

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT IN LAW FIRMS

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Underwritten by:

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WHITE PAPER:

10 Things Every Law Firm Should Know About Improving IT Performance[CLICK TO ACCESS
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This Executive Brief is a summary of the ILTA's 2014 Technology Survey Report which had the input of 454 firms representing more than 106,000 lawyers and 217,000 total users.

INTRODUCTION

- Over 450 legal firms responded to the ILTA Technology Survey about technologies in use. The answers demonstrated an industry commitment to securing, simplifying and saving.

SUMMARY TRENDS

- The strongest trend over recent years, and one that is borne out by this survey, is that security is the number one initiative and priority.
- Legal firms are trying to keep it simple. This is a continuous battle as add-ins, expanding data sets and applications proliferate in the marketplace.
- Trends show that in an effort to save money, more firms are using native technology, like the Outlook calendar, instead of implementing Outlook add-ins to handle things like docketing.
- More firms are leveraging tools and features they already own, as demonstrated by a 30% increase of use in SharePoint repositories instead of other knowledge management platforms.
- Firms are faced with challenges resulting from a competitive marketplace and a shrinking demand for services, curbing spending and putting pressure on existing resources.
- Future trends include cloud computing or X-as-a-Service to simplify management of a firm's IT portfolio, including hardware and other elements that are a drain on resources.



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IMPORTANT FINDINGS

- More firms are conducting security audits (73%). Web filtering is also an important initiative with 81% of firms using it.
- Multifactor authentication is a priority for 29% of responding firms and ethical wall protection nearly double that at 55%. Such technologies help prevent network intrusion and data loss.
- Firms consider information governance the second most important security challenge, as well as email support concerns (29%).
- Security in cloud-based storage is becoming stronger than on-premise storage, increasing the comfort level for legal use as well as playing into the new trend on simplification.
- Smartphone trends have varied significantly over the last seven years. While Blackberry was the overwhelming standard in 2008 (54%), they are down to 4% as ActiveSync has allowed the iPhone and other vendors to gain hold. ActiveSync offers a single connection technology for a variety of smartphones.
- More firms are allowing Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies instead of providing smartphones. Support pushed out to carriers simplifies and saves at the same time.
- Mobility is increasingly important to law firms, with more using Mi-Fi devices.
- The focus on mobile device management (MDM) has increased over the past two years, indicating possible client pressure to get such protections in place.
- 40% of firms use tablets. They are used in addition to laptops and not as expected replacing laptops. More than 35% of lawyers use laptops in place of desktop systems.
- Focus on simplicity and savings is found in the continued significant interest in virtual desktop technology but there is very little adoption of virtual desktops.
- One of the dynamic trends over the past few years has been the abandonment of Postini and the rise of Mimecast for enterprise email management.
- Dictation technology use is up, with a marked increase in firms using voice recognition technology.
- Awareness training is up, pushed by regulation and the fact that it is the most cost effective security measure available to firms.
- Knowledge management (KM) and enterprise search tools are flat, showing no new implementation over the last four years.
- Matter centric collaboration (MCC) has been on the rise to 64% but flat this year. Firms of all size use an electronic file environment that keeps all relevant data in the same place but fewer are putting dollars and time toward new implementation.

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TAKEAWAYS

- The most important responsibility of a legal firm is to protect the client information it has and the data on its networks.
- The focus on security is driven by clients and regulators, so security projects rise to the top of the priority list quickly.
- While security, simplicity and saving seem to be the dominant themes, many factors influence decisions and actions tracked in this survey.
- Security and mobility are causing major changes in the law firm IT environment already, indicating challenges in the future as they are reconciled.
- Complex systems require resources to manage them, and firm resources are already pressed.
- Reducing the complexity of a firm's technology system lowers costs, facilitates maintenance and allows delegation through managed services.
- With fewer staff, lawyers need to increase their technical skills, using electronic training delivery methods to enhance their abilities, with overall use in the industry increasing over previous years.
- More firms are keeping it simple, influenced by the high cost of security projects, while resources like time and money are in short supply.
- Firm leadership determines business imperatives but retaining flexibility is a tremendous asset that should not be squandered.
- The future is still murky as many forces - such as the market, firm leadership, clients, politics, and hackers - shape the trajectory of the technology agenda.
- Knowing where the legal industry is now is one thing, but it's more valuable to know where it is headed in terms of deployed technologies and frequency of use.

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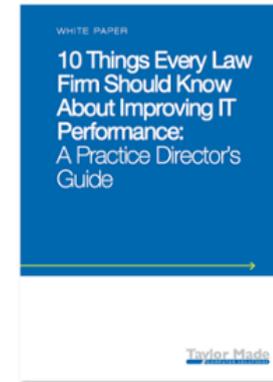


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