LEGAL workspace
Your Law Office in the Cloud

5 TOOLS

TO VIRTUALLY ELIMINATE OVERHEAD COSTS

Learn more about today's cloud computing solutions for law firms.

5 Tools to Virtually Eliminate Overhead Costs

Have you ever dreamed of starting your own solo practice? Thought about transitioning into semi-retirement? Looking to lower the overhead of your entire law firm? If so, you've probably been thwarted by the logistics and expense of finding office space, a receptionist, administrator and all the software that goes along with a successfully-run firm.

However, these impediments are no longer deal breakers for your next big career move. At Legal Workspace, we have the knowledge to help firms and solo practitioners save money and make the transition to a virtual law office, while gaining efficiency in the process. Utilizing the following five tools will allow you to decrease overhead costs and focus on practicing law.

Virtual Receptionist

First impressions are the most important, as they say. For years, professional answering services have been helping law firms manage their incoming calls, even when no one's in the office. Today, there are increasingly robust options for remote call answering, forwarding and messaging. From current and potential clients to other lawyers and court representatives, you want callers to hear a friendly, professional voice greeting them when they call your office. You also may not want them to know they haven't reached a physical office.

Virtual receptionists route your calls to a live, albeit remotely located, receptionist to answer your calls and transfer them to you or your voicemail, wherever you are. You get a professional receptionist and your callers get a friendly voice and helpful service. Below are two highly-rated services that are available to help you sound more professional starting with the very first contact:

> Ruby Receptionists
> Virtual Receptionist by Total Attorneys

Virtual Phone System (VOIP)

Voice-Over IP (VOIP) moves your phone service into the cloud. Your phone calls are processed through a provider via the Internet so that you have access to your primary phone service, voicemail, fax services and remote conferencing anywhere you go.

This means you're no longer tied to the landlines that previously anchored firms and attorneys to a physical office. If you need to check in or make a phone call, you can do so from anywhere –yet you'll

still be using your firm's main phone service. Also, since the service is made possible via the cloud, there are many additional features to take advantage of – such as voice-mail to email, teleconferencing and often unlimited additional numbers.

If you're interested in moving your phone service to VOIP, check out these two providers:

> Yiptel
> RingCentral

Virtual Office Administrator

You're an attorney, not a bookkeeper. Even with a fully staffed brick and mortar office, your law firm relies on professional back-office administrative support for monthly invoicing and paralegal support.

Virtual office administrators handle these tasks remotely, freeing you up to concentrate on practicing law. The fact that they aren't on-site means you no longer need office space for an administrative staff.

There are many back office support companies providing general business services. A quick online search will turn up several options. However, Watson specializes in law firms, providing both remote bookkeeping and paralegal services:

> Watson

Cloud-based Work Environment

The last piece of the virtual office puzzle is the software and file storage needed to run your firm. That's where Legal Workspace comes in. Our cloud-based work environment provides all the resources you need to manage your cases and track your time – from anywhere. Whether you've set up a small office in a shared office suite or work from home or a coffee shop, you have secure access to all your data and software needed to manage your cases.

With our virtual data storage, you no longer need large air-conditioned rooms to maintain your servers, meaning one more set of physical walls you can take out of the equation. Additionally, our cloud-based legal software eliminates the expense of maintaining the latest versions of popular firm management tools. All of this means you can lose your IT department and decrease your overhead costs.

Shared Office Space

The truth is, very few attorneys can operate 100% virtually. You can lose the office and utilize virtual services that allow you to work from anywhere and still maintain an air of professionalism, but you may need to meet with clients at some point.

Your practice may require the occasional conference room, or you might need a small office in which you can meet. It really depends on how you conduct business, but most attorneys don't want to have all their client meetings at a coffee shop.

Shared office spaces with common reception areas and break rooms have been around for decades. Many, like the nation-wide company Regus, offer offices in which many types of companies set up shop in one space. That may work for some attorneys. However, there's also LawBank, which provides shared office space for attorneys, allowing attorney collaboration while maintaining low overhead.

> Regus
> LawBank

With so many tools today to run your law firm virtually, attorneys have the freedom to practice law on their own terms. It's easier than ever for attorneys to break away and start their own practice or to scale back and settle into semi-retirement. For firms who aren't ready to go 100% virtual, but looking to decrease overhead, any combination of these virtual options could work as well.

We would be happy to discuss the best practices for transitioning to cloud solutions in law firms. If you're thinking about going virtual, but don't know where to start, give Legal Workspace a call today.

Legal Workspace is a pioneer in cloud-based work environments and data storage designed specifically for law firms. Learn more or arrange a free demo at legal-workspace.com. Click here to watch our video.