



Jermain, Dunnagan & Owens, PC Moves to the Cloud, Saves Costs with Legal Workspace

From individuals to Fortune 500 companies, Jermain, Dunnagan & Owens, PC has protected clients for 40 years. As one of Alaska's largest and most respected firms, JDO holds an "AV" rating and is consistently recognized in Martindale-Hubbell's Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers. The mid-size firm has 42 users on Legal Workspace and specializes in education, commercial, insurance, municipal and employment law.

JDO has helped the business community in Alaska grow by establishing legal precedents that shape statewide policy. While the firm's business success has expanded the corporate landscape in Alaska, the firm struggled when it came to IT. They needed a solution that would allow their attention to focus on what matters most, helping clients.

Tanya R. Wood, SPHR, SHRM-SCP oversees IT for the firm and categorizes herself as "above average" when it comes to technical know-how. But with her many duties, she didn't want to spend a significant amount of time or budget on IT.

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- Tanya R. Wood

"Formerly, our IT was all in-house. We had two physical servers to maintain. We worked with an outsourced IT company and a desktop person who came in twice a week for a couple of hours. If anything came up that was beyond the desktop support level, then it was assigned to a network person. The network person also handled all the updates and maintenance," says Wood.

Wood often ended up tackling IT support requests herself. "Because our in-house resources are limited, a lot of stuff wasn't getting done when it came to IT. Employees didn't feel supported by the IT vendor. I worked on the network every day and I knew the applications. But there were certain things I just couldn't fix on my own," she explains. The firm utilizes at least 5 business and legal applications to manage cases, time, and billing.

Wood goes on to explain, "I think part of the problem with our network at that time is that it was built quickly to accommodate growth. It was a hodgepodge. The servers were starting to fail. We needed complete upgrades. The network was disorganized in terms of general setup."

The network management came with a high price as well. "The costs of maintaining and upgrading our hardware and network kept increasing. We budgeted 300 hours for our first upgrade a couple of years ago. It went over 700 hours. We could have scrapped everything and started over and it would have cost less! That was just the basic upgrade. We still had to do an Exchange upgrade. It was pretty



expensive for the firm. We thought that after the upgrade our network would be good, but we were still spending a lot of money on it. This led us to look for other options,” Wood shares.

Moving to the Cloud with Legal Workspace

Ultimately, the mid-size firm decided that the key to stable, secure and supported IT lay in the cloud.

“With the cloud, IT and tech support were not going to fall into my hands anymore,” comments Wood. “We’d be able to call and get help whenever we needed it. We could move IT entirely offsite and have very little networking equipment. I would have my time freed up to focus on other duties.”

Legal Workspace became a leading contender due to its focus on applications built specifically for law firms. In addition to Microsoft, the company is certified to support well-known apps for law firms including Juris, Worldox, CompuLaw, Concordance and Copitrack.

“Legal Workspace knew the software we work with. When I first looked at them, I noticed right away that the engineers were certified in certain programs we use like Worldox. We wouldn’t have to call the software maker for support,” says Wood.

Jermain, Dunnagan & Owens, PC opted to move forward – and into the cloud – with Legal Workspace. The implementation, which kicked off in early 2016, was virtually effortless. The engineers and specialists at Legal Workspace worked hard to prove their expertise and ensure a painless migration.

“The knowledge of the Legal Workspace team is pretty high. They’re very knowledgeable, even with our complicated network. They weren’t afraid to do a little extra handholding with attorneys or staff that needed it,” shares Wood. “In the end, it was a pretty smooth transition. It wasn’t bad at all. I was surprised since we had had so many challenges before with the previous setup of our on-site IT.”

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Legal Workspace also worked hand-in-hand with the firm to cover areas that may not be specifically addressed by their outsourced IT services provider. The company helped the firm pinpoint their IT strategy by identifying infrastructure needs, providing legal app support and consulting and planning for the future.

The firm went live with Legal Workspace in February of 2016.



Convenience, Support and Cost Savings with Legal Workspace

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The adoption of Legal Workspace has enhanced the support level for the firm. "We used to have to wait for the desktop support vendor to come into the office. Lawyers and staff members now have support only a phone call away whenever they need it," explains Wood.

Legal Workspace has also helped the bottom line for the firm. "Compared to the costs of on-site IT, we are reducing costs with Legal Workspace," says Wood.

Wood says the involvement with Legal Workspace has been positive. "The experience has been good. I'd definitely recommend Legal Workspace," comments Wood.

Sidebars:

About the Law Firm

Name: Jermain, Dunnagan & Owens, PC

Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Launched: 1976

Website: <http://jdolaw.com/>