

**2025:**

The State of Bundling

## Introduction:

Previously, Zylpha has conducted a comprehensive survey of legal professionals to gain valuable insights into the evolving world of court bundling. This survey represents one of our most extensive research initiatives, reaching practitioners across the entire litigation landscape to capture a true snapshot of current practices, challenges, and trends.

This time around we have decided to focus on the changes implemented by HMCTS in May 2020 as a response to COVID-19 (and the UK entering lockdown) and the impact that they had.

## Background and Context

In April 2025, Zylpha conducted a comprehensive survey to evaluate the current state of Electronic Court Bundles and assess whether the process has become more accessible and user-friendly since changes to Court guidance was first introduced in May 2020.

The research aimed to provide an independent assessment of how the legal profession has adapted to these changes over the five-year period since their introduction, and whether the initial challenges faced by practitioners have been adequately addressed through experience, improved technology, or refined processes.

## Survey Methodology

### Distribution Strategy

The survey was strategically distributed through LinkedIn over a carefully planned four-week period, utilising both organic and paid promotional methods. This approach included:

- **Direct outreach:** Targeted messaging to relevant legal professionals through LinkedIn's professional network
- **Sponsored content:** Paid promotional posts designed to reach a broader audience of legal practitioners who might not be connected to Zylpha's network.
- **Extended period:** The four-week distribution period was chosen to ensure maximum reach while allowing sufficient time for busy legal professionals to participate.

## Participant Selection and Bias Prevention

To ensure the integrity and objectivity of the research findings, Zylpha implemented a deliberate strategy to minimise potential bias in the survey results. The survey was specifically targeted toward LinkedIn users who had a high probability of NOT being existing Zylpha clients. This methodological decision was crucial for three reasons:

- **Avoiding skewed results:** Many of Zylpha's established clients have maintained relationships with the company for up to 20 years, which could create a positive bias toward electronic court bundle solutions.
- **Ensuring representative data:** By focusing on non-clients, the survey captured a more accurate representation of the broader legal profession's experience with electronic court bundles and how they are produced.
- **Maintaining research credibility:** This approach helped avoid the common pitfall of vendor-sponsored research that inadvertently validates the sponsor's solutions.

## Research Ethics and Transparency

The survey was conducted with a commitment to transparency and ethical research practices:

- **No financial incentives:** Participants were not offered any rewards or incentives for completion, ensuring that responses were motivated purely by professional interest rather than external rewards.
- **Complete anonymity:** All responses were collected anonymously to encourage honest feedback and protect participant privacy.
- **Independent perspective:** The research was designed to avoid the common industry practice of creating surveys that appear to identify problems that conveniently align with the sponsor's product offerings.

This approach was chosen to distance the research from what the authors describe as manipulative content campaign tactics, where companies present problems that their products happen to solve—a practice they characterise as transparently disingenuous and easily identifiable by experienced professionals.

## Data Analysis and Classification Methods

### Response Categorisation

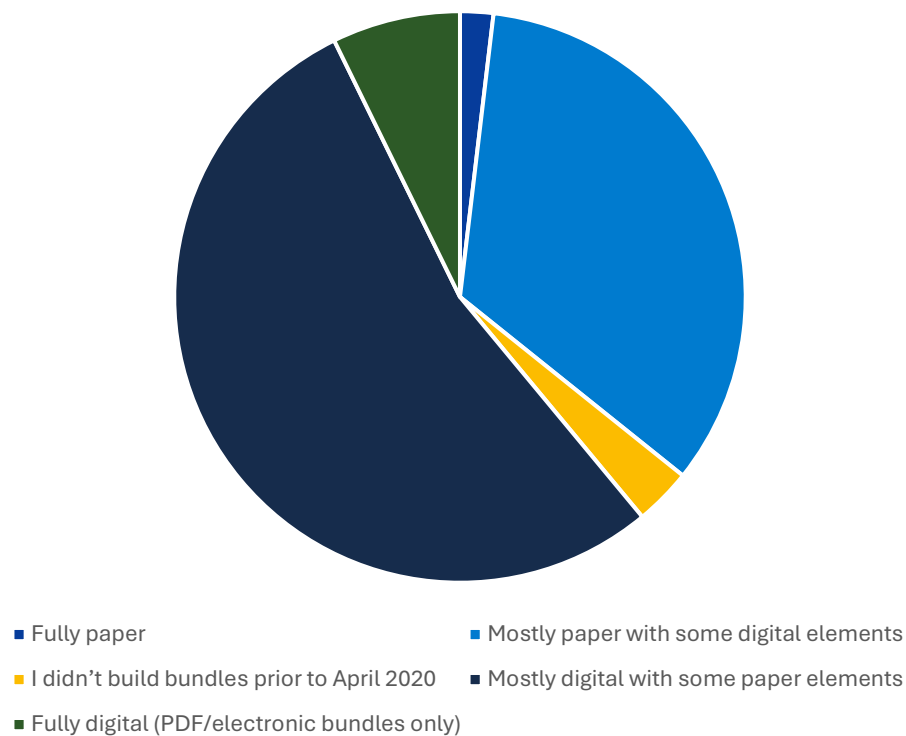
The results were processed using a systematic approach to ensure consistency and accuracy in data interpretation:

**Multiple Choice and Text Response Integration:** Where survey questions offered both multiple choice options and free-text responses, answers were analysed and grouped together when they conveyed the same information or perspective. This methodology recognised that participants might express similar views through different response formats while ensuring that the core message was captured.

**Handling of Incomplete Responses:** In cases where participants selected free-text options but failed to provide any written response, these instances were classified as "no response" rather than being excluded from the dataset. This approach maintains transparency about participation patterns while avoiding any inflation of response rates.

**Brand Name Standardisation:** The analysis process included intelligent interpretation of brand references where participants used variations of common software names. For example, responses mentioning "Abode" were logically reclassified as "Adobe PDF" based on context and common usage patterns. This standardisation ensures that data accurately reflects actual software usage rather than being fragmented by spelling variations or informal naming conventions.

## Question 1: How did you prepare bundles prior to May 2020?



### Key Insights:

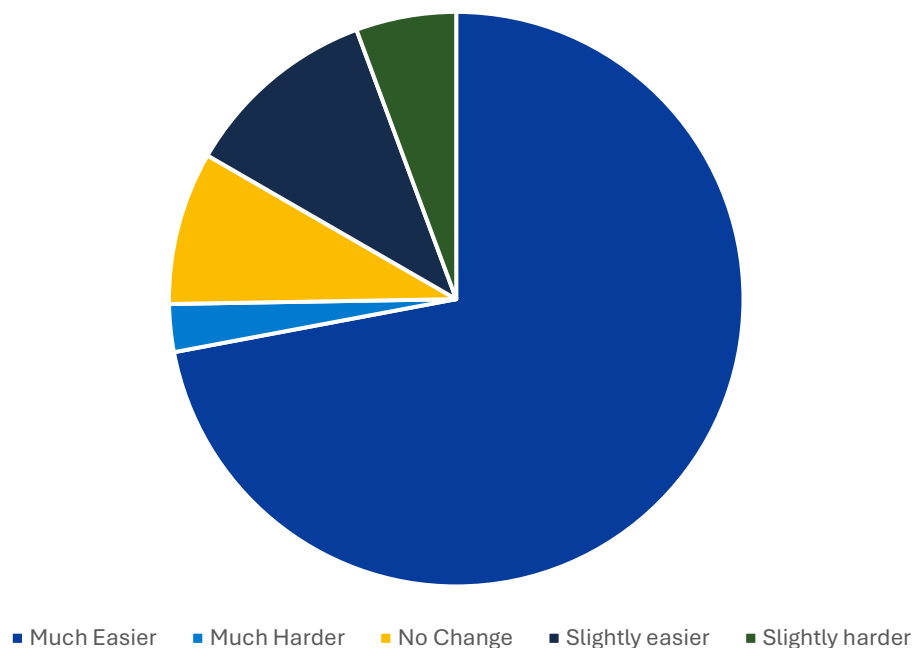
**Dominant Approach:** The vast majority (54%) used mostly paper bundles with some digital elements (126 out of 372 total responses). This suggests a hybrid approach was most common, indicating organisations were in transition between traditional paper methods and fully digital systems.

**Digital Adoption was Limited:** Only 7% were fully digital before April 2020 (27 responses), showing that complete digital transformation was still relatively rare at that time.

**Significant Digital Integration:** About 54% had adopted mostly digital approaches with some paper elements (200 responses), suggesting many organisations had already begun substantial digital transformation efforts.

The data reveals that April 2020 represents a significant transition point, with most organisations already using hybrid approaches but few having completed full digital transformation. This suggests the pandemic and the new Court bundle guidelines may have accelerated existing digital trends rather than initiating them from scratch.

In May 2020, the Courts published the first revised guidance on creating electronic bundles. What impact did this have on you?



### Key Insights:

**Overwhelming Positive Reception:** The transition to electronic bundles was highly successful, with 72% of respondents finding them "much easier" to use. This represents a significant improvement in user experience for most court users.

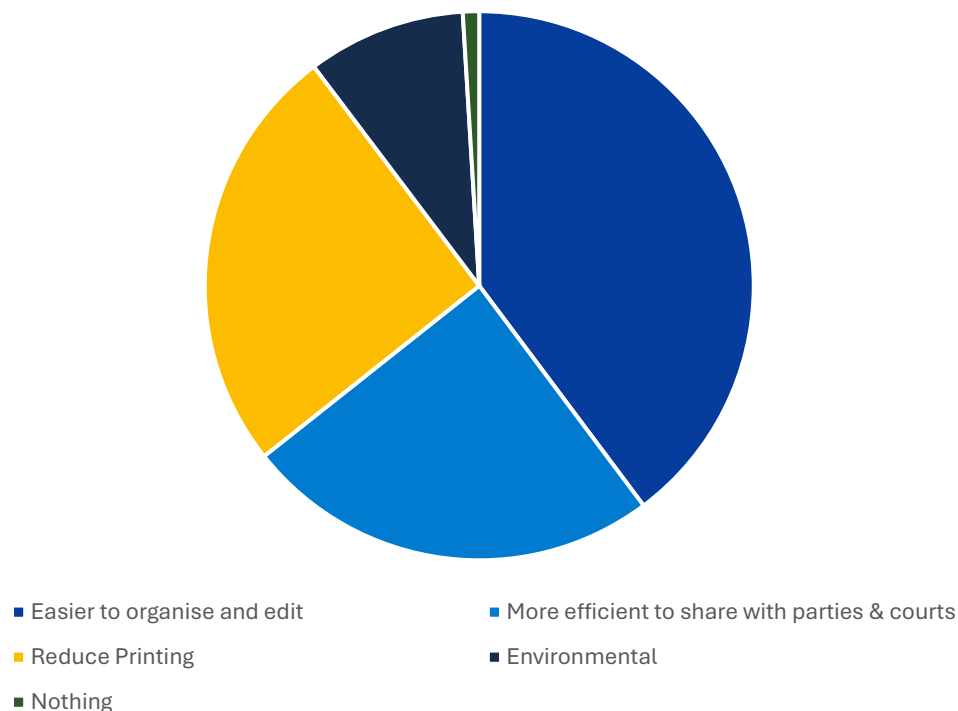
**Strong Overall Satisfaction:** When combining positive responses, 83.1% of users had either a positive or neutral experience (309 out of 372 total responses). This indicates broad acceptance and successful adoption of the digital transition.

**Minimal Resistance:** Only 8.3% of respondents found electronic bundles made their work harder, suggesting that concerns about digital transformation were largely unfounded. The resistance was split between those finding it "slightly harder" (5.6%) and "much harder" (2.7%).

**Clear User Preference:** The data shows a stark contrast between positive and negative responses - there's a 26:1 ratio between those who found it "much easier" versus "much harder." This suggests the benefits of electronic bundles far outweighed any drawbacks.

**Policy Validation:** This data strongly validates the Courts' decision to implement electronic bundles, showing that the digital transformation initiative met its goals of improving efficiency and user experience in the legal system.

What are the benefits you've experienced with digital court bundles:



### Key Insights:

**Primary Drivers Are Operational Efficiency:** The overwhelming majority (64.4%) of benefits relate to core workflow improvements - organising/editing documents and sharing them efficiently. This suggests digital court bundles address fundamental pain points in legal document management rather than being adopted for secondary benefits.

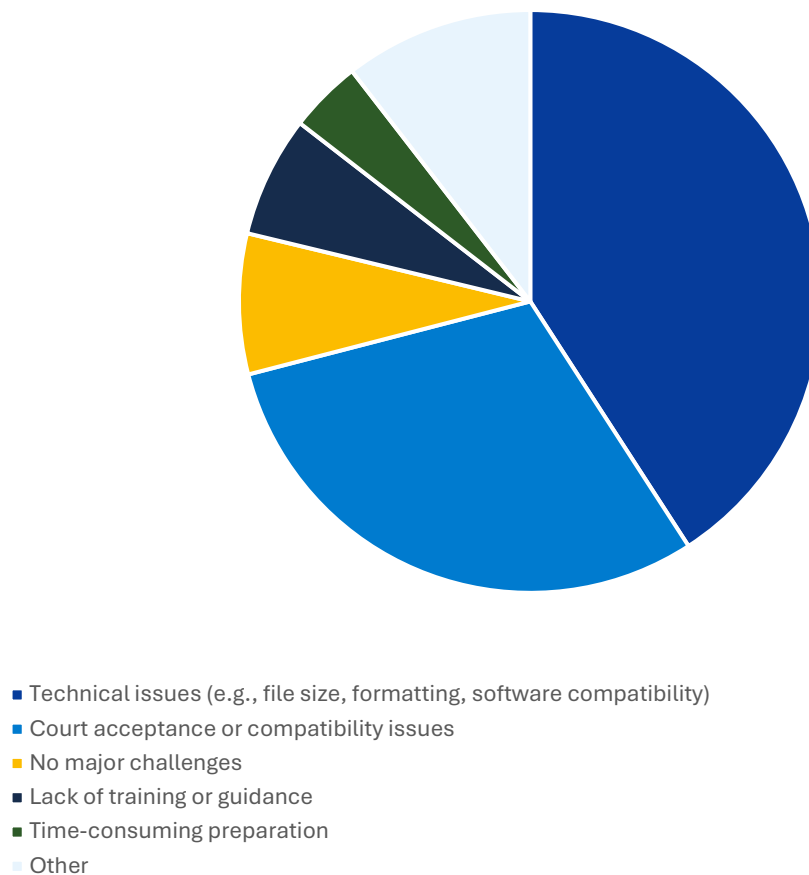
**Document Organisation Is the Critical Need:** "Easier to organise and edit" dominates at 39.8%, indicating that traditional paper-based systems create significant administrative burden. Legal professionals clearly struggle with document version control, updates, and structural organisation in physical bundles.

**Cost and Environmental Benefits Are Secondary:** While "Reduce Printing" ranks third at 25.4%, it's notably lower than organisational benefits. Environmental considerations rank even lower at 9.3%, suggesting adoption is driven more by practical necessity than sustainability goals or cost reduction.

**Near-Universal Perceived Value:** Only 1% of respondents see no benefits, indicating digital court bundles deliver clear value across the board. This suggests successful implementation rather than technology adoption for its own sake.

**Strategic Implications:** Organisations should focus on organisational/editing capabilities rather than environmental or cost benefits. The data suggests legal professionals need better document management tools first, with other benefits being welcome but secondary considerations.

## What is the biggest challenge you've faced with digital court bundles?



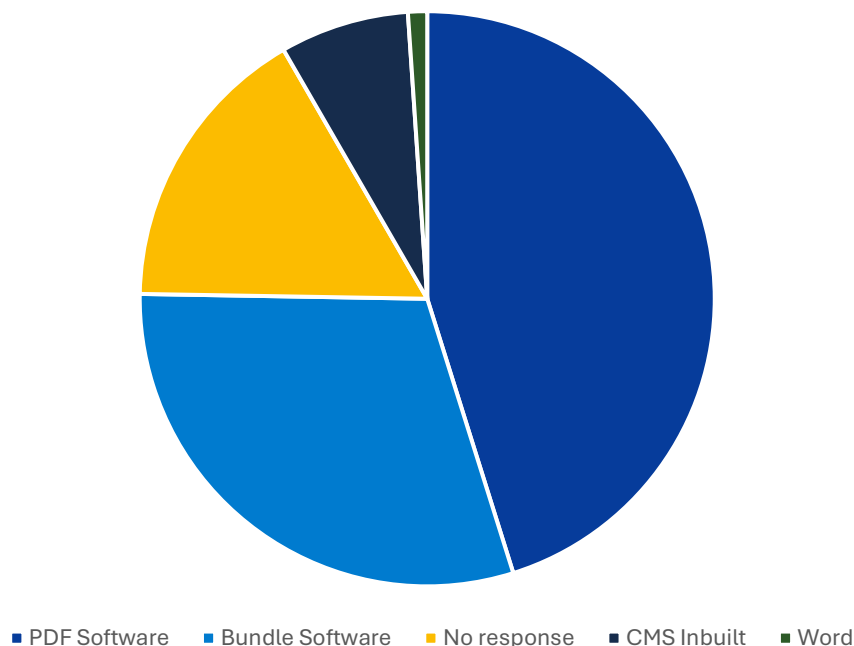
### Key Insights:

**Technical issues dominate the landscape:** Accounting for 40.9% of all challenges (152 responses). This includes file size problems, formatting issues, and software compatibility - suggesting fundamental infrastructure and standardization gaps.

**Court system barriers are significant:** Representing 30.1% of challenges (112 responses). This points to institutional resistance or incompatibility between existing court procedures and digital evidence systems.

Together, these two categories represent **over 70% of all reported challenges**, indicating that most problems stem from either technical limitations or institutional acceptance issues.

## What tools do you use to create, edit and share bundles



### Key Insights:

**PDF Software Dominates the Market:** PDF software is the clear leader with 45% of responses, this might be because it's something that they are already using (and therefore don't need to purchase separately). There is also the possibility that purchasing software that only does one role isn't an attractive proposition for many law firms.

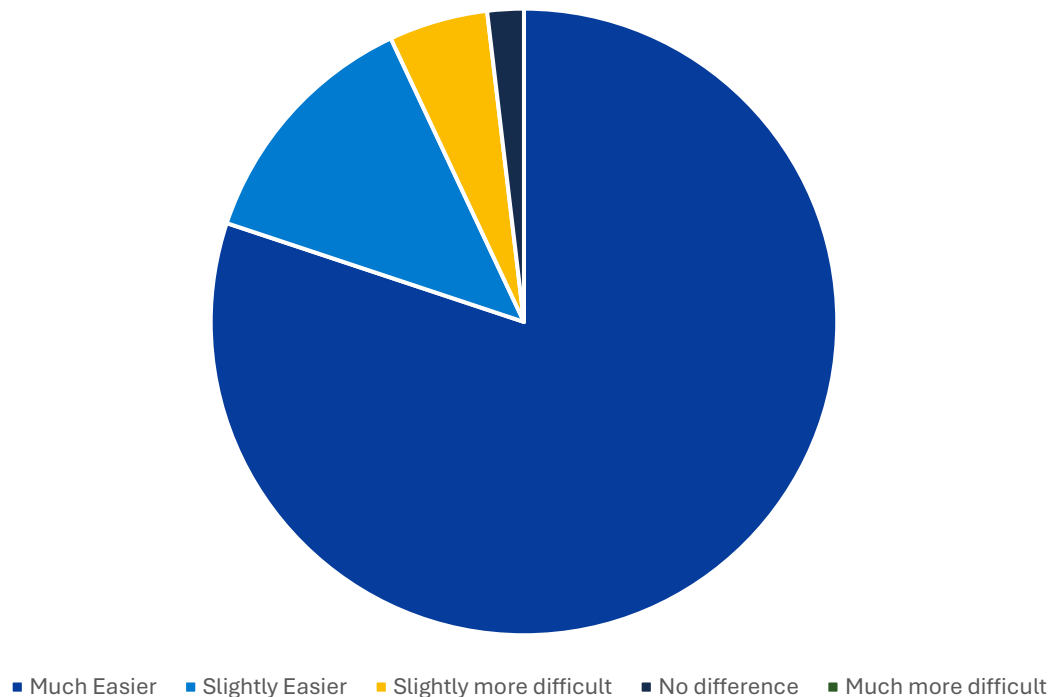
**Specialised vs. General Tools Split:** There's an interesting division between specialised bundle software (30%) and general-purpose PDF tools (45%). This suggests the market has room for both approaches, with many users finding general PDF software sufficient for their bundle creation needs.

**High Non-Response Rate is Concerning:** 16% of respondents didn't answer, which is relatively high for this type of question. This could indicate confusion about the question, use of tools not listed in the options, or uncertainty about what constitutes "bundle software."

**Market Consolidation Opportunity:** The data suggests potential for a tool that combines the ease of PDF software with specialised bundle features, given that 75% of users rely on either general PDF tools or specialist bundle software.



Overall, do you think creating Court bundles has become easier?



### Key Insights:

**Overwhelming Positive Response:** 93% of respondents (346 out of 372) found bundle creation easier, with 80% saying it became "much easier" - this is a remarkably strong endorsement.

**Minimal Negative Impact:** Only 5% found it more difficult, and notably zero respondents said it became "much more difficult," suggesting any challenges were minor.

**Strong Consensus:** With such a small "no difference" group (less than 2%), there's clear agreement that whatever changes were implemented had a meaningful impact.

**Scale of Improvement:** The 6:1 ratio of "much easier" to "slightly easier" responses indicates the improvements were not just marginal tweaks but substantial enhancements to the process.

This data suggests that the changes communicated by HMCTS have been extraordinarily successful, delivering significant efficiency gains with minimal downside. The lack of any "much more difficult" responses is particularly noteworthy, indicating the changes did not create major new barriers for anyone.