

# Design Thinking Process Leads To Custom Database Solution For META Advisors

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Unwieldy spreadsheets. Inconsistent data. Duplicate efforts. META Advisors' process of managing bankruptcy claims was time-consuming and vulnerable to human error. Originating through an empathy interview in Kelley Drye's Innovation Lab in which we uncovered some of the client's pain points, the firm identified a solution and developed an online database that allows META to more easily and efficiently process bankruptcy claims as a post-confirmation trustee. As a result, META can "reclaim" much of the time and energy previously spent taming thousands of rows of bankruptcy claim data.

## The Challenge

The process of reconciling bankruptcy claims requires tremendous amounts of work; indeed, in one case META managed more than 22,000 claims. For each claim, various data points must be updated and cross referenced. Managing this data in Excel proved to be tremendously inefficient when multiple parties worked from different versions of a spreadsheet. Further, multiple people entering data increased the risk of error, which can be expensive and delay distributions. As outside counsel to META, Kelley Drye saw an opportunity to collaborate on a solution to these pain points.

## The Solution

Kelley Drye's Innovation Lab used a design thinking process to understand the frustration META's Chief Compliance Officer felt spending hours of time reconciling conflicting data from different spreadsheets. Spreadsheet version control and collaboration with various contributors was driving her nuts. After defining the source of the problem, Kelley Drye worked with a developer to design and build the META Advisors Claims Management website.

## The Impact

The META Advisors Claims Management website saves time for all parties involved. The META team no longer worries about redoing work because different people used different versions of a dataset. Using a streamlined web interface, efficiency has been increased for all stakeholders that contribute to or access the data. Moreover, information is exchanged much more safely and securely. The site works so well that META occasionally licenses it out to other Kelley Drye clients as appropriate.

Kelley Drye's development of the META Advisors Claims Management website was recognized by the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium (CLOC) as one of the top three submissions for the 2020 Legal Innovation in Operations Project (LIO Project). A CLOC case study about the project summarizes the firm's approach to innovation: "Kelley Drye is evolving the scope of their services, and it's not an accident. They have become a 'learning organization' that seeks to complement its

legal expertise and brand with a distinctive problem-finding and solving capability."