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Do **IT** justice

IT Services for **Legal**

In this eBook, we will explore common issues faced by law firms, including data security, regulatory compliance, and the need to manage a growing number of devices and applications. We'll explore ways in which these can be overcome and explain the role of IT outsourcing and Managed Service Providers (MSPs).

The Unique IT Challenges of the Legal Sector

The legal sector faces unique IT challenges that can make it difficult for organisations to stay competitive and protect sensitive information. As legal professionals increasingly rely on technology to manage client data, streamline processes, and communicate with clients and partners, the need for secure and reliable IT infrastructure has become more important than ever before.

In general, the legal industry in the UK has been slower to adopt new technology compared to other sectors. However, with the increasing need to work remotely and the growing volume of data that legal professionals need to handle, the industry has recognised the importance of technology and is starting to catch up. According to a survey by The Lawyer, 85% of UK law firms have a formal IT strategy in place, indicating that there is a growing awareness of the need to invest in IT, and 46% have a dedicated Chief Technology Officer or Chief Information Officer role. This indicates that there is an increasing recognition of the importance of IT leadership within law firms.

However, for many firms, outsourcing IT services to an MSP or IT outsourcing provider can be a more cost-effective and efficient way of managing their IT infrastructure. MSPs and IT outsourcing providers can offer expertise and resources that law firms may not have in-house, allowing them to focus on their core business activities while leaving IT to the experts. As the legal industry continues to evolve, outsourcing IT services may become an even more important way for law firms to stay competitive and meet the growing demands of clients.

In this eBook, we will explore the IT pains experienced in the legal sector and address how these can be overcome, explaining the role of IT outsourcing and Managed Security Services Providers (MSSPs). We'll discuss common issues faced by law firms, including data security, regulatory compliance, and the need to manage a growing number of devices and applications.
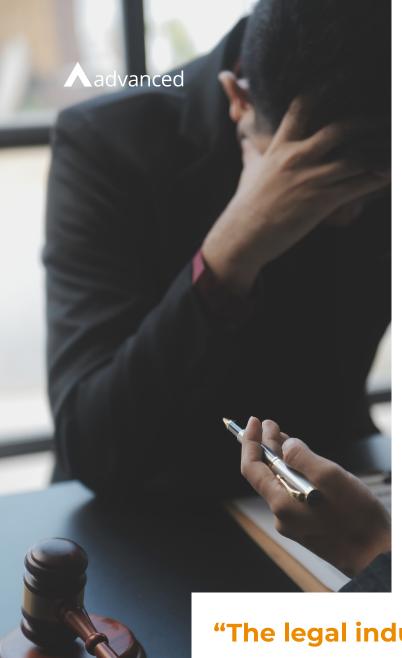
By understanding these challenges and the benefits of outsourcing IT services, legal organisations can improve their operations, protect sensitive information, and focus on what they do best - serving their clients.

A survey by the Law Society found that

48%

of UK law firms

experienced a data breach in 2020

There are several IT challenges that impact the legal industry

Data Security

One of the most pressing concerns facing the legal industry in the realm of IT is data security. Legal organisations are responsible for handling highly sensitive and confidential information, including client data and privileged communications. Cyber threats such as hacking, malware, and phishing attacks can compromise this information, resulting in severe reputational and financial damage. Physical threats such as theft or loss of devices can also lead to the exposure of sensitive data.

The risks are significant, and legal firms are well aware of the need to protect their data. According to a survey conducted by Thomson Reuters, 90% of UK law firms cited cybersecurity as a top priority, and 81% of firms increased their investment in cybersecurity measures in 2020.

Despite this increased awareness and investment, legal firms still face significant challenges when it comes to data security. A report by DLA Piper found that in 2020, the legal industry had the highest number of reported data breaches of any sector in the UK, with 18 reported incidents. This highlights the need for ongoing vigilance and the importance of taking proactive measures to protect sensitive information.

To mitigate the risks associated with data breaches, legal firms are turning to IT outsourcing and managed service providers (MSPs) to help bolster their cybersecurity measures. MSPs can offer a range of services, including endpoint protection, network security, and data encryption, to help safeguard sensitive data and prevent cyber-attacks. By working with MSPs, legal firms can ensure that they have the necessary expertise and resources to protect their data and comply with relevant regulations.

> **"The legal industry had the highest number of reported data breaches of any sector in the UK."**

Managing a Growing Number of Devices and Applications

With the increasing use of mobile devices and cloud-based applications, legal organisations must manage an ever-growing number of endpoints and applications. This can create challenges around data access, security, and compliance.

The use of mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets has become widespread in the legal sector. While mobile devices can enhance productivity and allow legal professionals to work remotely, they also introduce new challenges around data security and compliance. Mobile devices can be lost or stolen, potentially compromising sensitive data. Additionally, mobile devices may not be compliant with security standards or may not be properly managed, making them vulnerable to attacks.

Similarly, the use of cloud-based applications has become increasingly popular in the legal sector, with many firms adopting cloud-based storage, communication, and collaboration tools. While cloud-based applications can facilitate remote and hybrid work, they also introduce new challenges around data access, management, and security.

Managing a growing number of devices and applications can be overwhelming for legal organisations, particularly those with limited IT resources or budgets. However, there are strategies that legal organisations can use to manage these challenges.

A report by The Lawyer found that

57% of UK law firms increased their IT spending in 2020,

with the majority investing in cloud-based technologies

One approach is to implement mobile device management (MDM) software, which allows organisations to remotely manage and secure mobile devices, including enforcing security policies and remotely wiping data if a device is lost or stolen. Additionally, implementing security measures such as multi-factor authentication, firewalls, and anti-virus software can help mitigate the risks of security threats.

Similarly, legal organisations can adopt cloud-based applications that are compliant with security standards, such as those that are certified under the ISO 27001 standard. Cloud-based applications can also be configured to enforce access controls, such as role-based access, to ensure that only authorised individuals have access to sensitive data.

Overall, managing a growing number of devices and applications can be challenging for legal organisations, but implementing appropriate security measures and using compliant cloud-based applications can help mitigate the risks and enable efficient and secure remote and hybrid work.

"Legal organisations have had to invest in secure and reliable virtual private networks (VPNs) to allow their employees to access the firm's systems and data remotely."

Remote and hybrid working

Remote and hybrid working has become increasingly prevalent in the legal sector, driven by the need to maintain operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, legal organisations have had to adapt their IT systems and infrastructure to support this new way of working.

One of the biggest impacts of remote and hybrid working has been on the infrastructure needed to support it. Legal organisations have had to invest in secure and reliable virtual private networks (VPNs) to allow their employees to access the firm's systems and data remotely. They have also had to ensure that their employees have access to the necessary hardware and software, such as laptops and collaboration tools, to enable them to work effectively from home.

Another challenge posed by remote and hybrid working is the need for increased cybersecurity measures. With employees working remotely, there is an increased risk of cyber-attacks, such as phishing attempts and ransomware attacks. Legal organisations have had to implement more robust cybersecurity protocols, such as two-factor authentication and endpoint protection, to mitigate these risks.

Collaboration and communication have also been impacted by remote and hybrid working. Legal organisations have had to find new ways to collaborate and communicate effectively, such as through video conferencing and collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams and Slack. They have also had to ensure that their employees are trained in the use of these tools and that they are using them securely and appropriately.

Overall, remote and hybrid working has posed several challenges for the legal industry's IT systems and infrastructure. However, with the right investments in technology and cybersecurity, legal organisations can enable their employees to work effectively from anywhere while maintaining data security and compliance.

Data and Document Sharing

Data and document sharing is a critical aspect of the legal sector, particularly with the rise of remote and hybrid working. Legal professionals need to be able to collaborate on documents and other materials in real-time, even if they are not in the same physical location. This requires secure and reliable collaboration tools that allow for real-time updates, comments, and feedback.

However, data and document sharing can create several challenges, including:

- Collaboration: Legal professionals need to be able to collaborate on documents securely, in real-time, from any location.

- Security: Firms need to ensure that all documents are secure and only accessible to authorised personnel.

- Access: Legal professionals often need to access documents and data from multiple devices and locations. This requires a robust infrastructure that allows for seamless and secure access to data from anywhere, at any time.

- Version Control: Legal documents may go through multiple revisions and updates, and it's essential to ensure that everyone is working on the most up-to-date version.

By addressing these challenges and implementing secure and reliable data and document sharing solutions, legal organisations can improve collaboration, data security, and productivity, regardless of where their employees are located.

Compliance and Regulations

Legal organisations are subject to numerous compliance and regulatory requirements, including data protection laws, e-discovery rules, and ethical standards. IT systems and processes must be designed and implemented with these requirements in mind to ensure compliance and avoid costly penalties.
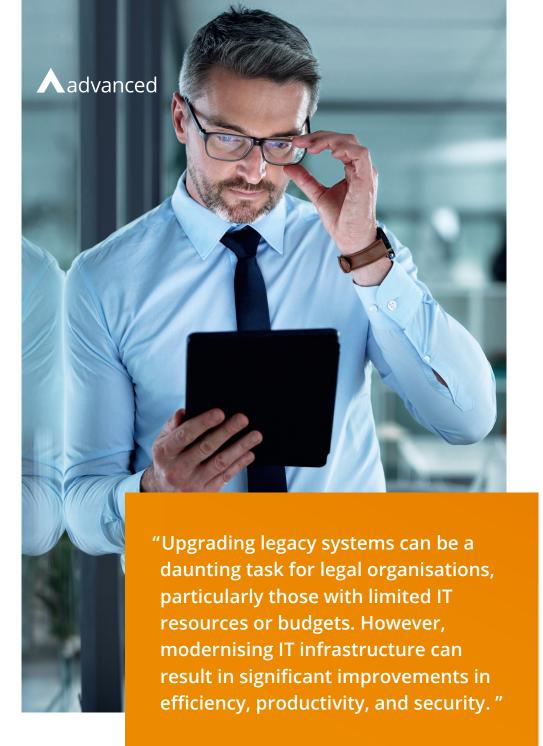
Some key regulations include:

- Data protection: Legal organisations must comply with data protection regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which ensures personal data is handled securely and responsibly.

- Electronic discovery: Legal organisations must comply with electronic discovery regulations, which require them to identify, preserve, and collect electronic data that may be relevant to a legal case.

- Ethical guidelines: Legal organisations must comply with ethical guidelines that govern their professional conduct, including client confidentiality, conflicts of interest, and maintaining the integrity of the legal profession.

- Anti-money laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) regulations: Legal organisations may be required to comply with AML and KYC regulations, which aim to prevent money laundering and other financial crimes.

- Intellectual property (IP) protection: Legal organisations must comply with regulations governing the protection of intellectual property, including trademarks, copyrights, and patents.

- Compliance with court rules: Legal organisations must comply with court rules governing their conduct in legal proceedings, including rules governing the submission and management of evidence, courtroom behaviour, and the use of technology in legal proceedings.

Failure to comply with these regulations can result in legal and financial consequences, including fines, reputational damage, and legal action. As such, legal organisations must ensure that their IT infrastructure is designed to comply with these regulations, including using secure data storage and communication systems and implementing appropriate security measures.

"Legal organisations must ensure that their IT infrastructure is designed to comply with these regulations."

"Upgrading legacy systems can be a daunting task for legal organisations, particularly those with limited IT resources or budgets. However, modernising IT infrastructure can result in significant improvements in efficiency, productivity, and security. "

Legacy Systems

Many law firms still rely on outdated technology and software, which can be slow, difficult to use, and prone to security vulnerabilities. These legacy systems may be running on older hardware and operating systems, which are no longer supported and may be vulnerable to security threats. Upgrading these systems can be expensive and time-consuming, but failing to do so can lead to inefficiencies and security risks.

Legacy systems can cause a range of problems for legal organisations. For example, outdated software may not be compatible with newer systems or cloud-based applications, making it difficult to collaborate and share documents securely. Additionally, older hardware and software may be more susceptible to malware attacks and security breaches, which can be costly and damage the reputation of the firm.

Moreover, legacy systems can negatively impact the productivity of legal professionals, as older systems may be slow to load and process data. This can lead to increased time spent on administrative tasks, reducing the amount of time available for billable work.

Upgrading legacy systems can be a daunting task for legal organisations, particularly those with limited IT resources or budgets. However, modernising IT infrastructure can result in significant improvements in efficiency, productivity, and security. For example, implementing cloud-based applications can facilitate remote and hybrid work, improve collaboration, and reduce the costs associated with maintaining hardware and software. Similarly, implementing modern security measures such as multi-factor authentication, firewalls, and anti-virus software can help mitigate the risks of security threats.

Potential Risks

If legal organisations do not appropriately address the above challenges, this can lead to several negative outcomes, including:

1 Downtime: Any IT-related downtime, whether it's due to system outages, security incidents, or other issues, can result in lost billable hours. This can be particularly detrimental to legal professionals who rely on technology to complete their work and communicate with clients.

2 Inefficiencies: Legacy systems, inefficient workflows, and outdated technology can slow down legal professionals and reduce their productivity, resulting in fewer billable hours. By adopting modern, streamlined workflows and up-to-date technology, firms can improve efficiency and productivity.

3 Security Incidents: Security incidents such as data breaches, hacking, or malware can cause irrevocable damage. Cyber-attacks commonly lead to reputational, legal and financial consequences, and even minor attacks will usually result in lost productivity while the issue is remediated.

4 Collaboration: Collaboration is an essential part of the legal profession, and technology can play a significant role in facilitating collaboration between legal professionals and clients. However, if collaboration tools are not optimised or are not user-friendly, it can lead to inefficiencies and wasted time.

By addressing these IT challenges and implementing solutions that improve productivity, efficiency, and security, legal organisations can maximise billable hours and improve their bottom line.

IT outsourcing can offer legal organisations a range of benefits, including access to specialised expertise, cost savings, and scalability. IT outsourcing providers can offer customised solutions that meet the unique needs of legal organisations, such as secure data management, robust infrastructure, and reliable support for remote working.

By partnering with an experienced IT outsourcing provider, legal organisations can streamline their IT operations and focus on their core competencies, while also improving security, compliance, and overall business performance.

According to the 2021 Legal IT Landscapes Report,

62%

of UK law firms outsource their IT support.

The same report found that the top reasons UK law firms cited for outsourcing IT services were cost savings, access to expertise, and improving service levels.

"By outsourcing their IT services to a managed services provider, legal organisations can improve their overall efficiency, security, and profitability, while also being able to focus on their core business functions."

How can working with a Managed Service Provider (MSP) help?

Legal organisations are increasingly turning towards outsourcing IT services to an MSP due to the significant benefits this can result in. Some of these include:

1 **Cost Savings:** Outsourcing IT services can often be more cost-effective than maintaining an in-house IT team. Managed services providers can offer a range of services at a lower cost than recruiting, hiring, and training an internal team, which can help legal organisations save money on their IT budget.

2 **Access to Specialised Expertise:** IT outsourcing provides legal firms access to specialised expertise that they may not have in-house. Managed services providers have highly skilled professionals who are trained in the latest technology and can help legal organisations implement new systems and technologies that can help them be more efficient and secure.

3 **Focus on Core Business Functions:** Outsourcing IT services allows legal organisations to focus on their core business functions, rather than being distracted by IT-related issues. This can lead to increased productivity and profitability, as legal professionals can spend more time on their clients and cases.

4 **Scalability:** Managed services providers can offer scalable solutions that can grow with the needs of the legal organisation. This means that legal firms can easily adapt to changing business needs and technology requirements, without having to worry about hiring and training additional IT staff.

By outsourcing their IT services to a managed services provider, legal organisations can improve their overall efficiency, security, and profitability, while also being able to focus on their core business functions.

In a survey of UK law firms by Legal IT Insider,

35% of respondents

said they outsource their IT functions to MSPs or other IT service providers.

Real-Life Use Cases

Outsourcing Service Desk

A mid-sized legal firm was experiencing significant challenges with its in-house service desk. The team was struggling to keep up with the increasing volume of IT support requests from staff members, resulting in delayed response times and frustrated employees. In addition, the firm lacked the resources and expertise to handle complex technical issues, leading to downtime and lost productivity.

To address these challenges, the firm decided to outsource its service desk to a managed services provider (MSP) specialising in IT support for the legal industry. The MSP offered a 24/7 help desk service staffed by experienced technicians who were familiar with the firm's unique technology environment and business processes.

Outsourcing the service desk had several benefits for the legal firm, including:

1 Improved response times: With a dedicated team of technicians available around the clock, the legal firm was able to quickly and efficiently resolve IT support requests from staff members. This led to increased employee satisfaction and productivity.

2 Access to specialised expertise: The MSP's technicians had deep knowledge and experience with the technology and software commonly used in the legal industry, enabling them to quickly identify and resolve complex technical issues that the in-house service desk had struggled with.

3 Cost savings: By outsourcing its service desk, the legal firm was able to save money on staffing and training costs, as well as the overhead costs associated with running an in-house service desk.

Overall, outsourcing the service desk proved to be a smart decision for the legal firm, allowing it to focus on its core business functions while leaving the IT support to the experts.

"By outsourcing its cloud services, the firm was able to leverage the expertise and resources of a specialised provider, while also achieving cost savings and improved performance."

Cloud

A large law firm was struggling to manage its growing data storage and processing needs. The firm was relying on an outdated in-house server infrastructure, which was becoming increasingly expensive to maintain and upgrade. The firm's IT team was also struggling to keep up with the demands of its lawyers and staff, who needed access to data and applications from anywhere, at any time.
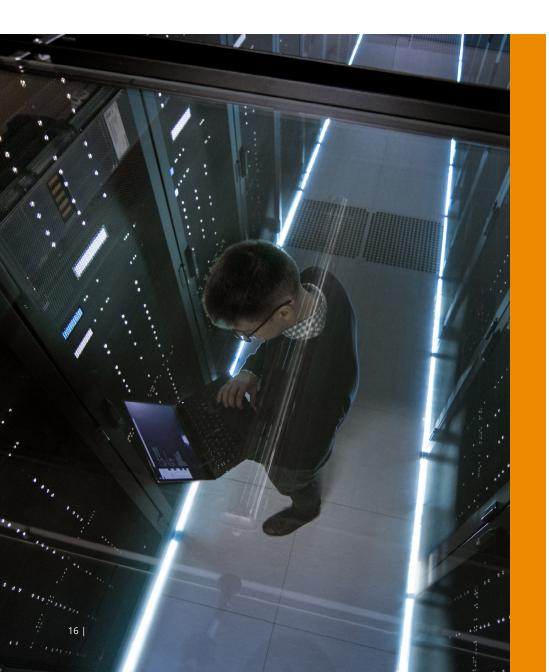
To address these challenges, the law firm turned to an IT outsourcing provider that specialised in cloud services. The provider worked with the firm to migrate its data and applications to the cloud, leveraging a combination of private and public cloud solutions.

With the new cloud-based infrastructure, the law firm was able to achieve several benefits, including:

1 Scalability: The firm could easily scale its infrastructure up or down as needed, based on business needs.

2 Accessibility: Lawyers and staff could access data and applications from anywhere, at any time, using any device.

3 Cost savings: The firm was able to reduce its capital and operational expenses by eliminating the need to purchase and maintain expensive in-house servers.

4 Security: The cloud infrastructure was built with security in mind, with robust data encryption and access controls.

Overall, the law firm was able to significantly improve its IT infrastructure and meet the needs of its lawyers and staff. By outsourcing its cloud services, the firm was able to leverage the expertise and resources of a specialised provider, while also achieving cost savings and improved performance.

Azure

A UK-based law firm with multiple locations and a growing number of endpoints was struggling to manage its IT infrastructure. They were using an on-premises data centre that was becoming increasingly expensive and difficult to maintain. In addition, the firm wanted to embrace modern technologies such as cloud computing to support their remote workforce and improve collaboration.

The firm decided to work with an IT outsourcing provider to migrate their data centre to Azure, Microsoft's cloud computing platform. The migration involved moving all of the firm's data and applications to Azure, including their case management system, email, and document management system.

The migration to Azure provided several benefits for the firm:

1 It allowed them to reduce their IT infrastructure costs by eliminating the need for on-premises servers and data centre maintenance.

2 It provided greater scalability and flexibility, allowing the firm to easily add or remove resources as needed.

3 It improved their disaster recovery capabilities by providing an offsite backup of their data.

4 It allowed the firm to leverage the latest security features and updates provided by Azure to better protect their data and applications.

Overall, the move to Azure allowed the law firm to improve their IT infrastructure while reducing costs and improving security. The firm was able to focus on its core business functions while leaving the management of their IT infrastructure to their outsourcing provider.

Cybersecurity

A mid-sized law firm specialising in corporate law faced increasing threats from cybercriminals, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic forced many of their employees to work remotely. The firm's IT team struggled to keep up with the constantly evolving security threats, and the cost of hiring and training additional staff was prohibitive. The firm decided to outsource their cybersecurity services to a managed security services provider (MSSP) that specialised in the legal industry.

The MSSP implemented a comprehensive cybersecurity programme that included 24/7 monitoring, threat detection, and incident response. They also provided regular security awareness training to the firm's employees to reduce the risk of human error. The MSSP worked closely with the law firm's IT team to ensure that all security protocols and policies were being followed.

The outsourcing of cybersecurity services provided several benefits to the law firm.

1 They were able to reduce the risk of cyber-attacks and data breaches, which could have had severe legal and financial consequences.

2 They were able to save on costs associated with hiring and training additional staff, and had more time to focus on their core business functions.

In conclusion, outsourcing cybersecurity services to an MSSP helped this legal firm to protect their sensitive data and reduce the risk of cyber-attacks, while also saving on costs and improving their operational efficiency.

"Outsourcing cybersecurity services to an MSSP helped this legal firm to protect their sensitive data and reduce the risk of cyber-attacks."

Hybrid Working

A UK-based law firm was struggling to transition to a hybrid working model due to a lack of IT infrastructure and support. They were facing issues with remote access, collaboration, and data security. They decided to outsource their IT services to a managed service provider (MSP) with expertise in hybrid working.

The MSP conducted a comprehensive assessment of the firm's existing IT infrastructure and identified areas for improvement. They implemented cloud-based collaboration tools and set up secure remote access for employees. They also implemented a data backup and recovery system to protect against data loss.

To ensure a smooth transition to hybrid working, the MSP provided training to the firm's employees on how to use the new tools and systems. They also provided ongoing support to ensure that any issues were addressed quickly.

As a result of outsourcing their IT services, the law firm was able to successfully transition to a hybrid working model without any major disruptions. They were able to improve collaboration and productivity while maintaining data security and compliance.

Full Outsourcing

A medium-sized legal firm with a distributed workforce across the UK recently decided to outsource their entire IT department to a managed services provider. By doing so, they were able to focus on strategic initiatives, manage costs, and gain access to specialised expertise.

In addition to these benefits, outsourcing IT also helped the firm achieve improved security. By partnering with a managed security services provider, the firm gained access to specialised security expertise, advanced threat detection and prevention tools, and ongoing monitoring and management.

Outsourcing IT also enhanced the firm's compliance efforts. Legal firms are required to comply with a range of regulations and standards, including GDPR and ISO 27001. By outsourcing their IT, the firm was able to access experts who could help ensure that their IT environment meets these requirements.

Furthermore, outsourcing IT allowed the firm to increase innovation. By leveraging the latest technologies and solutions without having to invest in expensive hardware and software or hire specialised staff, the firm was able to stay ahead of the curve.

Finally, outsourcing IT provided the firm with better disaster recovery and business continuity solutions. In the event of a disruption or outage, the firm was able to continue its operations without interruption, thanks to the robust disaster recovery and business continuity solutions provided by their managed services provider.

"By partnering with a managed security services provider, the firm gained access to specialised security expertise. "

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"As your firm grows, your IT needs will evolve as well. Make sure any potential IT outsourcing or MSP partner can provide scalable solutions that can adapt to your changing needs."

**Over 65%
of the top 100
UK Law Firms**

**currently used Advanced
Software and/or Services**

Key Considerations

When selecting a third-party supplier, organisations need to carefully evaluate potential providers based on a range of key factors. Some of the most important considerations to keep in mind include:

1 Experience in the legal industry: Look for an IT outsourcing provider with a proven track record of working with legal firms. They should have a deep understanding of the unique challenges and requirements of the legal industry and be able to provide tailored solutions to meet those needs.

2 Regulatory compliance: Legal firms are subject to a range of regulations and standards, including GDPR and ISO 27001. Make sure any potential IT outsourcing or MSP partner has experience in meeting these requirements and can provide the necessary compliance certifications.

3 Security expertise: The sensitive nature of legal data means that security is a top priority. Look for a provider with specialised security expertise and advanced threat detection and prevention tools to ensure your data is always protected.

4 Scalability: As your firm grows, your IT needs will evolve as well. Make sure any potential IT outsourcing or MSP partner can provide scalable solutions that can adapt to your changing needs.

5 Cost-effectiveness: While outsourcing IT can provide significant cost savings, it's important to find a provider that offers transparent pricing and can deliver the necessary services within your budget.

By carefully evaluating potential IT outsourcing partners based on these key factors, legal firms can find a partner that can help them overcome their IT challenges and achieve their business objectives.

IT Trends for the Legal Future

The legal industry is rapidly evolving, and technological advancements are playing a key role in this transformation. Here are some of the key trends that are likely to shape the industry in the coming years:

1 Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI is becoming increasingly prevalent in the legal industry, with firms leveraging machine learning algorithms to analyse large volumes of data and automate repetitive tasks. This technology can help firms to save time and reduce costs, while also improving the accuracy and efficiency of their operations.

2 Cloud Computing: Cloud computing is becoming more widely adopted in the legal industry, enabling firms to access their data and applications from anywhere, at any time. This technology can help to improve collaboration and efficiency, while also reducing the need for on-premises hardware and infrastructure.

3 Cybersecurity: As cyber threats become more sophisticated, cybersecurity is becoming increasingly complicated. Firms must take steps to protect their data and client information, including implementing advanced security solutions and regularly training their employees on best practices.

4 Remote Work: The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the trend towards remote work, and this is likely to continue in the future. As such, firms must ensure that their IT infrastructure is capable of supporting remote work and that their employees have the tools and resources they need to work effectively from anywhere.

5 Client-Facing Technologies: The legal industry is also beginning to adopt client-facing technologies, such as online portals and chatbots, which can help to improve client engagement and streamline communication. These technologies can help firms to provide a better customer experience, while also reducing the workload of their employees.

Conclusion

In conclusion, outsourcing IT services to an MSP can provide many benefits for organisations in the legal industry, including cost savings, access to specialised expertise, and improved security and compliance. With the increasing reliance on technology in the industry, it is more important than ever for legal firms to have a robust and reliable IT infrastructure. However, selecting the right outsourcing partner is crucial, and firms should carefully consider factors such as industry experience, certifications, and regulatory compliance when making their choice.

Looking ahead, it is clear that the legal industry will continue to be shaped by technology, with trends such as AI and automation playing an increasingly important role. As such, legal firms that stay abreast of these developments and invest in the latest technologies will be well positioned to remain competitive and deliver value to their clients.

Overall, outsourcing IT services to a trusted partner can allow legal firms to focus on their core business functions and strategic initiatives, while also benefiting from the expertise and capabilities of an experienced outsourcing provider.

Looking to outsource your IT or enhance your cybersecurity? Contact us today to learn how we can help your legal organisation achieve greater efficiency, security, and cost savings.

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