

An integrated search strategy at Ashurst



Leading international law firm Ashurst, with a team of over 200 partners in 12 countries, is an organisation that has taken the bull by the horns when it comes to delivering integrated search across the firm.

and the specific features of one approach versus another.

The solution Ashurst has deployed focuses on various collections of internally managed content.

browser interface that is presented to lawyers is shown in Figure 1. In this approach materials from internal sources are returned, grouped by type and by office.

It is easy to see how materials from internal sources are returned, grouped by type (shown on the left) and by office (individual tabs). The bottom left of the results page enables the search to be broadened to include all required online Legislation (searching by title), Case Law (searching by party name) and Commentary resources.

The result is a solution that puts the fee earners in control of what and how they search.

An example of the results from a set of external resources, including LexisNexis and CLI, is shown below. The bottom left of the results page enables the search to be broadened to include one or more of the online resources.

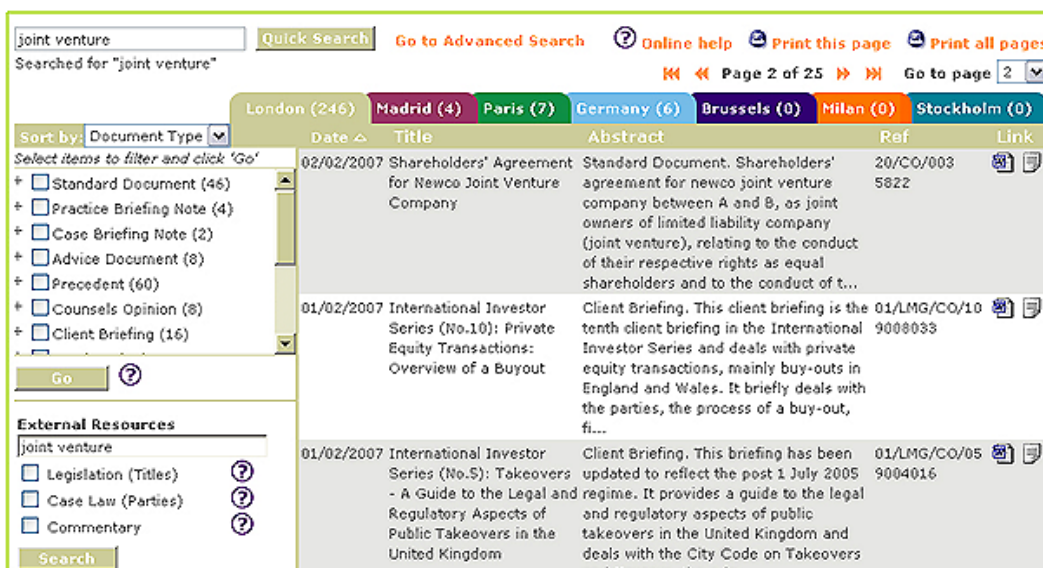
Integrated Search is the practice of providing specific and targeted searching across all essential information

Integrated Search is the practice of providing specific and targeted searching across several different information resources. It ensures that users know what they are searching and get the results they need and expect in a consistent and easy to use format.

At Ashurst, the internal resources are searched as a single entity but the results are segmented by document type and office. Using the results page of the internally managed resources, the search can be extended to incorporate specific online legal resources.

In delivering a truly Integrated Search solution the primary focus is on the business requirements and the needs of the users, as opposed to technology

In the case of Ashurst the online resources are organised by type, i.e. Legislation, Case Law and Commentary. An example of the web



The screenshot shows a search results page for the query "joint venture". At the top, there are navigation links for "Quick Search", "Go to Advanced Search", "Online help", "Print this page", and "Print all pages". Below this, a breadcrumb trail shows the current page is "Page 2 of 25".

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Office Filters:** A row of colored tabs representing different offices: London (246), Madrid (4), Paris (7), Germany (6), Brussels (0), Milan (0), and Stockholm (0).
- Sort and Filter:** A "Sort by: Document Type" dropdown menu and a "Select items to filter and click 'Go'" section with checkboxes for various document types: Standard Document (46), Practice Briefing Note (4), Case Briefing Note (2), Advice Document (8), Precedent (60), Counsels Opinion (8), and Client Briefing (16).
- External Resources:** A section on the bottom left with checkboxes for "Legislation (Titles)", "Case Law (Parties)", and "Commentary".
- Results Table:** A table with columns for Date, Title, Abstract, Ref, and Link. It displays three results:

Date	Title	Abstract	Ref	Link
02/02/2007	Shareholders' Agreement for Newco Joint Venture Company	Standard Document. Shareholders' agreement for newco joint venture company between A and B, as joint owners of limited liability company (joint venture), relating to the conduct of their respective rights as equal shareholders and to the conduct of t...	20/CO/003 5822	Link
01/02/2007	International Investor Series (No.10): Private Equity Transactions: Overview of a Buyout	Client Briefing. This client briefing is the tenth client briefing in the International Investor Series and deals with private equity transactions, mainly buy-outs in England and Wales. It briefly deals with the parties, the process of a buy-out, fi...	01/LMG/CO/10 9000033	Link
01/02/2007	International Investor Series (No.5): Takeovers - A Guide to the Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Public Takeovers in the United Kingdom	Client Briefing. This briefing has been updated to reflect the post 1 July 2005 regime. It provides a guide to the legal and regulatory aspects of public takeovers in the United Kingdom and deals with the City Code on Takeovers and Mergers, the rule...	01/LMG/CO/05 9004016	Link

At Ashurst the internal content is captured, organised and indexed using a range of different systems. The result is a solution that puts the fee earners in control of what they search and how they search.

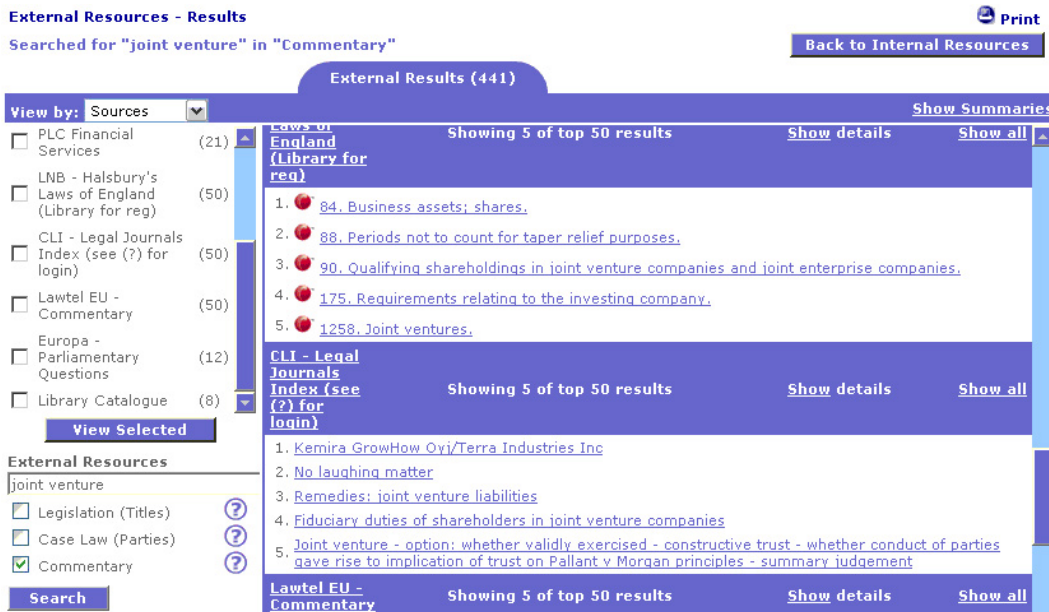
The Solcara KnowHow intranet system has proved to be extremely popular with Ashurst users accessing internal resources. An internal survey indicated a 90% approval rating by users.

The external search uses Solcara's popular federated search technology, SolSearch, with the complete

Figure 1. Internal Know How results

“Ashurst is...working with Solcara to ensure the solution deployed delivers real benefits to the firm and ultimately our clients.”

solution forming a key part of the firm’s intranet. (See Figure 2)



The screenshot shows a search interface with the following elements:

- External Resources - Results**: Searched for "joint venture" in "Commentary".
- External Results (441)**: Total number of results.
- View by: Sources**: A dropdown menu showing selected sources:
 - PLC Financial Services (21)
 - LNB - Halsbury's Laws of England (Library for reg) (50)
 - CLI - Legal Journals Index (see (?) for login) (50)
 - Lawtel EU - Commentary (50)
 - Europa - Parliamentary Questions (12)
 - Library Catalogue (8)
- External Resources**: Filtered by "joint venture".
 - Legislation (Titles) ?
 - Case Law (Parties) ?
 - Commentary ?
- Search**: A button to execute the search.
- Results**:
 - Laws of England (Library for reg)**: Showing 5 of top 50 results.
 84. Business assets; shares.
 88. Periods not to count for taper relief purposes.
 90. Qualifying shareholdings in joint venture companies and joint enterprise companies.
 175. Requirements relating to the investing company.
 1258. Joint ventures.
 - CLI - Legal Journals Index (see (?) for login)**: Showing 5 of top 50 results.
 - Kemira GrowHow Oyj/Terra Industries Inc
 - No laughing matter
 - Remedies: joint venture liabilities
 - Fiduciary duties of shareholders in joint venture companies
 - Joint venture - option: whether validly exercised - constructive trust - whether conduct of parties gave rise to implication of trust on Pallant v Morgan principles - summary judgement
 - Lawtel EU - Commentary**: Showing 5 of top 50 results.

Figure 2. External Know How results

Ashurst partner, Jeremy Thomas said “We have long been committed to cutting edge IT Knowledge Management systems. They are very much part of the matrix, which allows us to deliver the top quality service our clients expect. They underpin our efficiency and effectiveness and SolSearch very much matches our requirements.”

He added “Ashurst is leading the way in recognising the potential savings such a solution can deliver and we are working with Solcara to ensure the solution deployed delivers real benefits to the firm and ultimately our clients.”

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