Why I'm Bullish on the Unbundling —and Rebundling—of Legal Billing

Over the last decade, the legal billing software market has been busy breaking big, complex systems into smaller tools built to do one job exceptionally well. Law firms embraced these point solutions because they brought more speed, flexibility, and depth than legacy all-in-one systems could provide.

Each tool did the job it was built to do and "unbundling" looked like progress. But it came at a price when the work had to move between them. They didn't communicate. They didn't integrate cleanly.

So firms inherited the work of re-entering data, cross-checking reports, and reconciling systems that should already agree.

The cloud legal billing market was so focused on solving the legacy problem that it created an even bigger connectivity problem in its wake.

Now, the pendulum is swinging toward rebundling. Firms still want the depth point solutions brought to the market, but they increasingly expect the full billing workflow to work as one system.

The question now is what that rebundling should look like. I believe the market is starting to give us a clear answer.

The Unbundling Was Necessary, and It Worked

Legacy systems as a whole weren't keeping up with the needs of modern law firms. Many were slow to adapt, hard to use, and too broad to go deep in the areas firms cared about most.

Cloud-based tools brought change the industry welcomed.

A practice could pick and choose stronger options for time tracking, invoicing, payments, accounting, and practice management. And that choice led to faster innovation in the market, more flexibility, and more control over how their technology supported the business.

Legal billing was at the forefront of that shift. Instead of accepting one system that handled every function adequately, firms could choose the strongest tool for each part of the process: time, invoices, payments.

At the time, that was exactly what the market needed.

What the Unbundling Left Behind

The problem was never that point solutions lacked value. It was that firms had to work harder to make them work together.

At first, that looked like a purely administrative cost: more logins, more vendors, more duplicate entry, and more reconciliation. Over time, those extra steps became accepted as a new part of law firm operations.

Whether it's moving a time entry into billing, matching an invoice to the right matter, or posting a payment back to the correct balance, someone at the firm ends up doing the heavy lifting to keep these separate systems aligned.

What we are seeing now is firms spending limited operational capacity on work their technology should already be handling.

That is integration debt. Firms pay it in staff time, slower billing cycles, weaker visibility, and more opportunities for error.

Rebundling Has to Solve the Workflow Problem

Rebundling is the market's move back toward more connected platforms after years of specialization. In legal billing, solving the disconnect means bringing the separate pieces of billing—time, invoicing, payments, matter data, and financial information—back into one coordinated workflow.

The keyword is connected. A long feature list is not enough. True integration happens underneath the interface, where data stays aligned and moves with the work.

That's the distinction buyers should pay attention to.

- Does the platform keep time, billing, payments, and financial data in sync?
- Does information carry through without someone entering it again?
- Do the reports line up because they're working from the same data?
- Can staff move from time entry to invoice to payment in one platform?

When the answer is yes, the workflow is connected and the admin starts to fall away. When the answer is no, the complexity is still there, just under one login.

Genuine rebundling keeps the depth firms gained from specialized tools and reconnects the work around it in one cohesive workspace.

Where the Legal Billing Market Is Now

Firms have paid the price for disconnected point solutions for years. Today, that’s changing how they evaluate solutions.

For years, the question was: Which tool is best at this one function?

Now, I hear a different one: Why are we still using five tools for one billing process?

Firm decision-makers are looking for fewer platforms that can cover more ground without weakening the functions they rely on daily.

I believe this shift will redefine the legal billing software market over the next three years. The technology has matured, buyers have become more discerning, and the cost of maintaining disconnected stacks has become too steep to ignore.

This new phase of legal technology consolidation will favor platforms that connect time, billing, payments, and financial data deeply enough to remove work from the process.

What This Means for Firms with Disconnected Stacks

Firms know fragmentation is costing them, but the source isn’t always obvious when the extra work feels like a normal part of running the practice.

Start paying attention to what happens between systems.

Look at where information gets re-entered, where reports need to be compared manually, where staff wait for another person to complete a handoff, and where errors surface because two systems hold different versions of the same information.

Those are signs that the stack is creating work instead of supporting it. Then, ask:

Which processes should be connected? For most firms, timekeeping, invoicing, payments, and financial reporting should move through the same workflow.

Which data needs to stay aligned? Matter details, balances, payments, and billing records should update together.

Where does removing a handoff matter most? Start wherever staff are re-entering information, comparing reports, or waiting on another system before the work can move forward.

Firms that answer those questions can reduce administrative effort, shorten billing cycles, and get a more complete view of work, revenue, and collections. We see this shift firsthand across the firms and billing workflows our teams support.

I'm bullish on rebundling because firms can have both: deep functionality and a connected workflow. We're already seeing both come together in platforms built around the full billing process, rather than a single piece of it.

From where I sit, that's what the next generation of legal billing looks like.

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