



You're an attorney. Understanding basic IT  
is probably within your range of capabilities.



There really is no reason why, in five minutes, you can't know enough about cloud computing to confidently decide on the smartest path for your company to take into the cloud.

There are clear, easy-for-anyone-to-grasp pros and cons associated with the basic IT options. There are IT companies that have a history of serving the legal profession, and some that do not. That should make your decision pretty simple.

In the next few pages we'll give you enough information to do a credible job of questioning any IT provider, we'll talk about what IT issues are particularly important for the legal profession, and why law firms often ultimately choose External IT.



## PLATFORMS. EVERYTHING STARTS WITH A PLATFORM.

### OPTION 01: [TRADITIONAL IT](#)

The easiest, but least logical thing to do would be to remain with a traditional IT solution. This oldest approach is not built upon an organizing platform, but instead is a cobbled together assemblage of things invented, and updated, over the span of several years. In the world of IT, this is the slowest, most complicated and expensive way to work.

Every new application install, or application update, has to be done individually, with an IT support person moving from one computer to the next. Permissions have to be set up and managed individually. This makes them hard to keep track of, which in turn makes you more vulnerable to nefarious activities.

And then there's the financial hit that you take every few years. Servers and computers run out of space, become slower as they're overloaded with applications, or simply break down.

### OPTION 02: [MANAGED HOSTING](#)

Managed hosting is the first step most companies take into the cloud. The problems you have with traditional IT don't go away, and here again you don't have an IT unifying platform. Managed hosting will does give you a place to backup and store more information, or from which to launch applications.

Managed hosting companies, ironically, also do very little in the way of managing your IT. One example: you can have your custom and industry specific applications housed on a managed hosting server, but it's still entirely up to you to manage them. Bottom line, managed hosting gives you very little in the way of enhanced capabilities, added security, or financial savings.



The most effective way to use it is as a component in a comprehensive, cloud computing solution.

#### OPTION 03: SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE

“SaaS” is all the rage. You no doubt use applications already that are housed elsewhere in the cloud, and have some of your information stored on SaaS servers. Gmail is an example of this. So is Salesforce.com.

But SaaS, like traditional IT and managed hosting, does not come with a unifying platform. Each SaaS application lives on its own island. Adding SaaS applications to a traditional IT structure does not reduce your overhead, nor does it simplify how your staff will work or how your IT will be managed. You’ll still have all the drawbacks you started with, plus the additional bother of overseeing a long list of security permissions and passwords.

When your staff has a performance issue, they’ll have multiple SaaS Help Desks they’ll to contact as well, one for each SaaS company you’re dealing with.

SaaS applications are here to stay, but here again, they only make sense as part of an IT simplifying, unifying platform. Like managed hosting, SaaS is merely a component of a smart solution.

#### OPTION 04: HOSTED DESKTOP

This is where you cloud computing IT thinking should start, but not where it should end. A Hosted Desktop is potentially an IT unifying platform. Unfortunately, that’s all it is. Once you stipulate the IT capabilities you need, they can be built into a Hosted Desktop. If your needs are modest, so is the challenge. If your needs are more substantial, so is the size of the task you face.

Imagine you’re hosting a dinner party, and you’re ready to prepare the food. But before



you can begin, you have to build your kitchen. You can't simply walk in and start making your famous Remoulade. Hosted Desktop gives you a room in which to build your IT solution, but the rest is up to you. There is no built-in functionality. Your business can't simply load its applications and get cooking.

Hosted Desktop, as a platform technology, also has drawbacks. For example, once you're working in a Hosted Desktop, finding your open applications can be annoying. It forces you to work with two task bars. This means that everyone in the firm will be opening and closing their Hosted Desktop screen several times a day as they search for particular apps. Neither fun nor productive.

Working with a Hosted Desktop Help Desk can also be less swift than desired, even if the Help Desk technicians are on the ball. The reason is that they first have to determine how your particular IT solution was configured within your Hosted Desktop platform before tackling your problem. Because every Hosted Desktop is built from scratch, there are many variations, even within Hosted Desktop companies.

#### OPTION 05: [PORTAL DESKTOP](#)

The Portal Desktop solution is the ideal way to go. It's not only a unifying IT platform, but it has a tremendous range of capabilities already built in. To follow our metaphor, your kitchen is already constructed, and every feature is top-of-the-line.

You'll have integrated web-based access to all of your applications, data, email; integrated file sharing and collaboration tools. You'll be able to work just as easily with Windows and Web-based applications. (Web-based being those SaaS applications we mentioned earlier.)

Your staff can post announcements, create shared departmental files, reference an automated, up-to-the-minute company directory, and add links to their favorite web sites.

The Portal Desktop also comes with a long list of built-in administration features, to greatly accelerate the time it takes for an Administrator, or IT Director, to perform



routine IT tasks, such as adding or deleting a new user, and there are high-end, built in security features as well.

You'll have the fastest, easiest, most versatile and secure way to manage and work with IT solution in the world, for small to midsize business. A platform that is not only built for today, and proven around the world, but very much created for where IT is clearly going.

You now possess the most important information you need for taking your company into the cloud. Greater detail awaits on our website. The next issue is making sure your outsourced IT partner is a match for your specific needs.

## IT CHALLENGES, AND SOLUTIONS, FOR LEGAL FIRMS

As you know too well, law firms today must do more with fewer resources while still providing exceptional value to their clients. Regulatory agencies, industry groups and even long-standing clients are also requiring higher levels of accountability than ever before.

The need for up-to-date, highly secure, well-managed IT infrastructure is not just a business imperative, in many cases, it's a legal necessity.

The overall objective is to provide more effective legal services through improved operational efficiencies. Easier said than done? Actually, it's just as easily done as said. Or nearly. (We insert that legal caveat.)

Here are the specific challenges our legal clients face, and how we help shrink them down to size:



## ISSUE 01: SECURITY

Your data is confidential. By default it must be protected and secured from unauthorized third parties and from actual loss.

### HOW WE ADDRESS THE ISSUE

External IT protects law firms with data centers and IT infrastructure that are, without question, among the safest in the nation. Twenty-four hour guards are supported by state-of-the-art biometric scanners and card readers. Our facilities themselves are secure against floods, fires, even earthquakes.

The OS33 Portal Desktop platform also makes it very easy for administrators to manage permissions. It's the only platform with a self-service administration console built in, enabling you to remotely manage all IT resources for every user.

The console gives you policy-based application access control to manage users, groups, applications, permissions, profiles, security and folder access rights.

## ISSUE 02: HIGH AVAILABILITY

Real-time information can not be anything less than a given.

### HOW WE ADDRESS THE ISSUE

External IT delivers ready access to the same set of applications, communication tools and data, regardless of where you or your staff are working, and regardless of which computer or computing device they're working with.

If a local failure occurs, you can log into the system from a different computer or different location. All you need is an Internet browser and you're back in business. You can go right back to the same point in your work process, without any loss of data.

We offer fault tolerant network infrastructure with synchronous mirroring, and



continuous data protection for servers with 24 hour rollback. You have your choice of high availability SQL and Exchange deployments.

Anywhere, anytime access is our most fundamental benefit. Whether you're at headquarters, a remote office, at home or on the road, our clients will attest that we'll keep you connected. Our facilities boast an uptime of up to five nines (99.999). Less than perfect? Nobody is closer.

### ISSUE 03: [DISASTER RECOVERY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY](#)

Extended downtime is not an option.

#### [HOW WE ADDRESS THE ISSUE](#)

In the event of a Data Center failure, our system can redirect everyone to a pre-determined failover site. It's business as usual with little to zero downtime. And we incorporate a more flexible and reliable technology than you would have with Hosted Desktop.

Hosted Desktop relies on a network router. Unlike the name might imply, a router alone is not very good at redirecting users to specific resources based on the application they request, their permissions, location and other circumstances. A Portal Desktop, like OS33, occupies the perfect space—between your staff and your servers. This makes it far more adept at handling these challenges.

We take backups, at minimum, once a day, and can have them run at whatever intervals you request including continuous replication.

### ISSUE 04: [COMPLIANCE](#)

Three letters that make brows furrow: SEC. Two names that prompt Tums bottle-tops to pop open: Sarbanes-Oxley. The government stipulates guidelines and enforcement, but it's up to each firm, and their IT providers, to guarantee compliance. Your IT



capabilities need to help make this happen, and provide documentation to prove it come audit time.

#### HOW WE ADDRESS THIS ISSUE

The OS33 Portal Desktop includes a security tool that allows IT managers, or External IT support staff, to enable, disable, and manage a set of simple, tightly integrated services for email management and on and off-line storage. IT also gives you access to a built-in audit trail to greatly help with compliance, and includes multi-year archiving solutions. We also offer ISO compliance.

#### ISSUE 05: **PRODUCTIVITY**

Time is as much an obstacle to success as an opposing attorney. Litigation support specialists, legal council and administrative staff all must be able to connect to your IT resources. They need to access applications and data without a hitch, share information, and collaborate on the fly.

And it's just as important for a legal firm to have a consistent, customizable, user experience regardless of the where they're staff is working.

#### HOW WE ADDRESS THE ISSUE

The OS33 Portal Desktop unifies all of your applications, data, email, files and gives you anywhere access. Our exclusive mirroring feature allows multiple users to actually view and edit the same spreadsheet, document, presentation or file while being in different physical locations, simultaneously. Imagine how efficiently you'll work when you don't have to e-mail document changes back and forth.

You can easily create Group Folders and Shared Shortcuts. It's also an instant resource for contact information. With OS33, you'll have anywhere, anytime access to all of your IT. All you need is an Internet connection. It works on an iPad, and in a pinch you can work with a screen as small as that on your smart phone.



## ISSUE 06: AFFORDABILITY

The high cost of IT has been a hot topic in law firms for some years now. Particularly in a time of declining, or flat, revenues. Obviously, the lower your IT costs, the greater your ability to retain the intellectual property every law firm needs to do well: smart people.

### HOW WE ADDRESS THE ISSUE

We can help you dramatically reduce or eliminate capital expenditures for new hardware, software and related infrastructure, and we give our clients much more predictable monthly IT costs.

To further control your overhead, you only pay for the resources you use and leave configuration management and upkeep to us. And our Managed Hybrid Cloud services allow you to tap into additional IT resources like Amazon EC2™ and Microsoft Azure™.

Our FlexSupport Help Desk Plans let you have the exact level of support you need, whenever you need it. This can be structured to accommodate exactly what type and how much support each department needs.

### WHY EXTERNAL IT

Few IT outsourcing firms in the world can offer the cost savings, reliability, security and competitive advantages that you'll enjoy with the OS33 Portal Desktop and External IT. Nor can they offer you a solution that is so well proven. Right now, thousands of people, on four continents, are working with the OS33 Portal, some of whom began with us, and OS33 Release 1.0, almost ten years ago.

The External IT Migrations Group has a justly earned reputation for being one of the most skilled in the country, and our 10 Step Migration Process helps ensure that everything goes smoothly. Our Help Desk people are no less well respected, and have an average of five years Help Desk experience.



We encourage you to visit our website for more details, and then get in touch again with whatever questions you may have.

If you're capable of assembling a complex defense or prosecution, handling estate and financial planning issues, negotiating the parameters within which mergers and acquisitions take place, as well as weighing in on any number of other contracts, we're fairly certain that choosing 1) a cloud computing platform, and 2) a well qualified IT support partner, are probably within your range of abilities as well.

Just a hunch.



External IT

THE POWER OF THE PORTAL