



State of Mobile in Law Firms 2017

An analysis of mobile apps in the top 300 US and UK law firms featuring a ranking of the leaders of the mobile revolution in legal



Introduction

Back in 2012, [Kim Tasso](#) published a [short white paper](#) that made waves in the legal industry. She claimed that, despite a few exceptional cases, the professional services industry was mostly missing out on the mobile revolution.

Back then, she quoted research that showed mobile was booming. Now we have the data to confirm that even the experts' predictions fell short. Mobile isn't just big, it's ubiquitous.

On the right we compare the mobile stats that Kim offered in her original piece in 2012 against data from last year. The numbers, as always, speak for themselves.

With the incredible speed at which these numbers have evolved, many would've expected that the legal industry (and all others for that matter) to rush to catch up. But the reality is that that hasn't been the case at most firms.

This report, the first of its kind, sheds new light on the state of mobile in the legal industry, highlighting who is active and who is not, and sorting those who have simply applied easy wins from those who have a fully-fledged mobile strategy.

For those looking at taking their first steps in mobile, it also helps identify where apps can add value and how to start.

 Back then...	 Now...
"More mobile phones in the UK than people"	 1.3 devices per every person in the UK (Flurry by Yahoo! 2016)
"UK shoppers spend £1.3 billion using their mobile phones and tablets"	 UK shoppers spend £21.6 billion using their mobile devices (Center for Retail Research 2016)
"27 per cent of UK adults (about 50 million) now have a smartphone"	 80% of UK adults have a smartphone (Deloitte 2016)
"Globally, more people now have mobile phones than have bank accounts"	 There are 22% more mobile devices in the world than bank accounts (World Bank 2015 and GSMA 2016)

What's in this report?

This report is made of 4 key parts:

- Key learnings from analysing the mobile app activity of 300 law firms

If you only have 5 minutes, make sure you read this section

- A ranking of law firms with active apps on the app stores, based on our unique scoring criteria

See how your firm scores!

- Full analysis of the compounded results

Want the deeper insights? Head to this section

- Recommendations and advice

Our expert advice on how to manage your app store presence and how to make quick wins

Table of Contents

Introduction	2	What kind of apps are most popular with law firms?	20
What's in this report?	3	Event Apps	20
Why such a fuss? - The key reasons why all law firms need mobile apps	5	Reference/Content Marketing Apps	21
Summary of methodology	7	Interactive tools	22
Ranking Table	8	Which app use cases are growing quickly in popularity?	23
Key Learnings	13	Client Support apps	23
Are all the top law firms building apps?	13	Crisis Response apps	24
How recent are these apps?	13	Internal apps	25
US vs UK - who's more prolific?	13	Top tips for law firms wanting to become mobile leaders	26
How good are law firms at maintaining and updating their apps?	14	Ranking Methodology	28
Internal vs external vs client-facing apps	14	Population	28
A note about app popularity	14	Criteria	28
What apps are law firms building?	15	Scoring system	28
		Methodology FAQs	30



Why such a fuss? - The key reasons why all law firms need mobile apps

Recent [research](#) carried out by Adobe proved that mobile apps now:

- drive competitive advantage,
- improve communication, and,
- ensure that organisations are better equipped to manage remotely working employees.

But, beyond the theory and the numerous studies that have shown the advantages of mobile, there are a few practical reasons for law firms to adopt mobile, and apps specifically. Here are the most crucial of them:

It's no longer just a matter of competitive advantage

Not too long ago, a handful of firms jumped on the app space because no one else was there. It was an unmissable opportunity to be seen as innovative, especially by tech-savvy clients. Today, we stand at a crossroads - a quarter of the top firms have adopted apps, so having an app is no longer an innovation in its own right, but many are still to make the leap, and most are still to figure out what makes a great app.

With the cost and time resource involved in apps going down, we can predict with a good amount of certainty that adoption will increase significantly over the next year. Not taking part in the app space could put firms at risk of becoming technology laggards, or worse, missing out on offering added services that clients want and expect from top law firms. On the other hand, offering poorly thought through apps is as likely to undermine rather than enhance a firm's reputation.

Mobile apps offer the highest level of reliability

Mobile apps offer a level of reliability that other channels cannot. They will work anywhere regardless of connectivity, and the update and notification systems are more convenient than on most channels. This is important for law firms because reliability is one of the key values that clients expect from their legal advisors.

A better, immediate experience

In addition to reliability, immediacy is key for law firms and their clients. Especially when it comes to pressing situations. Clients and law firm staff are increasingly becoming more used to immediate results and flawless experiences, and less patient with complex experiences. Apps are much faster than browsers, always available, and carefully curated to be as simple and straightforward in providing answers as possible. For example, it's no wonder that we're seeing a boom in the amount of dawn raid apps, when for clients having an app might be the difference between chaos and coping.

Simply as a channel, these and many other arguments support that law firms should make a conscious effort to 'go mobile'. But as with any channel, success will depend on what firms choose to do with it and how. With this report we sought to answer the question about the role that law firms are playing in mobile app technology and we hope you will also gain a deeper understanding of how you can join in.



SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY



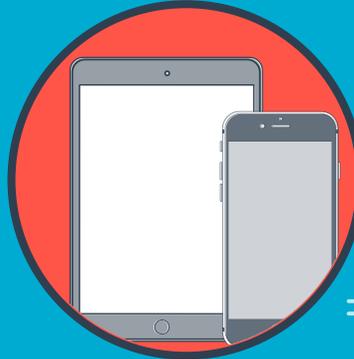
300
TOP LAW FIRMS
BY REVENUE



US & UK
HEADQUARTERED



PUBLIC
APP STORES



TABLETS AND
SMARTPHONES

We didn't consider internal-only, private or employee apps within secure apps or those distributed via a private app store



20-27
FEBRUARY 2017

Were the dates when we conducted the research for this piece

Rankings

 Ranking	 Law Firm	 Recommendations
1	Baker McKenzie	<p>Firms ranked 1-10 have numerous apps covering a variety of areas and purposes. You have established a competitive advantage through your use of apps and are probably concerned about how you can sustain this level of activity and work towards going mobile-first, whilst maintaining some control and central ownership over app projects.</p> <p>Our main recommendation is that you continue to keep an eye out for what other law firms are doing and emerging use cases in order to stay ahead of the competition.</p> <p>If you're in these top rankings, chances are you already have a strategy in place to move towards a mobile-first future and have a pipeline of upcoming apps across your firm. If you do not yet have these fully in place, we would suggest you prioritise establishing them.</p>
2	Eversheds Sutherland	
3	Latham & Watkins	
4	Paul Hastings	
5	Bird & Bird	
6	Mayer Brown	
7	Morrison & Foerster	
8	CMS	
9	Fish & Richardson	
10	DLA Piper	

 Ranking	 Law Firm	 Recommendations
11	Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz P.C. Dentons	<p>If your firm ranks 11 to 17, you have started your mobile journey but have not yet managed to spread the reach of its benefits to multiple departments.</p>
12	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman	<p>You might want to consider the general recommendations below, and you might also want to consider establishing a Mobile Center of Excellence: a central group to keep track of your mobile progress and set a pipeline of future mobile developments. This group could guarantee that your firm creates apps that truly serve your firm's strategic objectives and spreads the benefits beyond just a few areas.</p>
13	Fox Rothschild LLP	
14	Cozen O'Connor	
15	Allen & Overy Herbert Smith Freehills	
16	Hogan Lovells Norton Rose Fulbright Perkins Coie Polsinelli Taylor Wessing	
17	Covington & Burling Fidal Locke Lord Shearman & Sterling	

 Ranking	 Law Firm	 Recommendations
18	Carlton Fields Jordan Burt, LLP King & Wood Mallesons Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton Sidley Austin	<p>If your firm is between ranks 18 and 21 you have taken some steps on your mobile journey, but have not yet embraced mobile extensively.</p> <p>You have two to three apps on the stores but you haven't as yet managed to spread the reach of your mobile strategy to different groups and departments.</p>
19	Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld Simmons & Simmons	<p>Our recommendation is that you study the common app uses in this report and see where you can make some quick wins in the first place. Eventually you will also require a mobile strategy to cater to the individual needs of your departments and group.</p>
20	Baker Botts Hill Dickinson Husch Blackwell LLP Mills & Reeve Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe Weil Gotshal	<p>For the latter, it might also be a good idea to establish a Mobile Center of Excellence.</p>
21	Addleshaw Goddard Alston & Bird Berwin Leighton Paisner Clyde & Co Fisher & Phillips LLP Irwin Mitchell Linklaters Slaughter and May	

 Ranking	 Law Firm	 Recommendations
22	Bracewell LLP Holman Fenwick Willan McDermott Will & Emery	<p>If your firm sits between ranks 22 and 23 your firm built a single app, maybe even a very high quality app, but you stopped there.</p> <p>Apps are often at their best when they serve a single and specific purpose, so even though you've not established a presence for your firm on the app stores, it's important to not stop there and to spread the reach of mobile to as many possible well suited departments and groups within your firm.</p>
23	Cole, Scott & Kissane, P.A. Davis Wright Tremaine LLP Dickinson Wright PLLC Fenwick & West LLP Foley & Lardner Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	<p>Consider the general recommendations below to improve your ranking in the future and make sure you catch up with leading firms in the mobile area.</p>
24	Bryan Cave Cleary Gottlieb Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer Gibson Dunn Jackson Lewis King & Spalding Littler Mendelson Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart Phelps Dunbar LLP Proskauer Rose	<p>Firms in tier 24 have a single app on the app stores: an events app. These apps are quick and easy wins but are no replacement for having apps that serve a more permanent purpose.</p> <p>You've taken the first step into mobile but you can't stop there. Follow our recommendations (on the last section of this report) to establish a real and strong presence in the app stores and take full advantage of the booming mobile channel.</p>

 Ranking	 Law Firm	 Recommendations
	Reed Smith Ropes & Gray White & Case Willkie Farr & Gallagher WilmerHale	
25+	Is your firm not showing up?	<p>In this report we examined 300 top law firms in the US and UK, but the ranking above only includes the 73 who are active in the app space.</p> <p>If your firm isn't showing up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may have apps that are distributed internally, but none through the public app stores. This report didn't consider internal app stores so that might be why you're not listed. • Your firm does have public apps, but it was not included in our list of 300 US and UK law firms by revenue. If you think your firm should be in the list but isn't, please let us know. • Your firm does not have any mobile apps in the app stores. <p>If you would like to get started with apps but don't know where to start, why not request a free consultation with our mobile specialists? We work with many of the top firms in this list and have helped law firms create hundreds of their own mobile apps quickly and cost-effectively.</p>

KEY LEARNINGS

ARE ALL THE TOP LAW FIRMS BUILDING APPS?

✕



Law firms with apps

24.33%
(73 OF 300)

163 UNIQUE APPS ✕
266 TOTAL APPS

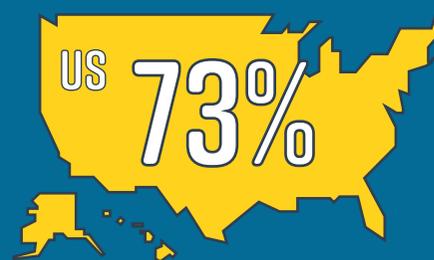
HOW RECENT ARE THESE APPS?

80%

of apps by law firms on the app stores have either been created or updated in either 2016 or 2017.

THAT'S A TOTAL OF 111 APPS

US VS UK - WHO'S MORE PROLIFIC?



73% of the firms with apps are US-headquartered. With US firms now targeting growth in London, UK firms may need to up their game.

How good are law firms at maintaining and updating their apps?

- 42.5% of all unique law firm apps on the app stores (113 of 266) were released in 2016 and 2017.
- 69.5% of all unique law firm apps on the app stores (185 of 266) have created or updated their apps in either 2016 or 2017.
- 30% of all unique law firm apps on the app stores (80 of 266) hadn't been updated since between 2012 and 2015.

Internal vs external vs client-facing apps

- 57.7% of all unique apps (94 of 163) were aimed at an external audience (general public)
- 8% of all unique apps (13 of 163) were aimed exclusively at a client audience
- 19% of all unique apps (31 of 163) were targeted at an internal audience
- 15.34% of all unique apps (25 of 163) catered to multiple audiences, a combination of internal, external and/or clients.

A note about app popularity

Popularity, or the number of downloads that apps accumulate, is not a good indicator of app success in the legal industry. We say this because legal content rarely has a mass audience in the way that other types of content and industries do. As with all B2B marketing, the more focused and useful the content is to the relevant niche, the more likely it is that it will return on investment. Conveniently, that is the very space in which mobile apps operate: in serving a useful, specific purpose to a highly engaged audience.

Having said that, we did have an interest in number of downloads when curating this report. Unfortunately, Apple keeps number of downloads information private so we could not readily analyse it; but Google does provide to the public a range for number of downloads for each app on the Google Play store (Android only). For most Android apps in this report, the most common range of number of downloads was 100 - 500, with one rare exception: Latham & Watkins' Book of Jargon for Mergers & Acquisitions fell in the 1,000 - 5,000 downloads range.

What apps are law firms building?

During our research we came across 10 main types of apps, with some sub-categories.

Event

Event apps are the most common kind of app in the legal industry. To learn more about them, see the section below.

- **Partner conference**

These login-protected apps are created specifically to support a single partners' retreat or conference. They usually contain the agenda, speakers, map, and other common event features.

- **General event**

We placed any event apps that didn't fit the partner conference description in this category. There are several kinds of event apps. Some are public and some are password protected, internal or customer facing. Some firms have a single catch-all events portal that enables the user to put in their details and access all events available in the firm at the time, or all events related to the user's existing profile or granted permissions.

Reference

Reference apps are a means for content marketing primarily, and client support secondarily. They contain useful information about specific topics, and are meant to help clients or the general public navigate a legal topic.

- **Topic Handbook**

A reference app that informs the user about the regulatory aspects of a specific topic. Typically contains several chapters with in-depth information about the topic. Some of these apps are very well adapted to the mobile channel (with short screens, large font, easy navigation, etc.), while some others more resemble ebooks. Examples include Denton's M&A Guide ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and CMS' Contralto (Contract Law app) ([Apple](#), [Android](#))

- **Regional Handbook**

Regional handbooks are similar to topic handbook apps, but they focus on describing a specific region or jurisdiction. Examples include Eversheds Sutherland's Texas openCourts (Apple, Android) and Hogan Lovells' Doing Business in Indonesia ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Hogan Lovells' Doing Business in Indonesia ([Apple](#), [Android](#))

• Publication/Report

These are publications or reports that were directly converted into app format. Examples include Weil's Bankruptcy Blog ([Apple](#)) and Slaughter & May's UK Takeover Code Index ([Apple](#), [Android](#))

• Country Comparison Guide

These are the most common of the reference apps within legal. They help clients (mostly in-house counsel) navigate laws and regulations about a specific topic/industry, across jurisdictions. Some of them contain direct comparison functionality, but many simply allow you to navigate between jurisdictions to see what's done where and how. Examples include Bird & Bird's Digital Marketing Law Guide ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Latham Watkins' AB&C Laws (Anti-bribery, anti-corruption regulation) ([Apple](#))

• Glossary

Glossary apps contain a comprehensive list of jargon words or acronyms and their definitions. They are aimed at users needing to learn more about a specific sector or practice's commonly used terms. Examples include Latham & Watkins' The Book of Jargon® Global Mergers & Acquisitions ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) from their prolific series of The Book of Jargon® apps, and Paul Hastings' Glossary of Oil & Gas Terminology ([Apple](#))

Firm General

Apps in this category are firm promotion apps without a specific topical or regional purpose to serve. They are most commonly used for website-in-an-app style apps or as holders for more apps or document libraries, for example.

• Website-in-an-app

This style of app was a common point of entry into mobile for law firms a few years ago, when responsive websites weren't so common. They contain roughly the same sections, methods of navigation and content as the firm's website. Examples include Sidley Austin's Sidley Mobile ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Alston & Bird's Finance app ([Apple](#), [Android](#)).

• App portal

These apps offer a secure gateway to a firm's multiple apps. Once logged in, the user is normally able to see a list of available apps that they can then download. Examples of these include Shearman & Sterling's Mobile Portal ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Eversheds Mobile ([Apple](#), [Android](#)).

Interactive tool

Interactive tools include fields for user input which result in some kind of an outcome. For more info on these apps, see below.

- **Calculator**

Apps in this category help the user come up with an answer to a specific question by answering some questions. Calculator apps typically involve a mathematical operation or work with numbers in one way or another. An example is Fisher & Phillips' FMLA Leave app ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) which helps employers and managers calculate family and medical leave requests.

- **Checklist**

These apps contain lists of items/tasks. They are useful to keep track of steps in a process or to-do lists for regulation or compliance. Many Crisis Management apps fall in the checklist category, and in fact there's just one so far that doesn't: A&O's LittleRedApp (Employment) ([Apple](#))

- **Questionnaire**

Similarly to calculator apps, these apps ask a series of questions and then provide an answer. The difference is that there is typically no mathematical or numerical operation involved, instead the answers are qualitative in nature. Examples include Paul Hasting's Failure-To-Market Forfeiture Guide ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Allen & Overy's Access Assist app ([Apple](#)).

Client Support

We placed apps in this category when they were password protected and available exclusively to firm clients. For more information on these apps, see below.

- **Client Education**

This subcategory includes all client support apps that serve the main purpose of providing knowledge to clients. An example is Herbert Smith Freehill's KnowledgeSOURCE ([Apple](#), [Android](#)).

Crisis Preparedness and Management

Crisis Preparedness and Management apps are built to provide clients with the reassurance of being no more than two taps away from a legal rapid response team, at any time. They also provide quick-read guidance on how to prevent and prepare for an emergency legal event and enable in-house counsel to inform and prepare the wider company about how to react to an emergency legal event. An example of a crisis preparedness app is Clyde & Co's Clyde Covered app ([Apple](#))

- **Dawn Raid**

The most common kind of crisis preparedness and management apps, Dawn Raid apps help clients with immediate access to emergency information such as emergency contacts in case of an antitrust dawn raid, a quick list of how to react to the raid, and more. Examples include Fidal's Antitrust Alert ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and DLA Piper's Rapid Response ([Apple](#), [Android](#))

Productivity

Apps aimed at improving internal networking and productivity.

- **Staff Directory**

A secure app containing a directory of all of the firm's staff and services. It usually includes people's contact details, search and filtering functionality, and other complementary functionality to help the firm staff connect quickly and securely. These apps are far more commonly distributed via internal app stores or mobile management systems (rather than app stores), but an example on the app store is King & Wood Mallesons' Connect app ([Apple](#)).

- **Internal Apps**

These apps can range from a full mobile intranet to internal support tools for a specific section of the firm. Examples include Fenwick & West's Fenwick Mobile ([Apple](#), [Android](#)) and Skadden's Associate Life ([Apple](#)). For more information on Internal Communications apps, see below.

Entertainment

Only one app exists in this category. A reason entertainment apps might be more scarce is that, like games, they are often expensive to create and maintain, and not easily replicable into more apps that are of further use to the business.

- **Travel Guide**

A single app falls in this category, DLA Piper's Guide To Hong Kong ([Android](#)) - we put it in a category of its own for its uniqueness, but we also anticipate other firms creating more of these hospitality related apps in the future, since they are relatively easy to create and maintain and make a good impression with clients.

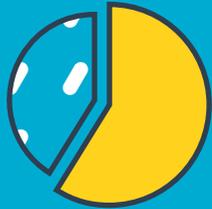
News

Apps in this category exist with the main purpose of providing news and keeping users updated about new regulations, judgments and relevant stories. An example is Weil's Bankruptcy blog ([Apple](#)) and Eversheds Sutherland's ES Tax SALT Shaker ([Apple](#), [Android](#)).

Game

Our research found that games are not common in the legal industry, with just a single game making the list. The reason why games are uncommon is probably the very high costs that are usually associated with building and maintaining games, especially when multiple device and operating system compatibility is required.

KINDS OF APPS



59% EVENTS

59% of law firms with apps (43 of 73) have event apps - the most popular by far. Unsurprisingly, 22 of the 43 apps specifically support partner conferences/retreats



10.9% INTERACTIVE TOOL

10.9% of law firms with apps (8 of 73) have an interactive tool app like a calculator, a checklist or a questionnaire that gives a score or response based on submitted answers



27.4% REFERENCE

27.4% of law firms with apps (20 of 73) have reference (content marketing) apps



9.6% CLIENT SUPPORT

9.6% of law firms with apps (7 of 73) have client support apps



16.4% WEBSITE-IN-AN-APP APPS

16.4% of law firms with apps (12 of 73) have website-in-an-app apps



5.5% INTERNAL

5.5% of law firms with apps (4 of 73) have apps to support internal initiatives or communications on the app stores



13.7% LAW COMPARISON GUIDE

13.7% of law firms with apps (10 of 73) have country comparison guides, or apps that help the user compare laws and regulations across a number jurisdictions



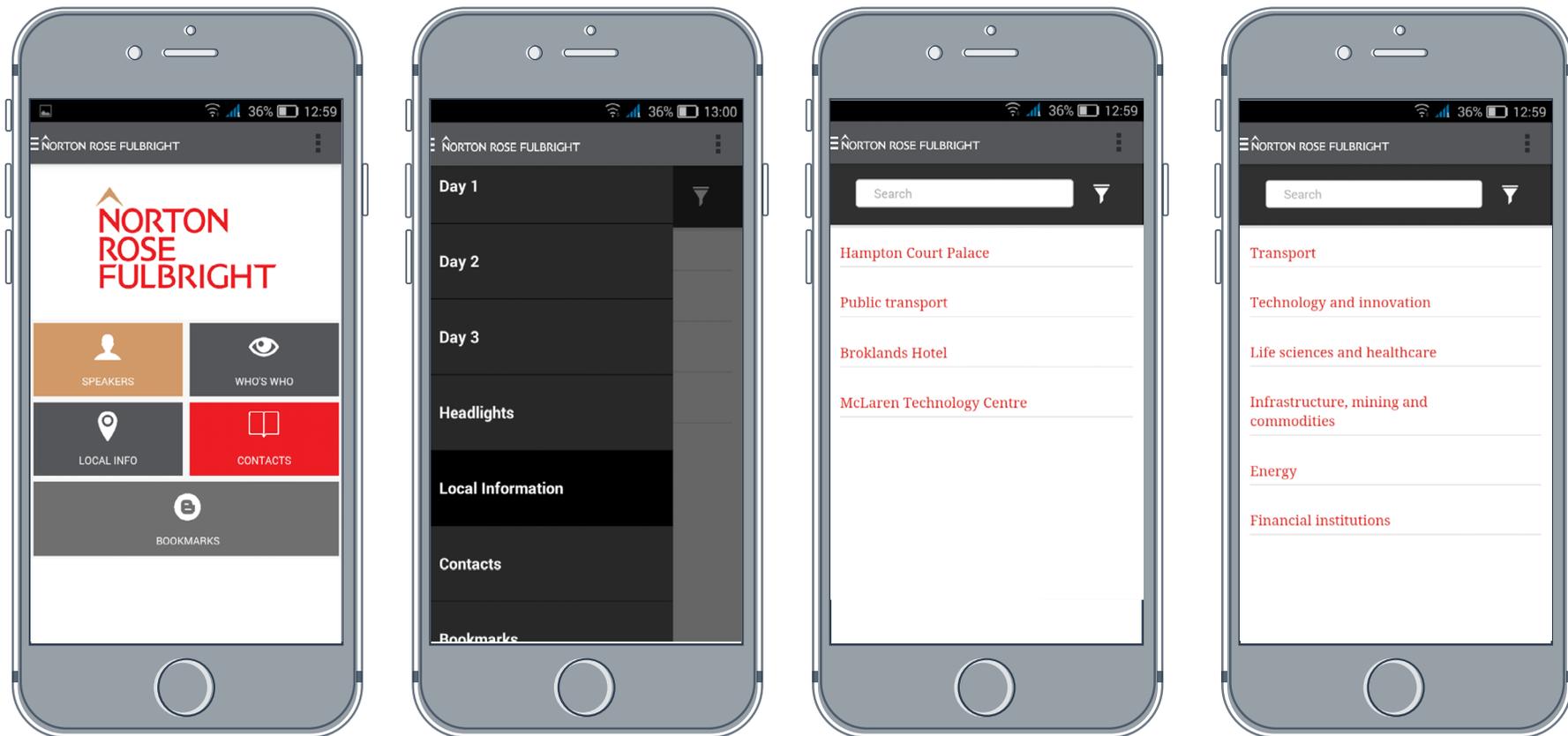
4.1% CRISIS RESPONSE

4.1% of law firms with apps (3 of 73) have crisis response apps (such as Dawn Raid apps)

What kind of apps are most popular with law firms?

Event Apps

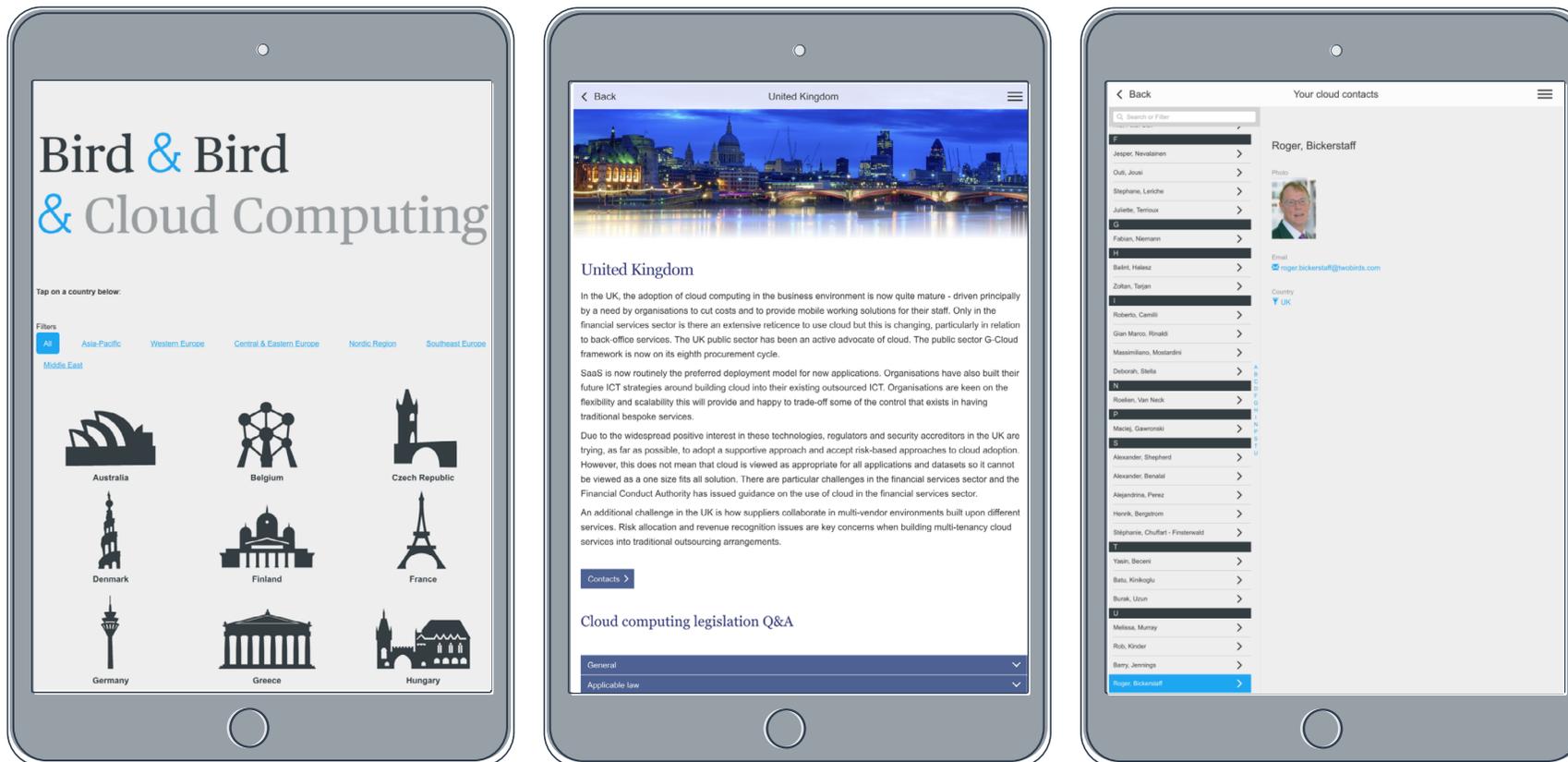
43 of the 73 law firms with apps (59%) have event apps - the most popular by far. Unsurprisingly, 22 of the 43 apps support partner conferences or retreats.



Norton Rose Fulbright's Event Platform helps event attendees find useful details about the events

Reference/Content Marketing Apps

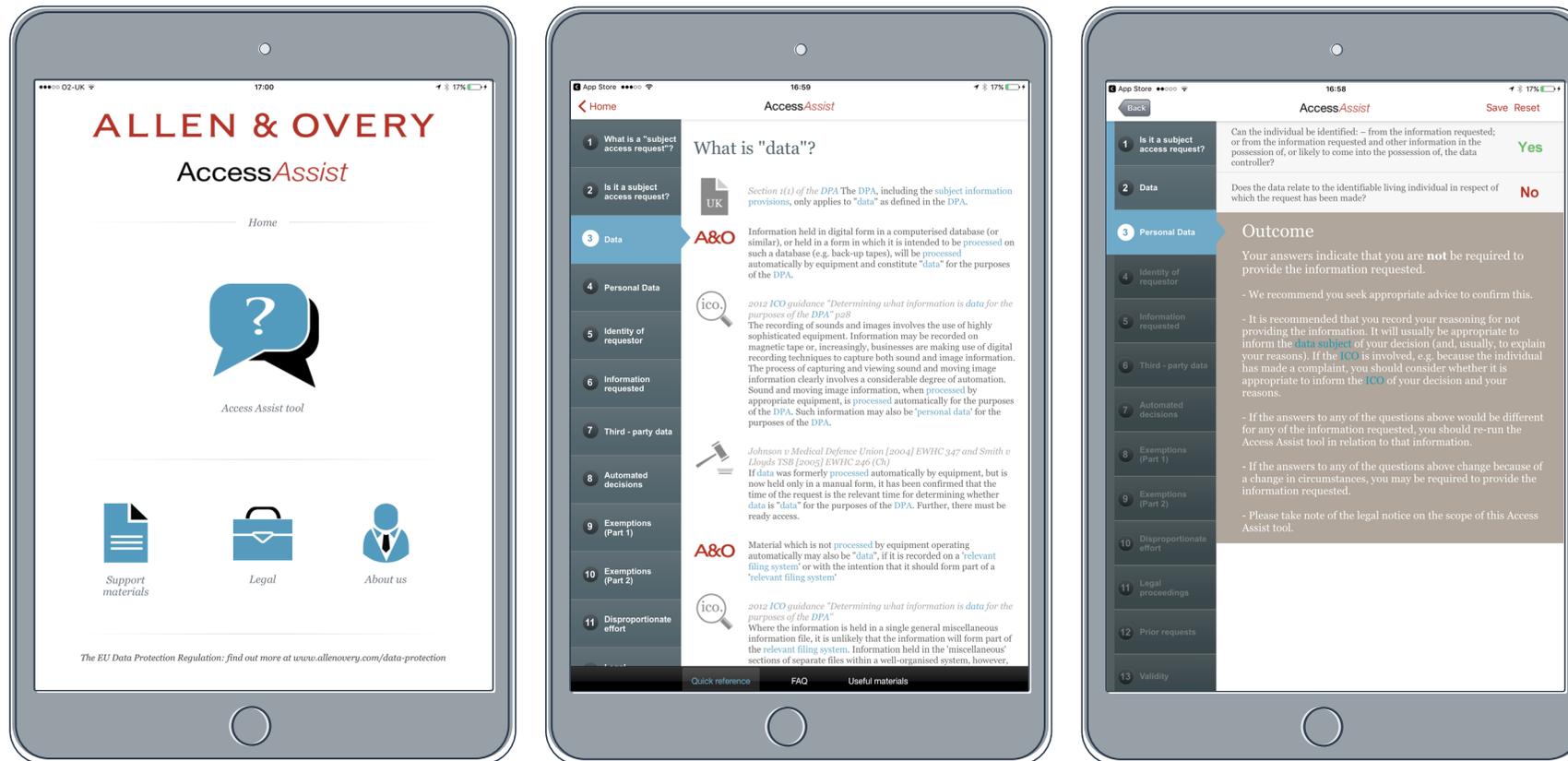
20 of the 73 law firms with apps (27.4%) have reference apps, many of which are country comparison guides, or apps that help users navigate a specific law or legal concept across many different jurisdictions.



Bird & Bird's Cloud Computing Law Guide is used to compare Cloud Computing Laws across 19 jurisdictions and find relevant contacts.

Interactive tools

8 of the 73 law firms with apps (10.9%) have an interactive app such as a calculator, a checklist or a questionnaire that gives a score or response based on user-submitted data.



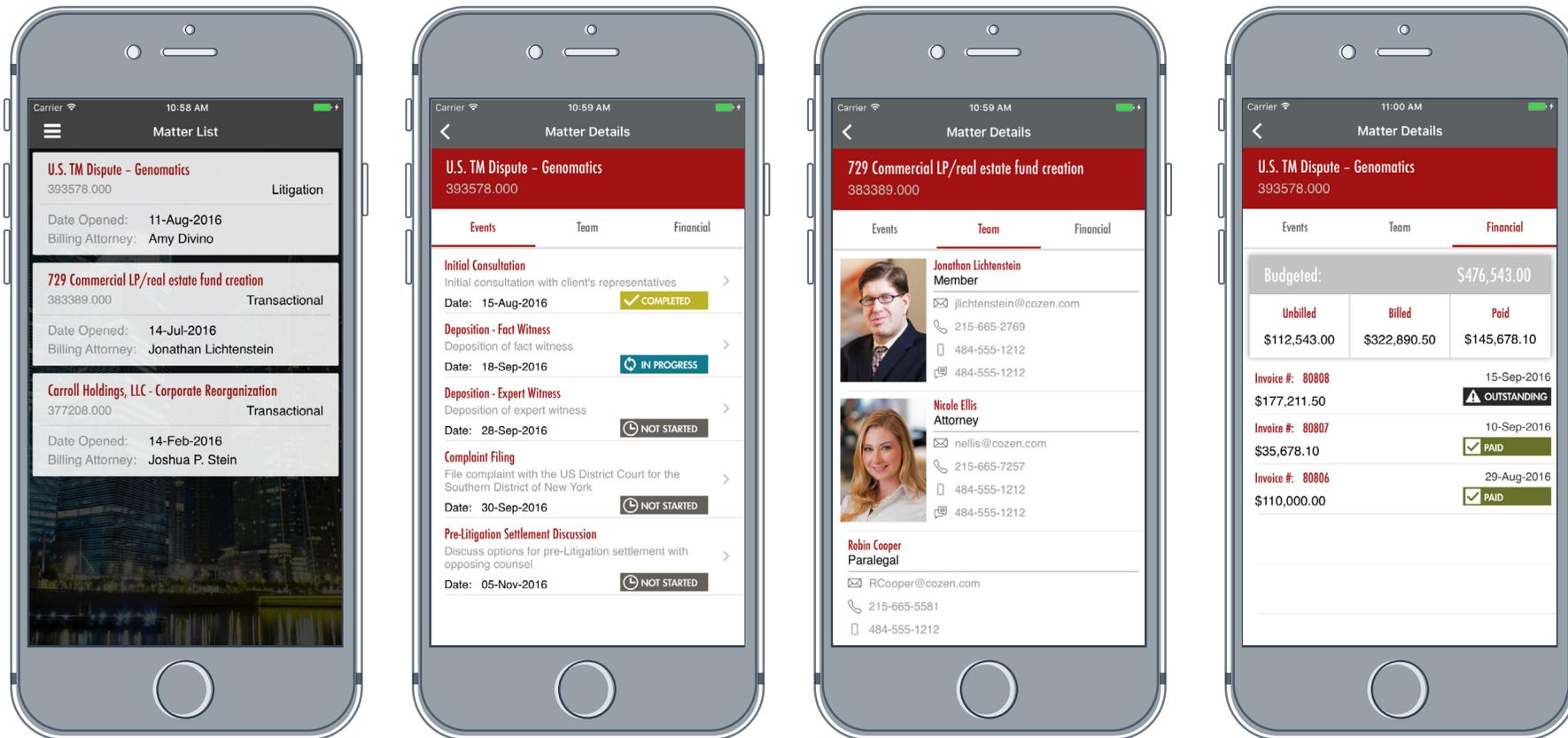
A&O's AccessAssist app helps users assess whether their company needs to respond to a person's request for personal data access, by guiding them through a series of questions with multiple possible outcomes.

Which app use cases are growing quickly in popularity?

Client Support apps

7 of the 73 law firms with apps (9.6%) have client support apps. Some offer all-around client support via a login-only platform. Another common use is providing easy access to CPD learning materials.

We believe there's real potential in client support apps and we expect to see more law firms offering these to Key Account clients, and maybe even all clients, in the near future.



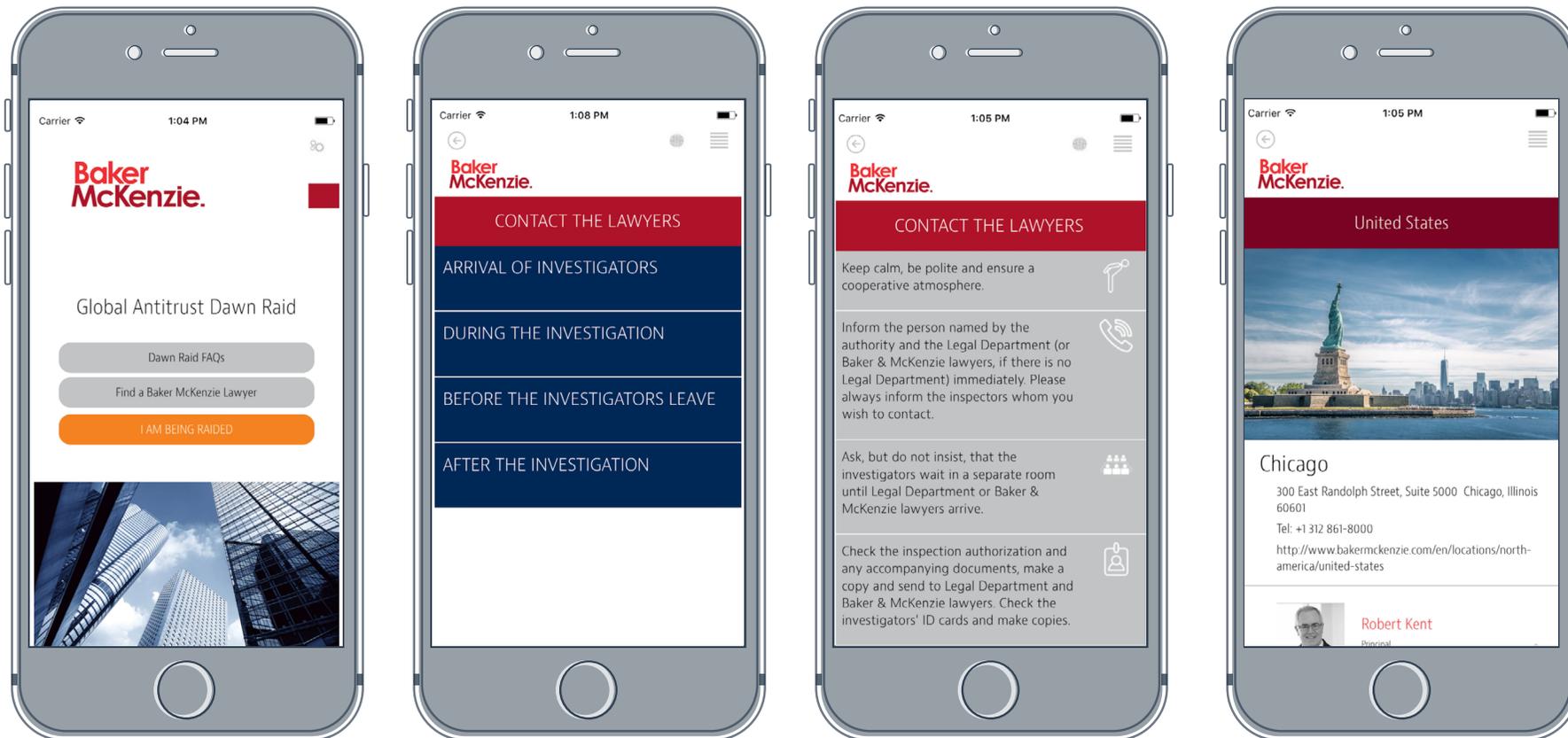
Cozen O'Connor's Legal Tracking (COLT) app helps clients securely track their matters, including important tasks/events, team and financial information.



Crisis Response apps

3 of the 73 law firms in our scope of research have crisis response apps (such as Dawn Raid apps). They are, however, one of the fastest growing use cases we've seen in the previous year. We have spotted there are at least 9 crisis response apps by law firms in general on the app stores.

They have been created by Baker McKenzie, Clyde & Co, DeBrauw Blackstone Westbroek, DLA Piper, Fidal, Herbert Smith Freehills, Holman Fenwick Willan, Houthoff Buruma and Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw. This use case just makes sense for law firms: it uses all the strengths of mobile technology (immediacy, speed, flexibility) and applies them to situations where clients require exactly those things.

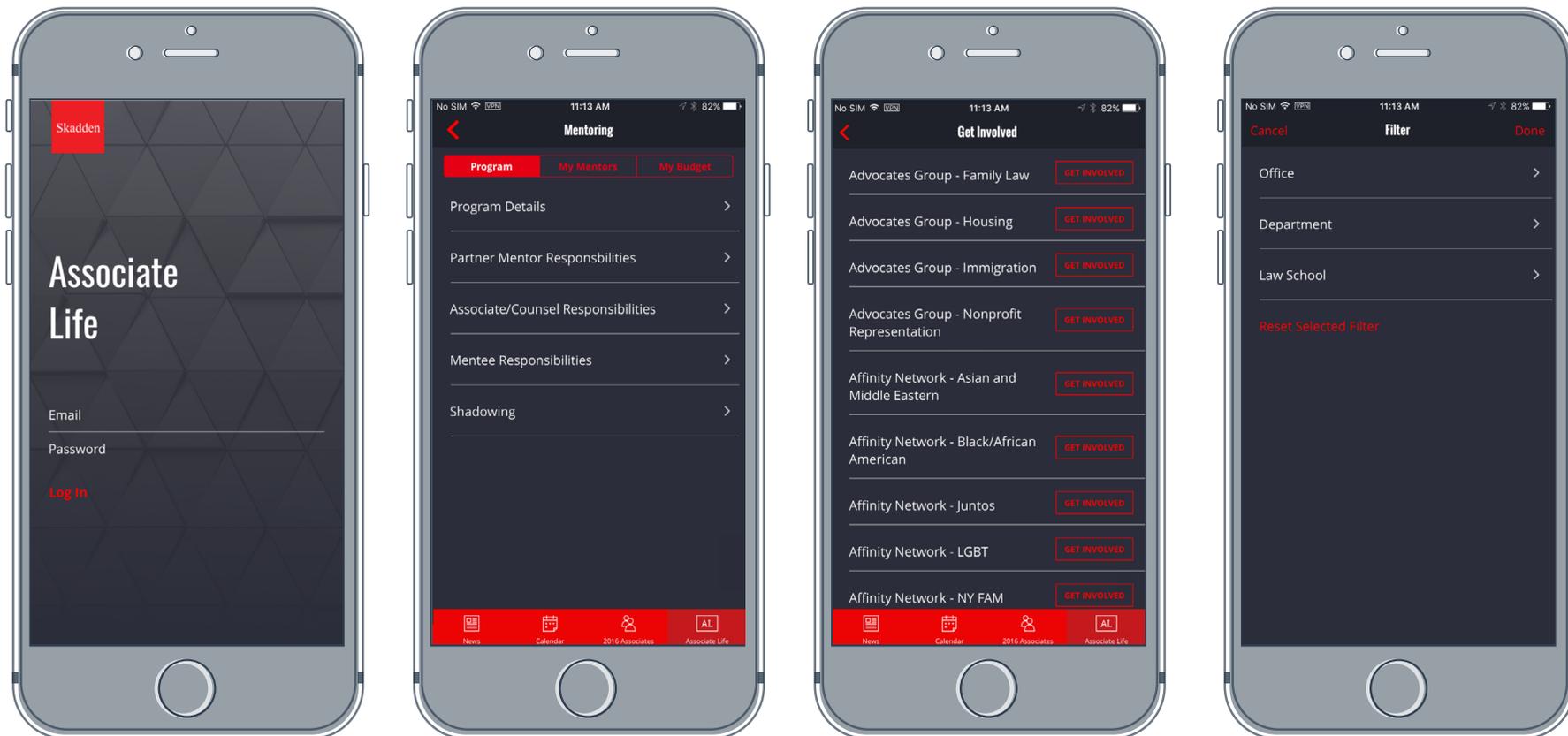


Baker McKenzie's Global Antitrust Dawn Raid App allows users to alert lawyers of an ongoing investigation and guides them through the process for 44 different jurisdictions.

Internal apps

4 of the 73 law firms with apps (5.5%) have apps to support internal communications on the app stores (including one that contains a staff directory app). This report excluded apps distributed by any other means, like mobile management systems, so we can only assume this is the tip of the internal comms apps iceberg.

In fact, law firms who use Fliplet to create apps often create more internal than external apps, and we cannot see this trend waning.



Skadden's Associate Life App helps new associates navigate their mentorship opportunities and network with different groups across the firm.

Top tips for law firms wanting to become mobile leaders

More apps isn't always better, but expertise coverage is.

Make sure your areas of differentiation have a mobile presence, especially if you're able to create single apps to cover your specific niches. One thing we know from years of apps being in the market is that they are most popular and easily adopted when they serve a specific purpose - that's why apps that try to do everything, such as the old website-in-an-app apps, are not really well adopted.

What this means to your firm is that, if you cover a range of niches, it is likely that you will need an ecosystem of mobile apps.

Got a great blog or an excellent email newsletter?

Put them into an app so your audience gets a notification when something new is published in their areas of interest. These days, every firm has a range of blogs and publications that get sent out, but inboxes are ever busier and it gets harder to grab clients' and subscribers' attention. An app will enable the user to get notifications about just the topics they care about, which in turn makes them much more likely to read and respond to them.

This is one of several quick-win ideas in the realm of apps. **You could also use existing guides, PDFs, brochures, event presentations. Content is all around in law firms, and many times it's perfectly suited for a mobile application.**

Apps don't need to be forever.

Keep your app store tidy and remove any apps that are no longer relevant. And while we're on the subject of time limitations, it's important to mention that many apps have a limited lifespan. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that, and most cutting edge companies have apps that expire, such as those related to events, seasonal reports, and similar.

Don't leave internal uses behind.

It's been proven that one of the best investments companies can make to internal productivity and synergy is taking advantage of mobile technologies. 20% of the law firms with apps in this report had internal apps such as staff directories, internal event and meeting apps and project support apps. Consider these in your mobile strategy as well.

Take a central approach to mobile strategy.

Firms with a central mobile strategy generally have better expertise coverage and do more than those that have created some apps but in a more disorganised, department-centric way. Look into Mobile Centres of Excellence to find out more about who should take ownership of mobile initiatives and why.

Don't launch an app unless there's an easy way to keep it up to date.

17% of the apps launched by law firms on the app stores haven't been updated in years (2015 or before). And while some apps are suitable for completely static content, the chances are most of them are not. However you choose to publish your app, make sure you check first what would be the process and resource necessary to push updates through.



Ranking Methodology

Population

This research covered 298 law firms in total, comprised of a list of the Top 100 UK Law Firms and Top 200 US Law Firms (by revenue).

Criteria

Several criteria were considered while conducting this research:

- Number of apps for each firm
- Number of app stores where each firm had an app presence (we considered the Apple, Android and Windows Phone app stores, since they are the largest of all available and cover more than 98% of the mobile app market)
 - Web apps were not included in this report, but some firms use them to reach desktop users and the remaining 2% of the mobile market
- Purpose served by the app (divided in categories)
- Sectors and practices supported

- Whether each app served an internal or external purpose (or a mix of the two)
 - Please note we did not consider private apps in this research, which includes any apps not available on the Apple, Android or Windows app stores

Scoring system

We scored firms according to this scoring system:

- **5 points for every unique app**
Number of apps is one of the lightest scoring criteria in this report. Sheer number is not as important as other criteria such as the purposes the apps serve and which areas of business they support.
- **10 point per unique main category of business purpose and 20 points per unique app sub-category** ([see more about each kind of app in the section above](#))

These two criteria consider the unique number of app business purposes covered by the firm. During our research we found 10 main types of app business purpose and 12 sub-categories, as shown below. Consequently, firms that have created apps to cover a range of different purposes had an advantage, but moreso when they created apps across different subcategories. This is to reflect both the effort and the impact that comes as a consequence of creating a range of apps for different purposes.

- **Event**

- General Event
- Partner Conference

- **Reference**

- Topic Handbook
- Regional Handbook
- Publication/Report
- Country Comparison Guide
- Glossary

- **Firm General**

- Website-in-an-app

- **Interactive Tool**

- Calculator
- Checklist
- Questionnaire

- **Client Support**

- App Portal
- Client Education

- **Crisis Preparedness and Management**

- Dawn Raid

- **Productivity**

- Staff Directory
- Internal Apps

- **Entertainment**

- Travel Guide

- **News**

- **Game**

- **20 points for every sector or practice served by each app**

The range of sectors and practices covered has been given the same scoring weight as the app category criterion, to reward firms who have endeavoured to decentralise the mobile app channel and make it widely available in different departments.

- **5 points for every sub-sector or practice served by the appy**
5 extra points were allocated to apps that support a sub-sector or smaller area of the law, in addition to a main sector. For example, Mergers & Acquisitions within Corporate law. This indicates an ability by the law firm to create topical apps and not just general, wide-ranging (and often less useful) app use cases.
- **10 point was awarded to law firms with apps designed for client support**
Client support apps reflect a considerable effort and strategic activity in firm mobilization, so firms with at least one app in this category received 10 extra points to account for the achievement.
- **1 point was deducted from law firms that had just one app when it was an event app**
Many law firms tied for the last places because they had a single app with a single purpose and to support a single area of the business. We've deducted 1 point from law firms that had just one app when it was an event app because event apps are notorious for being the most ephemeral and wide ranging app category in the industry, thus they should not really reflect as highly as other apps on the mobility score of a firm.

Methodology FAQs

Our firm has apps on the Blackberry store/Amazon Store/ an internal app store. Why did you not take them into consideration?

This report only took into consideration publically available information from the iTunes (Apple/iOS), Google Play (Android) and Windows App stores. For future reports we will get in touch with law firms with a survey of all apps, including those that are internally distributed via Enterprise Mobile Management platforms (like MobileIron).

Our firm has a mobile responsive website, shouldn't that score us some extra points?

Having a mobile website could have been considered a competitive advantage amongst law firms years ago, but more recently this has become a matter of digital expectation. For this reason we didn't award any scoring points to firms with mobile responsive websites.

Our firm's apps are better looking and more user friendly than other firms' apps. Why did you not consider that?

Scoring apps based on user experience and design would've added a subjective element to the scoring. We recognise that law firms have many different kinds of audiences. It would've been impossible to speak to each of them to properly assess overall experience and design for each app.

Ranked? Not ranked? We want to hear from you.

Contact us today with your query or, even better,
book a mobile consultation with one of our specialists
for free advice on the kinds of apps best suited for your firm and
how to make quick wins in the space.

FFliplet is an online platform that empowers anyone in a law firm to create
and launch powerful and beautiful apps for mobile and web using pre-built
templates, with no need to know code. To learn more about us visit fliplet.com



