



## INNOVATION AT WORK

# How Blakes Built a Custom Budget Tracker to Maximize Cost-Efficiency for a Major Bank Negotiating High- Value Commercial Agreements

## Summary

A major Canadian bank engaged Blakes to advise on a complex commercial agreement with an important partner, a type of matter that can be difficult to budget.

The client needed to regularly track the legal fees and the progress of the matter. It also needed to understand the value it was receiving from Blakes.

Blakes worked closely with the client to provide a custom report every two weeks that tracked progress, fees and savings. Now an essential feature of our work with the bank on multiple commercial agreements, this tool is tailored to meet the specific needs of each mandate.

## Challenge

Our client needed advice on a strategically important mandate involving the negotiation of a complex, high-value commercial agreement with a major service provider.

Controlling the cost of this type of negotiation can be difficult because it requires external counsel to be deeply integrated with the in-house legal department, participating in discussions, attending meetings and generally serving as a close trusted advisor.

At every stage of the file, our client needed transparency around fees and the ability to assess the value Blakes contributed.

## Solution



Blakes lawyers first worked with our Pricing team and analyzed similar matters to model a realistic budget.

Building a truly custom budget-tracking tool meant identifying the most important information for our client. So, as a next step, the relationship partner consulted with the client to determine the project's key performance indicators.

“From their first experience with Blakes Clarity™, our client has enjoyed peace of mind, knowing that there will be no surprise costs from their advisors on these complex files.”

— David Feldman, Partner

Finally, Blakes developed a customized matter report that tracked cumulative fees and savings. It was critical that the report present our fees and value transparently. To this end, fees and savings were categorized by project phase and by month. The report, delivered every two weeks, supplemented this information with a concise status update on the progress of the matter. As the client had prepaid a certain portion of the fees, the report also showed the declining balance of the prepayment and the details of each invoice.

## Results

In addition to highlighting the value of the Blakes team's advice, our solution for tracking costs offered something invaluable — peace of mind. Our regular budget updates allowed the client to accurately forecast the total fees and avoid billing surprises.

The report's clear account of the progress of the matter itself also gave the client's legal team useful perspective on non-budgetary aspects of the file.

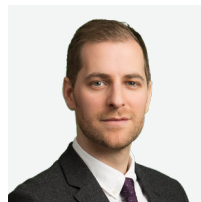
The Blakes team has since applied this solution to meet our client's budgeting needs in other complex negotiations with business partners. The results of each collaboration are fed back into the tool to enhance its accuracy. As we draw from a growing set of benchmark matters, this solution becomes more and more valuable for our clients.

## Key Contacts

If you would like to learn more about this solution, please contact:



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