

James Law Group chooses Legal Files because “a product is only as good as the people behind it”

Background

The James Law Group provides a full-service practice, advising and representing clients throughout Missouri in personal injury, workers' compensation and criminal defense matters. The firm's lawyers and staff members are committed to providing the personal service required to meet the needs of their clients.

The Challenge

When it's time to purchase case management software, many law firms are hesitant to make a commitment because of a previous technology experience that turned out badly. The James Law Group was not an exception. A Legal Files customer since 1997, Office Administrator Lynne James recalls that a very bad experience with a bookkeeping program made her firm very cautious when it came time to make other legal technology purchases. In the late 1980s, the firm purchased a bookkeeping software program. Everything was fine—for a while. Then, one year to the day after the program had been installed, a graphic of a bomb appeared on their screens. The software company had failed to pay a programmer, Lynne was told, and the programmer had inserted this “bomb” into the program. Since the programmer wouldn't provide the company with a password or code to “defuse” the “bomb,” the bookkeeping program “exploded.” The law offices lost all their data.

Needless to say, when the firm began to feel a need for case management, it wanted to make sure their next technology experience was a positive one. “It's a very big decision, a stressful situation,” Lynne explained.

“Everyone is depending on you to make the right decision. Everyone—not just you, but all the staff and attorneys in the office—is going to have to make a commitment to learn and use the software. It's very important for you to pick not only the right software, but the right company as well.”

Assigned this daunting task, Lynne began to gather information on several software programs by reading legal technology publications and visiting exhibitions at legal conferences. She also requested demonstrations of software programs.

Once Lynne narrowed the field to three or four software programs that met the needs of the law offices, she began to look past functionality. “Given our previous experience, I wanted to make sure that the next company was going to be around five years from now. I wanted to meet more than just one sales
(more...)

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Lynne James,
James Law Group

Customer Profile

James Law Group

- Law firm representing clients in personal injury, workers' compensation and criminal defense matters
- One office in St. Peters, Missouri, just northwest of St. Louis
- 14 users

Challenge:

- Meet firm's functional criteria
- Overcome previous bad experience
- Find a vendor who was reliable, trustworthy and knowledgeable

Solution:

- Integrate software in day-to-day processes and workflow
- Provide expertise to leverage full functionality of application for firm's specific operations

Results:

- Improve case and firm management
- Benefit from a responsive and knowledge team of legal technology experts who know our business
- Contribute to system's new features and enhancement

person. I wanted to meet and get to know the people behind the company. I wanted to be sure they would back up their product.”

An Honest & Knowledgeable Team

Legal Files’ case management features fit all the law office’ requirements and more, Lynne said. “From the beginning, we saw Legal Files as one of the top programs. It always stayed at the top of our list. But, more importantly in some ways, I had a very good feeling about the people. They were straightforward and honest, and I liked dealing with them.”

The Legal Files team was also knowledgeable, Lynne said. “It’s nice to have someone tell you about this button or that report, but Legal Files explained to me how a law firm like ours could use them—how they could be applied—to our benefit in our day-to-day operations. That was a pretty big advantage, because then I started to think how I might want to try using some of these things in our office.”

The Results

Lynne decided to purchase Legal Files for the law office in 1997 and is still very happy with her decision today. “It’s great. I can’t tell you enough good things about Legal Files,” she said. “I’m also pleased with tech support, how responsive they are and how they handle our inquiries. Plus, Legal Files is always working on upgrades and our suggestions are always welcomed. We’re proud that we help contribute to the development of Legal Files.”

The firm has also enjoyed increased productivity and the convenience of being able to access its Legal Files data remotely. The lawyers and staff members at the James Law Group use the browser based version of Legal Files to gain anytime/anywhere access to their case files and related data in a safe and secure manner. Built-in functionality allows you grant read-only or full read/write permissions to specific users or groups. “You access your files remotely as if you were actually sitting right in front of it!” Lynne said.

The Bottom Line

Lynne said she empathized with law firms who are in the process of searching for and evaluating case management software. “I suggest that you set up criteria—what you want software to do. Then, narrow down the field to those products that meet your criteria. Make your decision based on the research that you have done on the product, but don’t forget to evaluate the company and the people behind it.”

Though you may hesitate to make a decision, fearing you may make the wrong decision, Lynne said inaction is the not the right approach. “It’s a difficult decision, but look how it turned out for me, I’m a hero.”



(800) 500-0537
www.LegalFiles.com