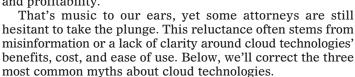# LAWYERS JOURNAL

LAW PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Cloud technology myth-busting: Three truths about the cloud's impact on law firm efficiency

By Morgan Martinez

Times are changing.

Gmail and Google Drive. Dropbox. Amazon Web Services. Some of our most ubiquitous technology tools are cloud computing services.

So it comes as no surprise that most lawyers are transitioning data storage and essential workflows to the cloud. In fact, using internet-enabled software as a service (SaaS) tools to automate and streamline time tracking, billing and invoicing, calendaring, and similar workflows can increase law firm efficiency and profitability.

That's music to our ears, yet some attorneys are still hesitant to take the plunge. This reluctance often stems from misinformation or a lack of clarity around cloud technologies' benefits, cost, and ease of use. Below, we'll correct the three most common myths about cloud technologies.

Myth: Cloud software isn't secure

A locked filing cabinet or a password-protected computer folder may seem like a secure document storage solution. But can it compete with bank-grade security?

The best SaaS tools use 256-bit encryption – the same type used by banks and financial institutions. In addition, this software allows you to control access to confidential information and track who accesses files.

You can also mitigate the risk of lost data with automatic updates. That means no more worrying about losing valuable files if a computer goes down.

Myth: Cloud technology is expensive, especially for smaller firms

SaaS software allows solo practitioners, small, and mid-sized firms to access resources that may otherwise be cost-prohibitive. For example, you may not be able to afford an in-house accountant but you can use legal accounting software to track your law firm's finances, reconcile transactions, and stay compliant when managing trust accounts.

Many of these SaaS tools are very affordable because they're offered on a subscription basis – typically monthly or

Morgan Martinez

annually. Providers may also charge per user, such as $50 per month per user. This pricing structure offers a suite of benefits:

• No large upfront costs – Smaller, consistent fees can help your law firm access essential resources while managing cash flow. Cha-ching!

• Flexibility to scale your usage – For instance, if your law firm grows and more attorneys need access to time-tracking software, you can simply add additional users. If you downsize your team, you can reduce the number of users instead of paying for software that you're not using. We've never heard cost-effectiveness sound so good.

Myth: Cloud software isn't worth it

Also known as "cloud technology won't impact our bottom line that much, anyway." No disrespect, but we beg to differ.

• Law firms that accept online payments get paid 32% faster than those that don't.

• More than 60% of people said their law firm collected more money due to online payment processing software.

• 54% of firms captured more leads using online (software-enabled) client intake forms. Additionally, 94% of legal professionals said document management software made document sharing easier, and 92% believed it facilitated document collaboration.

• Attorneys who use SaaS tools can see a 38% average increase in caseloads and gain 3+ billable hours per day.

The research is clear: Cloud-enabled technology can help law firms be more profitable and productive. Another myth bites the dust.

What does this mean?

"Cloud software" may sound like scary sci-fi, but chances are good that you've already used it in everyday life. For example, when checking your email, saving photos to your Apple iCloud, connecting with friends on Facebook, listening to music on Spotify, or conducting banking transactions online – you're using cloud software.

Using everyday legal SaaS tools is just as simple. Most importantly, these tools can make your life easier and your

firm more efficient and profitable. These are just a few examples of effective cloud software features for lawyers:

- Time tracking
- Billing and invoicing
- LawPay online payments
- Legal accounting
- Calendaring
- Document management
- Client intake forms
- eSignature
- Client Portal

To see how cloud technology can help your firm meet its financial goals this year get your 10-day free trial of MyCase now.

And don't forget to schedule your demo of LawPay, the online legal payments solution that is trusted by more than 150,000 lawyers. LawPay and MyCase seamlessly integrate, so you can manage your caseload and securely accept payments all in one place. ■

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