

## Your Legal Questions

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### **Legal Services and the Internet**

Powells has introduced to their website a range of online fixed fee services and I thought this would be an appropriate time to take a break from answering your legal questions and to consider the increasing impact of the internet on the delivery of legal solutions.

Those of you familiar with the property process will be aware that solicitors already make use of online services to obtain Home Information Packs, Local Authority Searches, Land Registry and Company Searches. However the profession has been slow to deliver its own services by this means.

In 2011 the so called "legal big bang" will see non-lawyers able to own law firms. This has led many solicitors to fear the likes of Tesco providing legal services - "Tescolaw".

In my view this is to misunderstand the market. Those firms like Powells already realise the importance of being able to budget. This is why we offer a fixed fee for many services.

However consumers are intelligent enough to realise that not all services can be sold like this. You may be willing to buy a routine medical service online for a fixed price but you are unlikely to want to do the same for a heart bypass operation. Similarly a routine house move cannot be compared to the purchase of a business or company. Some things are more complicated, take longer and require a degree of continuing personal contact not expected with an online fixed fee service.

Solicitors need to embrace the internet to deliver value to customers through suitable fixed fee services. Consumers need the savvy to know when a fixed fee is the right option. If you are being offered a deal which appears too good to be true it probably is!

Visit [www.powellslaw.com](http://www.powellslaw.com) for more information on our fixed fee solutions.

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