



# LAW FIRM IT RESOLUTIONS IN 2015

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2015.



## Law Firm IT Resolutions in 2015

You've probably thought about how many new clients you'd like to add, who might be made partner and how many associates the firm should take on in 2015. But just as important are your firm's IT needs over the next 12 months. How much thought have you given to the viability of your data backups, service or support contracts for your business-critical software... or even if that software is the most up-to-date?

As we look to the New Year, now is the time to think about every aspect of your firm's operations and take stock. Your IT operations are no exception. It's time to make sure everything is working as smoothly as possible and assess any changes to be made – whether those are necessary changes like required software updates or other changes that could create gains in efficiency and cost savings.

### Software Updates

#### Maintenance Assurance Plans

Going into the New Year is a good time to review your maintenance plans and service agreements. If, when you purchased the software, you also signed up for a maintenance assurance plan, you may be entitled to automatic (not to mention free) updates to your business applications. Check the website and your agreement and add reminders for those updates to your calendar to ensure you have the newest versions when they release. On that note, if you haven't followed up on those updates in the last year, now's a good time to see which ones you're entitled to, but missed.

#### Payroll

If you use an accounting software package, and especially if you do payroll in-house, that software must be updated annually to stay current with the latest tax codes. QuickBooks provides a [web page](#) to keep users updated on the latest version.

If you use a solution other than QuickBooks, check your software vendor's support site for links to updates that will bring the tax codes up to speed.

#### End-of-Life

Software vendors only support products for a certain amount of time after their release. Generally, you get a five-to-ten-year window in which a company will continue to provide updates, patches and baseline support.

### **Did you know?**

Microsoft retired support for Office 2003 and Windows XP this past April. If you're still using Office 2003, you'll be increasingly at risk of software incompatibilities, bugs and malware that would otherwise be covered by patches and service packs.

If you're still using Office 2003 or Windows XP, it's time to start thinking about an upgrade (besides – think of all the new features you've been missing out on the past 11 years).

For WordPerfect users, Corel provides updates and support to the current and previous versions of their products only. So if you're using WordPerfect X6 or X7, you're covered. If you're using X5 and older versions, your product's life-cycle is done. You can verify your version and check for patches and updates on Corel's [website](#).

For other applications, check the support section of the product website to learn more about their policies for patches and service packs.

## Restore Backup Tests

It's one thing to backup your data every night. It's another thing to know for sure that you'll be able to restore that data. Would you be willing to erase all your data right now and restore your latest backup to replace it? If the answer is "no," then you may need to switch to another backup solution.

Erase that doubt by performing periodic backup and restore tests to an alternate server (not the live server you use for day-to-day operations). Hopefully, all goes well and your sense of security in your backups is renewed.

Any number of things can go wrong with a backup. You may find that your backup software has failed, or that you're not backing up the entire database. You may also run into software incompatibilities between old backups and software that you've recently upgraded. Or you may find that no one knows the password to the encrypted files any more.

Conducting regular backup and restore tests will tell you if you're backing up your system correctly and help you plan for possible disasters. After discovering any problems, a restore test allows you to make upgrades to your backup drives or network components so that restoring from backup is successful when it really counts.

## Setting Your 2015 IT Budget

Most importantly, now's the time to look at what you spent on IT in 2014 and assess what changes or upgrades will be necessary in 2015 so you can budget accordingly. Ask yourself questions like:

What did you spend on support?

What software are you going to be required to upgrade because your old version is at its end-of-life?

What system upgrades do you need to make to keep things running smoothly?

Now's the time to plan for these expenses. Below is a common break down of a law firm's IT budget for 2015:

Support: 28%

Server and Desktop Maintenance: 19%

Software Licensing: 9%

Hardware: 26%

Secure Room for Server Equipment: 5%

On- and Off-site Data Backup Solution: 13%

To learn more about simplifying your IT budget in the New Year, refer to this [infographic](#).

All of these tasks and considerations are critical components of running any business. As a law firm, however, you have an extra obligation to ensure that your client and firm data remain secure. Depending on the size of your firm, making sure that you stay on top of IT support and management can be a full time job – even for a fully staffed IT department.

If any or all of these tasks seem overwhelming or outside of your firm's budget or capabilities, we invite you to have a conversation with Legal Workspace. Our remote legal environment with data storage addresses all of the IT issues you will need to budget for and take on in 2015.



With our law firm cloud solutions, all of your legal applications and data reside on our secure servers. With us, you have access to our suite of firm management, document creation and case management applications.

Our turnkey cloud solution for law firms mean you won't need to hire an IT person, invest in equipment and hardware, or worry about managing IT issues. Legal Workspace gives you 24-7 support from legal IT experts who know your programs and the software you're running. That means a lot less to worry about in the New Year.

Here's to a full caseload, productive new partners, enthusiastic associates and an efficient IT implementation in 2015.

*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](http://legal-workspace.com). [Click here](#) to watch our video.*