5 Essential Legal Software for WFH and Remote Law Firms

COVID-19 has transformed remote working from an option to a necessity for many legal practices. To keep law firms up and running, leaders have had to implement remote processes so firm members can successfully complete their work from home as they comply with shelter-in-place orders.

While remote working arrangements involve numerous components, having the necessary tools is one of the most important. Without these resources, firm employees cannot perform their assigned tasks accurately and efficiently when working remotely.

This guide covers essential software for law firms that need to support remote work. These law firm software systems can help teams stay organized and keep work moving.

Practice and Case Management

At their core, law firms are businesses and they require effective management. With practice management software, law firm administrative members can continue running the business of the practice even when they are physically away from the office.

Even in the best of times, it can be challenging to manage a busy law practice. Add in the extra hurdles of remote work, and the task becomes even more demanding. Law practice management helps law firms meet those demands by streamlining their practices, so they can effectively serve their clients while simultaneously running a successful and profitable legal firm.

Along with managing the practice as a whole, law firms also need software that assists with the management of individual cases. While working from

home, firm members will likely work on numerous cases on any given day. Case management software helps the firm and staff members keep track of the tasks and budgets associated with each matter.

Some of the most popular practice management software include Practice Panther, 8am MyCase, and Amicus Attorney. Each of these options offers various features for office management, as well as case management. While they can be effective tools, some solo and small legal practices may find them cost-prohibitive.

A cost-effective option for practice management software is a billing software with practice management capabilities. TimeSolv offers law firms the ability to track time and complete invoicing processes even when the entire office is working remotely. With additional features like document management, a client portal, and project management capabilities, TimeSolv also provides law firms with tools they need for effective practice and case management.

Electronic Signatures

For law firms to last through an interruption in service, they must continue getting tasks and duties completed. The nature of legal practice often mandates a document-heavy environment — from intake forms to contract and court filings, which creates a need for effective electronic signature software.

With this software in place, law firms can gather signatures digitally from numerous parties, regardless of where they are physically located. Users add legally binding signatures to documents using a computer, tablet, or even a smartphone. With electronic signature software, there is no need for printing, scanning, or face-to-face interactions.

There are various electronic signature options on the market. When choosing the best software, lawyers need to think about such features as signature tracking, which provides status updates as signatures are added. It also notifies the attorney when all signatures are complete. Secure document management is also essential so that lawyers can safely archive signed documents and easily search for them as needed.

File Sharing

When working away from the physical office, law firms must maintain processes for quickly and securely sharing client and firm data. File sharing provides firm members with the ability to access files and other information remotely from a centralized database.

File sharing capabilities are also important to the task of sharing documents with clients. While many law firms use email to send clients information, this method often lacks adequate security measures. Even the privacy statements that many law firms include in their emails may not be enough protection. Encrypted email offers one of the best options to promote security, but unfortunately, many law firms fail to encrypt their email messages.

There are numerous file-sharing options on the market. When searching for the right software, law firms should consider:

- Encryption options
- Platform security measures
- Vendor reputation
- Permission settings

Time Tracking

As firm members work from home, it becomes extremely important for law firms to maintain policies that promote accurate time tracking. When timekeepers fail to track their tasks accurately, it results in lost revenues for the firm. Add in the distractions that can come along with remote working arrangements, and the need for time tracking software becomes even more apparent.

TimeSolv time tracking software provides a useful tool for all firm members, regardless of where they work. With the mobile app, timekeepers can track tasks from virtually anywhere in the world using a smartphone. Even without an internet connection, firm members can immediately track their time. The app automatically updates the firm system once an internet connection becomes available.

Billing

To keep thriving in a remote work environment, law firms must maintain their client billing tasks. This can become challenging when firm members are spread out among different locations, but the right billing software streamlines the process from tracked time to invoice delivery.

When operating remotely, law firms cannot afford to waste time and resources by sending late bills to clients. They need a comprehensive billing software that simplifies the procedures for timely invoicing and faster client payments.

TimeSolv legal billing software provides all the features law firms need to successfully complete the invoicing process when firm members are working remotely. From cloud storage and flexible templates to LEDES billing and easy-to-apply discounts, TimeSolv provides law firms with the billing tools they need for remote working success.

The Right Software for Successful Remote Work

When faced with the need for remote working, law firm leaders need these five essential software systems to help navigate the transition and keep the practice moving forward. To learn more about all the ways that TimeSolv billing software can help your law firm with remote working, click here for a free, no-obligation trial.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a freelance writer with a passion for law. Through her business, Personal Touch Edits, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to TimeSolv and a variety of other publications.

Q&A

Q: Why are practice and case management tools especially important for remote law firms?

A: Remote work makes it harder to coordinate administrative tasks, matter updates, budgets, and deadlines from a central office. Practice and case management software helps law firms keep the business side of the practice running while also allowing attorneys and staff to track tasks and information for individual matters from wherever they are working.

Q: What features should law firms look for in electronic signature software?

A: Law firms should look for electronic signature tools that support legally binding signatures, work across devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones, and include signature tracking. Secure document management is also important so signed documents can be safely archived and easily located later.

Q: Why might email be insufficient for sharing legal files remotely?

A: Standard email often lacks the security protections needed for sensitive client and firm data. Although many firms include privacy statements in emails, those statements may not provide enough protection. The post notes that encrypted email is a stronger option, but many firms do not consistently encrypt their messages.

Q: How does time tracking software help protect law firm revenue during remote work?

A: Accurate time tracking helps ensure that billable work is recorded and invoiced properly. Remote work can introduce distractions and make tracking less consistent, so time tracking software, especially mobile tools that work even without an internet connection, can reduce lost time and help preserve revenue.

Q: How can billing software support a law firm's remote operations?

A: Billing software helps move work from tracked time to invoice delivery even when firm members are in different locations. Features such as cloud storage, flexible templates, LEDES billing, and easy-to-apply discounts can help firms send timely invoices and encourage faster client payments.

These remote work tools for law firms can help leaders manage the transition and keep the practice moving forward.