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## BURGES SALMON'S DIGITAL ACADEMY BOOSTS TECH SKILLS

Independent UK law firm Burges Salmon has just been crowned the RollOnFriday 'Best Law Firm to Work at 2022' That in itself is a great achievement and is reflected in their dedication to improving the skills of their people.

The firm has always recognised the importance of keeping people at the centre of its solutions, the need to build an innovation culture and the significance of upskilling. They have invested in training over the years, however it was clear they wanted to innovate further particularly given the increasing importance of digital skills. They wanted to provide relevant training for everyone across the business, enable training at point of need, and ensure it was accessible particularly in a hybrid way.

In October 2021 they launched their '**Digital Academy**'.

Supporting the firm's strategic focus on client service delivery, the **Digital Academy** boasts varied training modules and learning resources across a wide curriculum to help people upskill in ways relevant to their work. Its goals are to:

- (a) empower everyone in the firm to better understand technology, build their skills and understand how to talk to clients about legal technology; and
- (b) improve people's understanding and the use of technology and innovation to drive efficiency, productivity and enhance client service delivery.

Encouraging innovation and the use of technology is a focus of the firm to support agile working and to enhance client service delivery - crucial skills in an increasingly digital world.

Burges Salmon's **Digital Academy** is a collaboration between their Learning Technology and Innovation teams, working together to ensure the initiative is technologically innovative and that it pushed beyond BAU technology but also delivered in the best way to promote effective learning.

They took a digital-first approach when creating the **Digital Academy**. Hosted on a dedicated part of their online learning platform, 'LAB', it is easy to find with an interesting mix of instructor-led live sessions, e-learning courses and on-demand videos and resources; all designed to help people learn in a way and at a time that suits them.

The **Digital Academy** is not only a self-serve upskilling programme, it has also involved the team running a programme of multiple live training sessions, together with engaging with individual teams to highlight relevant modules. The Digital Academy also signposts and pulls together external supporting material, enabling a one-stop-shop.

They took the decision to certify the learning to encourage attendance and engagement, with many of the courses being aligned with **LTC4™** – the global standard for legal technology proficiency. Digital badges can be obtained by completing a learning review after each session and achieving a pass mark of 80%; the badges can then be shared more widely, for example, via social media such as LinkedIn. Not only does this inspire engagement, the badges help to build up the external reputation of the firm and individuals by providing an integrated way to share achievements. By requiring a pass mark of 80%, badges are not simply attendance records but a genuine reward for engaging with and learning from the sessions.



Engagement with The Digital Academy has been high and has demonstrated early success. As at 14 January 2022, 324 digital badges have been issued across the firm, the top two courses have been **Time Recording** and **Managing documents and emails**.

Its ongoing success is due to a number of factors including strong collaboration across the teams involved, good communication and the ability to tailor content to make it relatable, engaging and easily accessible. Not everyone wants to learn in the same way, and they want to support and encourage diversity, so one of the key pillars of The Digital Academy has been to ensure they provide material and content for a variety of learning styles and needs.

The Digital Academy has been well received and attended across the firm so far.

Feedback includes:

*"Looks really useful, something in there for everyone"*

*"Some great stuff on there and can see lots of hard work has gone into making it as easy to use/access as possible"*

*"How brilliant is that, had no idea how much was on there... I am going to get a badge!"*

*"Absolutely blown away by the amount of content that's on there, clearly a lot of hard work has gone into it and looks really great, really well done"*

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