supreme Court. By adopting the format the firm had previously used, Liz was able to quickly file her cross claim and move on to other matters in the case that also demanded attention.

Like many attorneys, Benjamin E. (Ned) Nicholson V was used to having countless file cabinets holding old pleadings, motions and other documents. Even when documents are electronic, traditional document management systems found in many firms often lack robust search capabilities.

West km uses the power of WestSearch® to quickly and easily locate files on a particular subject matter. Users can employ Boolean search terms and refine search results to identify the exact document they need.

“It saves me hours and hours of time,” says Ned. “With ten offices, I can’t possibly know what every attorney in the firm has done. But with West km, in a matter of minutes, I can find work product that’s directly relevant to what I’m working on. Maybe an associate in our Myrtle Beach office has done a memo on the exact point that I need, and it pops up – voila!”

EASY TO USE

West km and WestlawNext are seamlessly integrated to ensure that searches are conducted as efficiently as possible. Launching a single search within WestlawNext yields the best results – whether from online legal research or from the firm’s own work product. Search results from West km are displayed together with results from WestlawNext. Users can then use whatever is best suited for the particular case.

“You don’t need to open another application to search internally,” says David Morgan, Director of Library Services. “It adds another valuable data source when someone is conducting legal research, namely our own documents.”

“Ease of use is a key strength,” says Liz. “It’s a very efficient tool. It allows you to conduct searches – both inside and outside of the firm – very quickly. I have a huge level of assurance because I have a lot of confidence in all of the shareholders, associates, paralegals and staff who work here. I know that what I’m finding is strong work product. I can then review the cases cited and evaluate the appropriateness of that research for my specific needs.”

EASY TO INSTALL

McNair operates a state-of-the-art highly virtualized network, with 105 virtual servers distributed across ten locations. According to the Firm’s Technical Services Manager, implementation went smoothly and “we had no problems getting West km and our document management system connected, communicating and providing access to documents in order to make them searchable within West km.”

SHARING THE FIRM’S KNOWLEDGE

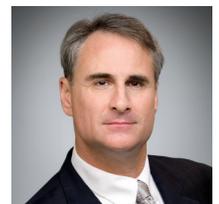
In addition to helping attorneys and staff be more productive, West km helps new attorneys quickly become familiar with the firm and its work product. “It’s great for new associates, summer associates and other new hires,” says David. “It really brings them up to speed quickly. They can access this vast database of work product and see the firm’s approach, even down to details such as how we format and draft documents.” Additionally, new attorneys are able to easily migrate their existing cases into the workflows and formats of the firm.

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MARKETING

The ease of searching the firm’s accumulated experience pays dividends not just in handling cases more efficiently, it also helps the firm more effectively leverage its experience in order to win new business and grow business from existing clients.

When a prospective client approaches the firm about a new case, McNair’s attorneys can use West km to quickly identify similar cases the firm has previously handled, often in the same jurisdiction. They can then provide these as examples of how they successfully handled similar previous cases.

ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Mobile technologies add a new dimension to the ability to work anywhere, anytime. The WestlawNext iPad® app now includes West km. Ned uses the app to challenge opposing counsel when needed, even on the spot. “I jump on the app and – boom – I can find the case they cite and show the judge exactly how it doesn’t really support their point.”

Similarly, the app can be used while mobile, such as in client meetings and at remote locations. If a new issue or concern is raised, McNair’s attorneys can quickly access West km to demonstrate their experience and show how they have handled similar issues.

MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCIES FOR CLIENTS

Clients are increasingly looking for efficiency and value. West km and WestlawNext can save significant amounts of time in managing a case. By not “re-inventing the wheel” every time a new case is opened, attorneys and staff can achieve significantly greater productivity.

“Clients want to know where they can get the best bang for the buck,” says Ned. “By using West km and WestlawNext, we can tell them with assurance that our firm will remain on the cutting edge and optimize efficiencies to their benefit.”

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ABOUT MCNAIR LAW FIRM, P.A.

Headquartered in Columbia, South Carolina, **McNair Law Firm, P.A.**, is a full-service law firm. Since the firm’s founding in 1971 by former governor Robert E. McNair, the firm has remained committed to the success of both its clients and their communities. With 10 office locations in the Southeast, McNair’s geographical reach enables the Firm to concentrate its resources to provide timely performance without sacrificing quality or efficiency.

Major corporations – both domestic and international – as well as local governments, family-owned businesses, entrepreneurs, non-profits, and individuals hire McNair to take on matters that are important to their own success, and that contribute to the future of local economies.

To learn more about McNair, its practices, and its people, please visit www.mcnair.net.

ABOUT WEST KM

Whether your practice is based in litigation, transactions, or both, **West km**® gives you and your colleagues exactly the information you need. Behind your own firewall, **West km** integrates your organization’s work product with Westlaw® Classic or WestlawNext® technology, so every search simultaneously retrieves the best of your work and the best of your online research.

- Increase productivity by reducing duplicative efforts
- Ensure that your work product is built on the best possible authority
- Increase the return on your technology investments
- Improve service to clients and courts with insights and quick turn-around

For more information, please visit westkm.com.

