

Assignment 1

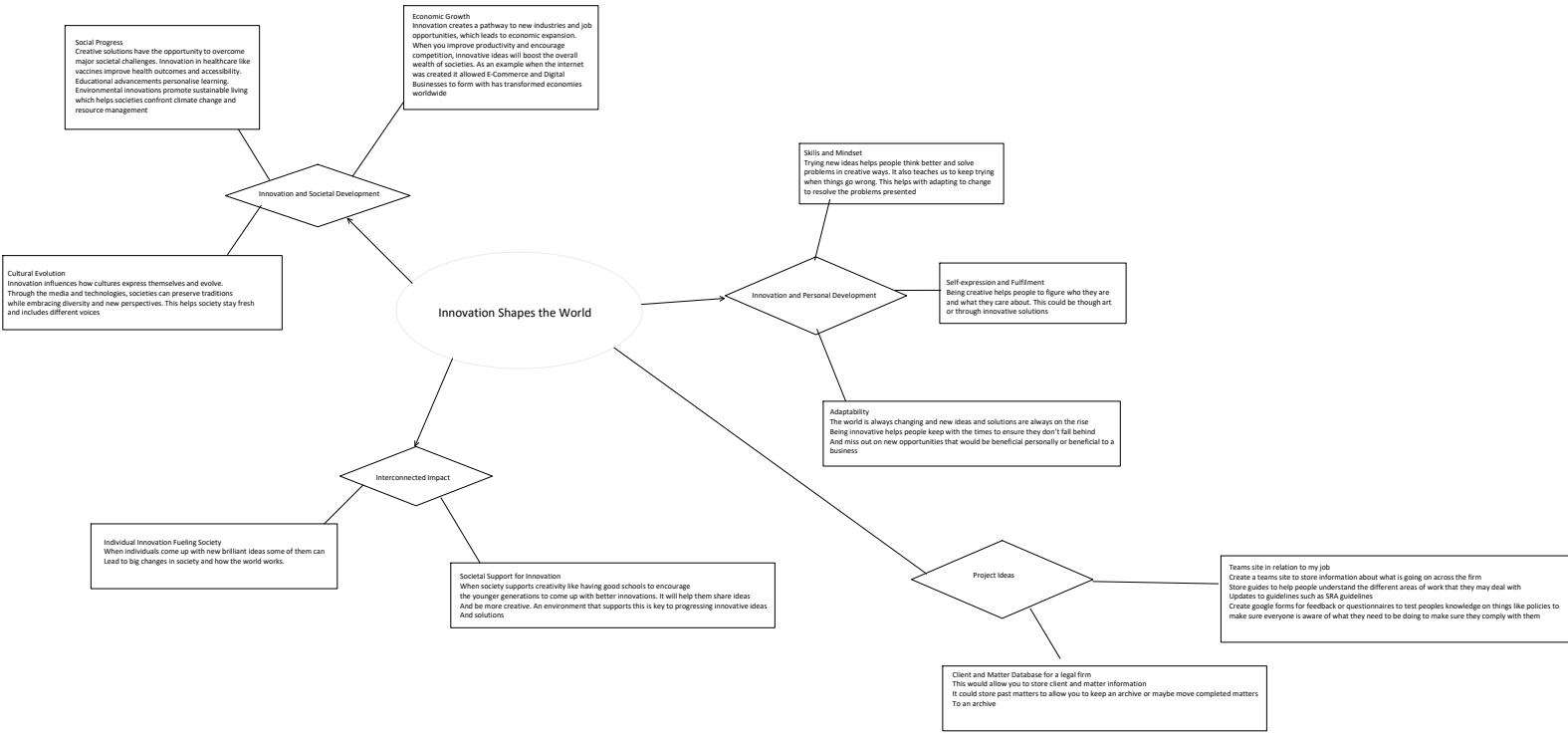
Wednesday, August 13, 2025

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Changemakers Assignment 1



Aims and Objectives

Tuesday, July 08, 2025 12:40 PM

Proposal

To create a database to store client and matter information for a legal firm of solicitors. I work in a solicitors so I can easily gather information in relation to this and I think this would be a good project to look into doing.

Aim & Objectives and Research Area

Q1. Aim and Objectives

Aim:

To design and implement a secure, efficient database management system tailored for a solicitor's firm, enabling the management of client information, matters, financial information, and legal documents while ensuring data compliance with relevant legal and data protection regulations such as the SRA guidelines

Objectives:

1. To investigate the information management requirements of a solicitor's firm including client intake, case tracking, document storage, and financial processes.
2. To analyse existing database solutions in the legal sector and identify their strengths and limitations.
3. To implement the designed database using a relational database system such as MySQL.
4. To evaluate the performance and usability of the database using test data and feedback from legal professionals at the firm I work in.
5. To ensure the database complies with GDPR and other data protection standards relevant to legal practice such as the SRA guidelines.

Q2. Research

For this project, the most appropriate research philosophy in my opinion is pragmatism. Pragmatism is suitable for applied computing and information systems projects where practical outcomes are prioritized, and multiple methodologies may be blended [1]. As this database design is aimed at solving a real-world problem faced by solicitor's firms managing and securing sensitive legal data. Pragmatism allows for flexibility in choosing methods and tools that best serve the practical application of the system.

Moreover, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches can be adopted. For instance, qualitative interviews with legal professionals will help understand how they work and utilise the data they have and data requirements, while quantitative methods can be used to find out the database performance in terms of speed and storage efficiency.

Q3. Search Tools and Strategies

To ensure the research is grounded in current best practices and academic work, a structured search strategy will be used to gather relevant literature. The following search tools and databases will be utilised:

- **Google Scholar:** For accessing academic articles and conference papers related to database design, legal informatics, and data privacy.
- **IEEE Xplore:** For technical research articles on database systems, information security, and software engineering relevant to legal technology.
- **JCP Solicitors:** I work in a legal firm so I can see a variety of different cases and find out what solicitors need and use to make this effective. I also have access to the case management system that we use so I can make comparisons to that

- **Surveys:** I can use surveys to gather information in relation to what I am doing to help me create something that people would find value in

Search Strategies:

Search queries will include Boolean operators and keywords such as:

- "solicitor database design" AND "legal case management"
- "relational database" AND "law firm" AND "GDPR compliance"
- "client data security" OR "legal document management"
- "law firm software" AND "information systems evaluation"

Search filters such as publication date (last 10 years), and relevance to the UK legal sector will be applied to ensure high-quality, relevant sources.

By using these targeted databases and refining the search with Boolean operators, only the most relevant and credible sources will be used to inform the project design and evaluation.

1. Validity – Making sure I measure what matters for a case management system

- **Use precise, legal relevant language** – Avoid vague terms like “good” or “fast”; instead use “time taken to find a document” or “number of clicks to complete a task.”
- **Base questions on real scenarios** - relate questions to tasks that the users may carry out daily
- **Test questions** – send out questions to few select people to gather feedback on the questionnaire to make sure the questions are clear and relevant before sending out firmwide to get the feedback I need
- **Avoid leading questions** – Keep questions and phrases neutral so people aren't biased towards positive or negative views

2. Reliability – Ensuring consistent results across responses and time

- **Standardise question format** – make sure the answers to questions are consistent with how they are answered so if one question asks to rate something 1-5 then make sure that is the same for all answers and doesn't change
- **Scenario based** – make questions suit a relevant scenario to help people understand what is being asked
- **Distribution** – I will choose one way to send the survey out to people to make it easier to gather the results instead of sending some by email and some by teams for example
- **Same question different answer** – possibly in the future if I did the survey again for more feedback I could ask some of the same questions to see if the answers I got will change depending on system updates that could change how things work

3. Generalisability – Making sure findings apply beyond the immediate sample

- **Include different roles** – Solicitors, Legal Assistants, Business Support staff, may have different needs to one another.
- **Send Firmwide** - I wouldn't be able to rely on just one branch office giving results as people have different ways of working so to do this effectively it would need to be sent to everyone
- **Different Teams needs** – different teams may have different guidelines to one another

4. Ethical Considerations – Protecting participant rights and trust

- **Consent** – make it clear that it is a voluntary survey but explain the importance to make people aware of the benefits of participating
- **Anonymity** – Remove identifiable information from responses before analysis. This removes the thought of people saying too much is bad or giving a specific answer
- **Confidentiality** – if real client or matter information is used or referenced then make sure it is redacted

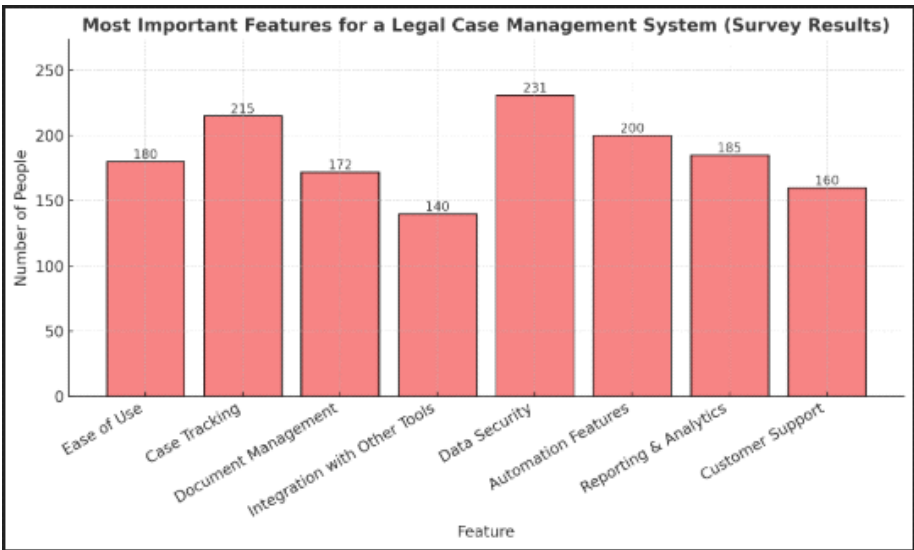
- **Stop Feedback** – Allow people to skip questions or stop doing the survey whenever they please if they decide they don't want to do it anymore
- **Summary** – share some of the finding to let users know it is being looked into and that the time they took going through it wasn't wasted

Survey Results

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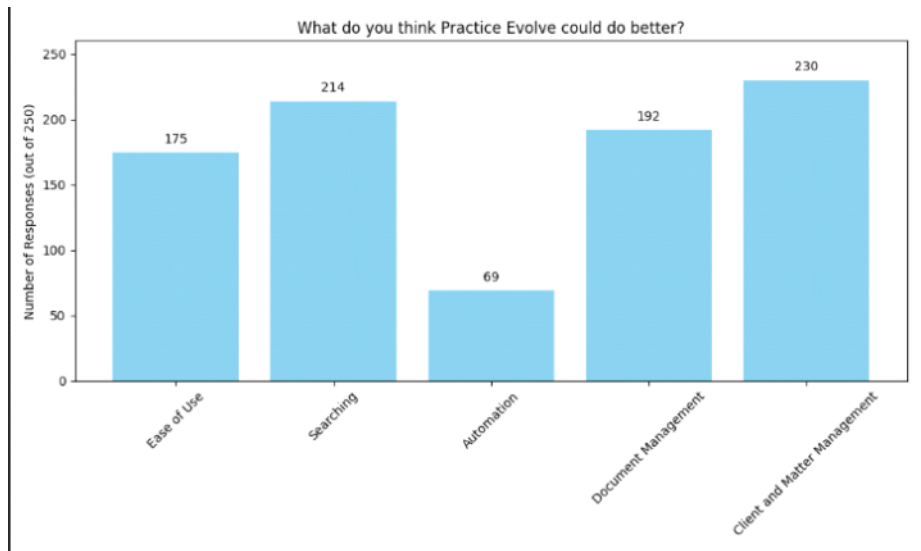
I created a survey and sent that out firmwide at JCP Solicitors and with the results I created a graph to show me what people think is the most important part of a legal case management system. From the results it shows me that people value security of the data they are adding more than anything. Data security is massive for a legal firm as they deal with a lot of personal information like financial details which would be a big problem if it ever got leaked or stolen.

Integration was the least voted for and this is possibly because people still have access to what they need through other programs and can likely get information from them to store in the case management system.



I also created a graph to show what people think could be improved with the case management system we use in work. From the results I can see that Client and Matter management is the one thing that people think can be improved with the search functionalities coming in close second.

People seem to be happy with the automation that can be utilised in the system.



References

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References

- [1] Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th ed. SAGE Publications.
- [2] Connolly, T. & Begg, C. (2015). *Database Systems: A Practical Approach to Design, Implementation, and Management*. 6th ed. Pearson Education.
- [3] Jones, R., & Kavanagh, D. (2020). "Digital Transformation in Legal Practice: Exploring Legal Tech Adoption." *Journal of Business Systems Research*, 11(2), pp. 23-38.
- [4] McRoberts, A., & Newton, L. (2019). "GDPR Compliance in Legal Firms: A Technical Perspective." *Legal Information Management*, 19(3), pp. 123-130.