

# Testimonial Selection

USING TIME WISELY

# The Office of the Crown Solicitor - South Australia

The Office of the Crown Solicitor - South Australia - is the largest user of LawMaster.

CSO has been using LawMaster since 2000. Implementation of LawMaster has been greatly aided by training and through the identification of key personnel within CSO as Mentors.

In a review of the achievements since the introduction of LawMaster, Kellie Anderson says: "One of the obvious areas for attention in a large organization like CSO is time recording and billing procedures. We now have a far more efficient system in place resulting in a substantial reduction in the time spent on this task at all levels. It is no longer the huge administrative task that it once was. Also the availability of reliable productivity data is proving valuable. Statistical and strategic information is already enabling the effective management of the Office".

Another benefit noted by Ms Anderson is the mutually productive and harmonious working relationship between CSO and LawMaster. "Whilst accommodating the needs of their existing clients, LawMaster has managed to make a large number of system changes to suit CSO", says Ms Anderson. "The most recent upgrade is an indication of LawMaster's response to our comments. The improvements made have been very well received."

CSO has made large productivity gains through the automation of CSO's documents and also the document storage and retrieval capabilities which LawMaster makes possible. "Routine functions, like the recording and attachment of File Notes, are now being widely used by our staff with significant benefit to the overall productivity of CSO", says Ms Anderson.

CBA Legal is a Perth based commercial firm specialising in property and finance. We have been using LawMaster since 2000. We currently have 33 users.

When we founded CBA Legal, I wanted the very best technology available to ensure that we could provide the quality service that our clients would require. I had had previous experience in using LawMaster and knew that this was the system that we needed.

Our practice requires that we are able to handle all aspects of Mortgage work for a large number of banks and financial institutions. The turn around time has to be very quick and the work must be done with absolute accuracy. We are able to manage the firm's complete operations using LawMaster. We can generate documents, create file notes, send emails, enter bring ups, record time, view file costs, do our billing and review the progress of matters with ease. Data need only be input once in order to make it available for use. This makes it very efficient from an operations viewpoint. Most importantly for us is the ability to use the Task Management function. We have created, with the assistance of LawMaster, a task management routine for running our mortgage work. Our staff are prompted through each step of the process while using the task management routine. This ensures that procedures are standardised, that the work may be delegated to appropriate staff and that the work is "first pass perfect".

As Managing Partner, I find the Management Workbench function most useful. It enables me to review all aspects of firm performance. LawMaster also provides a Marketing Workbench function and we are now exploiting the tools in this to advantage. We have found LawMaster to be very responsive with any issues that we may have had. It is also a forward-looking organisation. LawMaster is a long - term partner in the development and success of our business. It does not focus on today but looks to the future needs of the firm and provides for those needs.

Joe Claudio  
Managing Partner

Paul Radford is the Managing Partner of Connolly Suthers, a 30 person law firm in Townsville. The firm is a LawMaster user and practices in a broad field of law including litigation, corporate work, and conveyancing.

"All of our lawyers, and our support staff use LawMaster extensively", Mr Radford said. "With Lawyers Workbench, all of our file management and file retrieval is handled speedily and effectively as well as document drafting and important tasks like time recording and billing. Without doubt we can say that we now couldn't work without LawMaster."

"Since the adoption of LawMaster, this firm has been able to revolutionise the way in which we do business. Many time consuming tasks are now handled automatically by LawMaster and the time freed for our lawyers has been redirected into building a more profitable practice and a larger practice." "LawMaster has given our lawyers the ability to delegate a significant proportion of our preparatory work, with a consequent increase in work satisfaction for our support staff. With LawMaster, effective supervision of work in hand has been achieved and there is an increased sharing of constructive work."

"Whilst profitability depends on many factors there is no doubting the positive contribution LawMaster has made to our profitability. The redirection of our time from mundane, time consuming tasks into effective practice - building has been very significant and is due in large part to our use of LawMaster." The Management Reporting functions of LawMaster allow for relevant reports to be produced as required and this has allowed the Firm to have at its disposal timely information regarding the financial performance and position of the Firm and of the work performance of the producers.

The Firm makes extensive use of the Debtor Management facility of LawMaster and is gearing up to make use of the Marketing Workbench. These functions are vital to maintaining profitability and increasing the client base of the Firm.

Paul Radford

Managing Partner

"The challenge with LawMaster as a product is understanding the totality of the journey you are embarking on. This is not just a practice management or compliance tool. It is a way of thinking, a complete management process and it requires commitment to the end vision of continual improvement".

"I will not say that implementation has been easy or that it has been as quick as I would have liked. Nor will I say that there have not been issues we have had to deal with from both the software's perspective and from LawMaster's perspective. However, fundamentally this is the best product I have seen and although it was a pioneering decision 10 years ago when we purchased LawMaster, I know it was the right decision".

"Implementing LawMaster is not like flicking a switch. It is not something you should embark on if all you want is a simple system or a quick fix. Implementing LawMaster and getting the benefits it can deliver will require a desire to perform at the highest level possible, backed up with the resources necessary to support that goal. It is expensive, complex and comprehensive - which is why we bought it".

"Our staff can see the opportunities that LawMaster presents to them in our business. They can see that it will require a change in culture and commitment, but they are enthused by that challenge".

"We have been able to deliver a comprehensive document management tool to lawyers on their desk top. They can generate documents, create file notes, send emails, enter bringups, record time, view file costs and progress of matters all at the push of a button. And from a management perspective, this all happens from a central database with uniform information".

Nicholas Carr

Managing Partner

Our firm purchased LawMaster in mid 1996 shortly before my arrival. "Having been exposed to other practice management software my first reaction was that LawMaster was a comprehensive product and probably too sophisticated for our needs. But that was precisely the point...that LawMaster provides everything you could ask for in terms of practice administration, file management and document production in a seamless package."

"The challenge then is for the firm to change its culture, fully embrace the technology and thus enable the product to fulfill its enormous potential.

We accepted that challenge, applied some intensive training across the board and for some time now have had LawMaster positively influencing the performance of everyone from partner to junior clerk."

"We are still not at full LawMaster capacity however because development of the product keeps raising the bar. But that's a good thing. LawMaster is not for everyone. It needs dedication to the product to obtain full benefit, but it's right for us and the best I have seen."

Norm Shaw

Practice Manager

Mills Oakley is a Melbourne based commercial law firm. We have been using LawMaster since 1999. We currently have 87 users. Our goals in implementing and purchasing LawMaster were threefold:

- We wanted to have an integrated practice management system.
- We wanted to be able to have a document management system which would give us the flexibility for all users to operate.
- And we wanted improvements in the efficiency of our billing process. We now have a far more efficient system in place. We can generate documents, create file notes, send emails, enter bringups, record time, view file costs and review the progress of matters with ease. We need now only input data once whereas in the previous system we had we were inputting data a number of times. We have a central data source and that is useful and very efficient from an operations viewpoint. Document management is another area in which large productivity gains have been made. LawMaster makes this possible through its Task Management, its Document Generation and its storage and retrieval capabilities.

We have found with the implementation of LawMaster that there has been a substantial reduction in the time spent on billing. It is no longer the huge administrative task that it was previously. The availability of reliable productivity data is a valuable management tool. Such statistical information allows us to manage our firm more effectively. In addition to these management tools LawMaster also provides marketing tools which we are now exploiting to advantage. In terms of LawMaster themselves, we found that they were pro-active in the implementation process and they have been very responsive with any issues that we may have had. I have found that LawMaster is a forward-looking organisation. It is not wanting to focus on today but looks to the future needs of the firm.

Robert Gullotta

Partner

Munro Thompson Lawyers is a legal firm specialising in Property Law, Business and Commercial Law and Wills and Estate Planning. Munro Thompson was the first Sunshine Coast Legal Firm to implement LawMaster in its business and we have worked with the LawMaster team to develop a fully systemised office with streamlined procedures in all work areas - both legal and administration.

"The LawMaster product has enabled our specialised legal support team to develop our productivity enormously", says Terry Bethke. "All data input into the system can be retrieved at any time, for any purpose. Using the modules created in LawMaster we have set up systems which not only double check our work but save us time and money."

"Being involved in property matters, our predominant area of practice, we use standard formats constantly for property transfers. Using the Task Management System avoids overlooking anything. Document preparation is handled accurately and smoothly. Completed documents including letters are saved to LawMaster, and are instantly recoverable for future reference".

"We use the Time Recording system in the business not only to capture all our time spent on each matter but as a invaluable management tool. We capture all our time on each transaction and we can also monitor the productivity of our procedures and lawyers."

"It is very difficult to imagine how this business would function without LawMaster. It has been implemented and developed by our team in every section of the business and is really working for us. I feel that LawMaster put us ahead of our competition because it provides the capacity to develop advanced systems for the business", concludes Mr Bethke.

Terry Bethke

Senior Partner

"We knew we needed to improve efficiencies and management control"

Rising costs and increasing pressures on margins were taking their toll and in 1996 we decided we had to make some changes if we were going to remain competitive in a rapidly changing legal and business environment. We knew we needed to improve efficiencies and management control. We faced up to the fact that to make effective and lasting improvements, we were going to have to fundamentally change the way we worked and we recognised that technology was going to play a big part in that. We didn't want a traditional accounting package with bolt-on additions. We wanted a truly integrated platform that would allow us to automate, so far as possible, the production process, be flexible enough to allow us to adapt to and take advantage of new technologies and be easy to maintain and use.

We chose LawMaster because we assessed their product and organization to be innovative leaders.

Since we implemented LawMaster we have achieved substantial efficiencies and cost savings through electronic matter management, automatic generation of correspondence, automated task management and document generation, centralised marketing database and resources and automated billing and performance and management report generation. As internal receptiveness, culture and skills have improved, the rate of progress is increasing. We are now working on direct practitioner time input, expanding the use of task management and electronic receipt of instructions and active client access to matters and status reports via the internet.

Fundamental change of the kind we are going through cannot be achieved simply by changing IT systems. It requires a clear vision and understanding of the business objectives, cultural change, training/re-skilling and plenty of time. LawMaster have a fundamental understanding of this, which underpins the philosophy behind the product and its ongoing development.

For us the drive for improvement in systems and efficiency, and adaptation to new and emerging technologies is a continuous one and for this reason we regard LawMaster as a long term partner in the development and success of our business. John Ward

Managing Partner

Norman Waterhouse

"I am not a patient man. LawMaster was given less than two weeks to be fully operational in my new firm. We had to hit the ground running - the volume of work was high to extreme along with all the associated pressures of establishing a new business. We are a commercial law firm.

As a computer operator of necessity, I am even less tolerant with anything that does not work and I will make my feelings known when things do not happen as I think they should.

LawMaster proved that it was not only willing to take on our challenge but more than capable of handling it. In a very short time we were productive and we have achieved excellent results.

Even when we have some of the inevitable hard issues to address, I am always confident we will get prompt attention.

Now my firm gladly relies on LawMaster. I use it daily and constantly. For me a system that can select and dial a client, record the call and cost it, all automatically and in one sweep, is my sort of system."

John Porter

Senior Partner

Porter Davies Lawyers

Brisbane

Mr Smith is a sole practitioner in a recently established practice at Toogoom (near Hervey Bay) which specializes in Personal Injuries work. He has been using LawMaster – over the Internet – since June 2001.

Mr Smith is enthusiastic about the impact of LawMaster on his practice.

“I appreciate the completeness of LawMaster”, Mr Smith said. “All the tools which I require to manage my practice are available in LawMaster. And they are convenient, and readily accessible.”

“Using LawMaster over the Internet is an excellent option for the small practice. This approach avoids major investment in computer hardware, yet all of the LawMaster facilities are instantly available. My files are hosted by LawMaster, and accessed via a high-speed Internet link. In every way it is as though the database was located here in my office. I am satisfied that my data is totally secure.

“The time saving aspects of LawMaster have impressed me,” Mr Smith said. “Time is saved in so many ways. Lengthy file searches are avoided, as all records are available instantly. The time recording facility is simple to use, and it ensures that I do not lose track of the time spent on any matter.” “Document merging is another great time saver – LawMaster enables me to use standardised documents, or even documentation previously prepared for other work, and to merge this with the data relating to the matter in hand. This is a very powerful tool for any practice, but in a small practice like mine, it is invaluable.” “In the end, LawMaster combines time-saving, convenience and certainty. Emails relating to a matter are automatically saved to the electronic matter file, so nothing goes astray. Just about everything can be handled by LawMaster, so paper files have been dramatically reduced. The bring-up system keeps all matters under review and up to date. LawMaster has made a very positive contribution to the efficiency of this practice.”

Greg Smith

Lawyer Toogoom