



ELIMINATE SMALL FIRM GROWING PAINS WITH TECHNOLOGY

Learn more about today's cloud
computing solutions for law firms.



Eliminate Small Firm Growing Pains with Technology

Successful solos often find that they need to add staff to keep up with increased business. Whether the first addition is an administrative assistant, a paralegal, or another lawyer, a growing firm can expect many process changes to happen right away.

These changes can involve some growing pains, but selecting and utilizing the right technology can smooth the way. And, before you know it, a successful solo can transform into a successful small firm, with two to five people collaborating on documents, sharing calendars, and benefiting from a streamlined billing process.

Collaborate with Ease

In the old days, someone who wanted to collaborate on a document would email it to someone else. That person would make changes to the document and send it back. Everyone knows the hassles this process causes: Which document is the most recent version? Have everyone's changes been incorporated into the document?

Now, cloud solutions make collaboration and file-sharing much easier. Some basic options that small practices often use include Dropbox, Google Drive, and Microsoft's OneDrive. By accessing shared folders in these solutions, multiple people can make changes directly to documents. These options also benefit those who work from multiple devices, as they make it possible for users to see the most up-to-date version of a document from any device on which the appropriate software or application is loaded.

However, using these basic options--instead of a cloud solution specifically designed for lawyers--can mean exposing data to security vulnerabilities, which include data breaches, data loss, account hijacking, and insecure interfaces, according to a recent report by the [Cloud Security Alliance](#).

And, because these solutions aren't fail-safe, it's important that users back up data by maintaining local files or making an additional copy of data to store on an external hard drive. That means that all of the usual back-up difficulties still exist: People forget to do it, or they simply don't have the time to spend on daily back-up procedures.



Despite those risks, many small practices successfully use Dropbox, Google Drive, and OneDrive to share files and collaborate.

Shared Calendars

Collaboration isn't just about sharing documents; it's also about knowing others' availability. If an assistant can't see partners' schedules, that makes it difficult for him/her to manage appointments.

There are a couple of methods by which a small group of people can share calendars. One is through Office 365. Within that system, a user can share a "read only" version of his/her calendar with select people, revealing only the relevant information and setting personal items to "private." Or, users can delegate access to their calendar to someone, such as an administrative assistant, who can then make changes to the calendar.

Google has a shared calendar function, as well, but it can be difficult to run a practice off of Gmail because it doesn't offer the same functionality as a system built specifically for law firms.

Capturing Time and Running an Accounting System

As a solo transitions to becoming a small firm, the administrative details can get overwhelming. That's why an administrative assistant is often the first new hire. But, putting someone in that role generally means dismissing casual and outmoded methods of accounting and tracking time. By systematizing accounting and time-tracking, attorneys can offload those processes entirely to an assistant, without having to spend precious time explaining scrawled post-it notes and hastily constructed spreadsheets.

QuickBooks is the choice that the greatest percentage of small practices make for accounting software. Because of that, most time and billing software, like Tabs3 and Timeslips, integrates with QuickBooks, which means all pertinent information is in one place and doesn't have to be input multiple times.

Ready to Grow?

When a solo begins to grow into a small firm, technology can make life easier. Sometimes, though, cobbling a technology solution together out of many parts can be frustrating, and you might not cover all the gaps. Many people find that they want help making the right decisions. Legal Workspace's consultants can help lawyers build a secure and stable solution that meets their needs.



Because of Legal Workspace’s automated daily back-up and attention to security, the problems that might arise from using a more generalized cloud solution for collaboration don’t exist. Additionally, Legal Workspace integrates with all of the most popular legal software, including accounting and time-tracking programs. That means that you can have a seamless system without having to put it together yourself.

When a solo starts to grow, its needs change. Adding new staff can mean tech headaches. Or, it can mean upgrading to a system that works well and requires no special IT knowledge--or extra time.

Legal Workspace is a pioneer in cloud-based work environments and data storage designed specifically for law firms. Learn more or arrange a free demo at legal-workspace.com. [Click here](#) to watch our video.