



Huawei Picks Lawyers with Analytics



Huawei Technologies is the largest telecommunications equipment manufacturer in the world. Their ICT solutions, products, and services are used in more than 170 countries and regions, serving over one-third of the world's population.

Based in Plano, Texas, Steven Geiszler is the U.S. Chief Intellectual Property Litigation Counsel for Huawei. Steven spent over 15 years litigating IP cases at successful Am Law 100 firms. As part of his work he prepared many client pitches. To gather the necessary information, emails would be sent around the firm to find out who had relevant experience in a particular matter or before a specific judge. It involved a lot of word-of-mouth discussions and salesmanship in preparing these pitches, to present the firm in the most favorable light.

Legal Analytics

At Steven's last law firm he was one of the partners who saw a demonstration of Lex Machina and thought, "We have to get this". Once he became a customer, and realized what Legal Analytics could do, and how easy it was, he told his partners: "Be careful when you pitch. Lex Machina is changing the game. If you are less than accurate with your story, and your competitors or your client have access to Legal Analytics, someone will call you out."

Attorney Selection

Now at Huawei, where Steven oversees U.S. IP litigation, he finds himself on the other side of the table. One of his tasks is to assess law firm and attorney performance: "We routinely use Lex Machina to screen proposed litigation counsel when determining which law firm to hire for a new case. Surprisingly, many firms still don't understand that in-house counsel use Lex Machina to cut through the sales puffery in pitches."

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Steven Geiszler, Huawei

Steven recalled one case, where a trusted law firm introduced him to a new junior partner to work on a case. He pulled up the attorney’s profile in Lex Machina and saw that it was not up to his expectations. Steven picked up the phone and explained why he was not comfortable with the person. The firm also used Lex Machina and found that Steven was right – they had not paid attention and had not matched him with the right lawyer. After this episode, Steven said: “We expect all of our outside litigation counsel to use Lex Machina if they have more than 50 attorneys.” Even Huawei’s procurement team is now using Lex Machina to evaluate their law firms.

Early Case Assessment

Lex Machina allows Steven to quickly assess an opposing party and their counsel, to determine the risk level and the appropriate course of action. If, for example, he finds that the organization that sent him a demand letter has already filed 200 patent cases, but has never gone to trial, he knows what they are up to. In that case, he or another of his in-house colleagues may not involve outside counsel, but instead pick up the phone and resolve the matter directly. “Lex Machina narrows the information gap. It helps me be informed about the kind of phone call I need to make,” says Steven. Steven and his entire legal department now use Legal Analytics for opposing party and counsel analysis.

Litigation Strategy

Steven said: “Lex Machina’s efficient use of big data for screening law firms, and then managing litigation strategy, is one of the top three—if not the—most significant developments in U.S. litigation practice since I began my career in 2001”. It helps him and his team answer questions, such as: “How often does the judge presiding over a specific case grant transfer motions? Should we spend the \$25k, or more, on a summary judgment motion when it’s sure to fail?”

The Future

Summing up his experience, Steven said: “Legal Analytics has allowed us to go deeper into the bench of lawyers to find less well known, and often less expensive lawyers and firms, who have the necessary experience. In short, Lex Machina is redefining how lawyers and firms are hired. Firms who ignore this reality do so at their peril.” Steven wants non-lawyers and other members of his organization to learn the finer points of using Lex Machina, so that the company can get even more value out of it.