

Assessing Your Firm's Technology: Tips & Tricks

Practice Management Track



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June 5-6, 2006

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel – Los Angeles

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Agenda

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ What You've Got
- ❖ How You Use It
- ❖ The Impact of New Technology
- ❖ Tips & Tricks

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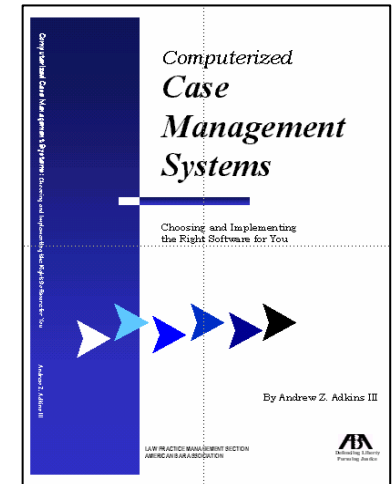
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Andrew Z. Adkins III

- ❖ University of Florida Levin College of Law
 - Director, Legal Technology Institute
 - Director, Technology Services
- ❖ Legal Tech Consultant – 1989
- ❖ Co-Chair, LegalTech Conferences
- ❖ Chair ABA TECHSHOW 2000, 2001
- ❖ *Author, Computerized Case Management Systems*
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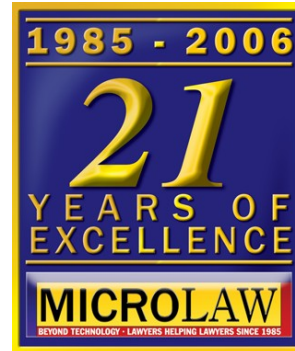
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Ross L. Kodner

- ❖ Attorney, Marquette Univ. Law School, 1986 (Law Review)
- ❖ Founded MicroLaw in 1985
- ❖ Legal Technologist and Law Practice Management Consultant
- ❖ Chair, Milwaukee Bar Association Technology Committee, Chair Wisconsin Law & Technology Conference 2002-Present
- ❖ Technolawyer Consultant of the Year 1999 (Lifetime Achievement Award), Contributor of the Year 2001, 2002, 2005
- ❖ Over 850 law practices and legal departments assisted
- ❖ Author and speaker nationwide on legal technology / law practice management subjects
- ❖ Chair, ABA LPM Section Computer & Technology Division (1998-2002) and Member, TECHSHOW 1997-2001 Board; Co-Chair, LegalTech Planning Board for all U.S. Conferences (1999-2005)
- ❖ Chair and Founder, Annual Legal Consultants & Technologists Dinner (1998-Present)
- ❖ Coordinator, HelpKatrinaLawyers.org



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Definitions



Case Management and/or
Matter Management
+ Financial Management
+ Document Management
+ Business Attitude

= Practice Management

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Assessing Your Firm's Technology

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Inventory Your Technology

- ❖ Software Applications
 - “Core” Software
 - Management Software
 - Practice Specific Software
- ❖ Servers
- ❖ Network (LAN), Infrastructure
- ❖ Desktop Workstations, Printers
- ❖ WAN, Communications, Internet Access
- ❖ PDAs, Cell Phones
- ❖ Remote Access Systems
- ❖ Other Technologies

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How Your Firm Uses Technology

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Inventory Your Users

❖ Main Technology Use

- Document Organization & Retrieval
- Email
- Calendaring
- Practice Management
- Time Entry and Billing
- Document Assembly

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Inventory Your Users

❖ Document Organization, Retrieval

- What software used (WP, Word, Acrobat or a combination – what about other document types such as Excel and Powerpoint)?
- How are documents stored?
- How are documents located?
- How are documents retrieved?

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Inventory Your Users

❖ Email

- What system used (OutLook, GroupWise, Notes, other)?
- Remote email accessibility
- Email storage/retention/archiving
- Email filters, rules
- Attachment management
- Connection to electronic matter files?

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Inventory Your Users

❖ Calendaring

- What system used (OutLook, GroupWise, other)
- Appointment method(s)
- Rules-based calendaring
- Proxy abilities for shared access
- Task Management and delegation
- Alerts and critical docketing event notification

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Inventory Your Users

❖ Practice Management

- New Client and New Matter Intake
- Client/Case Number Assignment
- Billing Connections
- Data Collection during course of representation
- Document Generation/Assembly
- Client/Case Information entry and accessibility

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Practice Management “Processes”

- ❖ File opening
- ❖ Conflict checking
- ❖ Calendaring, docketing
- ❖ Case/matter tracking
- ❖ Doc. Production, delivery
- ❖ Document management
- ❖ Discovery management
- ❖ File and records mgt.
- ❖ Communications – internal & external
- ❖ Client relationship mgt. (CRM)
- ❖ Time tracking & entry
- ❖ Billing entry and data access
- ❖ Cost recovery
- ❖ A/P, check writing
- ❖ A/R, collections
- ❖ Payroll
- ❖ Trust accounting
- ❖ GL, accounting
- ❖ Practice management / Firm administration
- ❖ Litigation and discovery support
- ❖ Legal research tracking
- ❖ File closing and paper/electronic archiving
- ❖ Budgeting and forecasting
- ❖ Reporting

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Connection Between Software and Law Firm Processes

- ❖ “Software standardizes Processes.”
 - To gain efficiencies using technology, attorneys and staff in a law firm ideally need to use the software the same way (or at least most people)
 - For example, the attorneys and staff should follow a common file-naming procedure for saving documents.
 - For example, all attorneys in the same practice group should use the same software with the same baseline skeletal set of procedures and processes

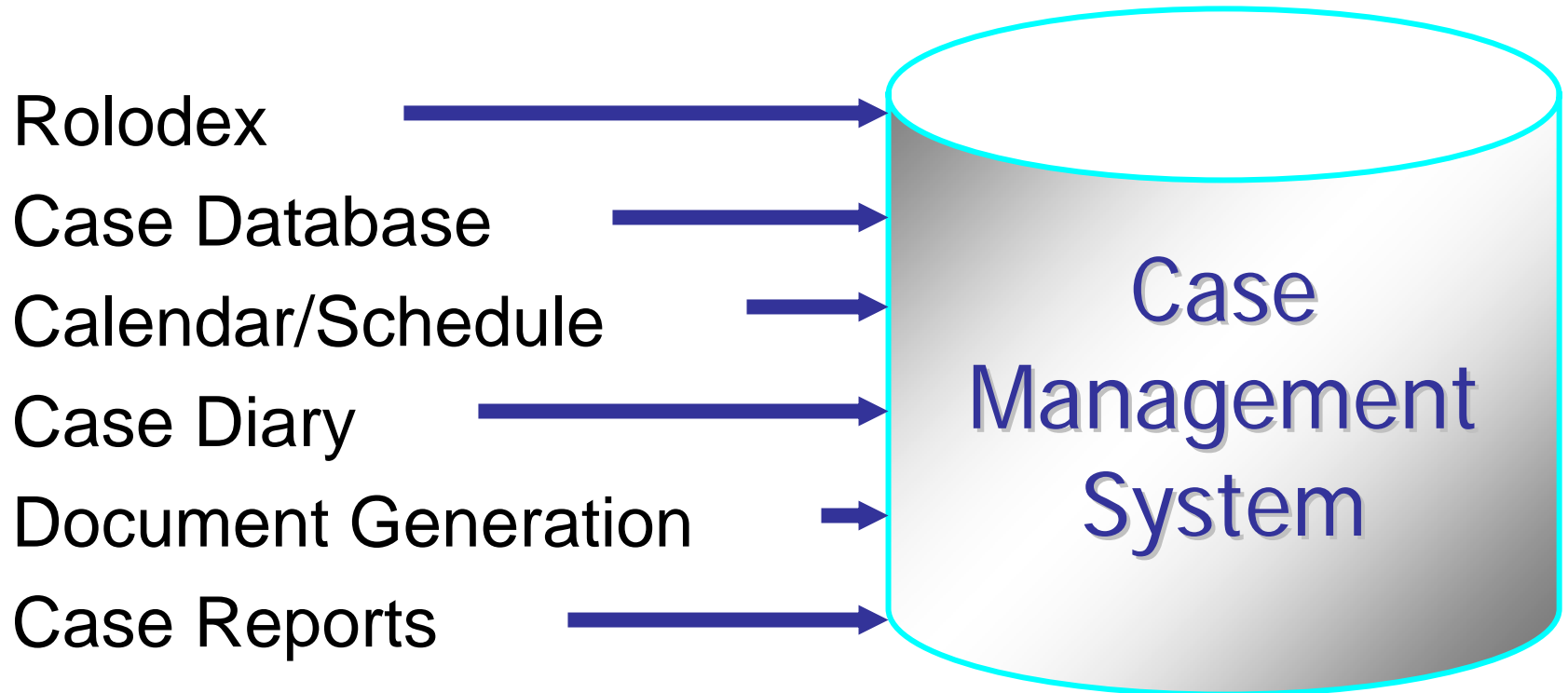
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You're Already CMSing

- ❖ Rolodex/Contact Database
- ❖ Case File Management
- ❖ Calendaring/Scheduling
- ❖ Generate Documents
- ❖ Post-It Notitis as a Memory Aid (CMS can equal “Cranial Management System” for some attys)
- ❖ Case Reports/Firm Reports
- ❖ Time, Billing & Accounting

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Basic CMS Functions



All CMSES Have These Functions!

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Needs Analysis Phase

❖ Workflow Analysis

- Follow information through your office – plan on streamlining processes before automating them

❖ “CMS” Notebook

- Case Intake Sheets
- Interview Notes
- Word Processing Documents
- Memos to the File
- Internal and External Emails

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What Can CMS Do For Your Firm

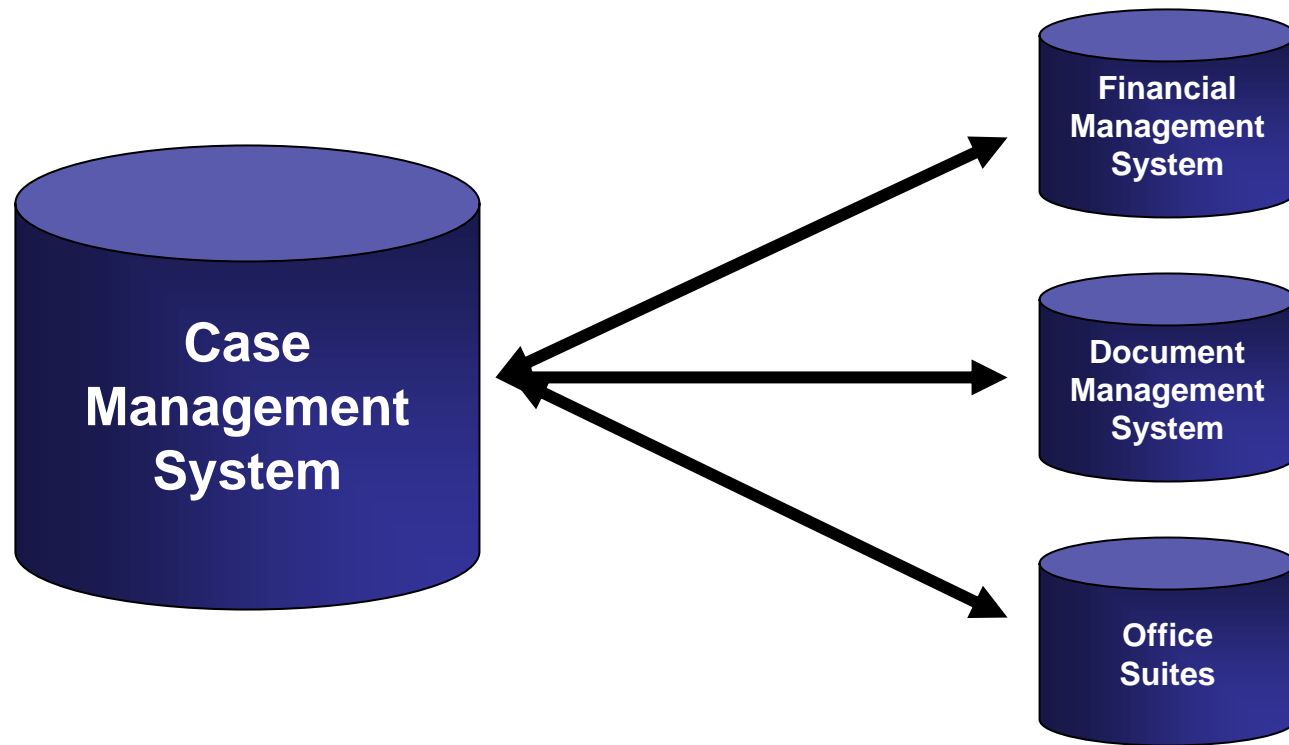
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CMS Integration with Other Tools in Your Practice



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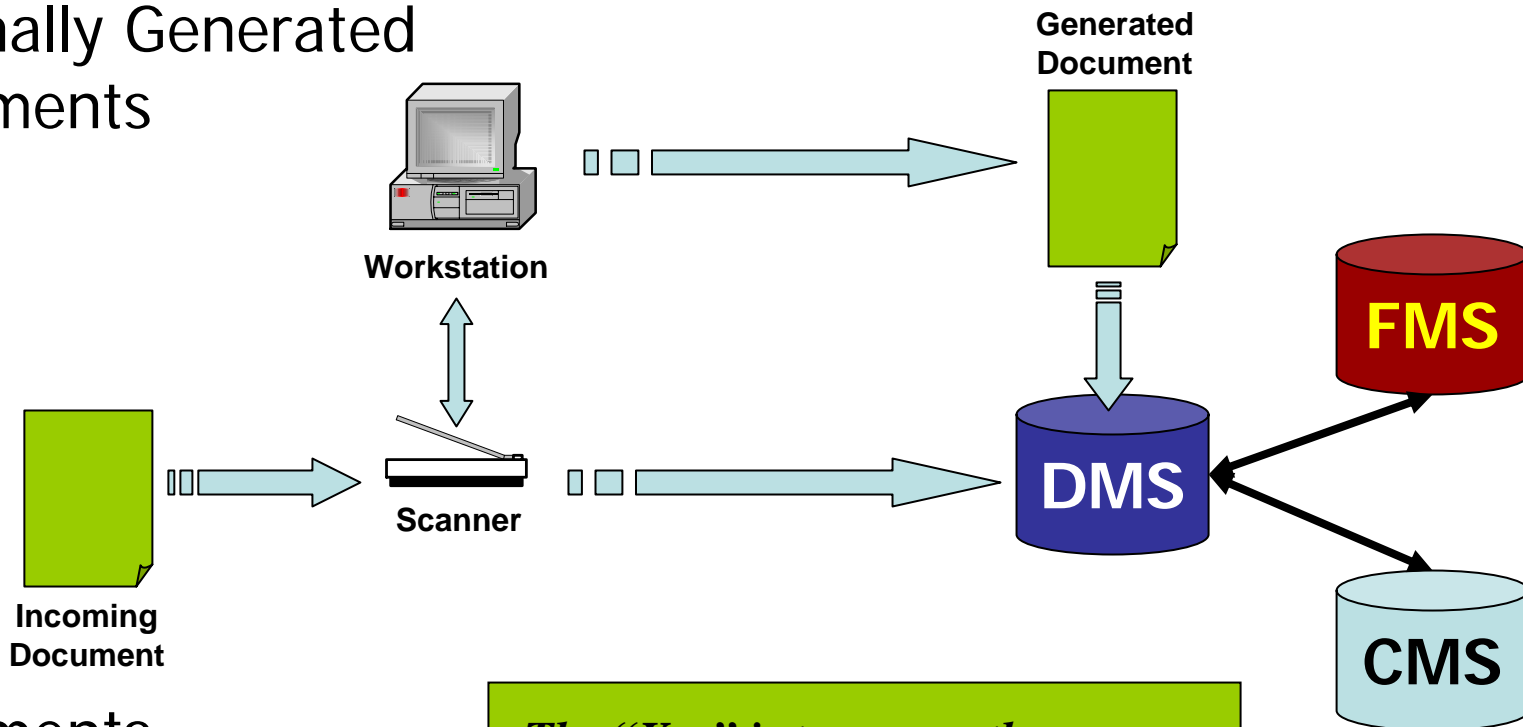
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A Paper *LESS* Office?

Internally Generated Documents



Documents Received Externally

The "Key" is to ensure the Document is "linked" to the matter

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The Cost of CMS Technology

- ❖ Range of \$1,750 - \$8,500 per user (without any hardware/network upgrades)
 - 25% - 45% for Software
 - 55% - 75% for “Soft Dollars”
 - Installation, Integration
 - Customization
 - Training
 - Annual Support
 - Non-billable lawyer and staff time involved in implementation



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Return on Investment

- ❖ If the software saves you 15 minutes per day
 - Bill 15 minutes more per day
 - @ \$300/hour
 - \$75/day - \$375/week - \$1500/month
 - Don't forget to add impact from billable staffers too

\$18,000 per lawyer per year

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Tips & Tricks

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It's Not All About CMS Features

❖ 85% is Objective

❖ 15% is Purely Subjective

- Two or more products with identical feature sets may produce very different visual reactions from the firm's lawyers and staff
- Equally capable programs could appeal to some people and repulse others.
- This is not quantifiable and is highly individualistic

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Time Frames & Reality

- ❖ It always takes longer than anticipated
- ❖ Expect the unexpected
- ❖ Plan for problems and be pleasantly surprised if they don't happen
- ❖ Be flexible in the timing of the process
 - You must establish a timetable with milestones that are tied to calendar days
 - You must be flexible because your firm must continue to practice law

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The Ultimate Reality Check

- ❖ Merely automating your present practices and processes is rarely the best approach
- ❖ CMSes are not “magic bullets” that solve all your procedural problems and inefficiencies
- ❖ Automating chaos = fastest, most efficient way to be chaotic
- ❖ Only approach that works – analyze, simplify and streamline your processes first, then automate the newly streamlined processes

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Selling Your Firm on CMS

- ❖ 100% Consensus is Impossible, but Necessary
- ❖ Use the F.U.D. Factor in a Positive Way
- ❖ Use Hot Buttons to Convince Doubters They Cannot Live Without CMS
 - Fear of Malpracticing
 - Costs More Money *not* to Have CMS than to Have One

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Do-It-Yourself CMS = Disaster

- ❖ “Lawyers representing themselves “*pro se*” in making case management decisions would be like one of their clients deciding to handle a capital murder case.”
- ❖ There are independent advisors who can guide and coach you through the selection process.

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CMS “Realities”

- ❖ CMS *can* make the firm more efficient
- ❖ CMS *will* change the way the firm practices law
- ❖ Firm *must* commit to the CMS rollout
- ❖ Training, Training, Training

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Technology Cost Example

❖ Scenario Strategy:

- 10 Attorneys
- 2 Paralegals
- 5 Legal Assistants
- 1 Bookkeeper
- 1 Clerk
- 1 Receptionist
- Total of 20 people

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Additional Hardware That May Be Needed

❖ (1) SQL Server (w/ NOS) @ \$6,500	\$6500
❖ (1) Data Backup (w/ SW) @ \$1,500	\$1500
❖ (2) Paper LESS Office Scanners @ \$425	\$850
❖ Install: 2 days @ \$1,500	<u>\$3000</u>
Total Hardware Cost	\$11,850

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Software and Implementation

- ❖ SQL Practice Management System @ \$8,500 \$8500
- ❖ Typical Annual Maintenance (20%) - \$850 \$1700
- ❖ Typical Install, Integrate, Configure: 4 days @ \$1,500 \$6000
- ❖ Training – CMS Admin: 1 days @ \$1,500 \$1500
- ❖ Training – CMS Users: 2 groups, 2 full days each. \$6000
 - (4 days) @ \$1,500
- ❖ Training – Document Management: 1 day each group \$3000
 - (2 days) @ \$1,500

Total Software and Implementation \$26,700

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Cost Summary

❖ Hardware Additions	\$11,850
❖ Software / Implementation	<u>\$26,700</u>
Typical Total	\$38,550

Technology Budget:
20 users @ \$1,750 - \$8,500

\$35,000 - \$170,000

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Thank You

- ❖ Andy Adkins (adkins@law.ufl.edu)
- ❖ Ross Kodner (rkodner@microlaw.com)

- ❖ Time for Questions and Answers

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