

## Practical Technology for Law Firms: Real Solutions for Pressing Problems



The technology marketplace loves shiny new toys. But law firms need [legal tools](#) to meet real-world challenges. The practical technology for law firms outlined below positions firms to improve productivity and security while enhancing both client and attorney experience.

Today's law firms face the need to address rising costs while attracting and retaining clients in an increasingly competitive marketplace. With a growing number of DIY solutions at their fingertips, potential customers expect more and better services for lower prices. They also demand assurances that their sensitive information will remain secure and confidential.

On the other hand, like their potential clients, the best and brightest lawyers have their choice of firms. More often, these talented attorneys are drawn to firms that support a healthy work-life balance through a [hybrid workplace](#). They also expect tools that will automate many of the mundane tasks, freeing them up to focus on practicing law.

### Start with a Cloud-based Practice Management System

A legal practice management system (LPMS) serves as the essential foundation for managing cases and clients. Firms can find a variety of feature sets in the available LPMS solutions. However, critical functions include client/contact management, calendaring, time and expense tracking, automated billing, matter management and conflict checking.

While many firms still use on-premises solutions, a cloud-based LPMS delivers the flexibility of anytime/anywhere access for attorneys who demand it. Clients also expect a significant online presence, including an online portal for client intake, billing, and communication.

While some LPMS solutions include light document management and accounting functions, these features often require additional tools.



## Facilitate Document Management

To begin with, if your firm has not already moved to a paperless system, consider doing so now. Going paperless saves costs and improves organization. But more importantly, it makes thousands of documents easily searchable. And it provides insurance against loss or unauthorized access of key documentation.

Legal document management software facilitates this process by providing access to documents through a central repository. The document management system not only supports document organization and storage, but also allows legal teams to classify documents according to type, client and other essential criteria. And it allows for access restrictions on a granular level.

In addition to classic documents and spreadsheets, a document management system provides the ability to save email messages to a case folder. And it provides tools for automating legal document assembly.

## Ensure Integration with Office Software

Every legal firm needs a suite of tools to manage communication, including email, word processing, presentation software and the like. Ideally, the office suite will integrate tightly with the firm's

document management software and LPMS. This allows the firm to take the next step and attach documents and emails to cases and clients.

For instance, Microsoft 365 delivers essential communication and collaboration tools. And Microsoft has even released a version of [Microsoft 365 for law firms](#). The leading LPMS and document management systems offer tight integration with Microsoft products. In addition, Microsoft Teams includes a host of resources to support collaboration, even over distance.

## Streamline Financial Management with Accounting Software

Law firms need software to handle standard financial functions such as banking, accounting reports and cash flow management. They also need tools to manage trust funds. If the firm's LPMS does not provide sufficient accounting functionality, financial management software will prove essential.



## Upgrade Security Tools to Meet Modern Cyber Threats

Law firms cannot afford to skimp on cyber security. Hackers know that law practices store a treasure trove of valuable information. And increasingly complex legislation and regulatory controls require firms to make securing that information a priority.

Start with a risk assessment to identify security gaps. An effective [legal security strategy](#) will include multiple security layers, from encryption to email filtering, multi-factor authentication and security monitoring.

## How to Choose the Right Practical Technology for Law Firms

Each law firm has its own problems to solve. Before choosing tools, take time to clarify the problems the technology needs to solve. Make a list of pain points, priorities and current processes at the firm. Then involve stakeholders in choosing and implementing the technology solutions.

The legal technology consultants at eMazzanti offer a menu of essential services, from Microsoft 365 integration to cyber security, cloud services and [eDiscovery tools](#).

