Transforming Your Legal Practice in 2021: Innovation and Tech

Empowering law firms with a unified IT support system of modern technology

White Paper

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Introduction

Legal practices have evolved significantly in light of recent legal innovation and technology advancements. Communication, digital compliance, data storage, and data security are all critical to the success of law firms that keep up with the times.

However, it is crucial to understand that the new systems and processes are only as good and secure as the technologies that empower them.

Technology and legal innovation go hand in hand, which is why this white paper will set out to help readers understand the importance of technological transformation in legal practices and how to go about it.

Let's discuss [the impact of technology on legal profession](#) and how you can transform your legal practice to stay relevant now and in the future.

Changes in Law Firm Technology

Law firm technology has revolutionized the way firms find clients, store data, and retrieve it as required. Modern legal document preparation software and other AI technology have made it easier than ever to find casework, scan legal documents, and streamline communications.

In general, due to the advancement in the cloud storage system, law firms can securely store data there. Most law firms have shifted from using internal support and IT teams to maintain their software and data centers. Now, they are relying on cost-effective and easily accessible SaaS solutions and cloud hosting services.

Cybersecurity has also become important as cyber-attacks are, unfortunately, becoming more and more common, and the systems hackers use are pretty advanced. This means that law firms need to apply cybersecurity measures to protect their data.

Workflow automation is also now commonplace in most industries, especially law. This is to create a more efficient system and the operational costs saved through hyper-automation, which is [predicted to be reduced by 30%.](#)

Legal innovation and technology have been primarily held in high regard since the COVID-19 pandemic. The days of judges conducting status conferences in-person so that litigants and their counsel could check-in are long gone, replaced by phone check-ins instead. Many civil hearings are being heard in the court via Zoom, and online mediation is encouraged.

Attorneys have been conducting virtual meetings with clients, notarizing documents, arguing cases virtually, and practicing remotely. In fact, [a survey found that over 70% of legal practices agree](#) about the lasting effect that COVID-19 will have on the functioning of courts and law firms.

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Data Security and Communication

In recent years, more importance has been put on data security in law firms. They hold a lot of sensitive data that their clients have entrusted them with. The ABA Cybersecurity Tech Report from 2019 claimed that over 26% of legal practices had experienced data breaches of some form.

Data security is a serious issue that has prompted the need for advanced law firm technology. Also, law firms are ethically obligated to protect their clients' data according to several laws. The main change in this realm has been to use law firm cloud software to store data and save it.

A Thomson Reuters Law Firm Technology survey that reported the largest concern (see chart below) for law firm leaders around technology is, in fact, the security of the data housed inside the firm. Password protection, access control, and encryption are some key measures that are put into place to do so.

Interoperability challenges and plans to solve challenges
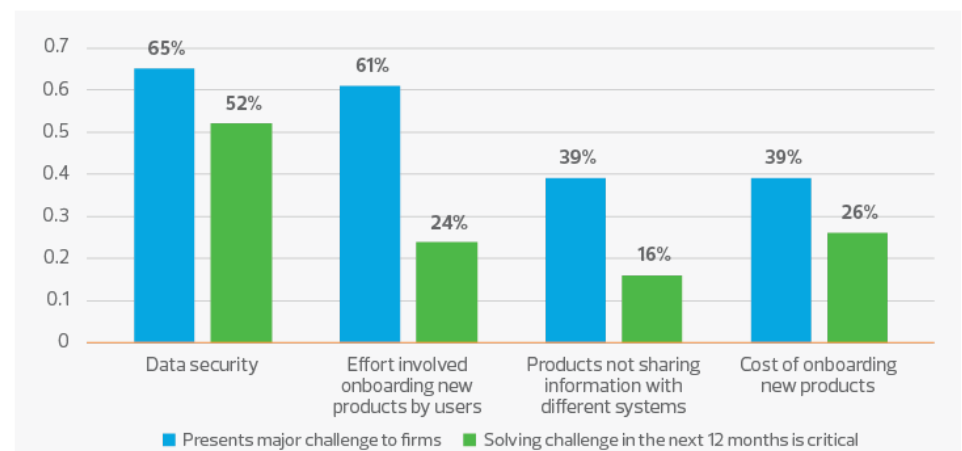
Source: Business and professional services industry outlook

There are also several changes in law firms in the way of communication. Electronic communication between lawyers with their clients has been established since the 1990s. In fact, email is a widely accepted mode of communication.

However, emails aren't a viable option because they aren't very secure; some go so far as to say that they are the same as sending a handwritten postcard. That is why, for practical and ethical reasons, people are choosing more secure channels to communicate.

Email is risky and can be easily hacked or intercepted, and even using encrypted email does not entirely get rid of these issues.

Outsourcing Technology Solutions

Law firms are notorious for being tech-averse, which is why more and more firms have now been embracing technological solutions so that they can boost productivity and streamline workflow. It also allows for better relations with clients, better performance, and increased ROI.

The solution to incorporating tech trends is to outsource selectively. Law firms focus on providing timely services and support to their clients. Third-party companies have the expertise and tools needed to improve legal processes. These legal tech vendors allow you to get accurate and speedy results without creating an entire department and allocating resources to do so.

Outsourcing legal software and services will also ensure that your data is secure. These services use powerful internal servers that deploy added security measures such as built-in firewalls to guarantee that your documents are safe from unauthorized access.

Legal document preparation software is also available to make the process of researching and getting paperwork together a lot simpler and timely.

Additionally, communication channels can also be outsourced. Client portals have been introduced in many practices because they are secure, user-friendly, and safe. Solutions such as these can help you collaborate and communicate with clients online while preserving confidential information.

Boosting Business Productivity with CRA

The changing technological trends in the legal field and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have made it integral for law firms to transform themselves and make the needed changes.

Our team at CRA has delivered exceptional workplace technology solutions for 25 years, with managed IT services New York businesses rely on for all of their technology needs. These solutions optimize productivity, strengthen customer relationships, enhance data sharing and drive profitability.

For information on law firm technology that can enhance your practices, contact us today.

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Corporate Headquarters

729 7th Avenue, New York, NY 10019 – 212-376-4040 – www.consultcra.com – hello@consultcra.com