Why Should Your Law Firm Use a Legal Phone System?

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What kind of phone system does your law firm use? As businesses in the legal sector embrace automation and other technology with increasing speed, it's unsurprising to see that legal phone systems are being updated too.

Law firms require powerful, reliable call handling setups to keep up with their clients' increasingly complex communication demands. That's why traditional and virtual law firms alike are now leveraging cutting-edge phone technologies that embrace mobility and flexibility.

What is a legal phone system?

Legal phone systems are cloud-based phone systems equipped with industry-specific features, like case management software integration and enterprise-grade security. They enable attorneys, legal assistants, office managers, and all the other vital team members at a law firm to enhance their internal and external communication processes.

Whether you're a traditional corporate law firm with 3,000 attorneys or a virtual law firm with five, a reliable legal phone system helps to streamline workflows, increase billable hours, improve client engagement, and deliver a great client experience from literally anywhere in the world.

So, why do law firms use legal phone systems, and what are some of the qualities to look out for if you decide to adopt such a setup?

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Providing a client-centered experience is key for any law firm. The better firms can serve their clients, the longer they'll retain them. The collaboration and communication benefits of the right legal phone system are key in this regard.

Device and location flexibility and advanced features like call waiting, visual voicemail, and especially integrations with the tools they already use (like Clio) permit attorneys to present the kind of polished professionalism that best represents their firm. And equally important: These features keep clients happy.

Let's dive deeper into some of the reasons law firms are realizing modern legal phone systems are a necessity and not a choice.

Flexible access to communication

In the legal field, your clients need to know they can depend on you to be available whenever they need you.

Legacy phone systems chain you to the desk or make you otherwise unavailable while you're on the go or attending court. They also lack advanced features like remote call recording, transcription, and visual voicemail, meaning you're likely to miss important calls and details while you're away from the office.

The right VoIP-based legal phone system grants you the freedom to work remotely, whether from your home office or while you're traveling between locations. Using your preferred device (most people opt to use their personal cell phone equipped with their business phone number), you can communicate with clients, attend meetings and trials, and more with the same efficiency as in the office.

Even more crucially, your clients can communicate with you however and from wherever *they* like. With the right law office phone system, you can give them the option to call, fax, message, or jump on a video call with the minimum of fuss—and without having to download an app or any software themselves.

Recorded and transcribed conversations

Your law firm could say goodbye to manual note-taking, too. The best AI-driven legal phone systems can record and transcribe conversations for you with impressive accuracy. That allows you to engage more authentically with your clients without the distraction of having to take written notes.

What's more, you'll have all the crucial details of any conversation to refer back to whenever you need. Some top phone systems will even automatically highlight action terms, distinguish essential details, and label caller information for you automatically.

A reduced workload and happier staff

Automation is reshaping the workforce, with 50% of business leaders heavily prioritizing the acceleration of automation in the workplace.

In the legal field, as with many industries, there are critical tasks that can also be tedious, complex, and incredibly time-sensitive. The best legal phone system can help your firm automate work like transcription, billing, and call handling.

With automated call recording, every billable minute is immediately logged to make accurate billing a cinch. Real-time transcriptions, meanwhile, replace time-consuming note-taking and give you timestamps, action items, and more. Virtual receptionists and other customized call routing features, meanwhile, boost client experience and leave your staff free to concentrate on other more satisfying duties.

Case management integrations

Your law firm likely already uses case management software to stay on top of cases and client relationships. The best legal phone systems can integrate seamlessly with those solutions.

Integrating your phone system with Clio or your case management software of choice makes your team's workflow more efficient and, by extension, improves client experience:

For example, this integration (well, any good case management integration, really) automatically logs your calls and syncs client information and call notes. You can even make calls straight from the Clio app for maximum efficiency (if you choose Dialpad and Clio as your preferred pairing)—ultimately, this all helps with keeping track of billing too.

Confidentiality and security

In the legal field, secure and confidential communication is vital. That's why the best legal phone systems provide enterprise-grade security and a range of features to protect you and your clients' information, data, and communications.

With the right law office communication platform, all data gets encrypted every step of the way, either while in transit or at rest. That means voicemails, texts, faxes, and any other info you can imagine. Additionally, single sign-on access options, secure file sharing, and more can add extra layers of protection.

Qualities and features to look for when sourcing your legal phone system

So, how do you choose the right system for your business? Cloud phone systems often come with an abundance of features, but there are some you should specifically look out for when sourcing a system suitable for a law firm.

Secure legal conferencing

Your firm's obligation to protect client confidentiality means any communication system you consider should take security seriously. This is particularly true for video calling, where you might discuss highly sensitive information during conferences with your clients.

Make sure your phone system comes with built-in security and privacy features like enterprise-grade end-to-end encryption. Also, ensure that it complies with the ISO standard for information security and other data protection initiatives such as CSA, GDPR, and SOC2.

An intuitive user interface

A communication system that's difficult to navigate or has a steep learning curve can seriously hinder productivity, result in time-consuming mistakes, and damage the client experience. Always look for a provider that boasts an intuitive user interface suitable for even the most technophobic colleague.

Most phone providers offer demos or free trials so you can determine the interface's ease of use before committing to a purchase.

App integrations and quick adaptability to paperless law offices

Your legal phone system should fully support your digitization goals by offering features and integrating with tools that make paperless law firms a possibility.

A comprehensive communications platform will offer virtual fax, cloud storage, case management software and CRM integrations, and plenty more functionality to ease the journey toward paperless firm operations.

Excellent and reliable call quality

The quality of your legal phone system reflects the professionalism of your law firm. If clients frequently experience poor call quality while speaking to your team, they might doubt the professionalism and reliability of your practice.

Poor call quality might also cause you to miss vital information in meetings, trials, or on client calls, potentially leading to mistakes that are damaging to your reputation and the outcome of your clients' cases.

With this in mind, choose a legal phone system that can provide evidence of impeccable and reliable call quality—ideally with a 99.9% uptime SLA guarantee—as Dialpad has.

Streamlined tasks and automation

Advanced call handling features and automated recording and transcription can help alleviate the pressure of those important but tedious tasks. Note-taking becomes a thing of the past and staff can focus more completely on your clients and their needs.

You can even have every single one of your calls and meetings automatically logged and exported to streamline billing and ensure accuracy.

HD audio recording

Anyone working in the legal field knows that the tiniest detail can make all the difference. The best phone systems offer HD audio recording to maximize clarity and eliminate potential unintelligibility.

Traditional and virtual law firms need a reliable system for firm calls

Cultivating trust and delivering reliability are two core law firm mission statements, and the phone system you use must reflect and support these aims.

For virtual law firms, in particular, the lack of in-person communication can make building trust with clients slightly more challenging, which is where a reliable communication system becomes critical.

The best cloud-based phone systems or communication platforms can help you improve the client experience in several ways:

- **Providing multiple communication options.** Clients can contact you via multiple channels depending on their preferences, increasing reachability and improving the client experience. Even better, there are no location restrictions. You can communicate with clients from the other side of the world with the same efficiency as if you were in their local office.
- **Delivering auto-attendant features.** Auto attendants have become the staple of a professional business phone system, efficiently routing calls to reduce client wait times and streamline workflows.

- **Removing data silos.** The integration of your phone system with your other essential tools means you can find client data quickly and easily while on a call, ensuring every client is served with speedy professionalism.
- **Ensuring business continuity.** Even traditional law firms need flexible communication systems. Whether you're urgently called out of the office or running late to an important meeting, a reliable cloud phone system lets you communicate on the go.

Together, these can improve not only the overall client experience, but also long-term client retention—while alleviating tedious workflows and making your firm more connected.

Set up your firm to be reliable and flexible

If, like most law firms, you value reliability and flexibility, ensuring these values are reflected by your client communications should be a priority. Investing in a modern legal phone system will grant you the flexibility to work with clients, however, whenever, and wherever works best for them. What's more, every client will know they can rely on you to be available to them.

When choosing a provider, vet each phone system in terms of security. Prioritize solutions that integrate with essential case management and calendar tools like Clio and Microsoft 365, and offer other customized integration options via APIs. Then, consider all the features and functions that the platform can provide to streamline workflows and save your law firm valuable time.

Keep all that in mind, and your law firm will find the legal phone system it needs to delight clients and stay a step ahead of your competition.

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.