

Overview

Firm Name: Lang Michener LLP

Location: Toronto, Ontario
(total of four offices)

Industry: Legal services

Customer Profile:

Lang Michener is a leader in Canada's legal profession and has been for more than 80 years. The international firm, with offices in Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Hong Kong, employs more than 200 legal professionals who serve Canadian and international clients.

Business Situation:

Lang Michener was a longtime customer of patent research services from other legal research and patent services companies. However, the firm grew increasingly frustrated with the various services because of their limitations for conducting end-to-end patent research. In 2008, a team of professionals from the firm decided to explore possible alternative products.

Solution:

After evaluating other patent research options, Lang Michener's search team decided to enter into a testing period with TotalPatent™ from LexisNexis®. The firm was pleased with the product's superior search capabilities, broad international patent database and the ability to download results directly into any format needed in the preparation of client work product. In early 2009, Lang Michener decided to switch from its existing patent research service to TotalPatent.

Benefits:

- Lang Michener has realized a 50 percent reduction in the time required to conduct patent research by using TotalPatent to streamline the end-to-end patent research process.
- The global breadth of the TotalPatent database gives Lang Michener professionals the ability to simultaneously search patent records in multiple countries.
- The TotalPatent service processes complex search queries that Lang Michener researchers could not run on the previous patent database.
- Lang Michener was able to realize substantial cost savings by reducing the number of tools and providers used in the patent research process.
- With TotalPatent, Lang Michener researchers now have access to the most comprehensive online collection of patent information in the world, enhancing its ability to produce high quality opinions.

Product Summary

Solutions: TotalPatent

Lang Michener Switches to TotalPatent™ for Patent Research, Generating Superior Search Results and Reducing Research Time

Lang Michener is a leader in Canada's legal profession and has been for more than 80 years. The international firm, with offices in Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Hong Kong, has more than 200 professionals who provide effective, innovative solutions to Canadian and international clients.

Lang Michener's Intellectual Property Law practice is recognized as one of the leading intellectual property law practices in Canada and has helped Canadian and multinational corporate clients protect and secure maximum advantage from their intellectual assets for more than four decades. In addition to its IP practice, Lang Michener also assists clients in areas such as corporate and commercial, mergers and acquisitions, bankruptcy and insolvency, litigation, insurance, and real estate law, and provides highly specialized advice on matters involving corporate finance and securities, lending services, information technology, tax and estates, competition and marketing, international trade, cross border business, and employment and labour law. Lang Michener's lawyers have particular strength at guidance and advocacy in areas unique to law and government in Canada, including administrative law and tribunals, and Supreme Court advocacy.

Situation

"For some years, we had been using a patent research service from another legal service company for most of our patent research needs," explained Alvira Macanovic, Ph.D., a scientific consultant with Lang Michener's IP practice. "Unfortunately, we began to realize that we were somewhat limited in what we could accomplish because of both the scope of the database and the functionality of the product. We needed a different solution that was able to meet the evolving needs of our clients."

In 2008, the firm formed a small search team of professionals from the library services, IP and litigation groups, and began to explore possible alternative solutions for meeting their patent research needs. According to Dr. Macanovic, they were particularly focused on finding a product that would support the searching of international patents and patent applications, that would allow them to compile this research and that would give them the ability to export their results in a variety of common document formats.

“We were attracted to TotalPatent because we saw that its functionality and comprehensiveness could serve as one-stop shopping for all of our patent research needs.”

Linda Boss
Manager of Library Services
Lang Michener

“In 2008, we met with a representative from LexisNexis, who introduced us to a new patent research service the company was developing called TotalPatent,” recalls Linda Boss, Manager of Library Services for Lang Michener. “We were attracted to TotalPatent because we saw that its functionality and comprehensiveness could serve as one-stop shopping for all of our patent research needs.”

Solution

After evaluating a variety of patent research options, Lang Michener’s search team decided on a testing period with TotalPatent.

TotalPatent allows users to access extensive LexisNexis® patent databases, including the full text from 27 authorities, bibliographic and abstract data from 96 authorities, searchable both in the language of publication and in English language machine translations, as well as images, legal status, citations and patent family data, and compressed and searchable PDFs. No other patent research solution in the world offers that level of comprehensive reach and international scope.

“We tried out TotalPatent for a short period, testing it with various clients and different patent research requirements,” said Dr. Macanovic. “Our clear goal was to put this product through its paces in various real-life circumstances in order to get an empirical sense for its performance that was as accurate as possible.”

According to Boss, during this time the firm was pleased with the TotalPatent service’s superior search capabilities and more comprehensive international patent database than what they had been using in the past. They were especially impressed with the ability to export their patent research results directly into any format needed in the preparation of client work product.

In early 2009, Lang Michener decided to switch from their existing patent research services to TotalPatent and became an early adopter among Canadian law firms. “As with the implementation of any new product, there were some initial kinks to work out and a user learning curve we had to navigate,” said Dr. Macanovic. “But the great thing about TotalPatent was that the product itself has a terrific built-in ‘Help’ tool and the LexisNexis Customer Support team was extremely responsive to our needs, questions and concerns throughout the adoption phase.”

“We have been able to reduce the time required to conduct patent research by more than 50 percent. This reduced turnaround time has been of enormous benefit to our clients.”

Alvira Macanovic, Ph.D.
Scientific Consultant
Lang Michener’s IP Practice

Results

In just its first year of implementation using TotalPatent, Lang Michener has realized a number of important benefits by switching from its previous patent research service to the LexisNexis offering.

1. Streamlined patent research process

“We have leveraged the TotalPatent service’s capability of supporting end-to-end patent research to streamline our entire patent research process,” said Dr. Macanovic. “We have been able to reduce the time required to conduct patent research by more than 50 percent. This reduced turnaround time has been of enormous benefit to our clients.”

2. International searches

The global breadth of the TotalPatent database gives Lang Michener’s IP professionals the ability to simultaneously search patent records in more countries than with the previous patent database. This is a tremendous improvement over what was available from the previous service.

3. Superior search results

“We’ve found that the search engine that processes complex search queries for TotalPatent, simply could not be run on our previous patent database,” said Dr. Macanovic. “This means we’re able to produce higher-quality research for our clients, which in turn places us in a stronger position to advise them on important legal questions pertaining to their intellectual property rights.”

4. Cost savings

According to Boss, Lang Michener was able to realize substantial cost savings by reducing the number of services and tools used in the patent research process from three separate products to just one. TotalPatent allows the firm to drop information directly into a report, reducing the need for additional support staff and software to re-enter data and re-format research results into client work products.

5. Comprehensive database

The TotalPatent service’s 38 million main patent families have given Lang Michener researchers access to the most comprehensive online collection of patent information in the world, all right at their fingertips.

“By making it possible for us to automate a number of functions that were previously time-consuming and disjointed, TotalPatent has allowed us to provide better client service at reduced costs. That is a home run in any country.”

Peter Wells
Partner
Lang Michener’s Toronto Office

Perhaps one anecdote illustrates the value of TotalPatent to Lang Michener more than any other.

“We are a Canadian law firm, so it’s crucial that we’re able to effectively search patent records on Canadian patents,” explained Peter Wells, a partner in the firm’s Toronto office. “Prior to acquiring TotalPatent, if we needed to search the description portion of the patent documents, we routinely had to dispatch a lawyer to physically travel to the patent office in Gatineau, Quebec, where he or she would sit at an authorized computer terminal and manually search the Canadian patent files. With TotalPatent, we’re able to conduct that research from right here in our Toronto office. This is particularly important when dealing with time-sensitive matters. Recently, for example, we received a rather complex and urgent request from a prominent U.S. law firm. Their client needed to ensure that a business it was thinking of acquiring was not infringing on other manufacturers’ patents. With TotalPatent, we were able to respond to this request in record time, after reviewing a large number of patents in the process. Our client was extremely impressed with our level of service on this matter in particular, which could not have been achieved without TotalPatent.

“TotalPatent has been nothing short of a breakthrough for our law firm,” Wells continued. “By making it possible for us to automate a number of functions that were previously time-consuming and disjointed, TotalPatent has allowed us to provide better client service at reduced costs. That is a home run in any country.”

About LexisNexis

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