Risky Business: A Toolbox for Managing Litigation Interests and Risks

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Experts for This Program

- John Lande, Isidor Loeb Prof. Emeritus, Univ. of Missouri
- Heather Heavin, Assoc. Dean & Assoc. Prof., Univ. of Saskatchewan
- Michaela Keet, Prof., Univ. of Saskatchewan
- Duncan MacKay, Deputy GC & COO, Eversource Energy
- Conna Weiner, Mediator, Arbitrator, Special Master
- You

Today's Agenda

- Survey audience about your use of litigation interest and risk assessment (LIRA) techniques
- Simple LIRA framework
- Sophisticated tools
- Experienced practitioners' perspectives
- Audience discussion

Stone Soup Process Today

- We will use Stone Soup research process to disseminate knowledge from this program
- Notetaker will take notes without names
- Summary will be published in Alternatives
- I will post summary on Indisputably blog including this powerpoint
- If you don't want your statements to be included, let notetaker know
- Questions?

Audience Survey

- We will ask questions about your background and use of LIRA techniques.
- You will use clickers to answer questions.
- There should be clickers on everyone's table.
 Does anyone need a clicker?
- Your responses will be anonymous and immediately displayed in aggregate.
- If a question isn't applicable, please skip it.

Audience Survey

- You will have 15 seconds to answer each question and you will see a countdown clock on the screen.
- To get the best information we can, it's important that you <u>answer candidly</u>.
- Any questions before we begin?

Informed Consent

You are being invited to participate in a research study that involves participating in an anonymous survey. Participation is voluntary. If you have questions about the research, please contact John Lande, landej@missouri.edu or 573-234-1745.

Who Are You?

Let's get a sense of who's in the audience. Are you:

- 1. an inside counsel
- 2. a lawyer in a law firm
- 3. an executive in a law firm (even if you have a law degree)
- 4. a private neutral
- 5. other

Inside Counsel

If you are an inside counsel, are you:

- 1. the general counsel
- 2. other inside counsel

Lawyers in Law Firms

If you are a lawyer in a law firm, are you:

- 1. a partner
- 2. an associate
- 3. other lawyer

Private Neutrals

If you are a private neutral, are most of your cases:

- 1. mediations
- 2. arbitrations
- 3. about half of each
- 4. other

Procedures in Your Cases

- We want to learn about the actual use of various procedures in your cases. Please answer these questions about the degree to which your company or firm has actually used these decision-making processes or tools.
- If you don't know or the question is not applicable, please skip the question.

Systematic Assessment

When your company or law firm assesses litigation risk in your cases, how often is the process a systematic, formal assessment process:

- 1. in most of our cases
- 2. in about half of our cases
- in a <u>substantial proportion</u> of cases, but <u>less than</u> <u>half</u> of our cases
- 4. in <u>almost none</u> of our cases

Early Case Assessment

- The next question is about how often your company or law firm uses early case assessments (ECA).
- For this purpose, an ECA involves basic factual investigation, legal analysis, estimation of likely court outcome, and estimation of the costs of going all the way to trial.

Frequency of ECA

In the cases that your company or law firm litigates, which best describes its use of ECAs?

- 1. we routinely use ECAs in most types of cases
- 2. we routinely use ECAs in <u>certain categories</u> of <u>cases</u> (e.g., amount at stake, subject matter, reputational interest)
- 3. we often use ECAs, on a case-by-case basis
- 4. we rarely use ECAs

Valuing Intangible Costs

When you do ECAs, how often do you assign a monetary value to intangible costs such as harm to internal operations, damage to reputation or relationships, diversion of time from business activities, loss of opportunities, etc.?

We routinely assign monetary values:

- 1. in most of our ECAs
- 2. in about half of our ECAs
- 3. in a <u>substantial proportion</u> of ECAs, but <u>less than</u> <u>half</u> of our ECAs
- 4. in almost none of our ECAs

Formal Decision Trees

In what proportion of your cases do you use formal decision trees?

- 1. in most of our cases
- 2. in about half of our cases
- 3. in a <u>substantial proportion</u> of ECAs, but <u>less</u> than half of our cases
- 4. in <u>almost none</u> of our cases

Technological Tools

In what proportion of your cases do you use other technological tools such as databases of comparable cases or statistical models (e.g., Monte Carlo simulations)?

- 1. in most of our cases
- 2. in <u>about half</u> of our cases
- in a <u>substantial proportion</u> of ECAs, but <u>less</u> <u>than half</u> of our cases
- 4. in almost none of our cases

Internal Database

Does your company or firm maintain an internal database of dispute characteristics, process used, and/or the outcomes?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

Pre-Suit Mediation

In what proportion of your cases do you mediate before an arbitration or lawsuit is filed?

- 1. in most of our cases
- 2. in about half of our cases
- 3. in a <u>substantial proportion</u> of ECAs, but <u>less</u> than half of our cases
- 4. in <u>almost none</u> of our cases

Litigation Interest and Risk Assessment

A Methodological Approach to Early Case Assessment in Litigation and Settlement

Smith vs. Jones

- 5 yrs ago, Mary entered a construction zone as a member of the public, and suffered head injury when hit by a rock in a construction blast.
- 5 years into litigation, discovery of documents is complete, and expert medical and engineering reports have been shared.
- Claim is for \$1.5 million.
- Defendant has just made a without prejudice offer of \$250,000.
- Assume you are Mary. On what basis would you decide whether to accept?

Getting it wrong?

- Randall Kiser, Beyond Right and Wrong:
 - 61% plaintiffs, 24% defendants rejected settlement offers to do worse at trial
 - Plaintiff error: \$43,100, Defendant error: \$1,140,000

Understanding Decision-making

- Patterns of Behaviour
 - Anchoring
 - Framing and Loss Aversion
- Cognitive Biases and Heuristics
 - Overconfidence/Self-serving/Confirmation Bias
 - Acceptability Heuristic

What language do you use...?

Very likely

Quite unlikely

Some possibility

Very good possibility

Reasonably likely

Fighting chance

Almost a sure thing

REMOTE POSSIBILITY

Your lawyer has told you that there are three issues in the claim:

- 1. Proving Standard of Care
 - Industry standard how many and what type of blast mats were required?
 - "This could go either way."
- 2. Contributory negligence
 - There were signs, warning public not to enter, but some question as to placement and visibility of signs
- 3. Damages
 - Most of claim is for future loss of income. You have a preexisting back injury, and have had difficulty committing to prescribed treatment. = Causation of loss (pre-existing injury and mitigation)

Step 1: Understand and Calculate Risks on Liability

Break each cause of action into its elements.
Assign probability: consider law and evidence (proof).
Assess overall probability of success: COMPOUND
Go through the same process with respect to DEFENSES.

Step 2: Project Damages/Remedy

Break it down into heads/types of damage. Assign a <u>most likely</u> outcome (considering probability) for quantum <u>on each</u>. Consider law and evidence (proof).

Add up #2 for each head of damage.

Step 3: Assess – multiply steps 1 and 2

Liability projection x Damage projection = Risk-Adjusted Outcome

Step 1: Liability and Defenses

- Standard of care 50%
- Contributory negligence 40% chance of 25%

Step 2: Projected Damages

- Damages
 - Past (pecuniary and non) 80% of \$500,000 (some evidentiary problems)
 - Future (loss of income) 40% of \$1,000,000 (60% chance she will be found to be a crumbling-skull plaintiff, rather than thin-skull plaintiff)

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$400,000 + $400,000 = $800,000
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Step 3:

• \$800,000 x 50% = \$400,000 less Contributory negligence (40% x 25% = 10% reduction)

Weighted Average for CN

- OR, use a decision tree ...
- $40\% \times .75$ (\$300,0000) = \$120,000
- $60\% \times 1.0 (\$400,000) = \$240,000$

Projected Outcome

• \$360,000

- Step 4: Process Costs
- Consider the Direct (Legal) Costs of Litigation
- Consider and evaluate the Impacts of the Litigation on Mary

Aspects of the litigation process that cause stress...

Adversarial nature of the Process

- Delay
 - Postponements, adjournments
- Intensity
 - Moments of 'too much, too fast'
 - Accelerated processes

Aspects of the litigation process that cause stress...

- Meetings with lawyers, other professionals
 - Interviews
- Examinations/depositions
- Testifying

Identify and Value Costs:

Individual: financial goals and stability

career, education, 'productive work'

relationships, family, community

health and wellness

previous litigation experience

Organizational: o

opportunity costs

reputational/brand costs

psychological health of organization

- Step 4: Process costs
- Time/delay and present value of the money (opportunity costs)
- Psychological and health impact of being involved in the conflict
- Direct legal costs

\$360,000 - process costs = Overall Risk-Adjusted value of the case

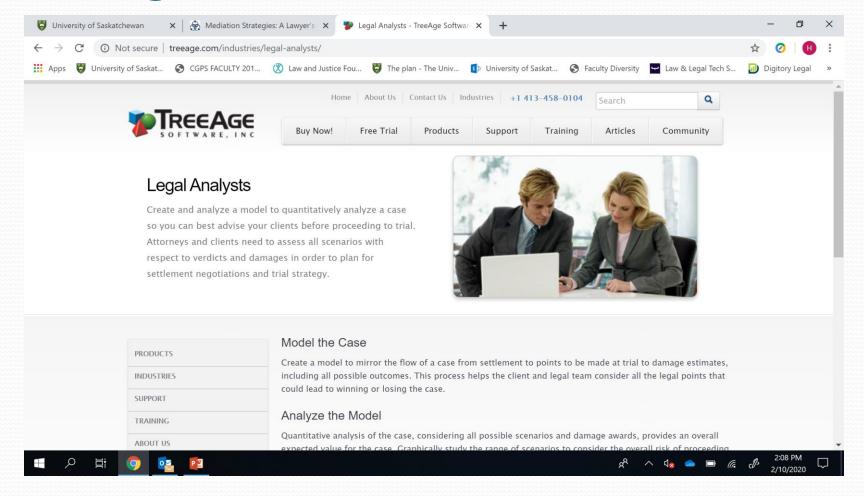
Sophisticated Tools

- Systematic Approaches to identifying and weighing risks
- Other professional disciplines (Business, Engineering etc.)
 predicting in the future
- Checklists: helpful for indentifying, tracking and managing tasks, but lack methodologies for estimating the quantitative probabilities of various contingencies/options

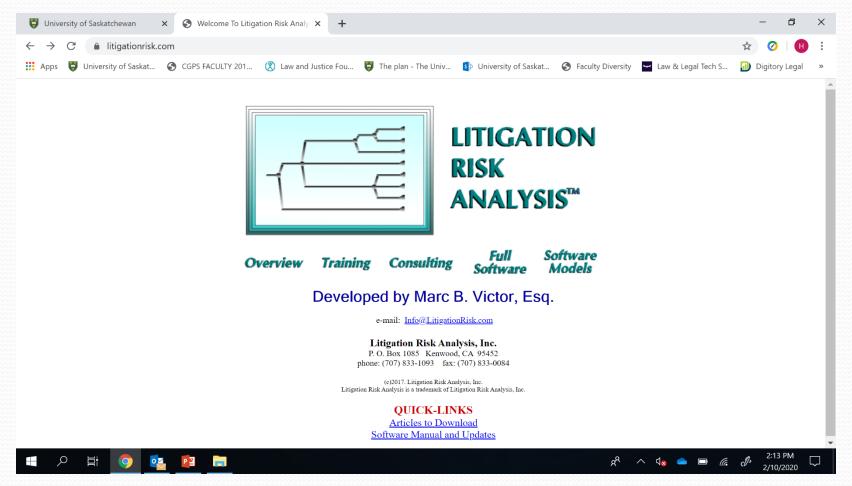
Decision Analysis – Decision Trees

- Three stage process:
 - 1. Identify all significant uncertainties in the legal case that may affect the finding of liability or damages
 - Determine all the reasons for a favourable and unfavourable finding for each uncertainty
 - Estimate the probability of each outcome for each identified uncertainty

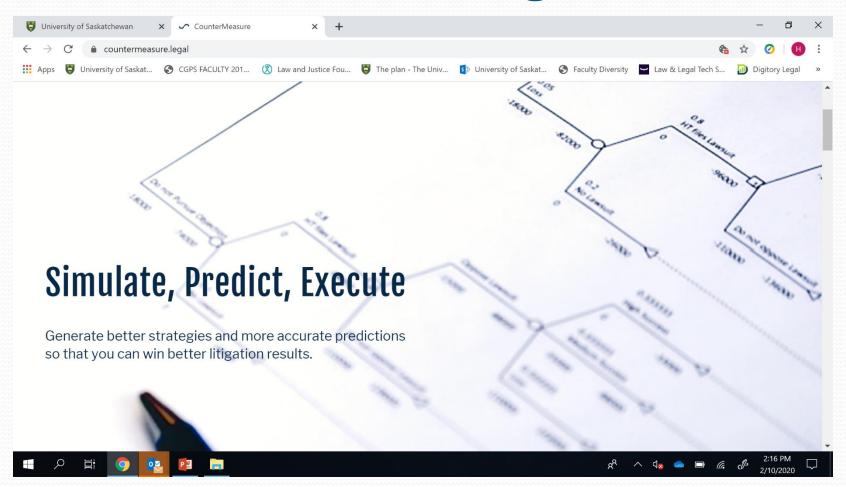
TreeAge Software, Inc.



Litigation Risk Analysis, Inc.



Countermeasure Legal

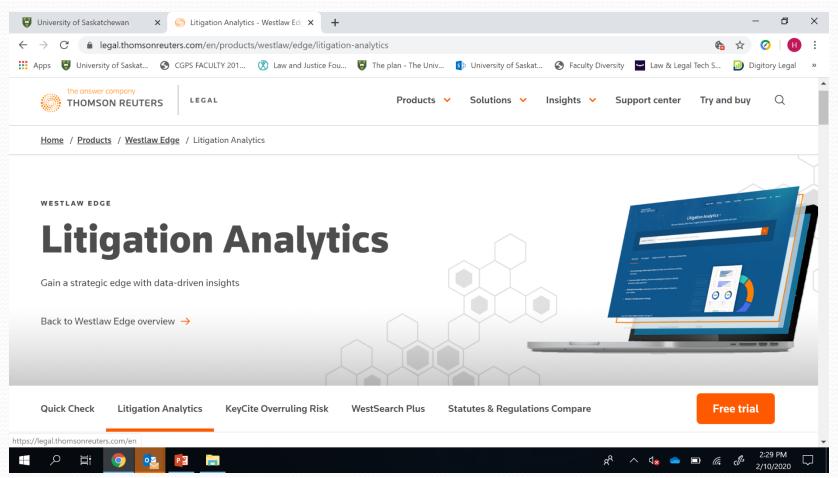


Data Analytics

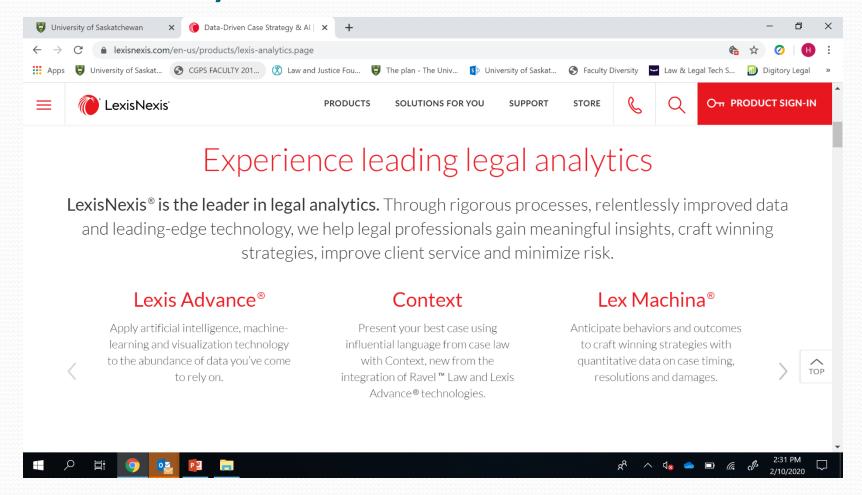
 using data from legal sources (databases) to provided detailed statistical information about past events such as courtroom outcomes and/or settlements

 Popular products on the market in the U.S. and other large legal markets

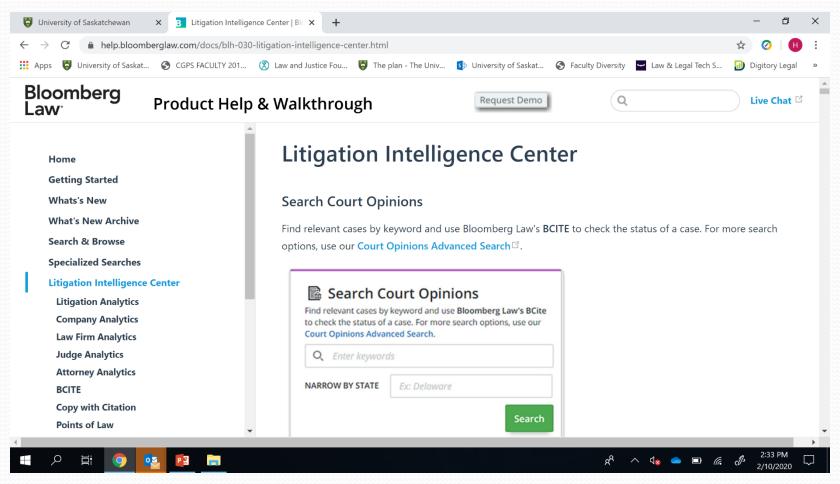
Litigation Analytics - WestLaw Edge



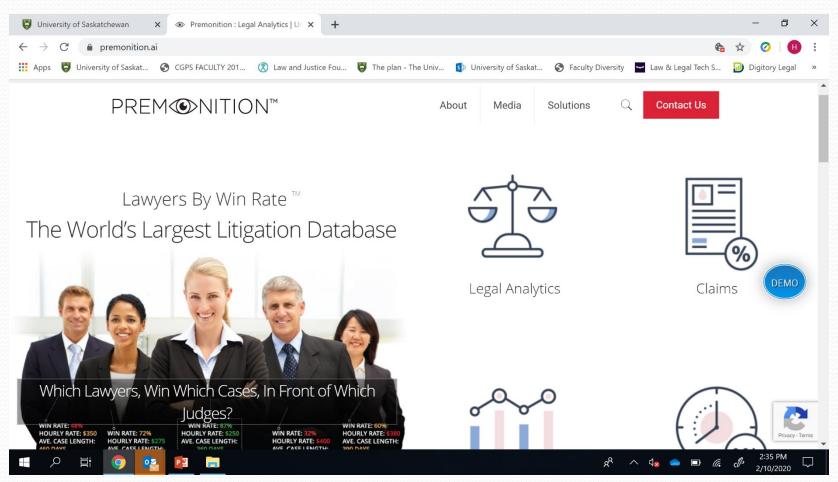
LexisNexis (Lexis Advance and Lex Machina)



Bloomberg Law – Litigation Intelligence Centre



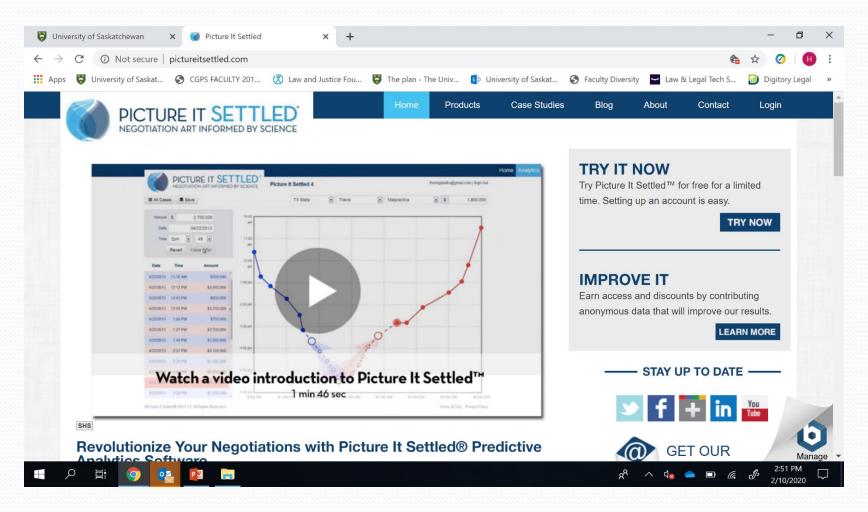
Premonition Legal Analytics



Loom Analytics



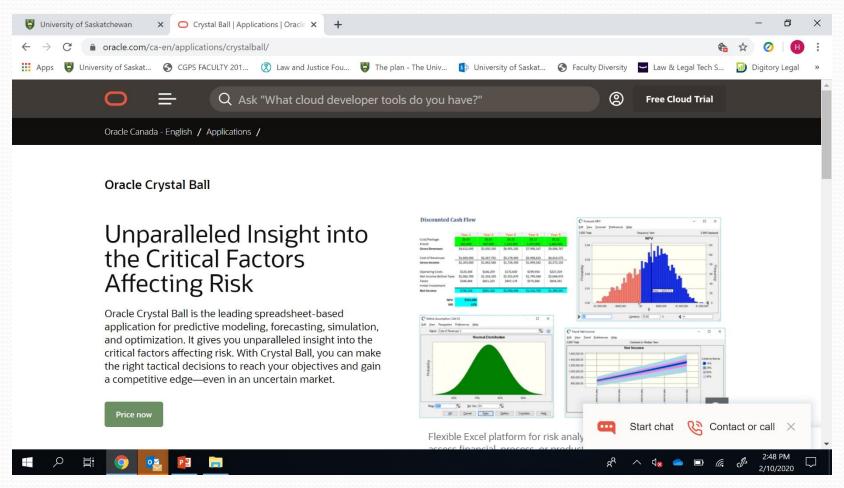
Picture it Settled



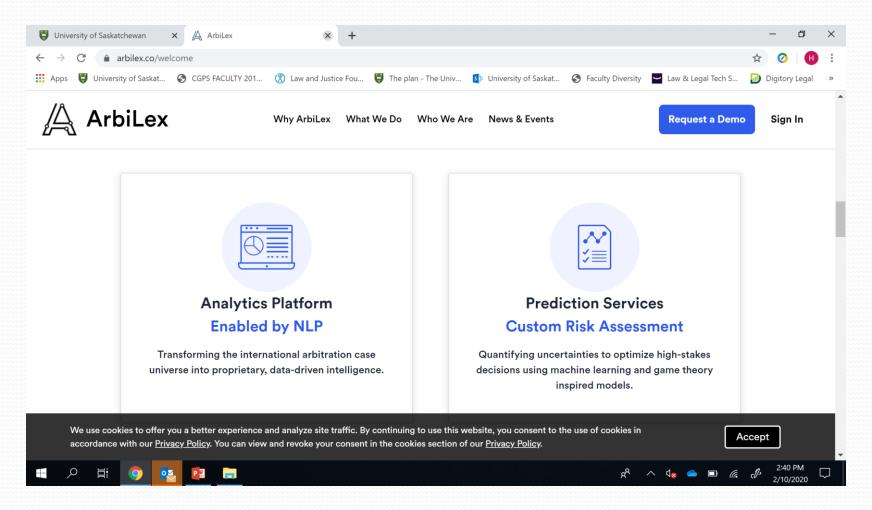
Model-based Analytics

- Using mathematical algorithms to generate future predictions
- -Monte Carlo simulations
- Bayesian Analysis

Oracle Crystal Ball



ArbiLex



Considerations for Using Tools

- Client communication and expectations
- Inclusion of other factors in to the analysis
 - Psychological and impact costs to clients
 - Business and Organizational costs
- Sufficient understanding of the data sets or the methodology that is being used by these products
 - Reliance on historic data?
 - Confidence in the modelling?

LIRA in practice...



Additional Resources

