

# Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP

## Portrait of a social Intranet

9 March 2010

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**Tools:** Wiki, Personal Dashboard, RSS

**Technology:** Confluence, Dropting (OSS) personal dashboard, RSS

**Number of users:** about 2,000

**Industry:** Legal

**Keywords:** wiki, Intranet, legal, law firm, knowledge-sharing, collaboration, awareness

**Timeframe:** 2009 - present

## Executive Summary

The global law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer needed a simpler method to maintain their various intranet sites. Client information and the process of maintaining it was too time consuming and too complicated. We replaced their traditional intranet platform with an enterprise wiki system to ensure that communication and collaboration became an integral part of how people work. The result is now a much richer and more accurate set of information for decision-making, with a ten-fold increase in the level of contribution.

## Case

### Information should empower

[Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer](#) (Freshfields) is one of the largest law firms in the world and part of the UK's Magic Circle of leading law firms.

Freshfields's former intranet content creation process involved preparing pages individually using Microsoft Word and FrontPage, a web page creation tool. This was a time-consuming process that required knowledge of HTML and experience using FrontPage.

Freshfields wanted us to explore how to broaden the participation in providing intranet content by simplifying the process of creating and maintaining their intranet sites. After all, increased openness and better communication can empower employees of an organisation and directly improve results.

## Simplifying workforce collaboration

We introduced an enterprise wiki platform which was highly customised, featuring dynamic navigation and designed to match the look and feel of their current intranet. This required only minimal training to get the site content population process started - content activity started even before the design and the customisation were completed. The new wiki platform enabled more users to update the intranet, promoting greater staff collaboration and communication within Freshfields. The wiki also ensured that the firm had a common format to share information and knowledge.

We created a standard 'landing page' layout on the wiki with a right hand column showing any recent changes to the site, popular pages and a tag cloud. These were new features on the firm's intranet but they grew popular quickly. Also we ensured that maintaining the site content was a straightforward and quick procedure which did not require any knowledge of html - click on 'Edit page, update the content and then Save.'

## Communication as work, not for work

With the new intranet solution, the communication and collaboration inside Freshfields became an integral part of how people were working, allowing decisions to be made with fresher and richer information. This meant that we were able to achieve 'in the flow' collaboration, rather than ask people to stop what they were doing in order to 'share' content for the intranet.

The new wiki platform opened up the maintenance of the intranet to more people than the firm's content managers - it was now possible for all colleagues to be included in the process of maintaining and developing the site content.

This project also introduced Freshfields to the use of social tools. Based on our research, they also rolled out an iGoogle-inspired dashboard which can be modified individually and which works as an aggregator of content on the intranet. The firm is also seeing benefits from adopting RSS as a way to keep up with internal and external information flows.

## More Information

- ▶ [Case Study in Managing Partner Magazine](#)
- ▶ [Headshift Blog Post](#)
- ▶ [Presentation Slides](#)

# Screenshots

## Group Homepage

Welcome
 FRESHFIELDS BRUCKHAUS DERINGER

INTRANET HOME
SEARCH

Dashboard → Private Equity Sector Group → Private Equity Group
Preferences | Add Category | Add Page | Edit Page | Attachments (2) | Info




**Private Equity Sector Group Home**

- 01 Our sector group
- 02 Sector group members
- 03 Sector News
- 04 Business development
- 05 Events, meetings & training
- 06 Client zone
- 07 Hot Topics
- 08 Know how & resources
- 09 Sector research
- Private Equity Source Book
- [Browse subweb](#)

## Private Equity Group

Created by [redacted], Last edited by [redacted] on Jun 26, 2008 ([view change](#))

Labels: [home](#), [corporate\\_private\\_equity](#), [corporate\\_london](#), [corporate\\_amsterdam](#), [corporate\\_brussels](#), [corporate\\_us](#), [corporate\\_italy](#), [corporate\\_paris](#), [skillsgroups](#) [EDIT](#)

Welcome to the private equity subweb. This site provides information on the sector group and its members as well as knowledge management and business development information.

**Sector Heads:**  
[redacted] London and [redacted] Hamburg

**LATEST NEWS**

**Monday, May 4, 2009**

**Freshfields publishes Private Equity Handbook**  
Last changed May 04, 2009 12:05 by [redacted]  
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# FBD: you can now edit the intranet

# Personal Dashboard

Home ▾
Client
Sector
News
Sitemap
New tab

↶ [Reset all tabs](#)
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**Corporate** Edit ▾ X

Add News | News | Recent Changes | Navigation

**News**

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- FAB Search
- Client Matter Search
- Google
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Wikipedia (en):

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**London** Edit ▾ X

- Workload Return
- London Work Allocation Contacts
- IT Systems Status Page
- This week's menu
- OpenDoor
- Matched Giving Fund
- Parents' Network
- Private email account
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- London Vacation Scheme 2009

**Key Resources** Edit ▾ X

- London 2012

## extending the experience: a dashboard

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