

The NETWORK

INTEGRATING

KNOWLEDGE

AND

CONNECTIONS

Cloud Strategies for Small & Medium Sized Law Firms

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Late Because...



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Member Milestones

THE NETWORK IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

South Florida Chapter,
The Association of Legal
Administrators

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THE NETWORK

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IT'S FALL! VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

MARIE COLÓN, LITTLER MENDELSON

Can you believe we are already into the fall season?! This means back-to-school and getting ready for those upcoming end-of-year projects and budgets – can't wait!

Going into the fall also reminds me of our chapter's altruism and what we can do as members to help. Each year, our chapter participates in several charitable causes. Last June, chapter members volunteered to do a house makeover benefiting His House Children's Home and in July, our chapter members were able to donate a van full of school supplies which benefited our local school, Miami Carol City High School. We have more wonderful charitable opportunities coming up. On October 30, 2016, the South Florida Chapter will be a "Rest Stop Sponsor" for the Freedom Ride, a ride to benefit wounded military veterans at the Homestead Miami Speedway. We will also be participating in Pino Strong's HeroBox Holiday Care Packages for our military (date to be announced).

Many of us are very fortunate to have the resources needed to take care of ourselves and our family. Sometimes we need to stop and be thankful for all we have and think of others who are not as fortunate. One of the highest priorities of our chapter is giving back to our community. We need volunteers like you to continue to support these charitable events. Please consider volunteering. You can even make this a family event by bringing them along. If you have teenagers, like me, these charitable events can be considered volunteer hours for them. It has been a humbling experience for my daughters to see the difference their time makes to others in need.

Another great perk of volunteering is that you get to network with other administrators and business partners in a casual setting. I personally have forged many new friendships as a result of this.

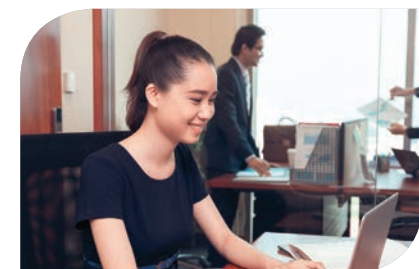
Soon you will see chapter emails asking for volunteers; please do not disregard these. All we need is your time and effort. Together we can all make an impact and ultimately make a difference!

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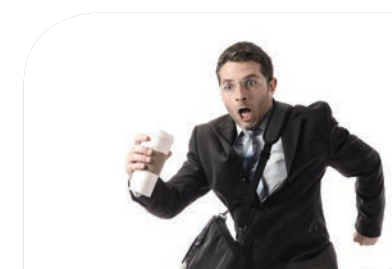
Cloud Strategies for Small & Medium Sized Law Firms

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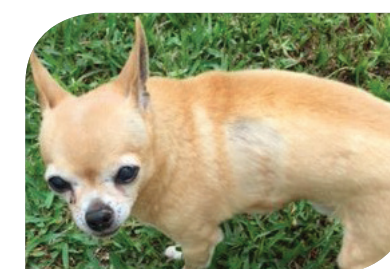
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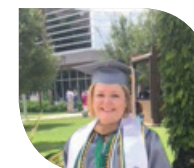
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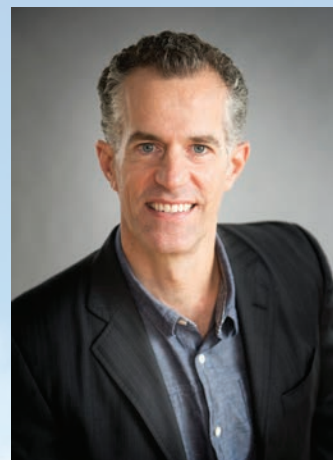
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CLOUD STRATEGIES FOR SMALL & MEDIUM SIZED LAW FIRMS



By: Peter Rabbino
Legal Computer
Consultants (LCC)



Only a few years ago, almost every case management, time and billing, accounting, document management and practice specific software application had to be installed on an in-house server, customized by a local expert, backed up locally and deployed to each user's PC. Applications and data remained in the firm's possession.

Today, there is a myriad of excellent third-party cloud-based solutions for hosting your data and for every software function. Access is as simple as opening a web page. Version updates and new functionality just appear when you next login. Most applications are accessible on smartphones. And everything should remain secure and accessible, even when the local network becomes unavailable due to a natural disaster or even a simple power outage.

A thoughtful Internet cloud strategy for your law firm presents opportunities to increase functionality, lower operating costs, improve disaster recovery and business continuity capabilities and even enhance data security. But determining the most appropriate cloud solution strategy for your firm can be a daunting challenge.

Unlike the financial and health care industries, the legal profession does not have a specific data security compliance standard and there is no oversight agency. Determining reasonable care for securing clients' privileged data is unclear. Responsibility for client-privileged data is an evolving science and law firms need to be vigilant and proactive to mitigate their exposure.

[Continued on next page >](#)

THINK AHEAD

Today's best solution may not be tomorrow's. A plan for migrating data and terminating service with a cloud solution provider should be in place before there is an issue.

A firm's responsibility has special considerations when saving client-privileged data on "the cloud."

The Internet cloud simply refers to servers accessible through the Internet. If your firm can remotely access its data and applications via the office server, technically, your firm is part of the cloud. Securing remote access to the firm's network is critically important. Best practice includes a third party penetration test, security threat assessment and a cyber-security policy evaluation.

Hosting data on a third party's cloud requires its own unique due diligence. Most third party cloud solution providers are going to have better firewalls, more redundancy and closer monitoring of systems than a typical law

firm that has its servers located onsite. But there are new risks to consider when migrating to the cloud.

According to the Florida Bar Ethics opinion on cloud computing, cloud solution providers given responsibility for client-privileged data should be domestically-based and subject to U.S. laws. Operations should also be domestic and respective servers should be in domestic secure co-location facilities.

It is prudent to research the company's operations. Every company will tell you they are a successful business... until they are not. Imagine going to look up client records, calendars or contact information only to find that the company hosting all your firm's data is suddenly out of business. A slick website does not necessarily correlate

to a company's size or success. Be cautious about contracting with startups and very small companies.

Today's best solution may not be tomorrow's. A plan for migrating data and terminating service with a cloud solution provider should be in place before there is an issue.

Understand the process to request an export of your data, ask what format your data will be exported, get commitments for their timeline to provide your data and agree on any associated costs. Frequent scheduled downloads of your data should be conducted for purposes of having your backups in your possession and to test data recovery procedures.

You may want to know what a cloud provider would do if they received a government subpoena for

your data. Would they hand it over without giving you an opportunity to object? Would they even tell you?

And hacking happens. Even if a cloud provider assures you that they take every precaution against being hacked, ask about their disclosure policy in the event they do detect an intrusion.

A cloud provider claiming 99% uptime still indicates a potential of 1% downtime (that's 80+ hours each year). In addition to learning about the functionality, support and costs when shopping for a cloud provider, also ask other users about past outage frequency and duration.

Encrypting your files hosted on the cloud is an important layer of security that can be easily added. Encryption secures data by requiring

a password to unlock files.

There are several encryption solutions that are inexpensive and demonstrate your commitment to security to your clients. Deployment is easy. For example, files saved on DropBox, GoogleDrive and OneDrive can be encrypted with www.sookasa.com.

By default, cloud hosted applications provide 24/7 availability from anywhere.

Consider implementing "access controls" for users that should only access files and applications inside the office or only during certain hours. Each staff should have a unique ID and complex passwords. Consider multi-factor authentication and ask what login auditing functions are in place.

In the past, Internet outages and bottlenecks usually only delayed email. Today,

most phone systems and all cloud solutions depend on solid Internet performance. Consider dedicated circuits for phone and data to be configured as failover redundancy for each other. Fiber circuits are fast and dependable. Other providers are less expensive and available in more locations. Employing a dual-WAN router to manage traffic between both circuits provides performance and Internet redundancy.

There are cloud solutions to replace most on-premise software functionality. Moving to the cloud is inevitable for almost every law firm software function, but this paradigm shift requires thoughtful due diligence and smart planning.

Peter Rabbino is a founding principal with Legal Computer Consultants. Legal Computer Consultants provides comprehensive technology solutions for South Florida law firms. www.LegalComputer.com

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Less Is More: The Modern Attorney to Support Staff Ratio

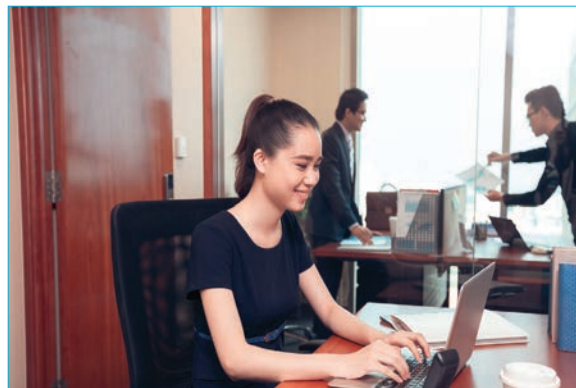
By Lourdes Sanders
Office Administrator, Broad and Cassel

One might say that an attorney to support staff ratio of 3:1, 4:1, or even as high as 7:1 is becoming the “new norm” at many law firms and in recent years several firms have done without or laid off support staff at a higher rate than attorneys.

Typically, legal secretaries have been, and in many cases, continue to be a critical component of the law firm support system. However, the competence of the legal secretary position has been significantly affected by technology and a new era of attorneys that are more independent and tech-savvy. The availability and presence of such resources has resulted in firms adapting to a new leaner standard attorney to secretary ratio and, in some cases, the secretary position has become obsolescent as a result of these changes.

Space planning has equally been affected by attorney to legal secretary ratios, depending on the firm, city and even state. In many offices,

it is the norm to assign secretaries their own cubicles or space. Modern developments have brought forth the concept of collaborative floor plans. For instance, firms will utilize a workstation that allows legal secretaries to work as a team, accommodating two or more secretaries within the same area. When considering this team approach, legal secretaries are not assigned to a specific attorney, but instead attorneys delegate work to the secretary on a first come, first serve basis. Naturally, this method allows the flexibility of having to occupy less square footage and office space, ensuring less leasing cost.



The reality is that each practice and its attorneys utilize secretaries differently and when calculating attorney to support staff ratios, the attorneys’ responsibilities combined with work load and needs should be taken into careful consideration.

While there is no right or wrong answer to what criteria meets every firm’s unique situation, finding the right balance is critical for the evolving role of the legal secretary. As space planning, technology and other factors apply their relentless pressure, firms must make tactful accommodations to provide optimal support to the organization and its various types of personnel.

Bottom line, despite challenges presented by the current legal market and the role of the legal secretary, attorneys require effective and efficient support for their practice and will likely always need skilled and dedicated support personnel, adeptly by legal secretaries.








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Sorry, but I Was Late Because...

By Lilly Torres, Office Administrator, Pathman Lewis, LLP
Editor-In-Chief, The Network

It's one of the banes of our existence as legal managers: the notorious late-comer. While dealing with late-comers is handled in various ways depending on your office's policies and the basis of each instance, it never ceases to amaze me the creative excuses that legal administrators and managers are given from those employees that couldn't make it into the office before the chime of the proverbial bell.

I asked some of our fellow ALA South Florida Chapter members to share the most wild excuses they received by tardy employees. Here are some of the responses I received:

"I was arrested."

"I was passing a kidney stone."

"My Chihuahua needed a dental cleaning."

"My cat gave birth last night; I'm exhausted."

"My 4 year old didn't want to wake up to go to daycare, so I felt bad and decided to let her sleep in."

"My 19 year old had a cold."



Whether there's credence to your employees' excuses or not, sometimes we'll never really know. Consider the following:

- Have a tardy policy in place and confirm all employees are aware of it and know the consequences for not adhering to it.
- Flexible schedules or offering later start times along with later leave times for select and vetted employees – which are becoming the norm and can result in a win-win solution.



2016 Chapter Leadership Institute Fort Worth, Texas

Some of our very own ALASOFLA Chapter Board and Committee members braced the sweltering Texas summer heat to attend this year's CLI! ALA's Chapter Leadership Institute (CLI) is an orientation, training and networking event for chapter officers and volunteer leaders. Lookin' hot, ya'll!

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A Sort of Miracle Morning

by Bernadette E. Peters, CLM, COO, Horr, Novak & Skipp, P.A.

I just finished reading a wonderful book “The Miracle Morning: The Not-So-Obvious Secret Guaranteed to Transform Your Life” by Hal Elrod. I’m always interested in finding ways to be more productive and love to read about self-improvement. This is a really good book, filled with useful and inspiring information and I highly recommend it. I was especially interested in his concept of getting the things important to you done first thing in the morning. It is similar to the theory of paying yourself first. This is especially helpful for me now that I live in Broward and commute to Dadeland. If I don’t do it early – it’s not getting done.

The idea is to get up earlier than you normally do, and take the time to work on personal development. He lists a lot of very successful people who are early risers. Getting up in the morning is not my favorite thing, but I figured I would give it a try. You meditate, read affirmations, visualize your goals, exercise and read. The acronym for this is SAVER – Silence, Affirmations, Visualization, Exercise

and Reading. All good stuff and I thought I would start the month of July with my first Miracle Morning.

There’s a cardinal rule known by anyone who has run any races – never wear new shoes the day of the race. They are an unknown and can cause blisters and other problems – use your familiar old and probably smelly sneakers you trained in. It’s a metaphor for many other things as well. I should have known better than to try a new alarm program the night before launching my first Miracle Morning. I had downloaded what looked to be a wonderful app – and it really was – it enabled you to wake to mountain sounds, beaches, rainforests or any music you’d like on your playlist. I had a morning playlist already with motivating songs so I was psyched. Great way to start the day! And it would have been had the bloody alarm actually worked. So, instead of waking to inspirational music at 5:00am, I rolled over at 6:15 and bolted out of bed in a state of panic. Not an auspicious beginning.

I frantically proceeded with feeding the dogs and letting them out, the usual first thing in the morning chore, and figured I still had time to do a quick Miracle Morning. I just had to be efficient. After feeding them, having a glass of water and cup of coffee, I was ready to commence with stage one of the SAVER program: silence, also known as meditation. I proceeded to my couch where I sat upright and focused on my breathing...and noticed right away that I had the loudest ticking clock in the world hanging on my wall. Never mind...focus on breathing...in for a count of three...out for a count of three. That’s when it happened. I have two dogs, one is a “Dorky” – a miniature dachshund, yorkie mix (Guinness) and the other is a chihuahua who is 15 and who has dementia (Bailey). Bailey has this wonderful habit of starting to yowl for no reason. Think of the sounds made during The Exorcist and you get the idea.

There I am, sitting and trying to focus on my breathing and I hear – tic toc, tic toc, EEAWYOOOO – WOOAHHHOO -tic toc, EEAWWWAHHH – you get the idea. Focusing on my breath went right out the window. Guinness was with Bailey and an inspection confirmed what I thought – he was fine and was seeing

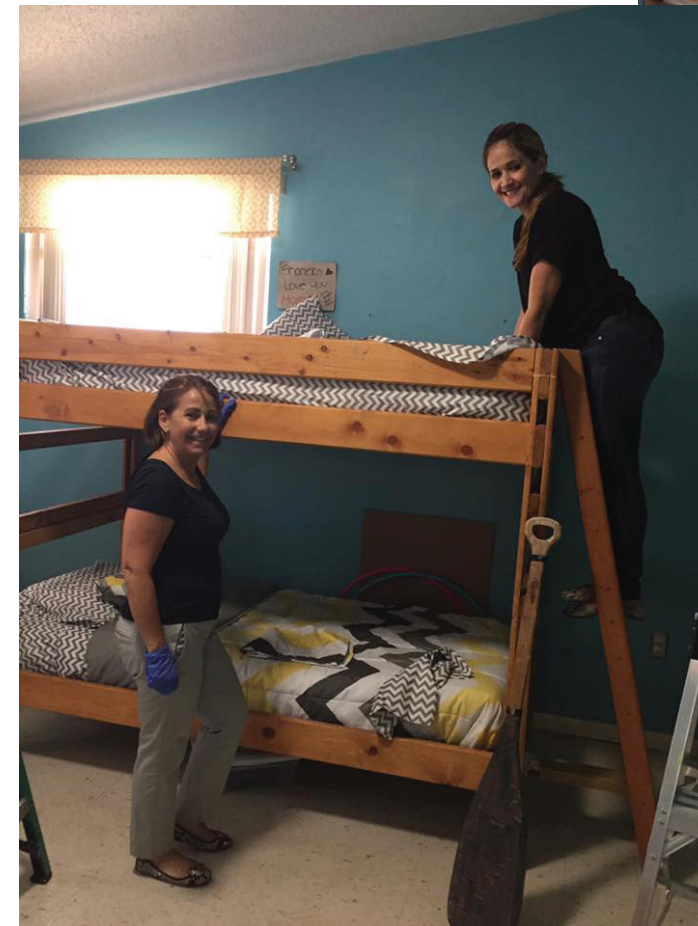
something that wasn’t there – or maybe it was and neither Guinness nor I saw it. This behavior is normally followed by him pooping on the tile, so I rushed to open the back door and let him into the yard. This was the end of my meditation session.

I quickly realized my first Miracle Morning was not to be. I do see the value in it and will continue this practice, just not in my living room. Below is a link to the material I hope you find helpful and a picture of Bailey, who is not at all helpful. www.miraclemorning.com



His House Children's Home - House Makeover Event

On June 4, 2016, The Association of Legal Administrators South Florida Chapter along with their friends and family participated in a charity "makeover" project at His House Children's Home. His House Children's Home is a private, faith-based non-profit organization dedicated to restoring joy to the lives of children from newborn to 18 years of age. Since it was established in 1989, His House has been offering safe, caring homes to abused, abandoned and neglected children in South Florida. The organization is a frontline provider of residential services for children. Its model is unlike many other residential programs. Each home is staffed with nurturing caregivers who make every effort to create a beautiful, cozy safe haven where children feel safe and loved. It was an amazing experience to volunteer and make over one of the many homes that these children live in. A big **THANK YOU** for all the donations that made this humbling experience possible.



Nicole Penny Earns MBA



After 18+ months of sleepless nights, crazy schedules, constant studying and late night classes, I can finally say I am officially an MBA! I recently graduated with honors from Nova Southeastern University H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business & Entrepreneurship. While at Nova I had the pleasure of presiding over the Nova Student SHRM Organization and mentoring incoming students. I was truly honored when asked to join both Delta Epsilon Iota and Sigma Beta Delta based on my high scholastic achievement. I was also humbled by an award from the dean in recognition of outstanding leadership and contributions to Nova SHRM and the Huizenga College of Business. Now that my time at Nova

has come to a close, I will look to the future and all of the possibilities that await me in the next chapter of my crazy ride. I'm buckled in and can't wait to see what the future brings!



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Coral Reef High School
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Wed., November 9, 2016
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11:45 - 1:30 PM
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Thurs., November 10,
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Topic: Time Management
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