CMS checklist for community legal services

This checklist outlines key considerations for centres when selecting a CMS tool, including problem definition, functionality, integration, costs, and vendor capacity.

Problem definition

Different centres will have different priorities and requirements for what they need a CMS tool to do. Some key guiding questions for centres are:

- **What is your overall vision for the CMS tool?**
- **What are your business objectives?**
- **What key outcomes does your chosen CMS tool need to achieve?**

Your answers to these questions will inform what functionality is required.

Functionality

The table below provides a sample of the functionality centres may require. It is not comprehensive. It is important that each centre scope out the functionality that meets its unique needs.

Client management	*Client details at a glance; Alerts for high-risk clients; Other parties; Conflict checking; Search; Handle ambiguous client data; Handle duplicates; See all matters and services for a client; Client portal*
	• An Built conflict check exists with PDF or Excel or an on-screen report. Wildcard searching is supported • Duplicate names are detected on data entry, and the user must accept duplicates by ticking a box. Duplication detection also exists on phone numbers and email addresses but only as a prompt, not a demand to tick a box. • A Single Contact record exists for each contact; this contact will then show their ROLE involved with the organisation, or Client. The contact record will show TAGS, which are configurable by the organisation to represent Alerts or other information, i.e. don't call, call after 10am etc. • Each contact card can support a Preferred name/Alias, and the system can be configured globally to show names in different formats. • Custom list views can be created on contact records to show any data held against the contact. This can also searched within/filtered if required.
Matter and Service management	*Matter at a glance – see all services provided as part of a matter; Reminders and alerts; File notes and tasks; Limitation dates; Time tracking; Assign a matter; Search for a service or matter; Review matters for risk management; Archive a matter; Capture outcomes*
	• All services are recorded in a Matter/Case file. You can have 1 or unlimited services per matter/case. • Reminders and alerts can be set as 'alerts' or by the use of tasks which you can also set alerts upon. • File notes can be captured on the matter/case. • Any number of custom fields can be created on a service or a case or a contact record. These can be dates, text, tick boxes, calendar dates or dropdown boxes. These will need to be configured to suit the data required to be captured. These fields are unique per case/matter type so they can be difference across different legal processes if required. Ie Crime has charge dates, Fine matters have date of fine etc
Referral management	*Referral to; Referral from; Track referrals; Internal referrals*

	• Yes this is trackable.
	• You can also setup email templates that will merge data from the case/matter and or contact so you can send key data as part of the referral email.
Making appointments	*Create and view appointments; View calendar; Send reminders and follow-ups; Link to Outlook*
	• Yes, you can link Office 365 or Google calendars to Actionstep per user.
	• You Can view product appointments, and you can set up reminders per appointment.
	• Calendar items are synced to google or office 365 and is two way sync.
	• You can also create list views of appointments, i.e. show all appointments this week, etc.
Document management	*Where documents can be uploaded or linked to; Ease of managing documents across a remote workforce; Drag and drop; Create subfolders; Tag documents; Preview documents within system; Email chain kept with the matter; Limit access to documents; Version control*
	• Each Case/Matter supports unlimited documents to be stored.
	• You can create default set of folders per matter/case
	• Users can create additional folders
	• Folders can include subfolders
	• Documents can be tagged with custom tags
	• Documents can be previewed [new feature being released currently]
	• Documents are available in folder browser mode or chronological view.
	• Emails saved to the matter/case are stored within such.
	• Documents are automatically versions when saving a user can download a previous version if needed. Latest version is the active version.
	• Documents folders if created as default folders can be secured by the administrator and any item subsequently saved will inherit such security.
	• Integrations exist for iManage and NetDocuments additional document management systems are in

	use.
Template management	*Create own templates or bring templates in from another source; Field pre-population for defined fields*
	- Templates are available for both Emails and Documents - Templates may be brought into Actionstep - Templates can have Actionstep coding applied to merge case data or contact data into the template. This is optional, you can save templates that don't have merge codes contained if required. - Merge fields for template pre-population is available and provides simpler insert value type merge fields or can be dynamic such as IF statements to conditionally change the document/email content based on the condition.
Staff management	*Review staff assigned cases; Workload management; Staff rostering*
	- Each organisation can create custom list views that are tailored to suit their requirements. This can be simply a list view of open cases/matters or just cases/matters assigned to an individual. - These list views can be access controlled by permissions if required. This is so each user has a tailored experience of what list views are visible and of course what data they show - Staff rostering is not a feature of Actionstep
User management	*Creating and modifying users; Password management; User permissions*
	- The organisation is provided 'Admin' rights that allow them to manager users (add/remove). Passwords are set by the individual user and resets are handled in the common 'reset password via email' approach. - Users are allocated to groups called system roles. Each system role can have its own set of permissions as required.
User experience	*How easy is it to use the system? To enter clients, matters and services?*
	Very easy. The system is intuitive and most cases self-explanatory. Training is provided to help ensure that data is captured the correct way in particular to

	meet the requirements of CLCAU

Reporting	*Dashboards; Create reports; Export data to CSV; XML and Excel; Graphs and charts in reports; Limit access to a report; Publish a report in Word or PDF*
	• Use of the custom list views is available to create reports which are subject to permissions the data can then be exported to Excel for further analysis and reporting. • Actionstep hosts a 'reporting' database instance, which centres can connect to with Power BI. • Actionstep has over 130 inbuilt reports that permissions can control. Note majority of these are related to financial reports which most centres will not require. These reports can be saved as PDF.
Appointment management	*SMS reminders; Calendar; Synchronised with 365; Show up in matter if linked; List views of appointments*
	• Actionstep provides inbuilt SMS features to allow sending of SMS which is saved the file. This is outbound only. • Actionstep also supports reminders via SMS for Appointments. • Via the integration of Konekta Email-to-SMS gateway more capability is unlocked to have Actionstep send emails based on templates, then the Konekta Gateway sends the email as a SMS. This also supports response SMS which are then converted back to Email for filing on the matter/case. This service is free, but is charged per message sent. • Calendars are linked to Office 365 or Google and are a complete two way sync. • Can view a list of appointments, and custom creation of lists can be created on appointments to surface the required data regarding the appointment. • If a matter is linked to an appointment then you will see the appointment list inside the matter/case as well as see a list of recent appointments on the home page dashboard of the matter/case itself.
Messaging	*Send emails and SMS from CMS; Make phone calls; Track messaging*
	• Yes you can send emails using the users outlook account or a generic account. Emails are then saved on the case/matter but are sent via the office

	365/Gmail integration.
	• SMS is available as mentioned previously
	• Phone calls can be recorded as a reference, i.e. the time of call, who called who, the result of the call. This is not integrated with a phone system but is available to make a record on file that a call was made. There is a company called VXT that provides phone calls that does link to Actionstep and creates file notes and time records based on telephony activity.
Security	*Where is the system hosted? Internal firewalls?*
	• Actionstep is hosted in Australia
	• Actionstep uses Amazon Web Services (AWS) for its cloud infrastructure and security.
	• Password policies can be created per group of users for password enforcement and complexity as well as restricting the time of day, day of the week and also by recognised networks (IP address) if required.
	• Further security detail is available as s dedicated collateral PDF on request.
Offline/Mobile phone version	*Is it possible to enter data offline? Is a mobile phone/table version available?*
	• No Actionstep is a cloud-based system that is available online. A mobile hotspot or iPad with Wi-Fi is more than acceptable to access
	• Dedicated Mobile device version is available for Android and Apple. This provides limited features due to the screen real estate available but is feature-rich and functional.
	• There is no dedicated tablet app, as this is not required. The full application works perfectly on a tablet, and CLCs often have leveraged this to use Actionstep in the community away from the office.
CLE, stakeholder engagement and law reform	*Does it support recording data about CLE sessions, stakeholder engagement and law reform activity?*
	• Yes. Just like a legal process is referred to as an 'Action Type' (called Matter or Case). You can create unlimited other business processes as Action types. Ie CLE, Stakeholder engagement or even other business processes. The system is very flexible.

Integration

Integration with MS Office	*I.e., Email appointments, reminders, and emails*
	• Yes Actionstep integrates with Office Suite. Both Desktop versions and online versions.
Integration to CLASS	*Can reporting data be automatically and securely transferred to CLASS?*
	• Konekta, a 3rd-party company that builds integrations on Actionstep, provides data sync to CLCAU. This is based on the explicit requirements from CLCAU of required data. • Each CLC must purchase the annually charged subscription from Konekta that provides a 'Template' to install into Actionstep that installs the required Case types and data fields expected by CLCAU. Centres often modify and expand this template to allow the capture of additional information that is not sent to CLCAU. Only the data requested by CLCAU via a published Document called 'Developer guidelines' is sent to CLCAU.
Integration to DEX[1]	*Can data be automatically and securely transferred from the CMS to DEX?*

	• WorkCloud has built support on Actionstep for DEX. (additional charges apply for DEX Support)
	
	• This product is called DEXXML and includes.
	    o A Template to install into Actionstep that creates required fields by DEX and allowed values.
	    o An external application that allows the centre to extract data from Actionstep at any time. This data is then validated by the tool and reports invalid data not allowed by DEX.
	    o Once data is deemed to be valid, the data is then converted into the required XML format. The centre then uploads the XML file to the DEX portal by attaching the XML file to the portal.
	    o Centres are expected to report to DEX at least monthly as the data capture, data validation and data extraction are simplified, allowing such frequency. Thus avoiding the January and July rush to meet reporting deadlines.

Compatibility with NLADS[2]	*How easy is it to collect data in the form required by the National Legal Assistance Data Standards?*

	- Easy!. The Konekta template initially installs the required fields and the allowed values.
	- If NLAP changes, then it's quite simple to create new fields.

Costs

Purchase Price	*What is the purchase price of the product?*
	• Ther eis no purchase price for the product. Only per user licence costs, please see below licence costs
Third party plugin costs	*What other software do you need to run it, e.g., document management software?*

	• Konekta CLC Template & Sync is
	
	    ○ Upfront Costs: $1500
	
	    ○ Annual Costs: $2800 paid in advance
	
	• DEXXML Template and Application is
	
	    ○ Upfront costs: $9000
	
	    ○ Annual Costs: $4800 paid in advance
	
	Actionstep includes document management software; however, if an external DMS is preferred, separate pricing will need to be quoted by suitable resellers of the chosen DMS.

Licence costs	*What does it cost per user?*

	• Actionstep licence costs are as follows
	
	• Standard pricing $159 per user per month. This has been discounted for CLCA members (CLC's) to the following prices
	    • $59 per user per month
	    • $29 per user per month for volunteer licences
	
	• These charges are paid annually in advance, and it is possible to pay several years in advance if needed.

Training costs	*What does training cost per user?*
	• Installation & Training package by WorkCloud is dependent on required deliverables and detailed scoping. • WorkCloud does offer a 'fixed scope' package (called 'Template approach') that has fixed deliverables and a fixed price starting from $22,000. The Fixed Scope (Template approach) includes the following deliverables. • System configuration • User Training up to 20 users (additional charges apply for more users to be trained) • "Prescribed" Data Migration from CLASS data based

	on the defined fields made available by CLCAU • Twelve tickets to WorkCloud Master Classes to provide admin/power users knowledge on customisation features of Actionstep such as custom data, workflows, document coding and list views. (these are attended AFTER go live)
Support costs	*How much does support cost for a year?*
	• Support is free from Actionstep. • Support contacts can be purchased directly from WorkCloud. These allow centres to seek support from WorkCloud but also allow WorkCloud to provide more consulting services, i.e. training, configuration, and advisory services that would not be provided in free support. These packages are charged monthly or annually and start at $612 per month for a 12-month package or $714 for a 6-month package. Both packages have an allocated number of hours to use across the term of the package.
Hosting costs	*Are there additional hosting costs?*
	• No this is all included in Actionstep licence price
Backup and storage costs	*What are the costs of backups and data storage?*
	• No additional charges, this is included in the licence price from Actionstep.
Data migration costs	*How much data needs to be migrated from old to new platform? Is the vendor responsible for data migration? What does your centre need to do to support data migration?*
	Data Migration Costs are included in the Overall package and defined in the Training Costs section. • CLCAU will extract the data on request • WorkCloud will load this data to Actionstep • This data is Client and Services data as defined by CLCA. A detailed listing of fields exported by CLCAU is available and is provided to centres as part of the quoting process. Extra costs for data migration. • CLCAU does not export documents currently, but it is in the process of providing that service. This would result in separate costs for document migration. • De-duplication of 'Additional/Other Contacts'. This is due to Class not storing such data as individual contacts but rather just as additional 'textual' data.

	The same person can be textually ie "John Smith" can be entered per service in CLASS that may be or may not be the same person "John Smith" that is entered on another service/s. De-duplication is based on a set of defined rules that detail what a duplication is. ie the combination of First Name+LastName+DOB etc and then the data is presented to your organisation for assessment and agreement prior to loading into Actionstep. Other optional such as not storing these persons as contacts but as 'custom data' are available which can avoid this additional de duplication deliverable.
Customisation costs	*How much customisation is required?*
	- The Konekta template provides the fields required and defined by CLCAU. Technically, this is all you need to operate Actionstep. - WorkCloud and Actionstep as well as other CLC' Peak bodies across Australia recommend to start with the template, then attend the master classes then apply further customisation. - Centres are expected to want further customisations, which are possible once they have obtained the required knowledge both from using the system and from the included master classes. - Some centres have opted to take no the 'template' approach which is costed in this document. But rather have a highly tailored and custom approach to their implementation. This is possible, and the costs are based on the services agreed upon.
Helpdesk support costs	*Are there additional costs for support?*
	- Actionstep provides free helpdesk support. - Optionally, you can purchase helpdesk support from WorkCloud (recommended)

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[1] DEX is the tool that some centres are required to use for reporting on DSS funding for social security services and matters.

[2] NLADS is the acronym for National Legal Assistance Data Standards.

Vendor capacity

It is important to understand the capacity of the CMS vendor. Key questions to consider include:

- **Can they support your centre and keep the system updated?**
- **Do they have adequate local support?**
- **What is their long-term viability?**

Vendor presence in Australia	*Including local support team*
	• Yes Actionstep has offices in QLD. HQ is in New Zealand. • WorkCloud is located in Sydney, Melbourne (HQ) and Adelaide.
How large is the vendor team?	• Actionstep has a global team of over 250 staff • WorkCloud has 10 staff
How long has the vendor been operating for?	• Actionstep has been operating for 21 years. • Workcloud has been operating for 10 years.
Vendor involvement with community legal sector	• WorkCloud has successfully implemented over 50 CLC's across Australia. This includes state wide implementation projects with New South Wales and Victoria.
Hosting	*Hosted in Australia?*
	• Yes
Deployment support	*How many data sources? Is there integration and migration support? Are documents going to be migrated too, or just clients/matters?*
	• Data migration is influenced by CLCAU providing the data. • Currently data provided by CLCAU is limited to Clients and their services. • WorkCloud will load this data being 1 case per service and apply the client to that Case. • CLCAU is working on extracting documents, this is yet to be finalised by CLCAU. • Should additional data be made available by CLCAU then Workcloud will need to assess and provide separate costings for that data
Ongoing maintenance	*Cost and level inclusive?*

	• Actionstep includes all maintenance in the licence fee
Training	*How much training is offered?*
	• Actionstep does not provide training. • Actionstep does provide on line library of video materials via the Actionstep Academy • All training is provide by WorkCloud
Support	*What helpdesk support is provided? Who is your first point of call in a failure? Are they local?*
	• Actionstep operates a support desk which is free. • Free support excludes training, configuration or advisory services. This is delivered as a chargeable service from WorkCloud • Actionstep support and WorkCloud support are all located in Australia and/or New Zealand. Actionstep has additional support services in the USA and UK that provide a 'follow the Sun' approach to providing support
Contract considerations	*Limits of liability, insurance, standards of service*
	• Actionstep terms are detailed in the licence agreement, however terms are available here online https://www.actionstep.com/terms/

Other considerations

Customisation	*How much customisation to the product is required? How easy is the product to customise?*
	- The product is simple to customise, but knowledge is needed. No programmer is needed, just general knowledge of computers is needed. - WorkCloud include master class tickets to provide education services on customisation features. - The Actionstep product does require configuration initially which is all handled by WorkCloud. Furthermore bulk of the required customisation by CLC's is completed by the installation of the Konekta Template. As stated, this includes all the required data fields required by CLCAU. However some centres have wanted to tailor and customise Actionstep further. This is of course optional but a powerful capability of Actionstep.
Regional and remote (offline operation)	*Is there a need to use the solution offline? E.g., at courts*
	No Actionstep is online only. Most clc's use Wi-Fi to their laptop or tablet to access Actionstep. Or if needed use the mobile app.
Software requirements	*What software does your centre need to run the system, e.g., what version of Windows is required? Does it run on a Mac?*
	- Actionstep only requires a web browser to operate. All major browsers are supported including Edge, Chrome, Safari etc. - Actionstep works on Mac and Windows. No specific version of the operating system is required. - There is an integration with Office that does require Office to be version 2016 or higher. Preferably office 365 (or Google suite)
Community legal education and law reform	*Does the system allow for collection of data on other key activities such as CLE and law reform?*
	Yes as answered previously