

Flock of Legals: Gaggle on the Gavel: Designing an Interactive Website to Create a Community for Lawyers

Shilpa Pachhapurkar (M.S. student, Human-Computer Interaction) and Sara Anne Hook, M.B.A., J.D.

Department of Human-Centered Computing
School of Informatics and Computing
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

In many ways, law is behind other industries and professions in its implementation of technology. Fortunately, a number of legal technology entrepreneurs and academics are designing systems that will make the study and practice of law more efficient and less expensive and new players are coming into the marketplace to challenge long-standing monopoly-like situations such as have been enjoyed by traditional legal research companies like LexisNexis and Westlaw.¹⁻³ There are now comprehensive practice management systems as well as more targeted software for internal law firm processes like time-keeping and billing.⁴ Websites allow potential clients to locate and connect with lawyers and for lawyers to promote their services to the public.⁵ However, our research identified an unserved niche within the legal technology marketplace. We observed that there was no comprehensive system for lawyers to connect with each other externally in a secure environment that would help them build a professional network of colleagues across the U.S. and even around the world. Our interactive website is intended to provide a LinkedIn-style community specifically for lawyers and is not for access by the general public. The tools within our community, called Gaggle on the Gavel (originally Flock of Legals), are totally within the lawyer's discretion as to how much of the system he or she wants to use, such as referrals, calendars and tracking of continuing legal education seminars and other events, who he or she wants to connect with and how much information will be shared with external colleagues about cases, career opportunities or research interests. Gaggle on the Gavel will also include visualizations that will show trends in the law with respect the kinds of cases being filed and other issues and statistics that lawyers would be interested in and that would help with strategic planning for law firms. Our poster will feature a demonstration of the current iteration of the Gaggle on the Gavel website, including our logo, as well as provide diagrams of the interaction flow within the website and the results of a focus group we conducted on our efforts to design an online community for lawyers.

1. Victor Li, *Contracts 2.0: Technology Rewires the Drafting and Reviewing of Contracts*, A.B.A. J., Nov. 2014, at 30.
2. Victor Li, *They're No Hacks: Technology Takes Center Stage as a Tool to Improve Access to Justice*, A.B.A. J., Oct. 2014, at 66.
3. Rohit Talwar. *All Eyes Are on the Technology Horizon*, Peer to Peer, Sum. 2014, at 44.
4. *Clio: Practice Management Simplified*, Res Gestae, Jan./Feb. 2015, at 26.

5. Avvo, *Find a Lawyer*, <http://www.avvo.com/find-a-lawyer>, (last visited Mar.18, 2015).