

Jurisdictional Analysis

Understanding the Data Behind the Litigation Trends



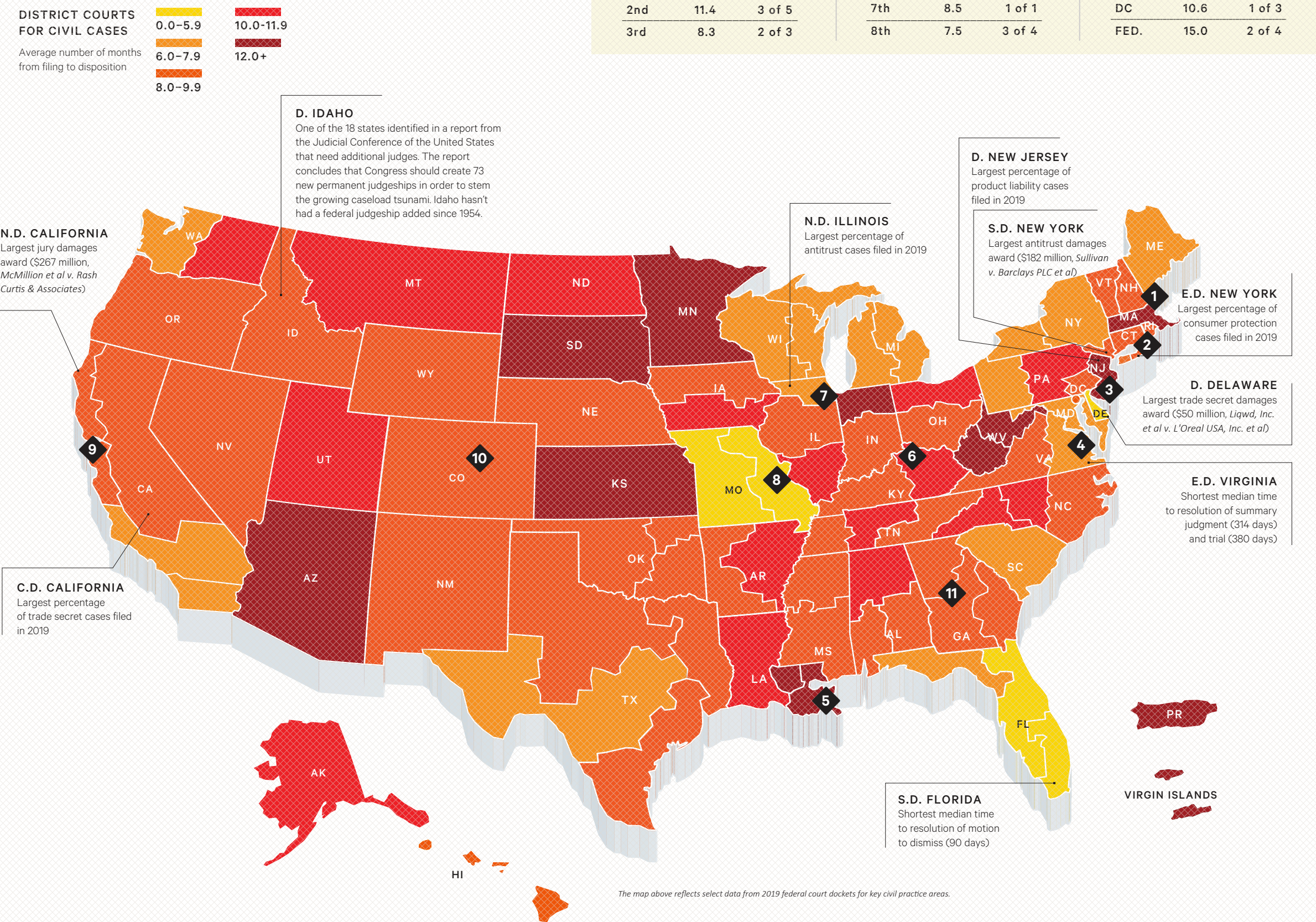
Over the past year, competition in the market for legal data analytics has continued to heat up, providing law firms with increasingly powerful tools to mine ever-more robust data sets from courts across the country. These sophisticated platforms enable attorneys to develop case strategies based on jurisdiction-specific insights into case timelines, outcomes, damages, and more.

But to provide *reliable* insights, it is critical that attorneys using these tools understand how they work and how to parse the underlying data. It is easy to make a broad generalization that the *average* case resolved in 2019 in the District of Massachusetts took nearly three years from filing to disposition. But this generalization papers over radical discrepancies between the speed of different judges’ dockets and different types of cases.

In the District of Massachusetts, the average time to termination falls from nearly three years to nine months if you exclude product liability cases. In the Eastern District of Louisiana, the average time to termination falls from 22 months to eight months if you exclude environmental cases. And in the District of Kansas, the average time to termination falls from 40 months to eight months if you exclude trademark cases.

The failure to understand and appreciate the nuances of data can easily lead counsel to draw inaccurate conclusions and provide inaccurate advice. The role of analytics tools will continue to grow in the coming year. But as always, these tools are only as good as the attorneys who use them.

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The map above reflects select data from 2019 federal court dockets for key civil practice areas.