

OSB Professional Liability Fund presents

# Practice Management Software: Know What You Want Before Making the Switch

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

10:00 am – 11:30 am

MCLE ID 87668

1.5 Practical Skills Credits

Speaker: **Rachel Edwards**  
*PLF Practice Management Attorney*



# CLE Materials

- PowerPoint Slides
- Presentation Resources

# Practice Management Software:

## Know What You Want Before Making the Switch



Professional  
Liability Fund

Presented by:  
Rachel Edwards  
Practice Management Attorney  
OSB Professional Liability Fund

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- Definition
- History
- Benefits
- Features
- How do you choose?
- Before the switch



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## Practice Management Software

Relational database allowing users to gather records for contacts, tasks, matters, and other related records to provide front and back-end management for a law firm

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## General Features

### Front-end management

- Conflict checking, client/contact management, case/matter management, document management/automation, calendaring, task management/workflow, communication, email management, timekeeping, billing, online payments










### Back-end management

- Trust accounting, reports

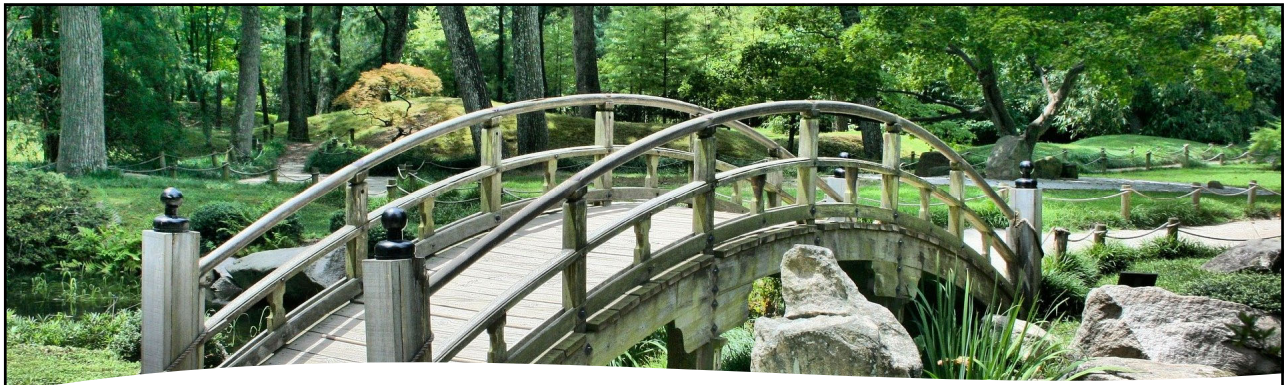


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Cloud-Based Practice Management Software		Minimum Users	Conflict Checking	Contact Mgmt	Matter Mgmt	Document mgmt	Document automation	Calendaring	Tasks/Workflow	Email Mgmt	Client Portal	Timekeeping	Billing	Trust Acctg
 Clio	\$69/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
 MyCase	\$59/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
 CosmoLex	\$85/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 PRACTICEPANTHER	\$59/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
 rocket matter	\$59/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
 SMOKEBALL	\$99/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
 zolaSUITE	\$79/user/mo	Yes (3)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 actiontap	\$89/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Centerbase	\$79/user/mo	Yes (5)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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## Benefits

- Centralized repository of information
- Prevents duplication and error
- Increases efficiency
- Succession planning

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1980s-90s	2000s	2010s	2020-Present
Desktop-based	Mostly desktop-based	Desktop-based and cloud-based	Desktop-based (limited) and cloud-based
Limited options	Still fairly limited options	Increasing options and integrations	All providing essentially the same types of general features with some special features and various integrations

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## Legal Technology

- Pandemic has led to consolidation and purchase by private equity firms
- More features being added based on demand

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**Spectrum of Features**

Significant differences among programs seen in these features especially

- Document management & automation
- Tasks & workflows
- Email management
- Accounting

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**Subjective nature of practice management software**

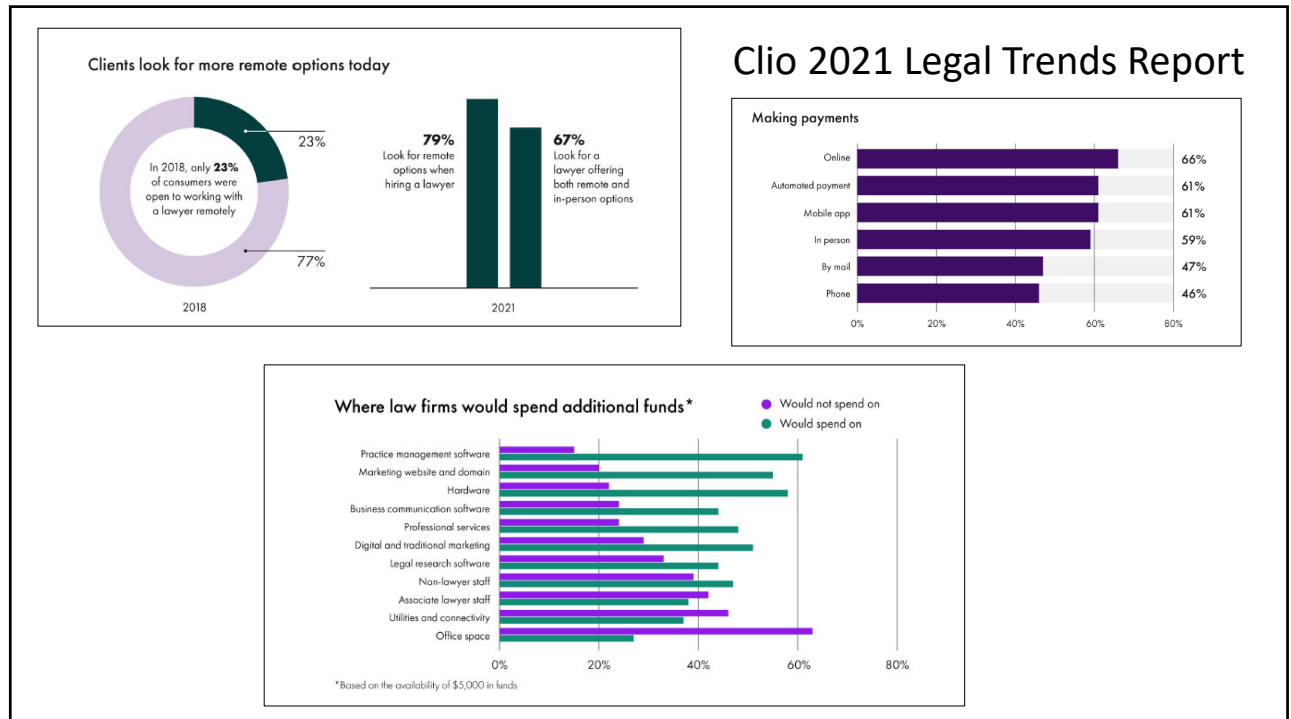
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# Current Usage?

Only about 50% of attorneys report using practice management software



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## “Tech Stack”

- Practice management software is one piece of the puzzle
- Other programs will be necessary
- Certain functions may be better performed outside practice management software depending on the program, functionality, and integration



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## Goals

- Understand features of practice management software
- Set realistic expectations
- Know and prioritize your needs
- Narrow your options




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## Conflict Checking

- Search the entire database for matching names/information
- Create a record of the conflict check within the matter

[www.osbplf.org](http://www.osbplf.org) > Services > CLEs & Resources > Forms > Conflicts of Interest > Conflict of Interest Systems & Procedures



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# Client/Contact Management

- Ability to enter clients, contacts, other parties, and link to other information within your matters
- Organize and track specific details about contacts



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# Client/Contact Management: Varied Features

- Client vs. matter-centric?
- Additional fields? Tags?
- Customizability?
- Integration? (e.g., Outlook or Gmail)

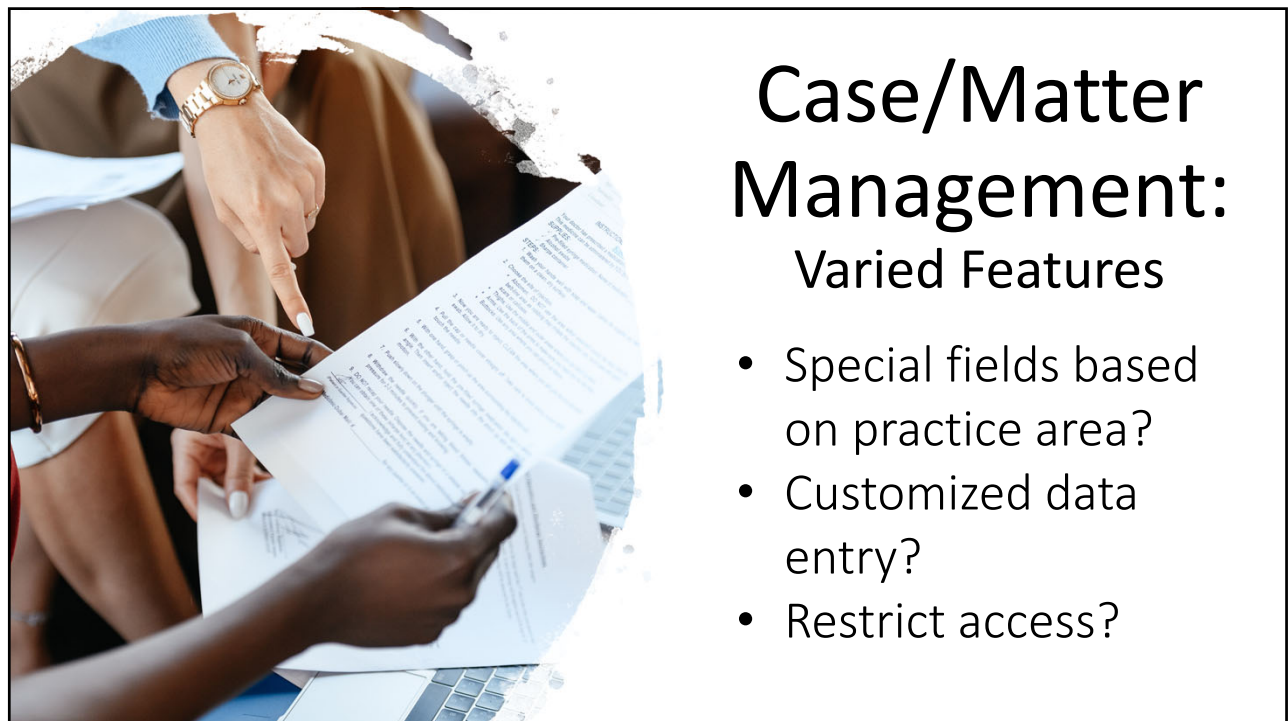
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## Case/Matter Management

- Manage and track matters from start to finish
- Link contacts, documents, appointments, and other information to matters

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## Case/Matter Management: Varied Features

- Special fields based on practice area?
- Customized data entry?
- Restrict access?

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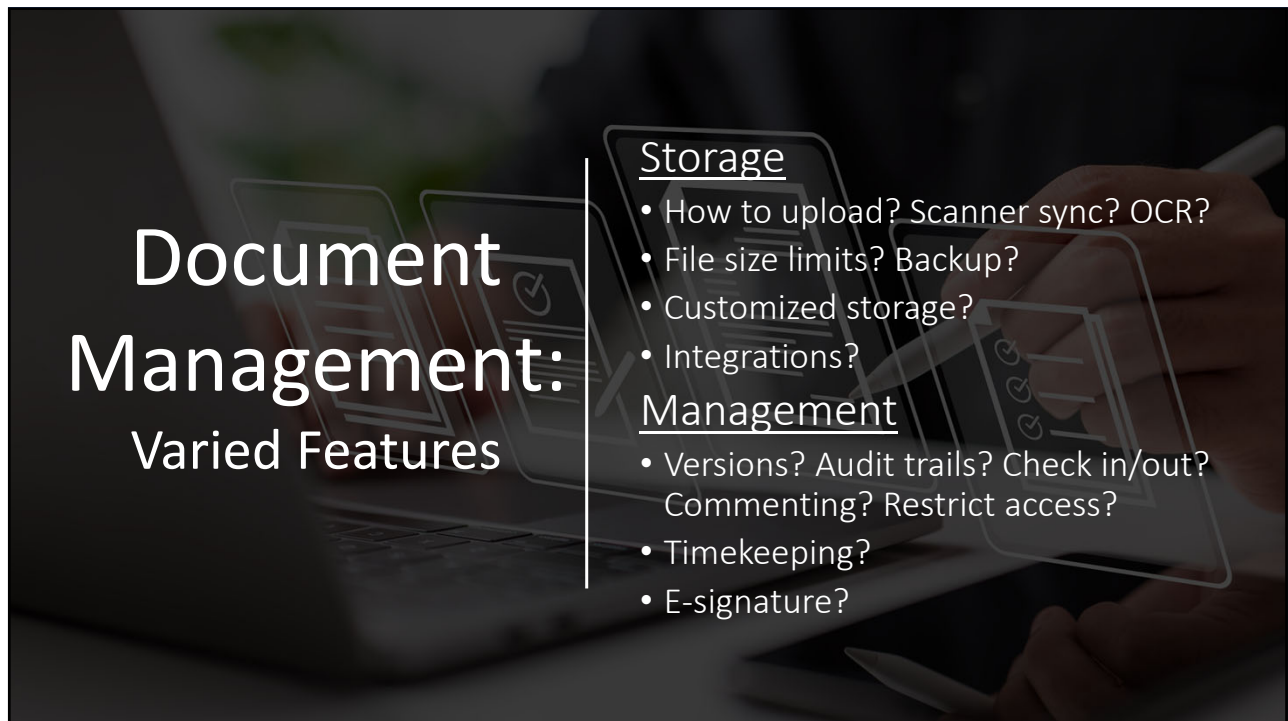




# Document Management

- Store, organize, access, and search for documents
- Link to matters within the system

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# Document Management: Varied Features

- Storage
  - How to upload? Scanner sync? OCR?
  - File size limits? Backup?
  - Customized storage?
  - Integrations?
- Management
  - Versions? Audit trails? Check in/out? Commenting? Restrict access?
  - Timekeeping?
  - E-signature?

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## MyCase Document Management

1. Click the open arrow icon to open a supported file type.
2. Download and install MyCase File Sync and then Sign In.
3. Make changes to the document within the native program and click Save.
4. The version history can be viewed in the Documents Details page.

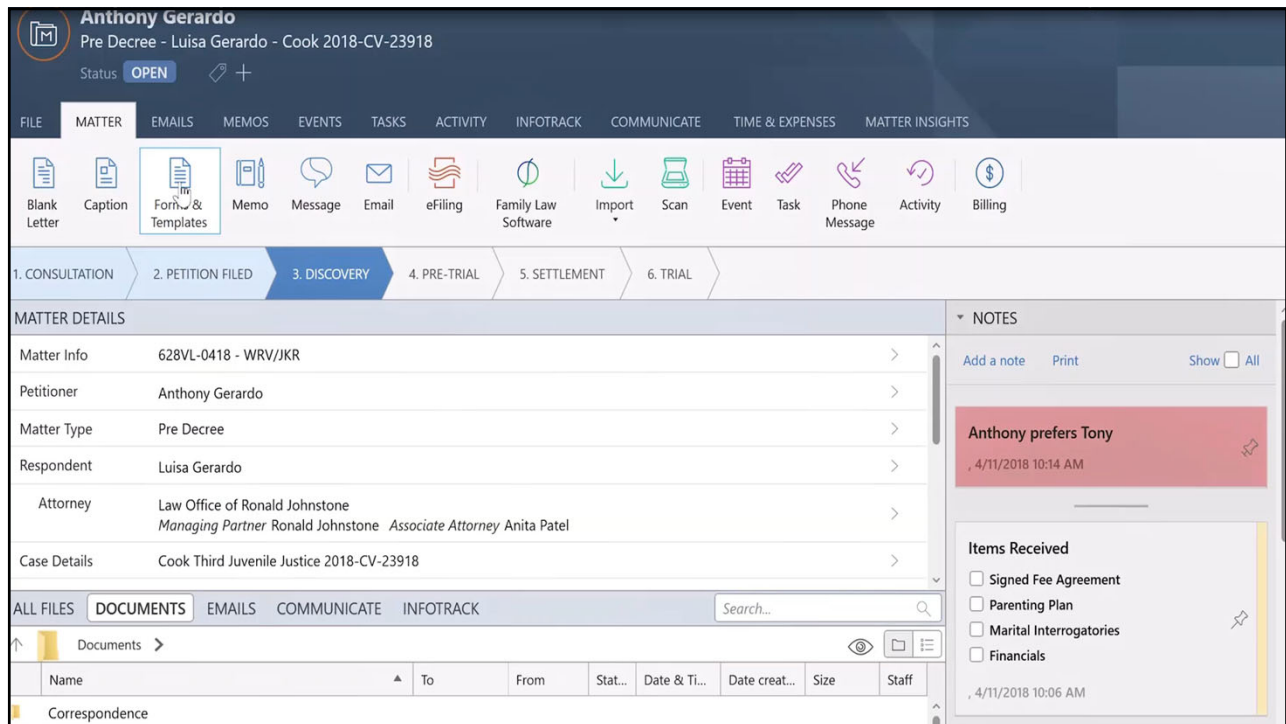
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## Document Automation

- Automate creation of specific documents
- Program relies on a template and information within the program to create a document
- Built-in or integration?

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# Calendaring

- Basic calendaring features
- Track appointments and events at specific dates and times that can be related to matters
- Sync to outside calendar program? (e.g., Outlook or Google)

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T	W	T	F
	1	2	3
7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24
28			

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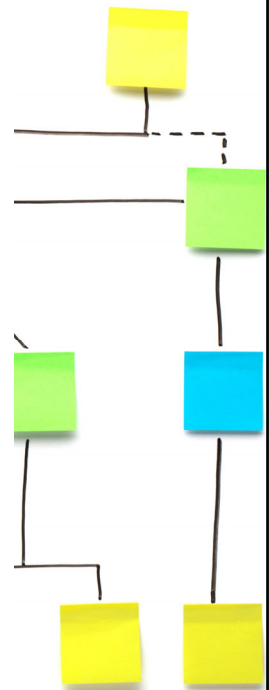
## Rules-Based Calendaring

- Court rules imported to calculate deadlines
- Schedule events, tasks, and repeating deadlines with reminders and sharing capabilities
- Built-in or integrate w/standalone?

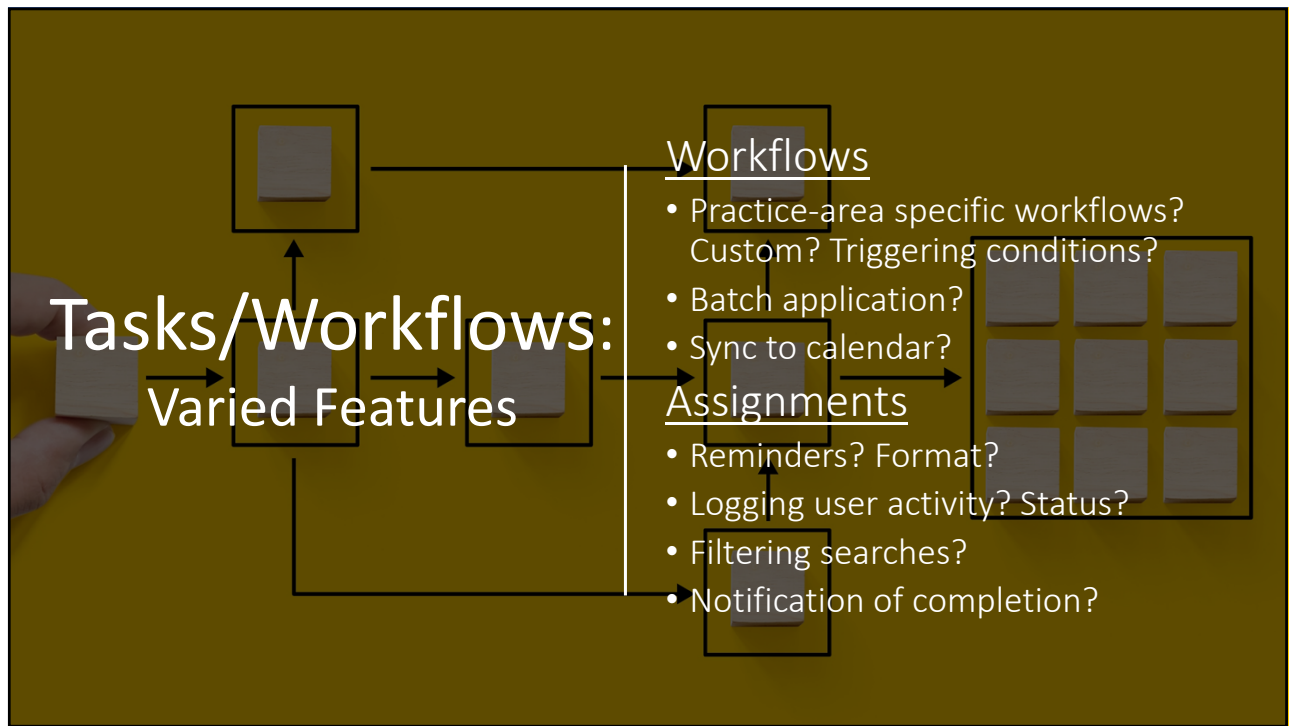
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## Tasks/Workflows

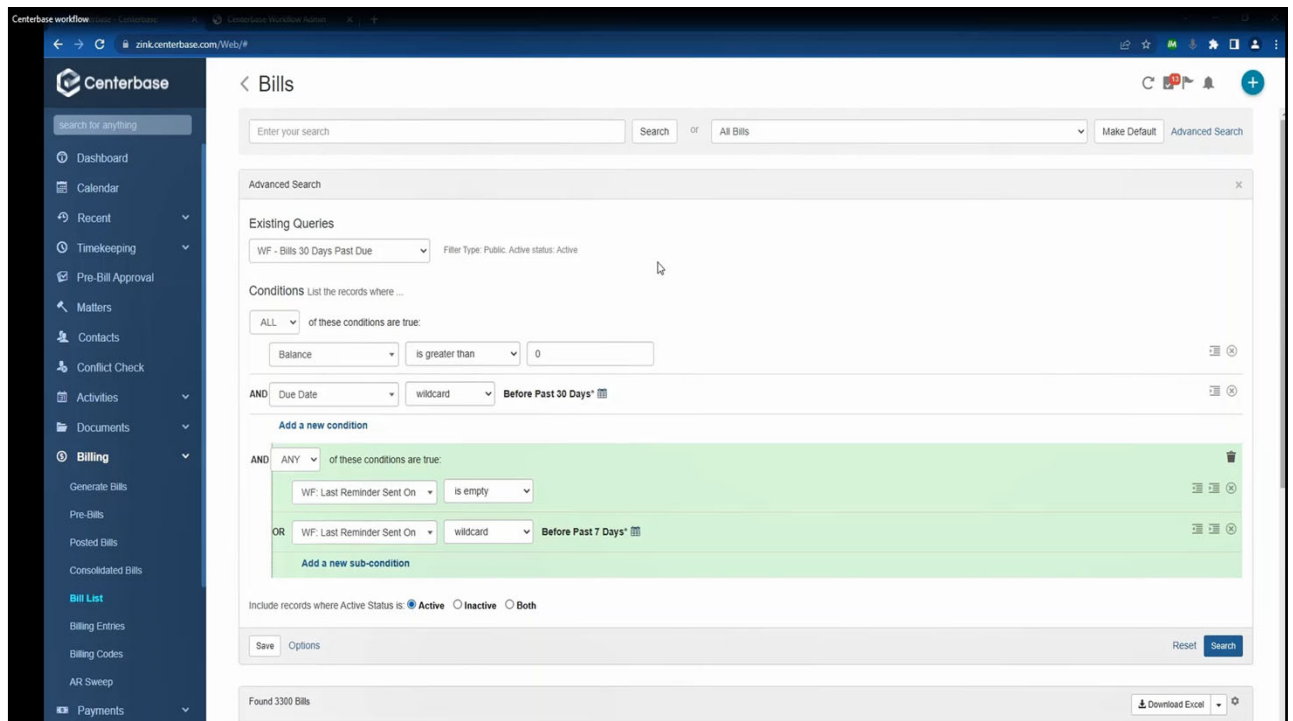
- Organize, allocate, and collaborate on tasks
- Individual tasks may be calendared and delegated to other system users
- Workflow is the automated process of applying a task list to a matter



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# Smokeball Workflows

Anthony Gerardo  
Pre Decree - Luisa Gerardo - Cook 2018-CV-23918  
Status OPEN

FILE MATTER EMAILS MEMOS EVENTS TASKS ACTIVITY

Task Phone Message Activity **Apply Workflow**

To Do Completed Waiting For Due Date

**Pre-Decree Workflow Petitioner**  
▼ 8 tasks

- Get Signed Engagement Letter and Retainer
- Draft Petition of Dissolution
- Review Petition of Dissolution
- File Petition of Dissolution
- Draft Parenting Plan
- Parenting Plan Confirmed
- File Parenting Plan
- Confirm Completion of Parenting Class

Select a Workflow

Discovery Request Workflow  
▼ 6 tasks

Family: New Filing Intake  
▼ 5 tasks

**Pre-Decree Workflow Petitioner**  
▼ 8 tasks

Response to Discovery served on our client  
▼ 6 tasks

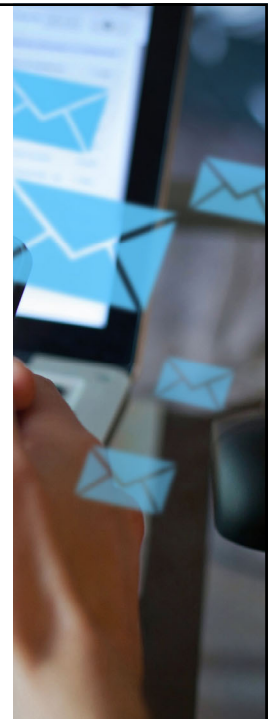
Name	Category	Internal Reference	Due on
<b>COMPLETED TODAY</b>			
Get Signed Engagement Letter and...	628VL-0418		Wednesday, April 11, 2018
<b>TODAY</b>			
Draft Petition of Dissolution	628VL-0418		Tuesday, September 17, 2019
Send letter to client explaining drc...	628VL-0418		Tuesday, September 17, 2019
<b>DUE LATER</b>			
Check in with client on Discovery pr...	628VL-0418		Tuesday, October 1, 2019
Get Discovery documents from Cle...	628VL-0418		Tuesday, October 8, 2019
Finalize Response to Discovery	628VL-0418		Thursday, October 10, 2019
Our Response to Discovery Due	628VL-0418		Tuesday, October 15, 2019
Our Response to Discovery Due (oc...	628VL-0418		Tuesday, October 15, 2019

1. Go to Tasks tab, click on Apply Workflow.
2. Select the workflow you want to apply.
3. When you click on the tasks button, it will show you how many tasks apply to each workflow.
4. Workflow tasks are shown on the To Do, Completed, or Waiting for Due Date tabs depending on their status.

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## Email Management

- Integrate with email vendors (e.g., Outlook, Gmail)
- Level of integration varies
- Functionality and user interface may differ significantly



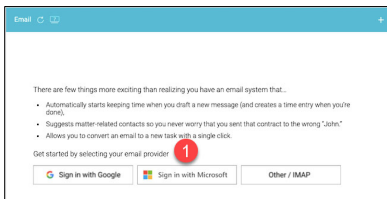
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# Email Management: Varied Features

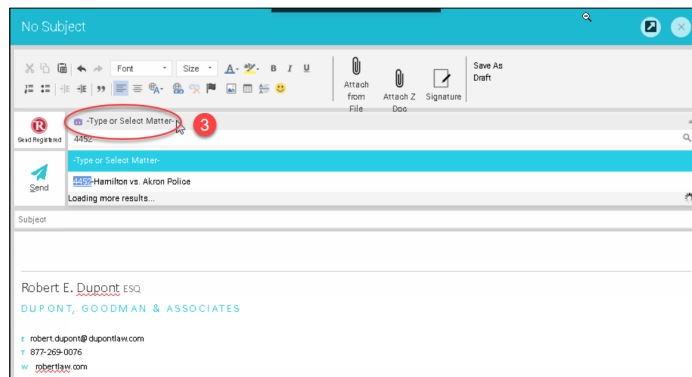
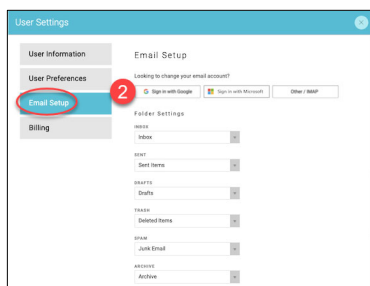
- Email “client” within program?
- Forward individual emails/threads only?
- Automated transfer/organizing?
- Syncing with email vendor? Level of syncing?
- Organization within program?
- Bill for time while using email?

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## zolasuite Email Management



1. Select your email provider.
2. Match up your email account's folders to ensure that emails sent and received are put into the correct folders.
3. Emails will automatically copy to each matter's Communications tab. Time entries started and saved.

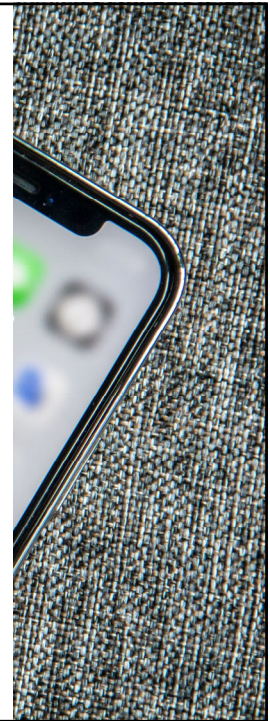


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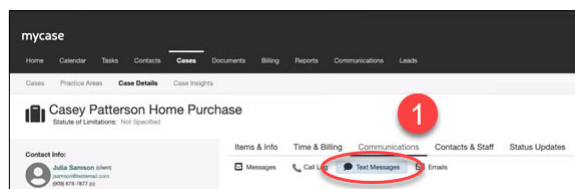
# Text Messaging

- Often part of the client portal
- If not, does it integrate with a text messaging program?

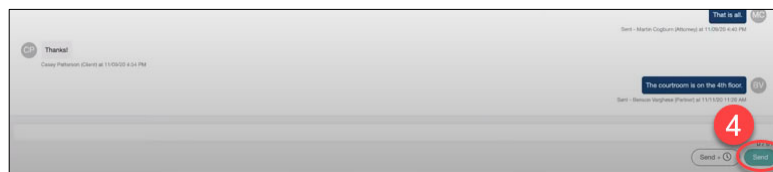
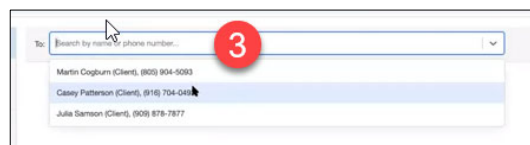
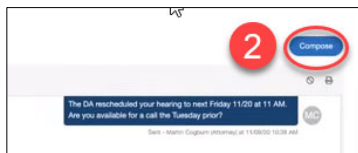


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## MyCase Text Messaging



1. Go to the Communications tab for the matter and click on Text Messages.
2. Click Compose.
3. Search for the contact.
4. Compose the message and click Send.



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# Client Portal

- Secure communication with the client to share case information, documents, messages, appointments, invoices, make online payments
- Client dashboard often customizable

<https://www.osbplf.org/blog/inpractice/client-portals--take-control-of-client-communication/>

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PracticePanther - New Contact: x

Secure | <https://app.practicepanther.com/Account/Create>

PRACTICEPANTHER + New Start Timer David Silberberg

Search... Dashboard Contacts Matters Calendar Activities Invoices Time Entries Automation More

PRIVACY

FIRST NAME	Tanya	M	LAST NAME	Kingston	
HOME	Add home number...		MOBILE	Add mobile number...	
OFFICE	Add office number...		FAX	Add fax number...	
EMAIL	tanyasilberbergkingstong343@mailinator.com			CLIENT PORTAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
CONTACT NOTES	Add contact notes...				
ADDITIONAL INVOICE RECIPIENT	Select Contact...				
BRAND NEW CONTACT FIELD	Add brand new contact field...				
RELATIONSHIP	Select Contact...				
DATE RETAINED					
DOB	Add dob...				
CUSTOM FIELDS	Add custom fields...				

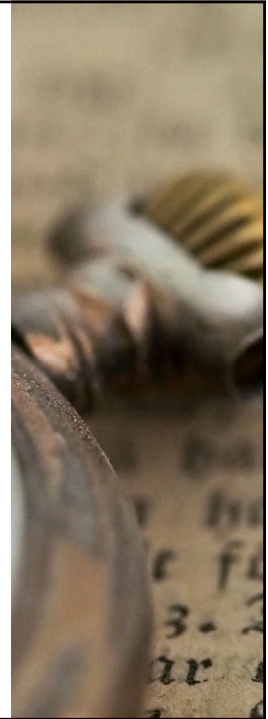
ADDRESS	Add address...
ASSIGNED TO	David Silberberg X
TAGS	
NUMBER	Enter Number...
WEBSITE	Add website...
CLIENT PORTAL SETTINGS	Client portal settings...

Save Cancel

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# Timekeeping

- Input, categorize, and record time spent on tasks related to matters
- Track expenses and attribute to specific matters



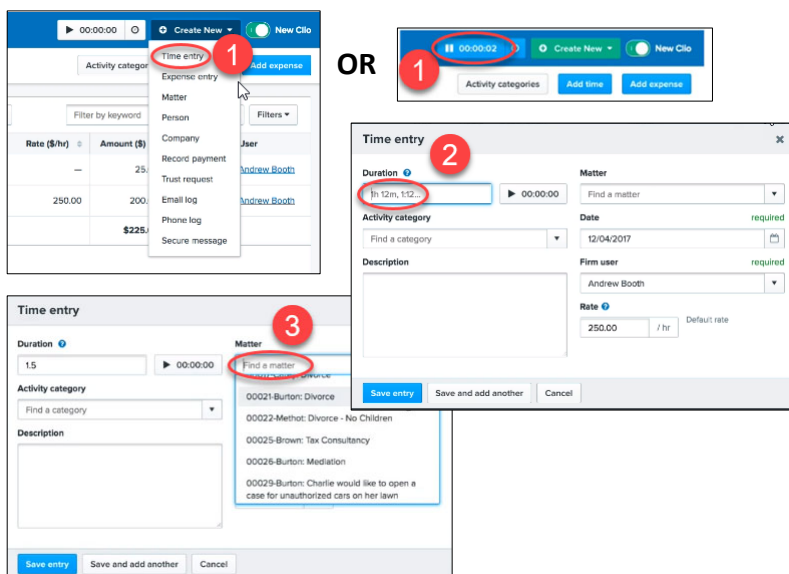
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## Timekeeping: Varied Features

- Start/stop timer?
- Multiple timers?
- Convert tasks/logs/notes to time entries?
- Integration with other applications? (e.g., Microsoft Word/Outlook)

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# Clio Timekeeping



1. Click Create New and select Time entry. Or you can begin a timer in the top right corner and attach it to a matter afterwards.
2. Input the duration.
3. Find a matter to attach the time entry to and provide a description.

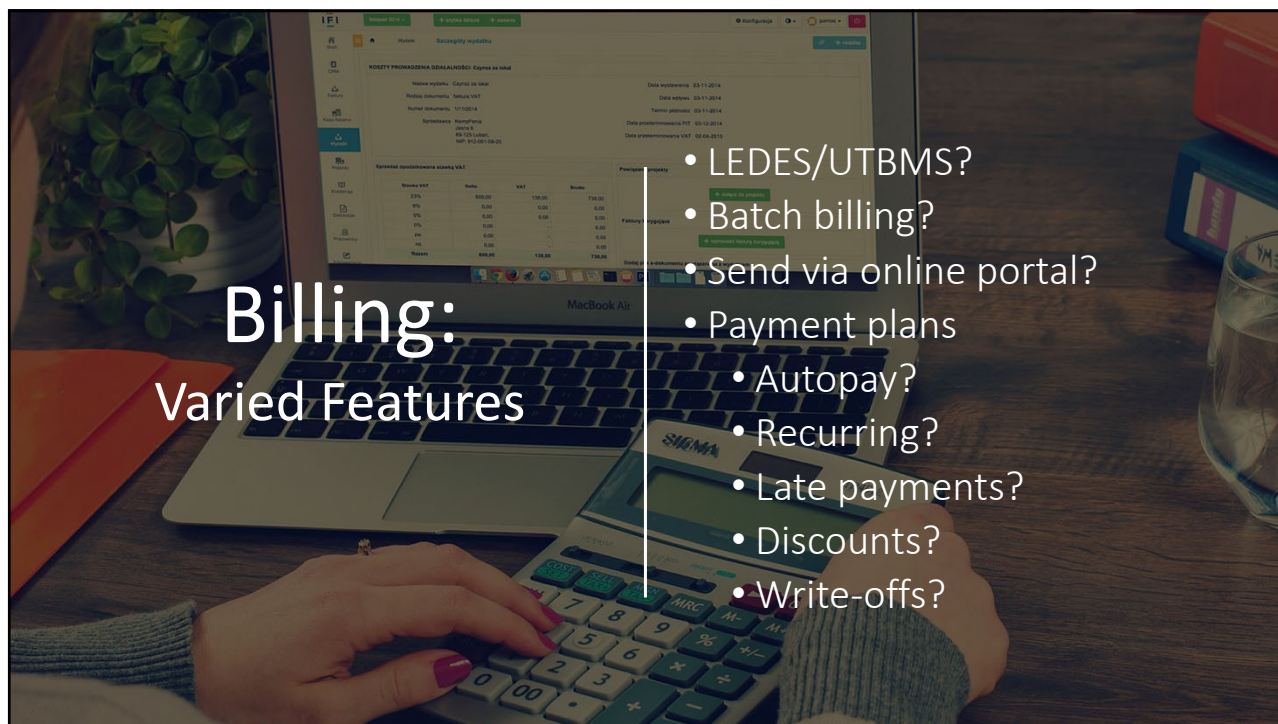
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## Billing

- Creating, approving, sorting, and tracking billing entries and payments attributed to specific matters
- Spectrum of customizable, automatic invoices



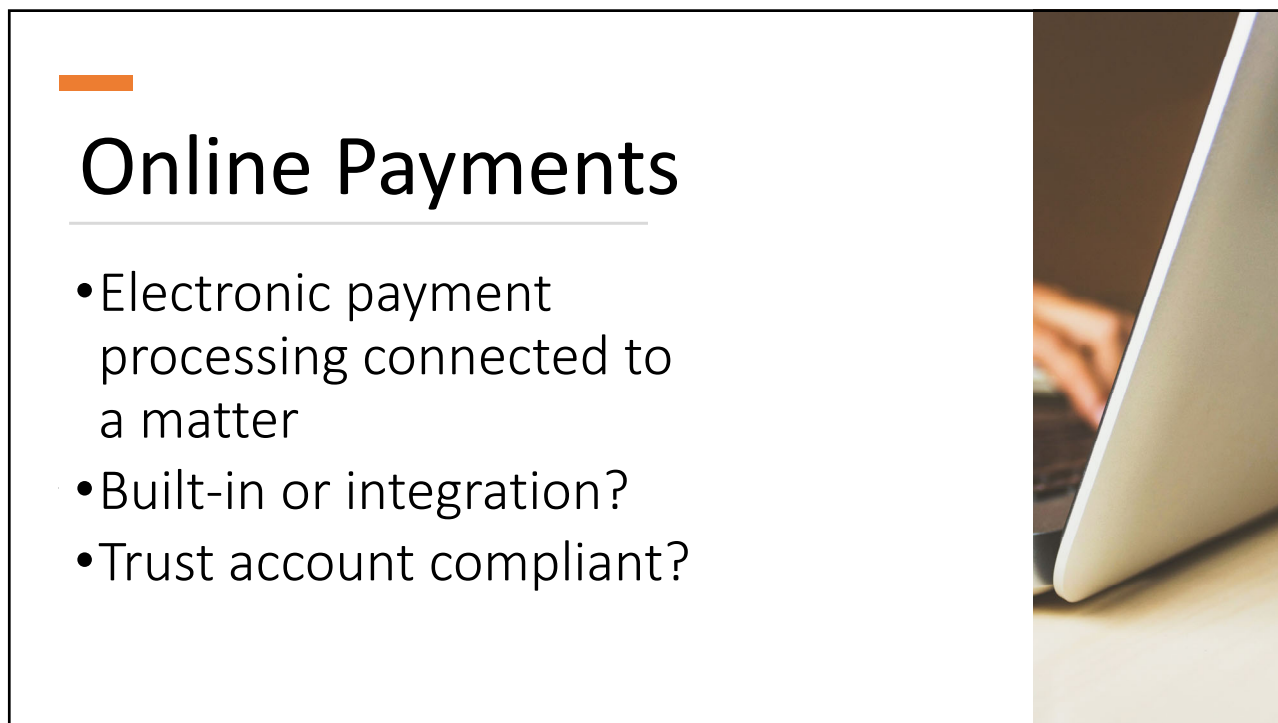
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# Billing: Varied Features

- LEDES/UTBMS?
- Batch billing?
- Send via online portal?
- Payment plans
  - Autopay?
  - Recurring?
  - Late payments?
  - Discounts?
  - Write-offs?

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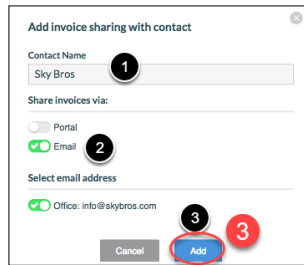
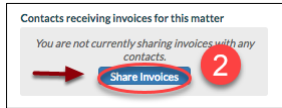
## Online Payments

- Electronic payment processing connected to a matter
- Built-in or integration?
- Trust account compliant?

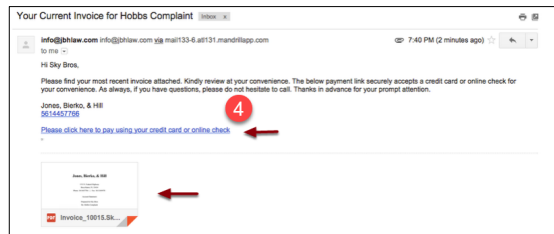
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# Rocket Matter Online Payments



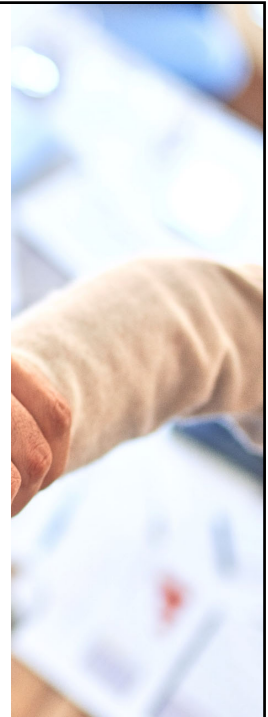
1. Navigate to the Matter Dashboard and click Edit Matter.
2. Select Billing information and click Share Invoices.
3. Enter the Contact Name, select Email, and click Add.
4. The contact will receive an automatically generated email containing the invoice with a link to the payment page.



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## Trust Accounting

- Most claim to have this feature
- Needs to perform Three-Way reconciliation
- Integration with accounting software? Bi-directional?



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# CosmoLex Trust Accounting

Plaid uses Plaid to connect your account

**Connect effortlessly**  
Plaid lets you securely connect your financial accounts in seconds

**Your data belongs to you**  
Plaid doesn't sell personal info, and will only use it with your permission

By selecting "Continue" you agree to the Plaid End User Privacy Policy **1**

**Continue**

1. You can link to your bank account to connect bank statements to the program.
2. Click on Reports.
3. Click on Three-Way Reconciliation Report in the Banking tab.
4. The Three-Way Reconciliation reconciles the Book Balance, Bank Balance, and Client Ledger Balance.
5. The Ledger Card Balances is the combination of all client accounts in your trust account.

**CosmoLex**

- Dashboard
- Matters
- Activities
- Accounting
- Contacts
- Setup
- Reports** **2**
- Account

**REPORTS**

- Accounting
  - Accounting (Matters)
  - Class Based Reporting
- Banking**
  - Bank Activity Report
  - Cash Receipts Journal
  - Cash Disbursement Journal
  - Payee/Payer Ledger
  - Reconciliation Report
  - Three-Way Reconciliation Report** **3**

**Three-Way Reconciliation Report**

Bank Account: TD-TD Trust Account

Available Statements: 06/30/2020

Sort By: Date

**SUMMARY:**

**LEDGER CARD BALANCES** **5**

**\$342,286.73**

**North State Law**

**THREE-WAY RECONCILIATION**

11/01/2018 - 11/30/2018

Reconciled **4**

BANK: TD  
ACCOUNT: TD Trust Account  
ACCOUNT #:

**I. Book Balance**

Beginning Balance:	11/01/2018	\$0.00
Plus Cleared Deposits (Increases):		\$712,235.00
Less Cleared Payments (Decreases):		(\$369,948.27)
Balance at End of Month:	11/30/2018	<b>\$342,286.73</b>
Bank Errors:		\$0.00

**II. Bank Balance**

Ending Statement Balance:	11/30/2018	\$342,286.73
Plus Deposits in Transit (Increases):		\$0.00
Less Outstanding Payments (Decreases):		\$0.00
Reconciled Bank Balance:		<b>\$342,286.73</b>

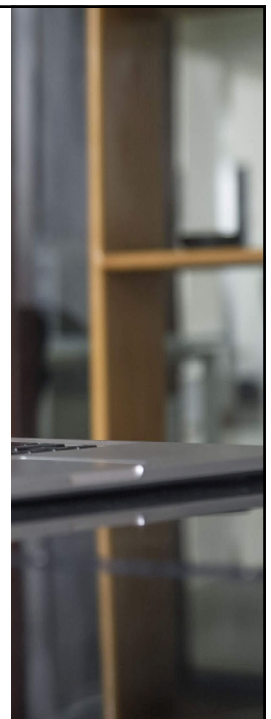
**III. Client Ledger Balance**

See attached report

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## Reports

- Offers data to firms to analyze various issues within the firm
- Typical reports:
  - Contacts- sort clients alphabetically
  - Matters- active vs. inactive, practice area, attorney assigned, origination
  - Attorney- number of hours worked, time entries for client by period
  - Task- task progress by user
  - Financial- trust balance, accounts receivable by period, billing entries



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# Clio Lawyer Productivity Reports

## Reporting Factor: Money

Lawyer Productivity Report (04/08/2016)			
Don Draper			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	\$121,020.61	\$590,544.97	\$711,565.58
Expense	\$7,595.40	\$28,154.36	\$35,659.76
	<b>\$128,526.01</b>	<b>\$618,699.33</b>	<b>\$747,225.34</b>
Joan Harris			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	\$888.00	\$3,688.75	\$4,556.75
Expense	\$45.00	\$510.30	\$555.30
	<b>\$933.00</b>	<b>\$4,179.05</b>	<b>\$5,112.05</b>
Peggy Olson			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	\$0.00	\$22,037.59	\$22,037.59
Expense	\$25.00	\$632.92	\$657.92
	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$22,670.51</b>	<b>\$22,695.51</b>

## Reporting Factor: Time

Lawyer Productivity Report (04/08/2016)			
Don Draper			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	79.89	671.10	750.99
	<b>79.89</b>	<b>671.10</b>	<b>750.99</b>
Joan Harris			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	7.50	17.47	24.97
	<b>7.50</b>	<b>17.47</b>	<b>24.97</b>
Peggy Olson			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	0.00	34.69	34.69
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>34.69</b>	<b>34.69</b>
Pete Campbell			
Activity Class	Unbilled	Billed	Total
Time	3.00	71.69	74.69
	<b>3.00</b>	<b>71.69</b>	<b>74.69</b>

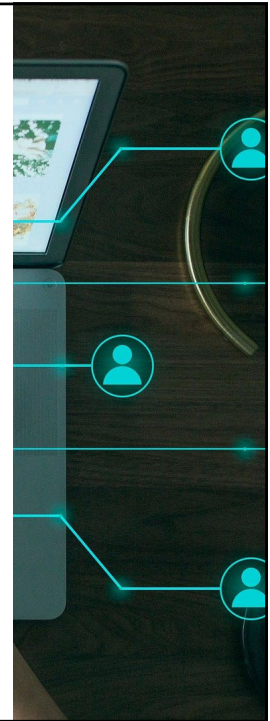
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## Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

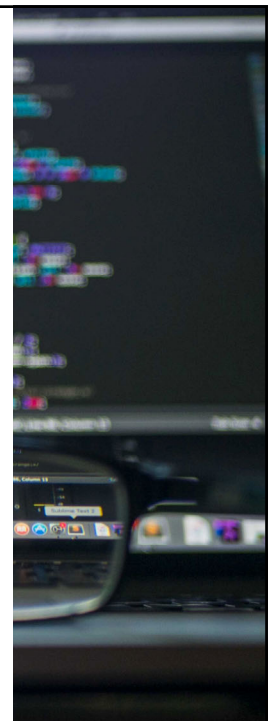
- Track potential clients from leads to conversions
- Determine return on investment for marketing campaigns
- Automated intake



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## Automatic Timekeeping

- Automatically captures time while working rather than using a timer or manual entry
- Know the details
  - Program itself?
  - Only specific parts?
  - Program and others?

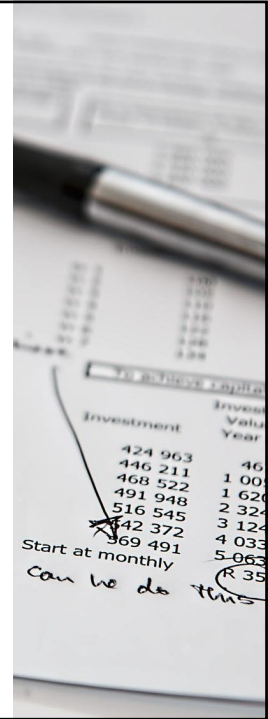


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# Full Accounting

- Manage all bookkeeping and accounting within the practice management software
- No need for a third-party accounting program like QuickBooks



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# 1. Needs Assessment

- Why the switch?
- Current systems and procedures
- Identify issues and bottlenecks
- What needs improvement?
- How can technology help?

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## 2. Strategic Technology Planning

- Firm setup
- Identify short/long-term firm goals
  - Paperless?
  - Grow client base?
  - Expand/eliminate practice area(s)?
  - Grow the firm?
- How will these changing goals affect your processes?
- How can technology help?

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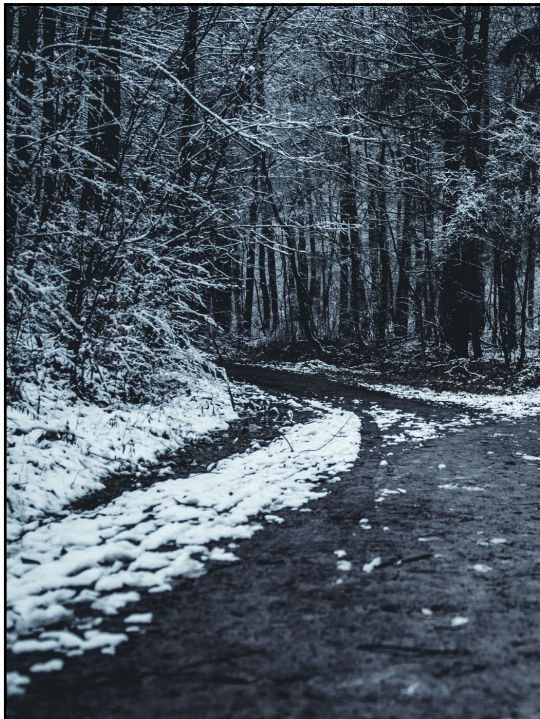




## 3. Research the Products

- Practice-area specific
- Desktop vs. cloud
- Necessary infrastructure
  - Mac vs. PC
  - Operating systems
- Firm size
- Pricing
- Product history
- Security
- Interface
- Migration

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## Know the Field

- Similarities
  - Most contain general features, will work for broad range of practice areas and firm types/sizes
- Differences
  - Some built for certain practice areas
  - Variations within general features
  - Special features
  - User interface
  - Customizability
  - Integrations

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# Practice-Area Specific

## Bankruptcy:

- NextChapter
- Best Case
- Jubilee
- BankruptcyPRO
- CINcompass

## Immigration:

- Innovation Law Lab
- LawLogix
- INSZoom
- Docketwise
- eIMMIGRATION
- Immigration Tracker

## Personal Injury:

- CASEpeer
- Needles
- Filevine
- SmartAdvocate
- Law Ruler
- Casepacer
- Law Align

## Government/ Agency/Public defender:

- LegalEdge

## Patent/IP:

- Alt Legal
- WebTMS
- PATTSY WAVE
- AppColl
- Patent Bots

## Transactional:

- Dealcloser
- TrackWithEase

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# Desktop vs. Cloud

## Desktop

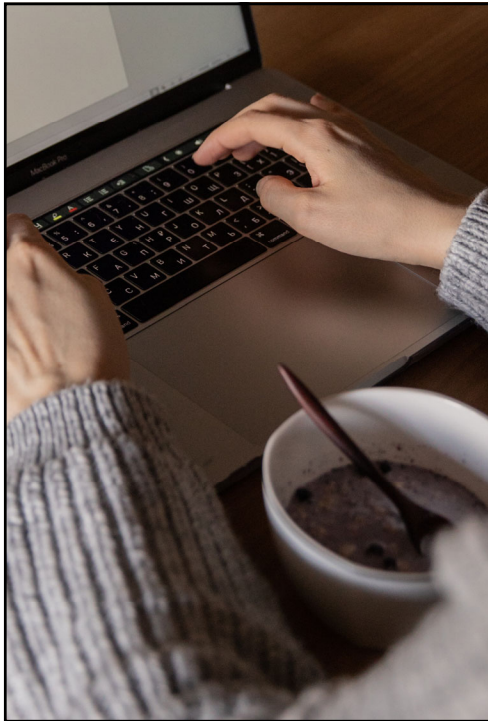
1. Installed on a computer or server (on-site or hosted)
2. Charge one-time license fee per user with annual maintenance and support charges
3. Technology consult or IT support usually necessary

## Cloud

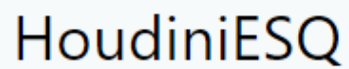
1. Require only a web browser for access
2. Typically charge per user per month
3. Input/access information remotely

See OSB Formal Ethics Opinion 2011-188  
(Third Party Electronic Storage of Client Materials)

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# Desktop-Based












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# Cloud-Based



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Cloud-Based Practice Management Software		Pricing	Minimum Users	Customer Relationship Management	Automatic Timekeeping	Text Messaging	E-signature	Online Payments	Full Accounting
	\$69/user/mo	No	Clio Grow (+\$49/user/mo)				Clio Grow (+\$49/user/mo)	✓	
	\$59/user/mo	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	\$85/user/mo	No						✓	✓
	\$79/user/mo	No	✓			✓	✓	✓	
	\$59/user/mo	No	✓				✓	✓	
	\$149/user/mo	No			✓	✓			
	\$89/user/mo	Yes (3)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
	\$99/user/mo	No						✓	✓
	\$99/user/mo	Yes (5)				✓			✓

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## Firm Size

1. Is there a minimum number required?
2. Certain programs better suited for larger firms

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# Pricing

- Desktop vs. cloud
  - Desktop: license
  - Cloud: tiered subscription
- Know the differences between the plans
- Important to know what you need and don't need to avoid unnecessary costs
- Possible add-on costs for workflows, integrations, migration, training



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## Functionality vs. User Interface

### Functionality

What does the program do?

- The task the program is trying to accomplish
- Ex. Conflict check, timekeeping, billing

### User Interface

How does the program do it?

- Number of clicks and how you get there
- Ex. Visual aspect (shapes, colors, locations)

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# Features

- Understand the functionality of each feature
- Make a list of what features you need and want
- Prioritize each feature
- User interface?

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	Importance	Availability
Document Management		
Document Automation		
Calendaring		
Rules-Based Calendaring		
Tasks/Workflows		
Email Management		
Text Messaging		
Client Portal		
Timekeeping		
Billing		
Trust Accounting		
Full Accounting		
TOTAL		
GRAND TOTAL		

### **Importance:**

- Required= 5
- Critical= 4
- Important=3
- Nice to have=2
- Indifferent=1

### **Availability:**

- Built-in no customization=5
- Integration no additional cost=4
- Available but customer customization necessary=3
- Available but vendor customization necessary=2
- Not available but maybe in future=1
- Not on list of future features=0

<https://www.lawtechnologytoday.org/2019/04/a-quantitative-approach-to-selecting-legal-tech/>

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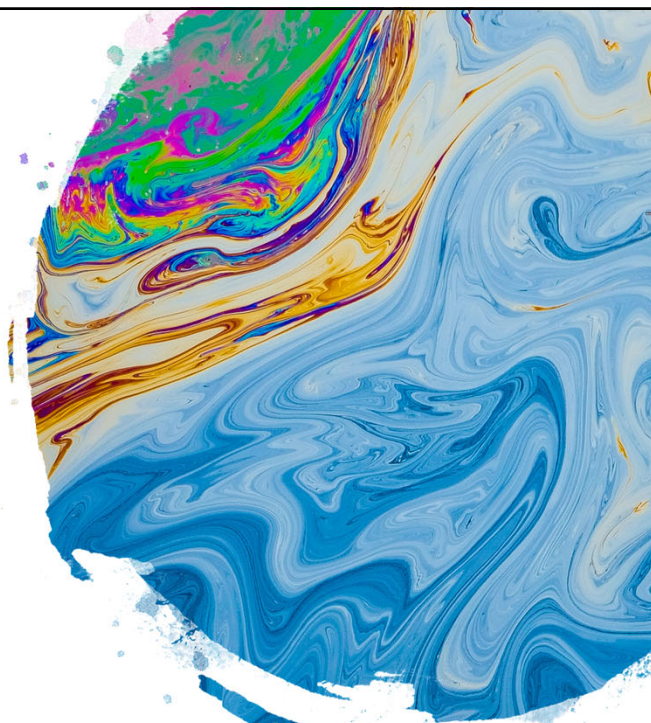
## Customizability

Ability to make changes within the program to make it more usable for your firm





















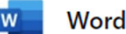







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## Integrations

- Know software you currently use
- Does practice management software perform those functions?
- Replace current software or integrate? Which one(s)?
- Syncing? Bi-directional?



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CRM	Virtual Receptionists	Contact Management/Email	Document Management	Calendaring/Reminders
	   	  	      	  
Rules-Based Calendaring	Word Processing	Automatic Timekeeping	Accounting	Online Payments
 	 	 	  	

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— 4.

## Evaluate

- Be sure to do a demo and trial
- Engage the team in the trial and commit to using it



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A blue background with a network of glowing nodes and lines, representing data migration.

## Migration

- Identify data, format, who will do it, and cost
- Prepare for migration
- IT assistance?
- Accessibility?

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## Training and Support

- Does the program offer training?
  - Formal
  - Informal
- Customer support?
- Involve staff
- Ongoing



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## Resources



Professional  
Liability Fund

<https://www.osbplf.org> > Services

- Forms ■ Books ■ CLEs ■ *InPractice* blog
  - *InBrief* Newsletter ■ Practice Management Assistance Program (PMAP)
- Oregon Attorney Assistance Program (OAAP)

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# Discounts

<https://osbplf.org/services/discounts.html>



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# Contact Us

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PLF Practice Management Attorneys

**Rachel Edwards**

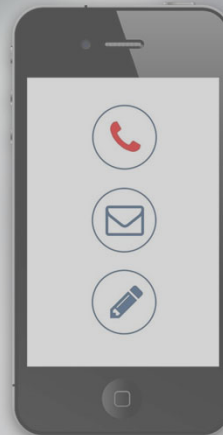
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503-924-1774



*Free and confidential*

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# Presentation Resources

1. Software comparison websites
  - a. Finances Online: Reviews for Business- <https://financesonline.com/top-20-legal-case-management-software-programs-small-medium-law-firms>
  - b. Capterra- [https://www.capterra.com/legal-case-management-software/?featureDD=on&utf8=%E2%9C%93&users=&sort\\_options=Highest+Rated](https://www.capterra.com/legal-case-management-software/?featureDD=on&utf8=%E2%9C%93&users=&sort_options=Highest+Rated)
  - c. Lawyerist- <https://lawyerist.com/reviews/law-practice-management-software/clio/>
  - d. G2- <https://www.g2.com/categories/legal-practice-management>
  - e. LawNext- <https://directory.lawnext.com/directory-companies/categories/law-practice-management-suites/>
2. Technology websites
  - a. ABA Legal Technology Resource Center- [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments\\_offices/legal\\_technology\\_resources/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments_offices/legal_technology_resources/)
    - i. Law Technology Today- <https://www.lawtechnologytoday.org/>
    - ii. Buyer's Guide- <https://buyersguide.americanbar.org/>
  - b. ABA Law Practice Division- [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law\\_practice/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_practice/)
  - c. ABA Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division- <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/gpsolo/>
  - d. LawSites- <https://www.lawnext.com/>
  - e. Attorney at Work- <https://www.attorneyatwork.com/>