ClioCon 2019: Highlights From Jack Newton's Keynote

Written by Teresa Matich

At the 7th annual ClioCon, Clio CEO and Co-founder Jack Newton opened the day with a rousing keynote, covering this year's $250 million investment in Clio from TCV and JMI Equity, Clio's vision for the future, recent additions to Clio's product offering, and findings from the *2019 Legal Trends Report*. And, Jack announced that his first book, *The Client-Centered Law Firm,* is now available for preorder and will be released early next year.

Investing in the future of the industry

To start, Jack provided insight into the recent $250 million investment in Clio from TCV and JMI Equity. Both companies are known for investing in companies that have historically changed the way consumers engage with age-old services, and with this investment, Clio joins a portfolio of companies that includes Airbnb, Expedia, Facebook, Netflix, and Spotify.

As the largest ever investment in legal, and the largest growth stage investment in Canadian history when it was announced, Jack spoke about how the investment will allow Clio to accelerate its vision of building the operating system for legal—a goal which he believes is important for the legal industry as a whole to meet its full potential.

That might seem like an audacious goal, but Jack pointed out that most bold and impossible goals only seem that way until they're reached. When Bill Gates talked about putting a computer on every desk and in every home, people thought that was outlandish and crazy, but today it looks almost inevitable: Not only do we have a computer on every desk, we also have one in every pocket.

Transforming the practice of law, for good

Jack shared that Clio has a similar vision: To see Clio on every desk in every law office, helping lawyers and law firms to become more efficient and productive. But the bigger vision is for lawyers to leverage this operating system to transform the practice of law, for good.

At the heart of it, the issue is a lack of product-market fit, caused in large part by lawyers not delivering the type of experience clients are looking for. As some lawyers and firms focus on companies replacing legal services as competitive threats, they're missing out on the chance to solve the problem and provide better client experiences themselves, and there's a huge opportunity being left on the table.

Consumer expectations are shifting in a meaningful way in the day-to-day interactions people have with other service providers. People expect effortless experiences from all businesses, including professional service providers like doctors' offices and law firms. If lawyers can step into an entrepreneurial mindset and enable themselves to be more efficient and provide more effortless experiences with the right technology, there's a bright future for both their own firms and for legal overall.

The Law Firm Maturity Model

Strong firm productivity and the ability to provide a good client experience are two equally important aspects of becoming a world-class law firm. Law firms that do well in both of these areas are more likely to thrive and grow, while law firms that don't perform in these areas are likely to shrink and decline. The Law Firm Maturity Model is a useful visualization that can help law firms take an honest look at where they stand, and where there might be opportunities for improvement.

Clio's goal is to support firms and move them to the top right of the maturity model, so that as many law firms as possible are thriving as productive firms that deliver amazing client experiences.

What's new in Clio?

Further to Clio's vision of helping lawyers thrive, Jack announced a number of recent additions to Clio Grow and Clio Manage—including a few early access features available exclusively ClioCon 2019 attendees. With these new features and updates, lawyers will be even better positioned to provide effortless experiences and track their success to keep their firms productive.

New Clio Mobile App

In an age where clients expect effortless experiences, becoming a thriving law firm means having the ability to be responsive and productive from anywhere. To that end, Clio has rebuilt and redesigned it's already incredibly popular iOS and Android mobile apps to allow lawyers to better focus on the moments that matter when they're on-the-go.

Improvements balance functionality Clio customers love with actions professionals take when out in the field; creating updates to the mobile calendar, tasks, activities, documents, introducing new quick actions, secure messaging, and working better with native applications like email and maps. Download the new app today on iOs or Android to try it for yourself!

Outstanding Balances

The new Outstanding Balances feature (located within the main Billing tab of Clio Manage) presents client outstanding balance information in one central place—so you can view, share, and manage client outstanding balances quickly and easily, while also tracking the status of multiple outstanding invoices. This cuts out time-consuming manual billing work, so firms can spend less time tracking and sending monthly invoices.

Outstanding Balances makes the billing process easier for clients too: Clients can also easily see what they owe and make payments instantly online via credit card.

Non-billable time tracking

Tracking non-billable time is key for keeping track of the time and effort—i.e., cost for your firm—that's going into each case. With Clio Manage, it's now easier to track non-billable activities on billable matters to get a complete view of how time is spent across the firm—while still maintaining control over what appears on an invoice.

Through a new checkbox on the time entry modal, time entries can easily be marked as non-billable. Then, once you start tracking, you'll have a detailed record of billable and non-billable time entries in the activities table, and a summarized comparison on the dashboard of your matter. Non-billable entries won't appear on an invoice—you'll just have a record for internal tracking purposes.

Clio Scheduler

One of the best examples of a poor client experience is the back-and-forth that results from trying to schedule a meeting. Sending seven or eight (or more) emails back and forth to try to find a time that works for everyone is frustrating for both law firms and their clients.

Now, clients can schedule appointments themselves with the new Clio Scheduler in Clio Suite. Only times that a given lawyer is available will show as open slots for meeting times, eliminating back and forth. And, clients can reschedule or cancel meetings on their own.

Early access to Clio Scheduler is available for ClioCon 2019 attendees. (Note: Attendees must have both Clio Grow and Clio Manage to be eligible).

Firm Dashboard

For the past few years, the *Legal Trends Report* has reported on anonymized and aggregated data from tens of thousands of legal professionals in the US to provide unique insights into law firm efficiencies, hourly rates, and other key metrics for success. However, law firms haven't been able to measure their success against these metrics themselves. Until today.

The new Firm Dashboard in Clio Manage will allow firms to measure their own utilization, realization, and collection rates, so that they can track firm productivity and revenue and pinpoint areas for improvement to help them succeed.

As a quick refresher:

- **Utilization rate** = a measure of how many hours a lawyer puts toward billable work on a given day.
- **Realization rate** = a measure of how much billable work actually makes it to an invoice.
- **Collection rate** = the amount that a firm collects compared to the amount invoiced at a law firm.

Early access to the Firm Dashboard is available to all ClioCon 2019 attendees. (Note: Attendees must have administrative and/or reporting permissions on their account to enable the Firm Dashboard).

Highlights from the *2019 Legal Trends Report*

Every year, the *Legal Trends Report* aims to answer different, pressing questions for the legal industry. Now, for the first time, Clio has significantly expanded the scope of its data analysis to look at multi-year trends for the report.

Jack spoke about how this meant the *2019 Legal Trends Report* was able to include a longitudinal study on what takes law firms from good to great, i.e., what makes the difference between firms that are stable, growing, or shrinking in terms of revenue, and what trends emerged.

A few highlights:

- **Strong revenue growth.** When looking at the total growth in revenues, growing firms actually grew by 20% to 30% year over year to achieve an average of 112% growth between 2013 and 2017.
- **A more efficient work day.** Utilization rates increased over time from 28% to 33% for growing firms, but for shrinking firms, utilization rates declined each year from 28% to 21%.
- **Collecting on more of what they're owed.** Stable and growing firms both maintain higher collection rates above 90% at all times. Shrinking firms, on the other hand, see drastically diminishing collection rates to 81% over time.

The report also provides in-depth analysis into how people find their lawyers, what they look for, and what the process is like:

- **59% of clients sought out a referral for a lawyer, but 57% searched for one on their own—only 16% did both.** Lawyers need to be aware of various channels where clients could find them, whether online, through bar association listings, or through referrals.
- Law firms need to improve their responsiveness to new client inquiries: **79% of consumers expect a response within 24 hours**, but **64%** indicated they contacted a law firm that **never responded at all.**
- The point above aligns with research for this year's report: **60% of firms that were emailed did not respond at all**, and of those firms that were called, **only 56% answered the call—39% of calls went to voicemail**—of which **57% didn't return our call within 72 hours.**

Overall, the report provides an unfiltered look at how law firms are serving their new clients, and a clear look at key areas law firms and lawyers could improve. The full report is now available for download.

Download your copy of the 2019 Legal Trends Report.

The Client-Centered Law Firm

Finally, Jack closed off the opening keynote with a big announcement: His first book!

Building on over a decade of experience spearheading innovation within the legal industry, *The Client-Centered Law Firm* covers why Jack now believes the legal industry is at an inflection point driven by changing consumer demands, and provides a practical guide to becoming an efficient, profitable, and client-centered law firm.

The book is available for preorder now on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other online book retailers, and will be released in early 2020.

Preorder and share a post about *The Client-Centered Law Firm* on social media tagging Clio and #clientcenteredlawfirm before October 28, 2019, and you'll be entered to win our preorder contest Grand Prize—including a new iPad®, noise cancelling headphones, and more for an excellent reading experience.

Preorder your copy of The Client-Centered Law Firm.

That's it for Jack's keynote! Stay tuned for more highlights from ClioCon 2019.

About Clio

Clio is the global leader in legal AI, powering legal work across the profession, from law firms of every size to corporate legal teams, government agencies, and courts. Its Intelligent Legal Work Platform unites the business and practice of law, connecting the people, information, and processes behind legal work. Clio's AI brings the context together with legal sources drawn from Clio Library, a growing collection of more than one billion legal documents. Over 400,000 legal professionals in more than 130 countries rely on Clio to run their legal world. Learn more at www.clio.com.