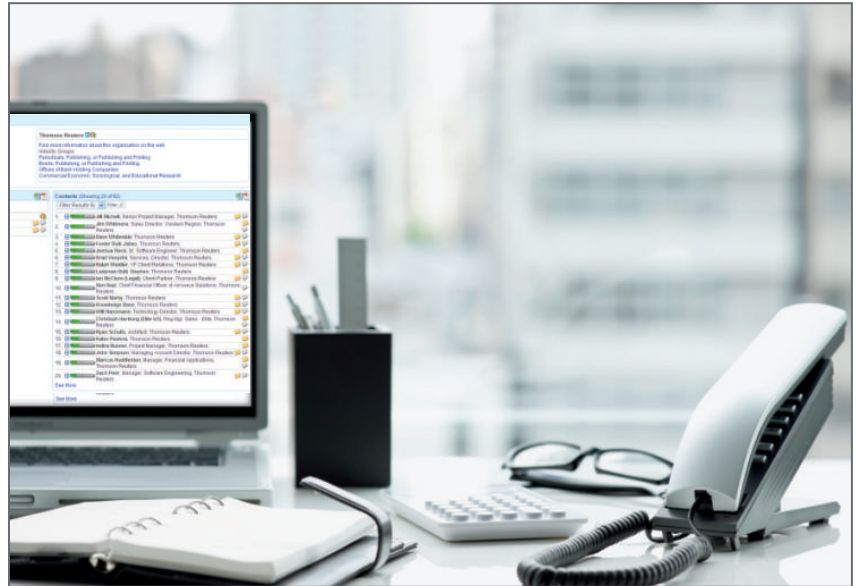


Spanish firm implements ContactNet to unleash the value of its relationship assets

CASE STUDY

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FRANCESC MUÑOZ
Director of IT
Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira



When Spanish law firm Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira decided to implement ContactNet, the Enterprise Relationship Management software from legal technology marketing specialists Hubbard One®, it took a bold step. The decision was based on a vision of what the software could achieve for the firm, which has a worldwide network of offices and an international client base.

Law firms are traditionally conservative purchasers of new technology and tend not to be "early adopters" of new-to-market software. But when Director of IT for Cuatrecasas, Francesc Muñoz, came across references to ContactNet on the Web in 2007, he realised the potential "value add" it could bring to the firm.

"I didn't go looking for the product, but when I did find it, I realised its potential immediately. We are a large firm and we typically open around 7,000 new matters every year. This type of activity creates a lot of email traffic about 'connections'. Lawyers need to know whether there is an existing relationship with a client before they embark on the new piece of work. The question: 'Who in our firm already has contact with a client or prospective client?' is always a vital one to answer."

For a firm the size of Cuatrecasas it is difficult for lawyers to answer that type of query, says Muñoz. "Lawyers email each other and ask one another at the water cooler, but those methods are far from foolproof. We realised that if we could implement a system that could provide this information based on our firm-wide communications, it would cut down our email traffic and eliminate this time-consuming task for lawyers."

Muñoz also realised that ContactNet had great potential as a business development tool. "I could see it could not only solve the 'who knows who' problem, but could also provide us with the opportunity to increase business. By using ContactNet we could see what contacts we had at a target company and leverage this knowledge to help us win work."

ContactNet enables law firms to record the number, reach and strength of its firm-wide relationships by collecting key email traffic data. The system can be integrated into a firm's existing CRM system, address books and other optional databases as required. Crucially, it collects and organises all of a firm's contacts and relationships automatically, removing the need for costly and error-prone data entry practices.

Laura Canudas, Director of Marketing at Cuatrecasas, comments "The best thing about ContactNet is that lawyers do not have to 'use' the system, as it gathers information automatically. Anything that lets a lawyer focus on work, rather than administering a supporting system, is a good thing."

The firm has used ContactNet successfully for two years and is now integrating it with its new SAP CRM system. "ContactNet complements the SAP system by providing more powerful enterprise relationship management functionality."

Since being installed, Muñoz says ContactNet has become a key line of business system for the firm. "We have opened it up to all partners and senior associates – around 300 lawyers in the firm. And it is certainly achieving what we thought it would."

Cuatrecasas uses ContactNet heavily in the pre-sales process. Says Muñoz: "Typically lawyers will use ContactNet prior to a meeting with a prospect firm. They will search to see if there has been any contact between anyone at the firm and the prospect in order to detect opportunities where we could leverage a relationship into new work."

But he says there are also numerous other ways the firm utilises the software. "We ask clients if they need introductions to specific companies or industries, and use ContactNet to discover if we can facilitate an introduction. We also run searches within specific industries to understand the firm's strength in a particular market segment."

He says the total number of users at the firm has steadily risen since it was installed in 2007 and the number of relationships that the firm captures has also increased significantly. "Measured over a 16-month period of use, we have lifted the number of our relationships from 840,000 to over 1 million."

Muñoz identifies two key benefits of the system for the firm: "It is definitely a time-saver for lawyers. At the touch of a button they can quantify the number of contacts the firm may have with any particular target, at what level they exist, and with a weekly updated score attached to each contact, key relationships can be identified very easily based on strength of that relationship. Previously they may have had to spend half a day asking people to find out the same information."

Secondly, by making relationship information more easily visible to key decision-makers, he says greater importance is attached to the value of those relationships. "That is extremely important, particularly in a poor performing economy when work does not simply walk in off the street. A big part of our sales process is relationship based. The product we offer is our legal expertise and the best way to sell that product is by leveraging the people we know and the relationships we have formed."

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Privacy legislation in Europe is very stringent, but Muñoz says ContactNet is designed to meet tough European personal data regulations. "The system has advanced privacy configurations that allow firms to tread the line between data privacy and information sharing. The actual content of emails is completely off limits, and if someone does not want particular contact information to be gathered and made available to others, that can also be accommodated."

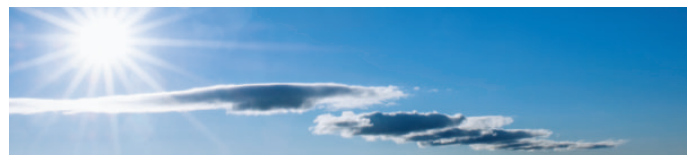
Muñoz says he would recommend the system to any firm that bases its sales process on the power of "word-of-mouth" marketing. "When I first read about ContactNet I thought it was a terrific concept, and in practice that has proven the case. By automating email data collection, it helps improve our business development processes, equipping us with a key sales asset – a gauge by which we can measure the strength of our connections in the wider market."

ABOUT CUATRECASAS

With almost a century of professional practice and an excellent reputation, Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira is a leading international benchmark for all legal issues in Spain and Portugal.

Founded by Emilio Cuatrecasas Buquet in 1917, the firm consolidated its Iberian presence through a merger with the Portuguese firm Gonçalves Pereira, Castelo Branco in 2003. It currently has offices in 22 cities in Europe, America, Asia, and North Africa, and is noted for its legal services on the Iberian Peninsula and in Latin America.

Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira provides legal advice on all areas of business law, and stands out for its commitment to helping companies develop their activities and defend their interests. Many of its leading clients have been with the firm for decades.



ABOUT HUBBARD ONE

Hubbard One® is the premier provider of marketing and business development solutions for law firms and professional services organisations. By combining industry expertise with innovative technology, Hubbard One delivers a comprehensive set of solutions, including Web communications, relationship and contact management, market analytics, experience management, proposal generation and SharePoint-powered intranets.

Today, more than 300 organisations around the globe leverage Hubbard One's solutions for client and business development. For more information, please visit hubbardone.co.uk/relationshipmanagement, or call +44 (0) 20 7369 7360.

