



Bird & Bird & First for Disputes

Effective Management of Complex Disputes

The control and budgeting of costs
Online access to information and reporting
Data handling and disclosure

Managing complex disputes

The ability to manage complex disputes in an efficient and cost effective manner is a challenge which has become even greater with the substantial increase in electronic data. Even cases of a moderate size can generate documents in the tens of thousands and in large cases documents can run into the millions with a draining impact on the legal budget. The need for effective project management is greater than ever.

At Bird & Bird we have considerable experience of handling large complex disputes and we have developed tools that maximise efficient, transparent and cost effective case management, in particular in relation to:

- The control and budgeting of costs
- Client access to information and reporting
- Data handling and disclosure



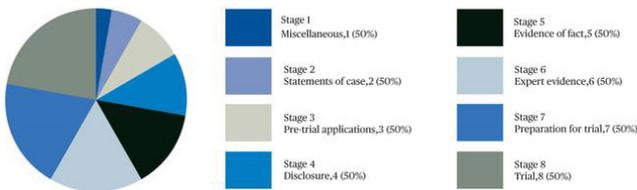
Control and budgeting of costs

You want certainty and transparency regarding the costs that you will incur especially in complex disputes where costs can quickly escalate and the ability to carry out a cost-benefit analysis at any point in time is crucial.

We have invested in an innovative system to forecast and monitor costs. The key advantages of our costs management system are:

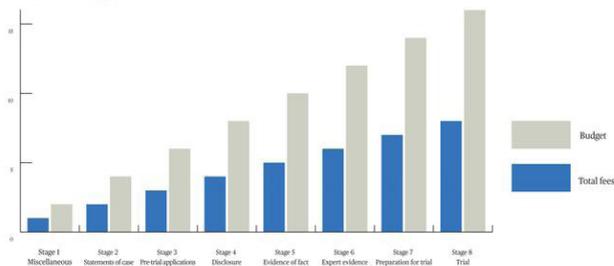
- **Accurate budgeting:** We prepare a detailed breakdown of the work to be undertaken at key stages which enables us to forecast actual costs more accurately.

Budget remaining



- **Transparency:** We share with you our detailed budgeting information at the outset so that we both have a clear understanding of what is included in the budget and where there is a risk of additional costs being incurred.
- **Monitoring:** The pricing and reporting system is fully integrated with our on-line time recording. This means that we can produce a detailed comparison of actual fees against the agreed budget at any time that you need. Alerts can be generated when a threshold cost is reached - either for an entire matter or a specific phase.
- **No surprises:** the level of detail and transparency in our budgeting process, combined with the ability to monitor actual costs against budget in real time, ensure that the cost implications of out-of-scope work or budget overruns can be addressed at an early stage.
- **Cost benefit analysis:** Our system enables us to assist you in achieving greater certainty in the cost-benefit analysis that should regularly be undertaken in deciding whether to press on with the dispute or compromise. We are able to estimate where “hot spots” of activity are likely to occur and therefore to assess better the value of any settlement proposal. We can also provide cost forecast charts which will enable you to predict, manage and control monthly legal spend.

Total fees vs budget



Document management cost

Document management, including the burdens of e-disclosure, is likely to be a significant cost element in any dispute. These include the fees charged by external litigation support providers for the processing and hosting of data.

To help manage these costs we offer an in-house document processing and hosting service which is priced in a very competitive and transparent way compared to similar services provided by external providers.

We have a one-off processing fee based on the number of documents that are loaded into our review tool, Relativity, together with a monthly hosting fee again based on the documents loaded onto Relativity.

We consider that the document based charging approach is a fairer basis on which to price rather than the per gigabyte basis favoured by external litigation support providers. Further details of pricing are available on request.

There are also features of Relativity that help with costs management. These include the ability to generate forecasts and to track the time and cost of the review as well as to produce graphical reports of key review metrics.

We have a one-off processing fee based on the number of documents that are loaded

The document based charging approach is a fairer basis on which to price

Innovative pricing

We work with our clients to develop cost effective fee solutions that can provide predictability and control. The best approach will vary from case to case and we will be happy to discuss with you the various options at the outset of a case.

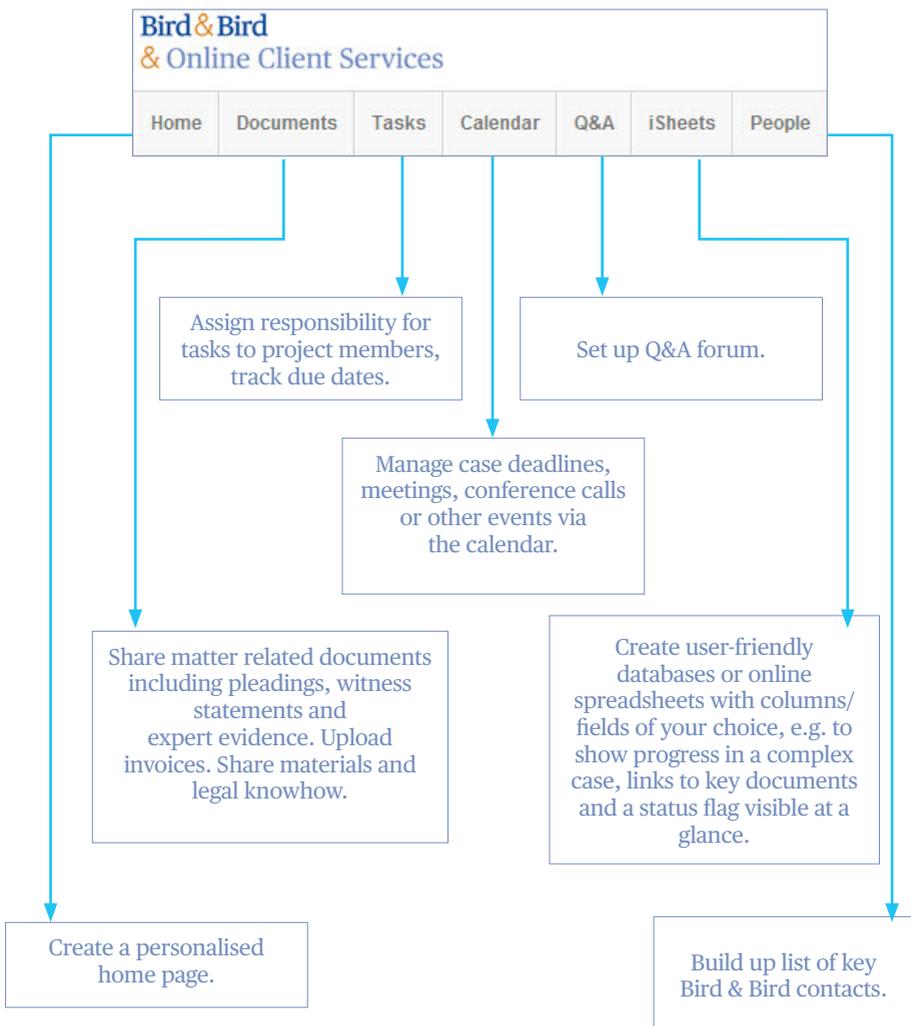
Alternative funding

Another important consideration in the effective management of large-scale disputes is the availability of alternative funding and other strategies to cap costs, including legal expenses insurance. Our close contacts with third party funders and insurers gives us a real understanding of the alternative funding market in the UK and internationally, and we have been involved in a number of high profile cases requiring complex funding arrangements.

Client access to information and reporting

To take assurance from our work, you need to know how and what we are doing, who is doing it and why. We will make sure that you have visibility on roles, responsibilities, deadlines and billing with clear reporting so that you really understand what is going on.

One of the key tools that we use to facilitate these objectives is our [Online Client Services \(OCS\)](#) site, a secure, password protected workspace that we set up and manage to support both specific matters and our overall client relationship.



Key benefits include:

- Secure access to documents with encryption
- Online calendar to track key dates and events
- Group tasks list to enable effective project management
- Access to Bird & Bird primary contacts details
- Access to key case documents including statements of case, witness statements and expert reports
- Access to Bird & Bird knowhow in an easily searchable on-line format

We will work with you to tailor your portal to meet your specific needs.

Data handling and disclosure

Effective analysis of documents is at the heart of the contentious lawyers' skillset.

At Bird & Bird we have been using technology to help achieve this goal since 1989. We are in the vanguard of international law firms rising to the challenge of e-disclosure using smart solutions to deal with the ever increasing amounts of electronic data.

We recognise that you expect us to handle, review and analyse electronic documents efficiently and cost effectively as an integral part of our service.

A key tool in our armoury is Relativity, a state of the art electronic review tool, which speeds up the management and review of documents. In particular, Relativity's advanced computer assisted review features help us to discard irrelevant material and to focus the review on the most relevant materials.



With Relativity we can run document reviews faster, smarter and more reliably, delivering tangible added value to you.

Relativity is securely hosted in London and operated by a dedicated support manager. Our manager is able to load data onto Relativity without the need for third party support (and cost), as well as to undertake the tasks necessary to reduce the documents for review, including eliminating duplicates and running date range, key word and other searches. Access to Relativity can be provided to the client and third parties such as barristers and experts as necessary.

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