One Wrong Move Can Ruin It All – A Guide to Making Smart Legal Technology Decisions

The legal industry is steeped in tradition, so it comes as no surprise when the implementation of new legal technologies brings about small headaches. But, the opportunity for huge debilitating migraines also exists. While the expanding legal technology landscape has created benefits for legal professionals, it's also come with some stifling disadvantages.

On the positive side, it's brought about valuable tech tools that help innovate law offices and move the profession ahead. Yet, on the negative side, the quick growth of this industry has opened a space for companies that are not as professional or capable as they claim.

This article discusses problems that can arise with the wrong legal technology and some tips for making decisions that prevent these headaches.

The Worst-Case Scenarios

The wrong legal technology can wreak havoc on your law firm systems, impacting your ability to adequately practice law. These problems can arise in various forms, but here are some of the most common scenarios.

A virus

According to the ABA Legal Technology Survey Report, almost half of all law firms have been infected with viruses, with 45% of respondents reporting that their law firm technology had been infected. Smaller firms with less than 10 attorneys were most likely to be infected, while firms of 500 or more attorneys were least likely. Almost a

third of respondents were unsure whether their firm had been infected or not.

Of the reported issues, about half of the affected firms reported that the virus caused no serious data breaches. However, they did experience a loss of billable hours due to downtime, considerable repair fees, and a temporary loss of their network access. About 6% of respondents reported the destruction or loss of files due to the virus, and a small percentage reported that the virus resulted in unauthorized data access.

Legal tech viruses can occur when the service provider fails to employ adequate security measures and ensure the safety of their product. When providing services to law firms, tech companies need to put measures in place that reflect the unique security needs of the legal industry.

Selling your data

Your goals and the goals of your tech provider may be different. In fact, the objectives of your tech provider may be unethical and even illegal. Once a provider gains your trust and access to your system, they can install spyware or malware onto your system for the purpose of capturing valuable data and selling it to the highest paying identity thief.

The consequences of this type of breach can be huge. Valuable law office data and confidential client data may be compromised, costing you clients, money, and your firm's reputation. While this type of legal tech problem rarely occurs, law offices must recognize the possibility and act accordingly.

Overbudget

Sometimes, new legal technology ends up costing a firm far more money than expected. Some service providers attract small and mid-sized firms with promises of low-cost services. Law firms purchase these resources, only to find that they end up being much more costly than expected.

For example, many of the legacy law firm billing systems require a server on site. For a law firm that doesn't already have a dedicated server, purchasing and installing one can potentially cost thousands of dollars. Add in the cost of maintenance and you have an expense that far outweighs the value of

the technology. Unexpected costs can also arise from convoluted systems that cannot be utilized by law firm staff members, as well as costly updates and upgrades to the technology.

TimeSolv legal billing system understands the consequences of unexpected expenses for legal technology – especially for smaller sized firms. That's why they price their services at an affordable level with updates and upgrades included.

Staff sabotage

The dangers of legal technology may also lurk inside of your law office, with staff members who are unable or unwilling to learn the technology. According to technical experts, internal staff sabotage is one of the most common sources of technology failure.

One reason for this may be staff members who are comfortable with the old methods and afraid to implement new systems. They know how to do their jobs with your current technologies – or lack thereof – and they would rather stay using those present methods than learn new ones.

Making Smart Legal Tech Decisions

It is possible to avoid these worst-case scenarios with some preparation and prevention. These tips can help you make smart legal technology decisions:

- Do your research. Don't make quick decisions without doing your due diligence and examining all aspects of the technology you're considering. Carefully review numerous customer reviews and ask colleagues for recommendations.
- Look for a partner. Legal tech providers become an integral part of your law firm and its success. Look for organizations that are genuinely interested in providing your law office with useful technology.
- Demos and free trials. Once you've narrowed down the list of contenders, take advantage of free trials and demos offered by the provider. These resources provide a valuable sneak peek at the service and its fit with your law firm.
- Compare service contracts. Remember that initial cost only tells half of the story. Review and compare service contracts, so you know what to

expect should problems with the technology arise in the future.

Legal technology can add necessary innovations to any law firm, but you must choose the right technology, so you don't end up with one of these disastrous situations. Take the time to do your research and identify the right legal tech company. Otherwise, you may end up with lost data, system viruses, and unexpected costs.

TimeSolv is a legal technology with a proven track record of success and satisfied clients. With consistently high ratings for security, cost, and customer service, the company prides itself on providing clients with the high value legal time tracking and billing at an affordable cost.