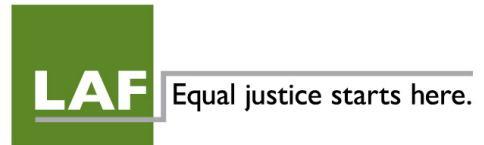# LAFPoint

A Knowledge Management System Designed and Developed for LAF Using SharePoint Enterprise 2013

TIG FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Technology Initiative Grant #13041

January 19, 2017

TIG FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Grantee Name: LAF
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I.   Project Goals and Objectives

LAF embarked on this project to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LAF's client services by updating LAF's workflows, communication, and information management. It is our hope that LAF staff will be able to represent more clients in extended representation cases and provide more community groups with useful legal information.

This project fell in line with LAF's 2012 strategic plan, which included an initiative for "building and maintaining institutional knowledge through the effective use of technology" throughout LAF.

LSC awarded LAF this grant for a thirty-month term, beginning November 1, 2013. The primary goal of the grant was to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LAF's client services by streamlining communication and information management, creating a collaborative workspace, and integrating SharePoint with our case management system, LegalServer. The specific goals and objectives were:

- To design, create and implement a SharePoint system to provide the foundation for enhancements to LAF's information management systems.

- Integrate SharePoint with LegalServer to allow staff to easily and seamlessly access and share information from the case management system and other LAF data sources.

- Improve LAF's operational effectiveness and efficiency by implementing an integrated SharePoint-LegalServer information management system.

LAF achieved the overall project goal and each of the objectives. In fact, we went beyond and built a SharePoint Enterprise 2013 system that is well-organized, practical, cost-effective, and flexible, enabling LAF staff to share knowledge and information throughout the organization in a secure manner. By using a customizable framework, we can change this system to adapt and grow with LAF for years to come. We named our system LAFPoint (pronounced "L. A. F. Point"). There was some debate over the case of the "P," but the capital won out in the end.

II. Evaluation Data and Methodologies

LAF used qualitative and quantitative data to analyze the usefulness of LAFPoint. This included surveys, in-person interviews, user testing, discussion boards, and reports.

Surveys
Using Information to Provide Extended Representation (Ext. Rep.): In June 2013 we gathered information about the number of extended representation cases staff handled and the amount of time staff spent on these cases. We received responses from 47 staff members (42 attorneys, 3 paralegals, and 2 other staff). Appendix (App.) at pages 1-7.
Playground Survey: In December 2014 we gathered feedback about the initial LAFPoint design. We received responses from 21 staff members (11 attorneys, 2 paralegals, 8 other staff). App. at 8-28.
LAFPoint Survey 1 (All Staff): In November 2016 we gathered feedback on the usefulness of LAFPoint to date. We received responses from 71 staff members (48 attorneys, 4 paralegals, 19 other staff). App. at 29-46.
LAFPoint Survey 2 (Extended Representation Community Engagement): In November 2016 we gathered feedback on the value of LAFPoint to staff who do extended representation cases and community outreach. We received responses from 25 staff members (all attorneys). App. at 47-50.

In Person Interviews
Mark Pace, our consultant, conducted interviews of 23 staff members in June and July 2014 to gain a better understanding of the way staff worked, the pain points they encountered in their work, and the recommendations they had for overcoming these obstacles. App. at 51-59. Mark Muniz, our VISTA, conducted a second set of interviews of 16 staff members in August and September 2016 to gather feedback about how LAFPoint was working and where we could make improvements. App. at 60-64.

User Testing
Members of the Core Group tested our SharePoint 2013 system after our consultant built the wireframe. They continued to test LAFPoint throughout the course of this project. App. at 65-74. We also conducted user testing in June and July 2015 when we met with LAFPoint Curators to discuss plans for migrating their work group files. We asked the Curators to provide feedback about creating, uploading, and sharing files on LAFPoint. App. at 75. We were looking for feedback on ease of use and adoption.

Discussion Boards
We collected "compliments and concerns" on the Home Page discussion board immediately after we launched LAFPoint. In June 2016, we moved this discussion to the LAFPoint Wiki and created FAQs from the questions and answers. App. at 76-80.

Reports
As of October 2016, we had added over 200 blog posts, migrated nearly 260,000 files, created more than 25 subsites, and started nearly 100 discussions. Data for May 2014 – April 2015 compared to data for May 2015 – April 2016 shows an increase of in the average number of extended representation cases per FTE case handler in four of our five practice groups and a decrease in the fifth practice group. App. at 81.

III. Summary of Major Accomplishments, Recommendations and Future Steps

On October 6, 2015, LAF launched its SharePoint Enterprise 2013 knowledge management system, "LAFPoint." SharePoint is a customizable knowledge management tool which organizations can use to do their work with clients and community partners, to train staff, to manage and store information, and more. We believe LAF is the first LSC organization to adopt a SharePoint Enterprise 2013 system which has all staff, not just case handlers, as its primary users. We chose to build our system "on premises" because this best suited our needs for functionality, maintenance, cost, and security. We used an iterative approach to design LAFPoint to take advantage of SharePoint's flexibility and ease of customization. Our major accomplishments include:

- **Embracing Social Computing** so that our staff can interact and collaborate about the ways they work to serve our clients and community partners. LAFPoint gives us a place to celebrate hard-won victories, collaborate on our current work, store policies and procedures, and link to additional resources.
- **Building a Modern Knowledge Management System While Migrating Information** from our file shares and our SharePoint 2010 system to LAFPoint.
- **Engaging All Staff** to create pages, links, wikis, subsites and other features within LAFPoint that allow them to share and manage information more easily.
- **Creating the LAFPoint Home Page** that contains a blog, calendar, Twitter feed, and "water cooler" discussions. The Home Page is a central location to share information about LAF, our work, upcoming events, internal policies, and links to more specific information such as our work group subsites. The Twitter feed gives us a window to the legal aid community at large, and the "water cooler" discussions foster a sense of community for all staff. App. at 82.
- **Building Customizable subsites** for LAF's work groups, task forces, and committees. Each group can build lists, wikis, libraries, discussion boards, and more. App. at 83-107.
- **Building the LAFPoint Wiki** with links to our introductory training video, glossary of terms, Governance Policy, training outlines, how-to guides, and Frequently Asked Questions. App. at 108.
- **Building Substantive Practice Wikis** in the areas of Children and Families, Consumer, Civil Practice, Education, Training and Veterans. We also rebuilt our Technology Wiki from our SharePoint 2010 site to include additional and updated material. App. at 109-113.
- **Migrating Files to Document Libraries** for all our work groups, so the libraries contain motions, briefs, guides, sample documents, and more. App. at 114-118.
- **Creating MySites** for each staff member, which include their OneDrive personal document library, Newsfeed, About Me Page, and more. App. at 119-120.
- **Writing Our Governance Policy** in August 2015, before LAFPoint went live on October 6, 2015, and revising our Governance Policy in November 2016 to include guidelines for our work group subsites and revised guidelines for our Curators based on the development we've done so far. App. 121-127.
- **Ensuring We Have Room to Grow** so that we can modify LAFPoint as our needs change. We plan to expand LAFPoint so that our board members and other external partners can access subsites within LAFPoint to see only the information they need for the work they do with us, while still keeping this information secure. We also have options for cloud integration, if we ever need a hybrid system.

IV.   In-Depth Analysis of Accomplishments

A. Development and Design

1. Knowledge Management at LAF Before LAFPoint

Before LAFPoint, LAF used network drives to store files and documents relevant to our extended representation and community engagement work, along with just about everything not in our case management system. Our main shared drive, called the "G Drive," contained multiple folders and levels of folders within folders. Share permissions were generally open for convenience, but this would often lead into problems with locked read-only files while another user had the document open. We had some form of version control with Shadow Copies, but it was mainly to protect against users accidentally saving an unwanted change. Many people would make copies of shared documents elsewhere, making updates difficult. Many times, experienced staff who had knowledge and valuable sample documents to share did not regularly save these files to a shared location. Collaboration on a single document or file typically involved using email to share multiple drafts of the document and compare versions. In short, our "brief bank" on our G Drive had become disorganized and was nearly unusable.

In April 2010, LAF acquired a license for Thomson Reuters' West km, a knowledge management system, to try to address some of these issues. This application indexed documents on our network shares, adding citations and facilitating keyword searches. Our intent was to have West km replace our brief bank on the G Drive. However, when we encountered a hard limit on the number of documents that West km could process, we concluded that it was unsuitable for our needs.

In June 2012, we updated LAF's intranet site which we used primarily to share news about the work we do via an internal blog. We had been running on an old version of Joomla, a free web content management system. Based on information we learned from a TIG Conference, SharePoint appeared to be the best choice to replace Joomla because it included the blogging platform as well as document libraries, wikis, and customizable automated workflows. We set up our new LAF intranet site on SharePoint Foundation 2010 with the primary intent being that most staff would use it for our internal blog posts. Our IT staff created a "Tech Wiki" with information for all staff about our technology and equipment. Over time, other staff explored the functionality of SharePoint on their own and added short wikis, how-to guides, and links to other sites. When we began running into the limitations inherent in the Foundation edition of SharePoint, we knew that we needed to explore a more robust system.

Toward the end of 2012, LAF adopted a strategic plan that included an initiative for "building and maintaining institutional knowledge through the effective use of technology." We needed a better way to organize, maintain, and share all the institutional information we had at LAF among our staff. Much of this information included files in Word, Excel, or PDF formats. Based on our experience using SharePoint Foundation 2010, we knew that we also wanted to create wikis and automated processes, and to use hyperlinks to share information internally as well as on the public Internet. Looking ahead, we knew that we would want the ability to share selected information with our Board of Directors and other external partners. We wanted a web-based system that would provide the foundation for LAF's information management, with the flexibility to grow and change with LAF. When we

looked at SharePoint 2013 and the additional functionality available in the Enterprise Edition, the idea for this project was born.

In 2013, before we formed the Core Group and started our work on this project, LAF began working with SeyfarthLean Consulting (with funding from a separate grant) to do business process analysis of several of our practice groups. One of the main lessons from business process analysis is that improvement is continuous. Because we were already using SharePoint 2010 in some ways, we had a head start when it came to thinking about using SharePoint 2013 to do our work.

Our Housing Practice Group (HPG) worked with SeyfarthLean in 2013 and 2014 to design document templates they stored in the G Drive, to implement a process for managing their case acceptance decisions in our SharePoint 2010 system, and to standardize their case opening and closing processes. After we rolled out LAFPoint, we migrated the document templates and other files from the G Drive, and we further refined the processes for managing case acceptance decisions and for opening and closing cases.

During the second half of 2014, our Children and Families Practice Group (CFPG) worked with SeyfarthLean. Two of the five projects this group decided to address using the SeyfarthLean business process analysis were: 1) launching a "Great and Powerful" wiki which would be community-created and maintained (as is the case for any true wiki) as a centrally accessible authoritative resource for the group; and 2) creating a work environment that offers more opportunities for interaction and collaboration within the practice group itself as well as with other practice groups at LAF. We created the first CFPG wiki in our SharePoint 2010 system in 2014. Once we rolled out LAFPoint in October of 2015, the Children and Families Practice Group used their experience creating their SharePoint 2010 wiki to design and build their LAFPoint wiki. The Children and Families Practice Group Wiki is the most detailed wiki we have on LAFPoint right now.

Our Consumer Practice Group (CPG) went through the business process analysis with SeyfarthLean next, at the start of 2015. The SeyfarthLean team did two training exercises with our CPG that they had not done with our HPG or our CFPG. One was an exercise on process mapping which illustrated all the steps needed to complete a goal, pointing out superfluous steps or where key actions were missing. The second was an exercise on root-cause analysis to help people avoid "solution-jumping," which happens when people assume they know what needs to be changed without examining and testing their assumptions. These were new tools for many of the staff in the CPG which helped the group have productive discussions about process-mapping, project management and change management. Like the HPG and the CFPG, the CPG then identified several projects to work on using the SeyfarthLean business process analysis. The CPG project most relevant to LAFPoint, titled "Project Fresh Start," involved creating a wiki in LAFPoint to use for bankruptcy cases that includes links to sources of law and other resources, a timeline, and sample documents such as pleadings, motions, and forms.

2. The Core Group

Soon after we received approval for our TIG project, we solicited volunteers for our "Core Group" who would be responsible for designing our SharePoint 2013 system. We received more than twice as many volunteers as we needed. We ultimately selected a group comprised of managers and staff that included attorneys, paralegals, an office manager,

and IT staff. The members of the Core Group represented four of our five substantive practice groups, our Client Screening Unit, and our administrative and support work group. The original Core Group members were: James Brady, Meghan Carter, Eric Fong (co-chair), Vivian Hessel (co-chair), Matthew Lango, Peter Mural, Steven Pick, Kate Selden, and Piper Taggart. Two additional members, Suzette Flores and Michelle Gilbert, joined the Core Group during the course of this project.

The Core Group met on a monthly basis to share ideas and make decisions about the overall design of LAFPoint, including the home page that all staff see upon logging in to the LAF network each day. The Core Group reviewed the taxonomy used by the Northwest Justice Project (NJP) in its SharePoint system (TIG 11076), gathered feedback from staff, and devised the taxonomy for LAFPoint. The Core Group also previewed the "wire frame" model of our SharePoint 2013 system and conducted initial user tests of the "personal pages" (now called MySites) within LAFPoint.

During the first half of 2014, individual Core Group members conducted outreach for our SharePoint project by attending staff meetings held by our practice groups, client and community units, and operations work groups. At these meetings, Core Group members described our SharePoint 2013 project, interviewed staff to help design LAF's taxonomy, and gathered feedback from staff about their experience using our current SharePoint 2010 system. In December 2014, nearly all members of the Core Group attended a "SharePoint Fest" that took place in Chicago from December 8 – 10. This gave the Core Group valuable insight into using SharePoint and encouraging others to use it as well. The different conference tracks made this conference valuable for both our IT professionals and our general users within the Core Group.

The Core Group worked together from January 2014 through October 2015 to design, test, review, and implement LAFPoint. The Core Group members brought their various strengths to this process and, without exception, worked hard to achieve the project goals. Some members of the Core Group continue to work on LAFPoint development by serving as LAFPoint Curators now.

3. Hardware and Software

We purchased a Dell PowerEdge R420 server with eight processor cores, 64GB of memory, and flash accelerated storage to maximize responsiveness. Both SharePoint 2013 and the Office Web Apps server runs off instances of Windows 2012 R2. For the database server, storage capability is a greater priority. We configured an existing server with a four-core processor, 32GB of memory, and sixteen hard drives in striped and mirrored disk arrays. The database itself is Microsoft SQL Server 2014 on Microsoft Windows 2012 R2.

On-premise SharePoint 2013 deployments require three roles: web, application, and database. In smaller environments such as ours, we are able to start with a two-tier deployment model that combines the web and application roles into one server.

Using our current file server as a guide, we configured the database server to be able to store an order of magnitude more data than we currently had. Right now we are using only a fraction of its 22 terabytes of available space. Once we complete upgrading our production servers' host hypervisor operating systems and hardware in the first quarter of 2017, we will move the database server to its final resting place on an array exceeding 32

TiB (as firmware issues related to these drives' operation in RAID arrays have been relegating them to offsite backup duty). To maximize performance, we will use a combination of hardware RAID, SSD read/write caching, and software SSD tiering (Windows Storage Spaces). The practice of short stroking mechanical platter drives will be replicated by limiting the virtual drive's usable space and ensuring partitions are created in the lowest disk sectors. The timing of both the firmware update and the new operating system release were the factors in scheduling its deployment.

Performance and backup limitations dictate that we stay well under the hard storage limit, and we do not anticipate this becoming a concern for at least five years. To estimate this value, we simply looked at how much new and changed data we generated based on the size of the volume shadow copies built-in as a primitive version of versioning and data recovery on the file server. SharePoint's capabilities in this realm are far superior, which is a worthwhile tradeoff for the overhead of using SQL storage. The controversy of using SQL to hold ordinary BLOB/data files persists to this day, which is why RBS/FILESTREAM support was introduced in SharePoint 2013. While we've found plenty of support for the various positions people take on this matter, not even Microsoft has a useful recommendation either way, so we will have to trust that the default settings are good enough. A little (or more than a little, in our case) overprovisioning of speed and capacity should mitigate these concerns in any event.

Our initial design called for a single landing page and data repository for our entire agency. Documents would be placed in a central library with a flat storage structure. Instead of organizing documents as they are uploaded, they would be tagged with keywords within the taxonomy we developed. Although we ultimately moved away from keyword tagging to create subsites for each of our work groups, as discussed in Section B of this report, we based this decision on feedback from users rather than on hardware or software limitations.

4. Two Key Roles: Consultant and Information Manager

LAF sought bids from SharePoint consultants to design and implement our SharePoint 2013 system. We ultimately contracted with Mark Pace of Nuvem, Inc., because he had worked with Northwest Justice Project to design their system for their TIG project and he offered a competitive bid. Mark also has excellent credentials, showed enthusiasm for our project, and was committed to LAF's mission of equal access to justice.

Mark provided invaluable knowledge and experience throughout our project. At the outset, Mark learned about LAF's structure, staff, work groups, and workflows. He attended our team's "kick off" meeting in January 2014 and our monthly Core Group meetings thereafter via Join.Me. At these meetings, Mark provided insight about using SharePoint and shared knowledge about the technical requirements for SharePoint. Mark worked with the Core Group to create a SharePoint architecture that corresponded to the workflows in our practice groups identified through the SeyfarthLean business process analyses. Mark also spent three days at LAF in June and July of 2014 to conduct face-to-face interviews of 21 staff members so that he would better understand how they did their work, where they ran into pain points, and how we might improve efficiency. Based on input from the Core Group and LAF staff, Mark helped us design and develop an efficient User Experience and Information Architecture (UX/IA) that would allow staff to easily find and add content to SharePoint.

In our TIG application for this project, LAF identified the need for a dedicated IT staff person to work as an "information manager." The idea was that the Information Manager would work directly with Mark to design the structure of the SharePoint system and then maintain the system once it was implemented. Peter Mural, LAF's Network Administrator, has filled this role extremely well. Mark Pace trained both Eric Fong and Peter Mural on SharePoint design, and Peter has continued to expand his knowledge of SharePoint on his own by reviewing material available online and by exploring the functionality of the system.

Peter is the primary author of our LAFPoint wiki and the how-to guides available on this wiki. Both Peter and Eric assisted Vivian Hessel with many of the training sessions we conducted for staff right before we rolled out LAFPoint, and helped with the supplemental trainings that we have conducted in recent months. In addition, Peter met individually with LAFPoint Curators to teach them about the more advanced features available to them when designing subsites and other functionality within LAFPoint for their work groups.

B. User Testing, LegalServer Integration, and Preparation for Launch

1. User Testing: All Staff Invited to the LAFPoint Playground

After conducting "outreach" with LAF staff and gathering information about existing SharePoint systems, the Core Group set about the task of devising an initial taxonomy for LAFPoint. Developing our taxonomy was a daunting task because we had a lot of information in multiple subject areas, with significant overlap between areas. We wanted our taxonomy to be well-designed so that it would make sense to our users. The difficulty we encountered was in deciding how much detail to provide. In addition, as is likely to be the case for any group that is developing a taxonomy, not everyone in the Core Group had the same subject-specific knowledge of the work being done in LAF's various groups.

We reviewed the taxonomy developed by the Northwest Justice Project for their SharePoint TIG and obtained feedback from staff in LAF's work groups about our proposed "tags." We devised a taxonomy that we felt was 90-95% complete, and agreed that this was the best we could do given that taxonomies are ever-changing. We included a "folksonomy" field that allowed users to include their own tags if they did not find the tag they wanted in our taxonomy structure. App. at 130-132. This would give users the satisfaction of adding tags they wanted to see while allowing the LAFPoint Curators and Administrators to incorporate the more commonly used tags into our taxonomy over time.

Simultaneously, Mark Pace built a "wireframe" of our system on our development server. We invited all staff to "play" on our SharePoint 2013 Playground in November and December of 2014. We asked those who played on our SharePoint 2013 Playground to complete a survey about their experience and to share their ideas with us. Although only twenty-one staff completed the survey, this group represented ten of LAF's fourteen programmatic and operational work groups. The results of the survey were favorable: 73% of respondents either "loved" or "liked" what they saw (Question 3), approximately 50% liked the Home Page as it was or had no suggestions to change it (Question 5), and approximately 70% had a favorable impression of the window that opened for adding new documents to the LAFPoint Central Library using the tags we had developed (Question 7).

App. at 8-28. During the first quarter of 2015, the Core Group continued testing our system on our development server, seeking feedback from individual staff, and suggesting modifications which Mark Pace incorporated. We also settled on the name for our system – "LAFPoint" – and in April 2015, we invited staff to "Show and Tell" sessions to preview LAFPoint. We held three preview sessions in April 2015, each lasting 45 – 60 minutes. App. at 128. These were informal sessions for people to come and go as they pleased. We invited staff to stay for 15 minutes or longer, ask questions, and provide feedback. We also asked everyone who came to complete a short exercise using LAFPoint, either during the preview sessions (we had a laptop computer set up on the side of the room) or back at their desks. App. at 129. The feedback we received was positive but minimal. This was probably because most people did not know what to expect and had not fully processed the idea of LAFPoint being a web-based system.

In addition to the LAFPoint Home Page that shows the blog, calendar, Twitter feed, and water cooler discussions, we also created "Landing Pages" for each of our work groups. The idea behind the Landing Pages was that the majority of staff wanted an easy way to see the members of each work group and information about the work that other groups were doing. The Core Group also wanted to make information about each of our work groups accessible to those outside the group to save time and increase efficiency for everyone.

2. LegalServer Integration

In addition to contracting with Mark Pace to help us design and develop LAFPoint, we also contracted with PS Technologies, Inc. (PSTI), the developer of LegalServer, to integrate LAFPoint and LegalServer. Because they are the developer, PSTI was the only entity who could provide the programming expertise to properly integrate LegalServer with LAFPoint. PSTI also had worked with Mark Pace on the NJP SharePoint TIG. Although we had to create a new API for LAFPoint that would work with SharePoint 2013 and LAF's instance of LegalServer, the work that PSTI had done on the NJP's SharePoint project informed their work on our project.

The initial concept behind the LAFPoint-LegalServer integration was based on the tagging and taxonomy system that LAF had developed. App. at 130-132. The idea was that staff from all work groups would tag files and upload them to the Central Library in LAFPoint. In the Central Library, users can see the LAFPoint-LegalServer integration and the fields that are shared between LAFPoint and LegalServer: title, name, courts, legal problem code, special legal problem code, and zip code. Our initial tests of the integration feature were successful, and we plan to continue testing the document sharing and search functions in SharePoint and LegalServer with pilot groups. Consistent with our iterative approach to LAFPoint development, we will seek feedback from staff and revise the functionality based on this feedback.

Since our launch, we have integrated LAFPoint and LegalServer in another way as well. In addition to using the tagging system that we developed as part of our original central library design, we also have developed an automated form filler on LAFPoint for a specific category of cases (expungement) that allows users to enter data in LAFPoint and, once submitted, saves the data in both LAFPoint and LegalServer automatically. This is one example of efficiency we have achieved with LAFPoint. We hope to create additional automated forms like the one we have for our expungement work. The automated form

processes in LAFPoint represent a significant source of untapped potential because users do not need "administrative" permissions or special training to create them, and the information is automatically stored in both systems once it is added to LAFPoint.

3. User Testing: Curators Come Back to the LAFPoint Playground

At the same time that our Core Group members were testing our system during the first quarter of 2015, we began recruiting LAFPoint "Curators" from each of our work groups. The Curators would be responsible for identifying and migrating relevant information from our SharePoint 2010 system (with help from the IT staff) and our G Drive to LAFPoint.

We recommended the following guidelines for migrating information from the G Drive, which we included in our initial LAFPoint Governance Policy: 1) migrate the most widely used files first; 2) do not migrate files that are more than five years old; and 3) avoid migrating duplicate files.

We successfully recruited a team of 14 Curators to migrate and maintain the information for each of LAF's work groups. We began holding training sessions for our Curators in May and June 2015. At the Curator Training Sessions, we suggested ways to devise a migration plan and trained Curators how to add links to their work group Landing Pages, create folders on their work group subsite libraries, and migrate files from the G Drive to LAFPoint.

Once the Curators – some of whom were also members of the Core Group – began to focus on the task of migrating files from our SharePoint 2010 system and our G Drive to LAFPoint, it became clear that the Curators and Core Group members believed we would be better served if each work group had not just a Landing Page but also its own subsite within LAFPoint. This was a major shift in our design, coming just three months before our scheduled launch date. This change in design meant that each work group would have its own library, and one result of having separate libraries would be that the taxonomy and tagging system we had developed would be used less frequently, although at the time we couldn't predict the impact precisely.

Even though moving to individual subsites for each of our work groups was a major shift in design coming shortly before our launch date, the proposed change felt right. This was especially true given the iterative approach we had been using from the beginning of our project. The feedback we were getting from the Curators and Core Group members was that each group wanted its own subsite so that they could have more flexibility to store more information, as well as a space designated just for their group. Looking back, it is clear that we made the right decision although there were costs involved in terms of time and resources.

4. Preparation for Launch

Once we decided to set up subsites for each of our work groups, the other preparations for launching LAFPoint fell into place. We held two more training sessions for our Curators in July and August 2015. In September 2015 we held general user training sessions every Tuesday for five weeks in a row. A total of 91 staff members, or approximately 60% of LAF staff, attended the September training sessions. App. at 133-138.

We set October 6, 2015 as our launch date. We started notifying staff two months before, using blog posts on our SharePoint 2010 system, email announcements, and reminders at staff meetings. Each time, we reminded staff that our G Drive would become "read only" and that the Curators had the primary responsibility for migrating data to LAFPoint.

Prior to our launch date, IT staff worked hard to create an LAFPoint wiki that included basic how-to guides for using LAFPoint, and then to migrate files from our SharePoint 2010 site to LAFPoint. We also prepared to make the G Drive "read only" so that staff would still be able to access the files stored on the G Drive but would not be able to save any new or modified files back to the G Drive. We made this decision in order to encourage staff to use LAFPoint for any new files they created.

C. Knowledge Management for All LAF Staff

1. Go-Live

We launched LAFPoint on October 6, 2015. As a small incentive and welcome for staff, we distributed LAFPoint pens and a note to everyone's desks before LAF opened for business that morning. The pens had the slogan, "LAFPoint: Collaboration starts here," which was a play on LAF's slogan, "Equal justice starts here." App. at 139-140.

The LAFPoint "How To Guide" or wiki, was available on day one and staff have been using it ever since. We also set up a Discussion on the LAFPoint Home Page inviting people to share their compliments and concerns regarding LAFPoint. This gave us a way to capture immediate feedback and to share the answers to questions with all staff.

We also continued to hold regular training sessions. We called these sessions "Question and Answer Sessions" (Q&A Sessions). In each session, we included one or two basic how-to demonstrations such as how to share files, upload files, tag and migrate multiple files at a time, etc. The Q&A Sessions took place once each month from November 2015 through February 2016.

We kept a running list of issues to address and troubleshoot during the first six to eight weeks. With persistence from our IT professionals and help from our consultant, we worked through this list before the end of the calendar year.

2. User Adoption and Feedback

Staff "buy-in" for LAFPoint has taken place in fits and starts. Initially, the "early adopters" embraced LAFPoint because they enjoyed learning to use new technology, they wanted to do their job well, or both. Other staff grudgingly used LAFPoint, or used it sporadically. A few staff avoided using LAFPoint's web interface entirely, preferring to work within the traditional folder structure of Windows Explorer (and WebDAV mapped SharePoint drives). However, once staff understood and accepted that we "aren't going back," more people began to make genuine efforts to adopt and use LAFPoint. As the Curators migrated more information to LAFPoint this also helped facilitate further adoption by more users.

We created an introductory training video for LAFPoint in December 2015 which staff found helpful. While some features of LAFPoint have changed since we made this video, we still use it for new staff in the on-boarding process to introduce them to LAFPoint.

Rather than continuing the Q&A Sessions that we had started immediately after we launched LAFPoint, we started a second round of LAFPoint training sessions targeted to each of our five substantive practice groups in March 2016. App. at 141-158. We reached out to the Curators of each practice group beforehand to learn what questions people had so that we could tailor the training to the group. In addition, some of our Curators conducted their own mini-training sessions for using LAFPoint within their work groups.

We also continued to build our How-To Guides and to encourage people to share information with one another about how they were using LAFPoint to do their work. We kept "talking up" LAFPoint as much as we could in our day-to-day work. When we saw staff using the "old" way of sharing information via email, we pointed out that putting the information on LAFPoint and sharing a link would make the information more accessible, faster to find, and easier to update.

We awarded LAFPoint "Helping Hands" (desk gadgets that can hold cell phones or notes) to staff who used LAFPoint to share and collaborate with their colleagues. App. at 159. Ellen Rheaume created a subsite for our veterans' work that includes sample documents, manuals and links to additional information. Miriam Hallabauer organized important information on the Civil Practice & Procedure subsite, and Karen Doran added links to a multitude of resources on our Immigrants & Workers' Rights subsite. Kate Gladson created a subsite for the School Closings Project with information about our advocacy, case work, community outreach, media connections, presentations, research, and links to Chicago Public School guidelines, news stories, and analyses of students affected by school closings in other regions. Kate even added background images of classrooms, to make the site visually interesting. Elizabeth Rosenthal created a signup sheet for our agency-wide Implicit Bias Training, which was an excellent example of how we can use the collaborative features of LAFPoint to allow multiple people to open and edit a document simultaneously.

Based on feedback from staff in August and November 2016, we opened up permission settings on the various work group subsites so that all members of the work group – not just the designated Curator(s) for the group – can modify the subsite. This involved a leap of faith in some ways, but so far no catastrophes have occurred. This is another example of efficiency we've gained through LAFPoint; by opening up permissions, all members of a group can add to and modify their subsite and document library, making both work more like wikis. We also have created a few more How-To Guides and have continued to develop training materials. We have started doing more targeted training sessions that address specific features of LAFPoint and we plan to continue these sessions in the coming months.

We also plan to re-form our LAFPoint Curators group so that more people can be involved in using some of the more advanced features within LAFPoint. We are discussing whether to create a "LAFPoint Curators Wiki" or "Advanced Features Wiki" as part of this effort. We are striving to make improvements to remote access and will continue to refine the search capabilities within LAFPoint. In keeping with our iterative approach, we want those who are eager and willing to be able to explore LAFPoint within practical boundaries that maintain its integrity and security. We're looking forward to the ongoing development of LAFPoint in the months and years ahead.

V.   Factors Affecting Project Accomplishments

There were several factors that enhanced our project. The first factor that enhanced our project was the energy and enthusiasm of the members of the Core Group. Throughout the two years that this group worked together, the Core Group members were dedicated to the project. They provided thoughtful insights and a keen understanding of the workloads placed on their coworkers. Several members went above and beyond their duties to devote personal time to this project on weekends and holidays. Steven Pick, a Core Group member who works in our Children and Families Practice Group, embraced his role as a leader for this project by learning to use LAFPoint, investigating new features of our system, and demonstrating to others how they could use LAFPoint.

The second factor that enhanced our project was the knowledge, dedication and commitment of LAF's IT professionals. Eric Fong and Peter Mural worked hard to anticipate technical issues and, as a result, we have had very few. To date, LAFPoint has not experienced any down time. To help our staff adjust from a system of network files to the web-based system of LAFPoint, Eric wrote a script that automatically creates a shortcut or "favorite" to each user's OneDrive on LAFPoint. Peter educated himself about SharePoint administration and created nearly all of the how-to guides on our LAFPoint wiki. Both Eric and Peter have patiently shared their knowledge with LAF staff, particularly the designated Curators for each work group.

A third factor that enhanced our project was that some of our staff had used the wiki functionality in our SharePoint 2010 system before we moved to LAFPoint. They already knew there is great potential with a tool such as SharePoint and they were eager to embrace opportunities to be creative. Once we rolled out LAFPoint, these individuals used their creative energy to build wikis and to modify their work groups' subsites for the benefit of everyone in their groups. People were excited to have the opportunity to build something that helped their colleagues do their work.

We also confronted several challenges. The first challenge we confronted was the haphazard level of commitment from staff. Some staff were truly and fully committed; other staff were barely interested. Some staff professed their commitment but then failed to follow through. There were several staff who criticized the project in the training sessions held before we launched LAFPoint. This dampened the spirits of those in attendance, including the members of the Core Group, and it required effort to recover.

Another challenge we confronted was difficulty gathering meaningful feedback on the details of the project. Although we solicited and obtained feedback from staff throughout the course of the project – on the taxonomy, wireframe, Central Library, Landing Pages, LegalServer Integration, and more – the feedback we received typically was not very detailed. This was likely due in part to the nature of the project; it is difficult to provide detailed feedback on a new tool when you don't know about everything it can do. But this also was likely due to a lack of interest and commitment on the part of some staff.

The third major challenge we faced was the ingrained cultural use of email. We have made progress; more people search for sample documents before sending an email asking for samples, and more use links to share information rather than email attachments. But this type of change involves changing work habits, so we will need to continue reminding people to break old habits at the same time that we model and reward new habits.

VI.   Strategies to Address Major Challenges

We employed several strategies to address the challenges we confronted. To address the uneven level of commitment from staff, we reached out to individual leaders within our organization to solicit their input and assistance. We identified specific examples of ways we could demonstrate how their group might use LAFPoint in their work.

To address the challenge of gathering meaningful feedback from staff, we created a discussion on the Home Page of LAFPoint right after we rolled out our system. This allowed staff to pose questions and get answers that everyone could see. From the discussion we ultimately devised a FAQ sheet that we still have available on our LAFPoint Wiki today.

On October 27, 2016 we held an "After Action Assessment" (A3) Meeting with our Core Group and our SharePoint consultant, Mark Pace. Our Training Coordinator, Beverly Palmer, facilitated our A3 meeting. Beverly was not part of the Core Group that designed LAFPoint but she did act as an LAFPoint Curator before and after we rolled out LAFPoint.

The main recommendation to come out of our A3 Meeting was that we could have done a better job marketing our new tool. By "marketing" we mean not only identifying the benefits of LAFPoint and communicating those benefits to staff, but also getting specific, detailed commitments from our leadership at LAF to demonstrate ways they would use LAFPoint to do their work. This was not surprising; we knew we had devoted insufficient resources to "selling our system."

Identifying the benefits of LAFPoint and communicating those benefits to staff involves telling a story and showing staff how they can save time and effort. This has happened naturally over time but we would have had a higher rate of user adoption earlier on if we had done a better job at the outset of telling our story to staff.

Getting specific, detailed commitments from LAF leadership to demonstrate ways they would use LAFPoint is more complicated, and necessarily involves several steps. First, one must identify the leaders who will take part and train them to use the new system. These individuals must be willing to devote the necessary time to learn the system and to practice using it. Then, one must identify the tasks, projects, or examples of how the leaders will use the new system in their work. Finally, these leaders must be ready and able to demonstrate how they are using the system when, or soon after, the system is rolled out. For us, this also has happened naturally – but slowly - over time. We likely would have had a higher rate of user adoption earlier on if we had done a better job preparing our leaders and holding them accountable to their commitment.

VII.   Major Lessons and Recommendations

Developing and implementing a SharePoint system is a complex process. In the development phase, it is important to have expertise about the system from a consultant and commitment for the project from within your organization. Your consultant (almost certainly from outside your organization) should be willing to listen and learn about your organization, about your staff, and about how your staff do their work. The commitment from within your organization must come from the committee assigned to the project and from the leadership within your organization. Commitment from leadership is critical because the staff will follow the examples set by their leaders.

The best strategy for implementing a new system such as SharePoint is to have a simple message about the benefits it will provide which you are able to convey easily. The best way to convey the message is person-to-person. That is, have a "sales pitch" that you can repeat in various settings over and over again, and convey the message in personal interactions with other people. The message should be conveyed during training sessions, but also should be conveyed when users ask questions, reach out for technical support, and when they are starting a new project. This strategy will undoubtedly require a fair amount of time and resources, but it is critical for success.

Every change you ask people to make requires effort from them, and the decision each person makes about whether to put in that effort is influenced by those around them. People follow the lead of those they trust when they are deciding whether to try something new. The users who saw firsthand how others were using LAFPoint – especially when those others were their managers – were more likely to take on the task of learning how to use LAFPoint themselves.

Onward

The time, effort, and personal resources I devoted to this project over the course of the last three years have been enormous. The varying responses to LAFPoint from staff have been about what I expected, but not what I'd hoped. However, I am encouraged by the individuals who continue to suggest new ways to use LAFPoint and who are eager to explore new ideas. As demonstrated by the LAFPoint Helping Hands awarded so far, there is no shortage of enthusiasm for using LAFPoint to share information about the work that we do at LAF. I am confident that with ongoing care and development, LAFPoint will be a valuable resource for us for years to come. As one trusted source said about my efforts, "Yet another example of you taking people where they didn't even know they needed to go, but are happy once they get there."

VRH

Appendix

Appendix