

Whitepaper for law firms: Directory app

All key information for staff in one place

- Introduction
- Why create a directory app?
- What are common directory solutions and their limitations?
- What are the benefits of a directory app?
- How to create a directory app

Introduction

All organisations require easy access to important information. According to the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), nearly 20 percent of an average staff work week is spent looking for internal information or tracking down colleagues who can help with specific tasks. Implementing a social technology tool such as a directory, could contribute to an increase productivity of staff by 20-25%¹.

Key information all staff need easy access to includes:

1. Colleague contact details - phone, email, messaging
2. Colleague experience, location, skillset, practice area/department, responsibilities
3. Access to company services such as IT support numbers or HR
4. Access to office information so they can find travel, parking and service information

Fliplet offers a compelling solution so you can create a directory that addresses all of your law firm's requirements with a beautiful and powerful app.

In the following whitepaper, we delve into the issues faced by firms with their existing directory and the benefits to using a solution like Fliplet. We've also included a simple 6 step guide on how you can create and deploy a directory app in under 2 weeks.

Why create a directory app?

1. Gain access to the firm directory outside of the office, as most people can only access their firm directory inside their office
2. Have the ability to quickly find the right colleague to refer a customer to (based on experience / recent case work etc)
3. Enable new starters to learn about people within the firm and vice versa
4. Highlight new starters, recent award winners, promotions, birthdays, etc to improve the culture at your firm
5. Put all relevant contact details in one place including local time zones, locations, contact details, job title, department/practice area, line manager, photo, experience and bios
6. Include all staff, not just lawyers to improve communication throughout the firm

What are common directory solutions and their limitations?

Law firms usually have some of the following solutions for access to a directory, however there are a number of limitations or frustrations for users, leading to limited benefits for staff and the firm. We assessed the most common solutions and their limitations.

Printed list given to staff

Limitations:

- Unable to change content after it's been printed, so there is a risk of the material becoming outdated quickly
- Not easily searched and filtered, it can be difficult to quickly find a colleague by department, experience or specialism
- No analytics to understand what information is most valuable
- Expensive to print and ship, plus environmental costs

Excel file accessed by staff

Limitations:

- Can be time consuming to manually change content, therefore the information could become out of date quickly
- Limited access out of the office, restricted to the office or VPN connection
- No analytics detail, no information about how individual users use the directory
- Unlikely to have photos that help people recognise their colleagues and build relationships

Access to an intranet directory page

Limitations:

- Limited reach of directory, only available under office or VPN restrictions
- Poor user experience on mobile if it's not mobile responsive and will be difficult to read on a small screen
- Generally these pages are functional and not necessarily designed with the user experience in mind
- Can have limited search and filter capabilities, making it challenging to find a colleague
- Limited analytics detail, little to no information about how individual users use the directory
- Restrictive framework or template that can limit functionality and access

Access to templated/basic mobile app solution

Limitations:

- Some have a poor UI/UX, making the app difficult to navigate and find the details sought after in a way that suits the firm and the existing way of searching
- Security concerns mean the app may not integrate with Active Directory, meaning manual updates are required
- Not fully customisable resulting in limited information and a standardised format which may not allow for the inclusion of all details the firm wants to include
- Limited functionality e.g. users cannot create favourite lists, directly message colleagues or group people together
- Limited integration capabilities with other apps or legacy software solutions
- Designs and layout are often templated or restrictive, so might not be on brand

“Our directory app has changed the way our firm shares information and has become a vital tool to connect our teams across the world. Having the necessary information and contacts quickly available has made us more efficient and better able to manage many global issues”

What are the benefits of a directory app?

By using a solution like Fliplet to create a directory app, you can expect the following benefits:

Improved usability

- **Powerful search and filter** capabilities straight out of the box. This dynamically adjusts based on the content provided so users can easily find the information or details required. Less time is spent on searching for information
- Always available even when out of the office. Our apps **automatically cache content for reliable offline access**, therefore staff have uninterrupted access to the directory regardless of their internet access
- **Understand the firm’s organization chart**, where an individual fits in, find colleagues in the same department, or those fulfilling similar roles in other departments
- **Include vital office location information**, so new starters and visiting staff can easily find out everything about an office location, maps for how to get there, what to do around the office and the amenities available
- Navigate offices, desks and meeting rooms to connect with colleagues via **interactive floor plans**
- Make business travel arrangement details accessible, using **links to transport and accommodation accounts**, for example, Uber or Marriott Hotels account number, guidelines and the firm admin contact
- Include **facilities management functions** to book rooms, organize catering, audio/visual equipment, etc
- **Easily update the app** to reduce the chance users will have access to out of date information. Individuals can manage their own profiles to keep contact details accurate. Admin rights are available for key staff
- **Integrate with Active Directory** so all basic contact detail is always up to date
- Include an **additional communication channel** by utilising our chat feature, saving time when a quick response is needed.

Improved communication

- **Connect with groups and internal services teams**. Find IT support hotlines, facilities management, HR, switchboard, etc
- Connect with colleagues easily via the **one tap to chat, SMS, email or call**

- **View detailed staff information** to include name, profile picture, title, department, location, experience, skill set, specialisms, recent case examples, CV, LinkedIn profile
- Promote recent promotions, performance recognition, new starters or those celebrating to **improve the culture and engagement within the firm**

Improved analysis

- Understand your users with **data driven analytics** to track screen views, popular profiles, active users, actions completed and more
- **Understand each individual user** to optimize the app. Ensure users get the most out of the app, streamline processes and deliver cost efficiency and time savings

Improved security and distribution

- Fliplet offers **Apple and Android apps for smartphone and tablet**, plus web apps to give access to the directory on any platform
- Conforms to **IT security standards, encrypts data** in transit and rest, offers SSO. IT departments don't need to make any special dispensations for using Fliplet to create a directory app, as it can meet already established security protocols
- **Integrates with SQL databases or APIs** via an easy to configure on-premise tool. No additional tools or systems required for IT teams to acquire, reducing the unknowns and ensuring a smooth transition to using Fliplet apps

“Our previous intranet and knowledge sharing tools were not user-friendly, difficult to update, and overloaded with out-of-date information. Our staff also felt a significant need for a more connected network, since finding the right information was very much dependant on who you knew and your ability to use those relationships and network to get the information you needed. Our directory app has replaced the firm’s intranet directory system and increased team efficiency”

How to create a directory app

Fliplet’s directory app can be integrated, secured, tested and deployed in under 2 weeks and with minimal IT resources.

1. Confirm the location of your directory content.
Fliplet integrates with SQL databases and offers a REST API for uploading content.
2. Integrate Single Sign On with your existing identity provider.
Fliplet supports SAML2, ADFS and oAuth2.

3. Apply your brand colors and fonts to the app.
Fliplet's app templates can be rapidly branded to ensure the app looks like it was built for you. This typically takes about 15 minutes.
4. Deploy your app.
Fliplet apps can be deployed via MDM, private app stores or public apps stores. For internal apps, we recommend MDM or private app store.
5. Analyse your app's usage.
Using Fliplet's built-in analytics you can confirm the app's usage and what users find useful.
6. Training and app optimization.
Fliplet will train your team to modify and optimize the app.

Any questions? Get in touch hello@fliplet.com