



White Paper

# Cloud for Legal Services





## Cloud for Legal Services

The legal industry relies heavily on the ability to store large quantities of files for long periods of time. This data needs to remain accessible and secure. It may seem like that's asking a lot, but with the cloud, it's really not. With advanced backup, failover, recovery and computing, the cloud is accessible for any legal firm.

Data and document storage apps and backup are the most popular uses of the cloud in the legal industry today, and that's because

firms are reliant on quick retrieval of the information they need. Not only will your legal data remain safe and constantly accessible, but cloud solutions are scalable so you can just keep storing more and more without worry. Unfortunately, many employees currently use the cloud without management approval. This open, unmonitored use is risky, and that's why it's time for legal professionals to get ahead of the curve and implement cloud services and standards so adoption is done

the right way.

Industry experts predict that cloud computing use by lawyers will increase significantly this year, now that the technology is becoming increasingly familiar. It may not cover all computing needs right away, but more lawyers will certainly use the cloud for some aspects of running their firms, whether it's billing, time tracking, document storage, or a full-fledged law practice management software system.



## Legal Technology Trends

### Contract Software

Contract software includes contract life cycle management and contract drafting. The road to getting a contract signed by all parties is often a long one and in this sector, contracts are never going away. Any way to streamline this process and address contracts more efficiently is useful, as many legal businesses waste a significant amount of work hours these tasks. Contract software, especially those programs offered in the cloud, will reduce wasted time and offer a high return on investment.

### Cloud Computing

Early adopters of cloud computing have demonstrated the benefits of productivity and compliance in the cloud. This will motivate legal organizations to plan their cloud migrations, especially as mobile- and web-based technologies continue to grow. Mature cloud solutions offer multiple, integrated functions with secure and mobile access, which perfectly fits how legal professionals need to work.

### Wearable Technology

Wearable tech will become more prevalent in many sectors of business, including legal. Wearables like smartwatches help legal professionals filter out all but the most important information, and add another easy way to remain connected to the workplace, even on the go.



## Paperless Offices

According to a recent survey, attorneys predict that the law firm environment could be paperless in as little as five years. This won't necessarily be easy to achieve, as legal organizations, by their nature, utilize a lot of paper and books, and many professionals actually prefer hard copies versus electronic copies.

However, a paperless environment already has large appeal to legal organizations, who would benefit from cost savings on storage space, printing, mailing and other costs associated with paper. Digital data storage today is a much cheaper option. The transition will require these organizations to redefine their processes and operations, and gain knowledge on the digital options available to them. They'll also need to get buy-in from internal employees and clients, which may prove a major obstacle in the coming years.

## Remote Working

This is becoming a trend across the entire business world. For cost-saving and convenience purposes, more and more legal professionals will turn to home offices or alternative working environments. It's extremely feasible today to work productively remotely. Professionals can continue to visit client offices and take advantage of virtual meetings.

This trend is possible thanks to tools like high-speed Internet, cloud computing technologies, co-working spaces, online software, and more.

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# Cloud Benefits for the Legal Industry

## Storage and Security

In the past, legal professionals have been wary of putting information in the cloud, as one of their main responsibilities is to protect client confidentiality. This makes moving data to a provider's infrastructure a bit frightening. People still aren't sure exactly where they stand with cloud security. Fortunately, professionals today are realizing that in most cases, cloud computing is just as secure, if not more secure, than traditional data storage. In many cases, lawyers should be more concerned with their current storage and security systems.

With the cloud, data like documents, contracts, notes and billing information is remotely stored in a secure data center that is owned and managed by the cloud provider. The information is more secure in this location because the provider has both legal and financial responsibilities to implement the highest security measures and ensure constant backup.

## Disaster Recovery

Of course, it's not just about secure storage. Legal companies also care immensely about the lifespan of their data. Information must be safe from destruction, which can come in many forms: system failures, natural disasters, etc. There are countless examples of firms losing both original and backup data due to these situations, and that's because they didn't have a strong, cloud-based disaster recovery plan. With the cloud, even if a data center is affected by one of these occurrences, redundancy ensures that your system is up and running, uninterrupted, via a different data center. You can experience automatic backups and geographically diverse remote storage for your important information. 40.5% believe that disaster recovery and data backup capabilities are the highest value benefits delivered by cloud computing. (LexisNexis)

## Simplified Management

With cloud computing in your legal firm, you don't have to worry about managing your computing system. The responsibility shifts to your cloud provider, which means you free up a lot of time. You don't have to worry about installations or maintenance issues. Instead, you can focus on what you do best: running your firm. This will lead to a higher quality of work, greater client service and business innovation – and it's all thanks to the cloud. Already, 31% – that's nearly one third of all lawyers – report using cloud computing software to manage their firm (ABA Legal Technology Survey). And according to LexisNexis, that percentage might actually be closer to 40% now.

## Flexibility

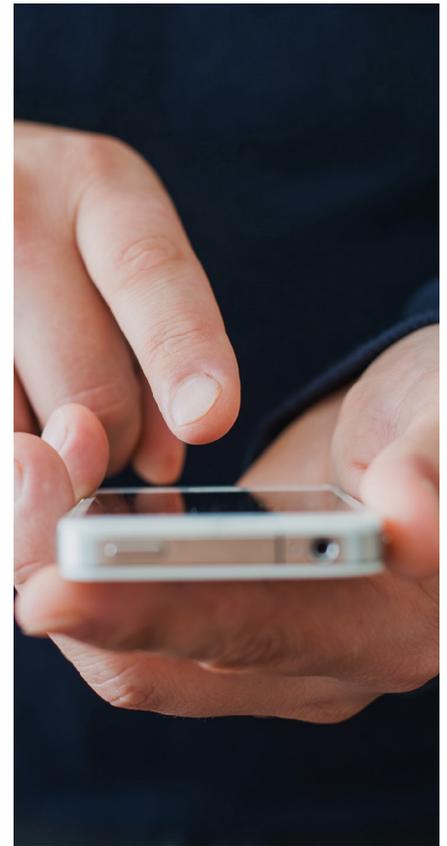
45.2% of attorneys agree that mobility and freedom of access are the highest value benefits expected from cloud services. (LexisNexis) With cloud computing, working with this flexibility becomes a lot easier. Your applications and data are accessible via the Internet across multiple platforms, browsers and devices, including laptops, tablets and smartphones. It's easy to work on the go or from various locations, like home, the office or on a business trip, because software is tied to the individual, rather than the computer. This ensures that in any situation, even a disaster, you can be up and running as usual.

This flexibility leads to efficiency because you are constantly connected to your data. Finding everything you need at the click of the button is much better than poring over papers and files hidden in desks and boxes.

## Cost Efficiency

With cloud computing, firms experience costs based on a subscription model. This means that instead of paying a huge upfront sum, the attorney or legal professional pays monthly, based on their usage, users or needs. Cloud requires no additional hardware purchases or installation, saving even more money. Better yet, the end environment is intuitive and simple, allowing users to pick it up without extra training. The costs actually shift to the cloud provider. These include the costs of maintaining and updating infrastructure, data centers and software. You simply pay to use the resources.

Additionally, cloud solutions like applications are constantly upgraded, allowing you to work with the latest features and remain up to date. With traditional software, upgrading is extremely pricey. Firms can now store client data, financial records, legal documents, and more on the cloud for a fraction of the cost, in a secure facility instead of at risk in-house.



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# How to Prepare for Legal Tech Changes

## Know How to Use New Technology

Traditionally, legal organizations have lacked either the knowledge or motivation to keep up with technology trends. However, technology advances continue to charge forward, and these organizations just fall farther and farther behind. Unfortunately when it comes to new business technology, ignorance is not bliss. Clients want the results that the latest

technology can provide, and they don't really care how that happens. They pay premium prices to get premium services..

But for the legal team, it matters. If they don't have knowledge on current technologies, they'll hit a wall when it comes to providing what clients want - and that doesn't bode well for long-lasting

relationships. As we head into coming years, clients will grow less tolerant of this ignorance from legal firms. While these professionals can't be experts in everything, they should make an effort to provide premium services that are actually quite attainable and fully managed in the cloud. This should be high on the priority list.

## Stay Ahead of Changes and Trends

Legal firms that remain ahead of changes and legal technology trends will make more informed decisions that will create competitive advantage and impact revenue growth. Constant education

ensures that a legal firm will make knowledgeable technological decisions to streamline the practice and provide better service to clients. Rather than waiting for something to become main-

stream and hopping on last minute, technology should become a core competency so legal organizations can be early adopters.

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## About RapidScale

RapidScale, a managed cloud services provider, delivers world-class, secure, and reliable cloud computing solutions to companies of all sizes across the globe. Its state-of-the-art managed CloudDesktop platform and market-leading cloud solutions are the reasons why RapidScale is the provider of choice for leading MSOs, VARs, MSPs, Carriers and Master Agents throughout the United States. RapidScale is not only delivering a service but also innovating advanced solutions and applications for the cloud computing space. RapidScale's innovative solutions include CloudServer, CloudDesktop, CloudOffice, CloudMail, CloudRecovery, CloudApps, and more.

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