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November 2007

Legal Connection

KEEPING LEGAL PROFESSIONALS CONNECTED

A Time For Giving Thanks

Concentrate on the positive this season....



As the year draws to a close and I mull over all that has happened in my life and the life of my practice in 2007, I have so much to be thankful for ... Professionally, it's been a banner year – LegalTypist has grown in so many ways ~ increasing our client base and revenues as well as making associations with other virtual professionals – I am thankful for each new connection.

I'm definitely thankful that I've been able to put into place processes which streamline some of the more time consuming aspects of running a successful practice. This frees me up to do less admin work and concentrate on the more important task of getting the word out about LegalTypist, the Virtual Assistant industry and securely working on the web.

I'm also very proud of the fact that in October, I completed my 10th speech at Syosset ToastMasters. It's official – I don't feel like a deer in the headlights when standing up in front of a crowd and speaking! ToastMasters has my eternal gratitude as there's no way I could educate larger groups about working remotely AND securely without the support, encouragement and education I received from my fellow Syosset ToastMasters. In fact, in November, I gave my first "live" presentation on Upgrading to A Digital Workflow to the LI Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators and in December, I will be presenting to the Suffolk County Bar Association Solo/Small Firm Committee. All possible thanks to ToastMasters. To see where I'm speaking next or to register for virtual events hosted by me, navigate to: <http://www.thelegalva.blogspot.com>

What do you have to be thankful for? Good health – lots of friends – loving family – another year on the planet? Too many times we get bogged down in the negatives of life – feeling overworked, under appreciated and stressed out all the time. I find technology can really amplify these problems rather than helping to resolve them. Take a minute now to think of the good things that came your way this year - and be thankful for what you do have. When a negative does creep in, write it down and try to figure out a way to remove it so this time next year, you can be thankful it's gone! ;) Until next time.....

LegalTypist

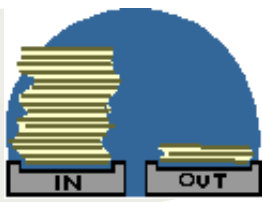
**SMARTER
TECHNOLOGY**
Experience
Counts



MAXTOR ONE TOUCH REMOVES HASSLES OF BACK UP

Experts recommend having both a physical and on line back up of your computer's important files.

What's the easiest way to physically back up your files – documents, photos, music? The Maxtor One Touch – plug it in, connect it via USB, turn it on and hit the big button. Every time you hit the button, you're backed up. While supplies last (200G/\$69.99): <http://tinyurl.com/3e2swa>



8 Ways to Make Your Client Feel Valued

By **Sylvia Low**

What you do when you practice law is to provide your client with a legal service. Professionals (not just lawyers, but anyone providing a service for a fee) are invariably judged on more than their technical competency. You may sincerely believe that your clients are paying you for your “legal expertise”. The truth is your expertise is assumed and your client can hardly tell how skillful your legal reasoning is over another competent lawyer; but they can certainly tell if your service falls short.

Marketing gurus are fond of saying “The first step to marketing a service is getting the service right”. Many lawyers do not see how investing in improving service delivery – whether in staff training or implementing in a practice management system – will earn them more. Yet there are so many ways for client care and service standards to fall short – from the way your staff answers the phone to how you monitor case deadlines; providing good service is much more than a matter of professional etiquette, it is a business imperative.

The key to avoiding the pitfalls of poor delivery standards is to ensure that communication between you (your practice) and your client is always open and good. Here are some tips to improve client communication – ensure that he will think of you when he needs legal advice.

1. Spending time making sure that your client understands the terms of engagement – if both sides have not established from the outset what the engagement is to achieve, the client may come to the conclusion that his lawyer is incompetent when the desired outcome is not achieved. When drafting the engagement letter, focus your communication on understanding the intent and desired outcome of the client. Take time to explain the legal strategy or tasks you will be undertaking on the client's behalf; and don't underplay possible adverse outcomes of these actions.

2. Keep the client informed. You may be doing a great job with the negotiations or court applications or opposing counsel for the other side, but if the client is never told, he will not be appreciative of your efforts on his behalf.

3. Take time to explain your billing process at the time of engagement and prepare a detailed bill wherever possible. If the client receives a bill which states “for legal

services rendered...” without a description of the specific tasks and legal outputs you have delivered, they are more likely to wonder why it cost so much.

4. Return phone calls promptly. No one likes to feel ignored. Even if you are unable to respond personally, have your secretary or paralegal step in and explain why you are unavailable and will return the call by a stipulated time.

5. Implement an effective case monitoring system to ensure that no case file “falls asleep” through inaction on your part. Apart from the legal consequences of expiring statutory deadlines, clients will appreciate that you care enough about their case to send them updates and reminders.

6. Train your staff to recognize key clients and their staff (for corporate clients) and to treat them with respect and consideration. You can be sure that negative feedback will be transmitted to their bosses very quickly if they feel snubbed or belittled.

7. Implement a diary / reminder system to help you keep in touch with “inactive” clients. Take time to understand their business so that you can more easily offer other legal services to them. Network for them - Whom do you know may be able to help your client's business? Can you send business their way? By showing your interest in helping your client succeed.

8. Solicit client feedback. You can use a questionnaire; or simply take time to ask how they think you are faring? Should you be doing something different? Do they have any complaints about the service of your staff? Feedback should be recorded and acted upon, not paid lip service to. Visit Bizilaw for more information.

Sylvia combines her passion for words with her interest and expertise in helping small businesses grow. She now writes, edits, corrects, proofreads and enhances any piece of text that Bizilaw publishes for itself – including website content, email brochures, newsletters, press releases, ads, sales kits; and every now and then, an article on practice management and how to grow your business.

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<http://EzineArticles.com/?8-Ways-to-Make-Your-Client-Feel-Valued&id=778677>



Seven deadly sins of PC users

From ignoring anti-virus protection to neglecting to back up data, even the most seasoned PC user may be guilty of risky or irresponsible usage habits. Here are the seven most common – and most dangerous – of those mistakes:

1. **Failing to keep anti-virus protection updated**
2. **Downloading unsafe material**
3. **Forgetting power protection**
4. **Neglecting to back up data**
5. **Ignoring Windows® updates**
6. **Misusing e-mail attachments**
7. **Friends and family using your PC**

View entire article here:

http://h30046.www3.hp.com/news_article.php?topiccode=20070810_539127_225_121_0_0&pagesite=SMB_OOV®ioncode=NA

Top 3 Computer Back Up Myths Exposed!

Never do today what you can put off till tomorrow. Sound familiar? That was always my motto (still is sometimes...) but as far as backing up my computer, procrastinating is the last thing I do! I have learned my lesson after losing precious data from multiple hard drive crashes!

Think disaster won't strike your computer? I have news for you: statistics show that 1 in every 4 computer users suffers a critical data loss every year. Laptops are stolen and hard drives crash; it's a fact of life. If you've never seen a grown man cry, wait till his computer crashes!

Still, I've heard many excuses from other computer users about why they don't backup their machines. Well, they might sound good, but they really do not hold up.

I conducted a small survey among computer users to find the most popular excuses. The top three excuses are shown below, along with my rebuttals.

3. I don't know how.

Now's the time to learn. If you have learned to use a computer, you can learn to backup your files. It can be as simple as burning a CD or clicking on folders and selecting "back this up."

Find the nearest computer whiz and tell them you want to back up your data. Or just browse the internet for data backup. Someone will be happy to help. (After losing a lot of my data due to hard drive crashes, I'm happy to help people backup their data.)

2. It's too expensive.

Backup does not have to cost an arm and a leg. Although some services are very expensive, it is possible to backup all of your data for a few dollars every month. What do CD-Rs cost these days, a couple cents each? Even one top-notch online backup service is a mere \$5 per month.

You buy insurance for your house and car, right? Think of data backup as insurance for your documents and digital photos. (Remember, even if your insurance covers the cost of your computer during a catastrophe, they will not cover your data loss, which most likely is worth more than the computer itself.)

And the #1 reason... 1. It takes too long.

This reason would actually be better stated as "I'm too busy!" or "I'm lazy!" but I figured I would combine those into one sentence!

If you burn CDs with all of your data, then yes, it takes a while. But even that does not take as long as trying to start over from scratch once you have lost everything!

Just think if you lost everything. What would you do?

Remember that backup service I mentioned earlier that's only \$5 per month? Not only is it cheap, it works automatically after a few minutes of setup time. It will actually backup your entire computer without any effort on your part! If you don't have time for that, I don't know what you have time for.

Levi Bloom runs PCBackupReview.com where you can learn everything you need to know about computer backup. Check out his website to learn the secret to backing up your computer easily for just \$5 per month or to [subscribe to a free e-course about computer backup](#). Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Levi_Bloom



Don't let this be you - back up today!



Attorneys, legal admins and VAs, submit your question or technology need by clicking on the AskAndrea icon above or located on each page of

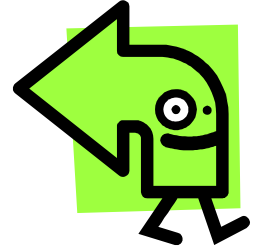
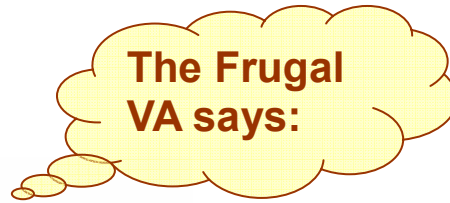
<http://www.lawfirmsolutions.com>

E-mail
Digital Dictation
Digital Transcription
Working Remotely/Being Virtual
Copy, Internet and E-Fax

You will receive a courteous and prompt e-mail response. No question too basic!




A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.



Project manage for the holidays *in reverse*

Grab your calendar and schedule time for holiday projects based on completion date. Plan it ~ if your want your cards received by the 15th – block off sufficient time to purchase the cards and stamps, write out holiday message/newsletter, address and get in the mail by Dec. 11th. Use the same principle for all your holiday to do's. Remember, a little each day goes a long way!



BYOB Lecture
December 4th - 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

Year End Technology Assessment

Is your software up to date? Does it need to be? How much space is available on your PC? Exactly when do you need a new machine? Should you buy a laptop or desktop? Andrea answers these and other questions LIVE. Must register to attend. Early bird discounts available for those who hurry!

Register here:
<http://www.eventbrite.com/event/83839767>



Get in the giving spirit *and* make space in your world

If you're planning a winter get away or want to be a savvy business traveler, use the most comprehensive travel search engine to snuffle out the great deals: <http://www.kayak.com>.

Grab a garbage bag and spend 10 minutes each day going through your home's closets and drawers. Any garment that has not seen the light of day during the past year – toss into the bag. Donate to Big Brothers, Big Sisters by dropping in boxes located throughout LI or by calling 631-234-0000. For a list of drop boxes, navigate to: <http://www.bbbsli.org/pages/page15.html>.



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