

# THE NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

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## Don't Settle for Limited Legal Billing Software

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There's no question that attorneys are automating their firms, and securing the data entrusted to them, at higher rates now than ever before. In fact, a 2017 study [conducted by the American Bar Association](#) revealed that 52% of attorneys have stored their data in the cloud. Conversations about automation abound, and experts do not hesitate to encourage attorneys everywhere to take their firms to the cloud, entrusting their data to software that can both protect their information and maximize attorneys' productivity. However, what fails to be discussed is the fact that there are different levels of automation available to legal professionals. Comprehensive practice management software is an altogether different investment than, say, Google Calendar, an email inbox, or a limited legal billing software. The truth is that, although plenty of attorneys have opted in for full practice management solutions (be it PracticePanther or another option), a significant minority of attorneys rely on legal billing software, relegating the rest of their practices to other, less efficient options. Relying on software for complete practice management is a leap some attorneys may be hesitant to take, so we're here to explain why, in considerations between practice management and legal billing software, fully functional practice management is a no-brainer.

### **Law practice management software *is* legal billing software**

We'll get straight to the point: while attorneys who use only legal billing software do not get access to practice management automation features, those who use law practice management software reap all of the benefits of automated billing—and then some. Law practice management software comprises contact and matter organization; document, workflow, and intake form generation; client correspondence; calendaring—all *in addition to* advanced legal billing features like time tracking, customized invoice generation, batch invoicing and billing, invoice read receipts, payment reminders, and more. In fact, the best practice management solutions integrate directly with IOLTA compliant payment processors— LawPay is by far [the most highly recommended](#). By investing in law practice management software, you're not giving up the legal billing features that are essential to your firm; you're supplementing them with countless other productivity tools.

### **It's cost-effective**

Law practice management software takes a multi-pronged approach to help you run your firm: it should automate everything from your client intake to your communication with both clients and associates, all the way through to building and following through with your case, ending with getting paid. In a world where an attorney's time exists in direct correlation to his or her paycheck, it's extremely important for legal professionals not to waste their altogether precious time on non-billable clerical work. By addressing all components of your law practice (not just the billing part), comprehensive software solutions like PracticePanther save their clients hours' worth of billable time on a weekly basis. Assuming your software saves you one hour (a very conservative estimate), and that you bill \$200/hour, you'll have saved over \$9,000's worth of time within one year. Pricing varies for law practice



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management software. That's an over \$8,000 profit using the most conservative time-saving calculations possible.

## **Streamline like never before**

Would you keep different components of an ongoing case in different filing cabinets? Instead of compiling the documents associated with each case in the same organized folder, imagine shuffling between your Client Information cabinet, Invoices cabinet, Expenses cabinet, and Court Documents cabinet in order to compile all of the necessary information for the same matter. It's inefficient, disorganized, and could result in imperative information being lost or overlooked. Much like this filing cabinet nightmare, the problem with software like legal billing software, which isn't comprehensive, is that it doesn't allow you to host everything you need on one platform. Law practice management software, on the other hand, is the most organized, ever-present (and automated!) file folder you could possibly have for each of your contacts and matters.

## **Conclusion**

Legal billing is a crucial component of your law firm's operations, and it stands to reason that any legal professional would look for a software solution with comprehensive, secure billing features. What too many attorneys and legal entrepreneurs may not realize, however, is that law practice management software is the most secure option available to attorneys and legal entrepreneurs- not just for legal billing, but for all of the information handled by your firm.

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