

Who owns the digital workplace?

Ownership in a Big Law digital workplace is not a single-team decision. It is a layered model. Here is how it works and who does what.

Across nearly every Big Law firm we work with, ownership follows the same pattern. IT owns the infrastructure. Knowledge Management owns the experience. Practice groups own their content. Compliance owns the guardrails. The model holds because each group operates within a clearly defined domain, without needing to negotiate every decision with the others.

The complexity starts where the layers overlap. A small number of objects, the attorney directory most prominently, draw on data and decisions from multiple teams simultaneously. These shared objects are where ownership disputes concentrate, where launches stall, and where governance needs the most deliberate design. **Knowing where clean ownership ends and shared ownership begins is the difference between a digital workplace that sustains itself and one that quietly degrades.**

The four-layer ownership model



The shared objects problem

Three objects sit across all layers simultaneously: the attorney directory, search taxonomy, and DMS integrations. Because no single layer owns them, they become the most contested parts of any launch.

Each needs a named lead and an agreed conflict process. **Committee ownership is not ownership. Resolve these before launch, not after.**

RACI: who owns what across ten capabilities

How to read: A/R Accountable and Responsible A Accountable R Responsible C Consulted I Informed

Capability	IT	KM / Innov.	Practices	InfoSec / Rec.	Mktg / BD	HR	Finance
Site provisioning and lifecycle	A/R	C	I	C			
IA, navigation and search	C	A/R	C	C	C		
Content publishing and maintenance		A	R	C	C		
Attorney directory	R	A/R	C	C	R	R	
Matter and DMS integrations	A/R	C	C	C			C
Security and ethical wall policies	R	C		A			
Retention and records governance	R	C	I	A		C	
Publisher training and enablement	R	A/R	C	C		C	
Intranet analytics and adoption	C	A/R	C	I			
Financial and BI dashboards	C	I	I	C			A/R

Two patterns stand out.

- 01** **KM and IT alignment is the highest-leverage governance decision.**
KM owns what attorneys experience. IT owns the environment it runs on. Misalignment between them is the most common and most preventable source of failure.
- 02** **The attorney directory is the only row where four teams share responsibility simultaneously.**
It needs its own governance conversation before anything else is finalized.

Analytics has been separated into two rows intentionally. Intranet analytics covers adoption, search performance, and content health, all KM capabilities. Financial and BI dashboards surfaced on the intranet are a Finance capability. They have different owners, different data sources, and different governance requirements.

The structure is consistent.

The execution is where firms diverge.

The firms that launch and sustain effective digital workplaces are not the ones with the largest teams or the most sophisticated technology. They are the ones that defined ownership clearly before anything was built, treated the shared objects as governance problems rather than IT problems, and aligned KM and IT on the same side of the table before the first decision was made.

Infodash

Infodash is purpose-built for this governance model. An M365-native layer that gives IT, KM, and Compliance distinct control surfaces, without requiring a rebuild of your core stack. If you are working through an intranet governance or platform decision, we would welcome the conversation.

Contact us at getinfodash.com