Law firm billing: Increase profitability with efficient invoicing

When you think about increasing the profitability by enhancing your law firm billing, your mind probably goes to attracting more clients and bringing in more revenue. But administrative tasks, such as billing and invoicing, also have a significant effect on the level of profit your legal practices sees each year. If these duties are not carried out in an efficient and accurate manner, your firm may feel the pains of wasted time and unpaid invoices.

With the implementation of a sensible and streamlined invoicing process, you can promote efficient use of administrative time and timely payments from clients, which can translate into increased profits. The following are some tips to get you on the road to a structured and effective legal billing process.

Make it convenient

An organized billing process starts from the moment you or your attorneys complete a billable task. Expedient time tracking sets the stage for accuracy and timeliness throughout the billing cycle. But convenient time tracking is only possible when you provide your firm members with tools that are both accessible and easy to utilize.

Whether your attorneys are sitting at their office desk on a conference call or finishing a client call while waiting in traffic, they need access to proper time tracking tools. The right legal time tracking system makes this happen with the use of a mobile application.

A mobile app allows you to access your time to track from a smartphone or tablet, freeing you from the confines of the office desktop computer. With one touch, you can start a timekeeping device that will keep track of your

time while you complete the task at hand. You can also choose to manually record your time once the task is completed, even if there is no internet connection immediately available.

Make it easy

Legal billing is one of the most hated aspects of legal practice, and this is mainly due to the amount of time it can take to get it done. For a law firm that relies on manual tracking and paper invoices, the task may involve gathering tracked time, calculating increments, and creating numerous customized bills. This is a time-consuming process that can take you and your staff members away from more profitable tasks.

By simplifying the steps between time tracking and invoice creation, you can promote a more efficient billing process. Once again, this is a task that is made significantly easier with the right billing system. Legal billing software makes invoice generation quicker and easier for you and your administrative staff. For example, Time Solv legal billing allows you to:

- Convert tasks into billable time with the click of the mouse
- Use default tasks descriptions when entering billable time
- Create customized, reusable invoice templates
- Utilize LEDES billing codes
- Batch invoicing process to send all bills with one click of the mouse

Features, like Expense Tracking, also help streamline the invoicing process by keeping expenses organized and easily accessible for billing. It's no longer necessary to keep up with numerous receipts or rely on your unreliable memory when recording client expenses. The tracking system keeps all of your expenses in order to save time when invoicing time arrives.

The split billing option is another time saver, allowing you to easily divide an invoice for payment by numerous entities. All of these features work together to make the invoicing process simpler for you and your law firm staff.

Make it automated

How much time have you and your staff spent sending out billing reminders to clients with overdue invoices? Probably far too much. With automated billing reminders, your billing system allows you to set up prescheduled payment reminders that are sent to clients with overdue accounts. For example, you send out your invoices on the first of the month. At the same time, you set up a billing reminder to go out for invoices that remain unpaid for 14 days. On the 15th day of the month, without any additional work on your part, the system automatically resends the invoice to the client, with a friendly reminder that payment is due.

You can set up these reminders to go out as often as you deem appropriate – whether it's every 15 or 30 days. Just set it up once and you don't have to worry about it again, saving your firm valuable time and money.

Make it easy to pay

Clients are more likely to pay your invoices in a timely manner when provided with quick and easy payment methods. While many firms are still stuck in the days of paper checks and mailed payments, more profitable firms recognize the financial value of online access and credit card payments.

A client portal allows your clients to independently log into your system and view their individual accounts. They can easily see work completed on their cases and any pending invoices – all without having to spend time calling the office and speaking with you or a member of your administrative staff.

Through a collaboration with LawPay, TimeSolv's portal also allows clients to make invoice payments using their credit cards. You can even set up automated credit card deductions, to efficiently allow clients to fulfill affordable payment plans.

Make it happen

These are not difficult changes to make. With the implementation of a structured billing process, you can create a law firm environment that:

- Makes time tracking quick and convenient
- Takes the frustration out of the processes between time tracking and invoicing
- Streamlines the delivery of invoices to clients
- Provides a quick and convenient method of payment for clients

To learn more about the ways that TImeSolv helps you create a more efficient and profitable invoicing process, 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, The Legal Writing Studio, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to TimeSolv and a variety of other publications.