Customer Future Proofs Its Attorney Timekeeping by Choosing Tech Vendor

When leaders at Customer law firm sought to upgrade the firm's timekeeping system, Tech Vendor's competitive pricing and full-featured mobile app won them over. The firm quickly earned a return on its investment as attorneys immediately captured more billable hours while working remotely and located even more hours through automated time tracking.

Customer is gaining a variety of benefits by using Tech Vendor, which we share below. But their biggest advantage still lies ahead. Because in choosing Tech Vendor, Customer also acquired a versatile tool with the ability to quickly adapt to new challenges that are bound to arise in our ever-changing technological landscape.

A Forward-Looking Approach at Customer

Buyer is a leading law firm in XXXX [Description of Customer firm follows.]

[Customer Contact], CTO at Customer, takes a forward-looking approach to maintaining the firm's position as trusted advisor to growing businesses worldwide. In recent years, that included implementing a best-of-breed strategy for software adoption that moves firm processes from multi-purpose platforms into specialized, better perfected applications.

Drivers of Change

In the past, attorneys at Customer used timekeeping software that was part of the firm's accounting system, which was itself part of an all-in-one platform that also offered document management functions.

Every paralegal, assistant, and attorney logged into the firm's accounting system every day to work, whether from the office, home, or some other location. Even with the proper security protocols, it was a less-than-ideal situation.

Plus, technology vendors often cannot invest in the research and development needed to maintain top-level functionality of all the various components in all-in-one platforms. And as Customer also discovered, the cost of a single license for a multi-purpose platform can be much too steep, especially when most users need to access only one of its components.

Why Customer Chose Tech Vendor

[Customer Contact] and his team looked at timekeeping software for about six months before opting for Tech Vendor.

"Tech Vendor won us over by both competitive pricing and its strong mobile features, plus the fact that the integration process could be done quickly," [Customer Contact] explains. "Most timekeeping solutions tick all the same boxes – but Tech Vendor was the only one to offer the iPhone integration."

The prospect of a smartphone and tablet mobile app was, and still is, critical for Customer. "If I have to name one new capability we needed most, it was the mobile app," [Customer Contact] says. "We saw a very quick win and a fast return on investment through Tech Vendor's mobile features."

"Attorneys are capturing more billable time because of the mobile app." – [Customer Contact], CTO at Customer

More attorneys are working out of the office, during commutes, at court, at home, on planes, and elsewhere. Around 95% of U.S. attorneys use a smartphone to get work done out of the office and about half use an iPad, the 2018 ABA Legal Technology Survey Report revealed.

But efficiently recording these remote hours into a timekeeping system has been a frustrating challenge. "To enter time remotely in the past," [Customer Contact] says, "you had to log onto the corporate network, then log into the accounting system, and then put in the time. Nobody wants to waste the extra time and go through that hassle, especially on the weekends."

But with Tech Vendor's convenient mobile app, attorneys at Customer are booking more time for remote work, and entries for weekend work are on the rise. "When you get a phone call from your boss or your client, you can quickly switch to the app and get the time in the books easily," [Customer Contact] explains.

Time- and labor-saving features like these make Tech Vendor rewarding and easy for all its users.

Flexible and Easy for All Users

Tech Vendor's convenience, flexibility, and ease of use plays an important role in encouraging user adoption. Implementing new technologies in any business is difficult because people tend to resist change. As [Customer Contact] points out, "When you've been registering time a particular way for 30 or 40 years, it may be pretty hard to change the way you're doing it. And you're probably pretty good at it as well."

Attorneys at Customer, however, embrace the change, encouraged by the relief they feel when they log in for the first time and discover an interface that looks and feels familiar. "If they want to use it as a basic tool, they can. If they want to use its more advanced features, they have that option as well," [Customer Contact] says.

For example, with their old software, timekeepers could view only posted time entries. Every detail about every new entry had to be conjured anew. But with Tech Vendor, timekeepers enjoy a more holistic view of their activities that includes saved, released, and posted time entries. The system also pre-fills parts of new entries such as client and matter numbers and task and activity codes. [Customer Contact] says, "Attorneys are relieved that they don't have to fill in all the tedious details at the start of every entry."

Finding More Billable Time

Tech Vendor's software automatically logs emails, calendared meetings, phone calls, mobile calls, documents, dictation, browsing activity and more. It can also add details to the entry description that spark the timekeeper's memory. Users can access the logged entries online and receive a nightly journal report.

"Attorneys use the reports for inspiration. Instead of looking in their sent emails and recent documents list, they find everything in the detailed journal of day's activities," [Customer Contact] said. "It makes it easy to register more time. And the software integrates with our accounting system, so the time is transferred smoothly to our billing department."

But perhaps one of the most valuable benefits come from the insights garnered when working with a more advanced system.

Deeper Insights into Workflows & Billable Targets

At Customer, a useful feature on both the desktop version of Tech Vendor's software and the mobile app is the continual display of billable hours targets. Before Tech Vendor, it was very difficult for attorneys at Customer to follow their progress.

"All lawyers have a target, but they didn't follow up on that target very well in the past because they had to extract the numbers themselves to see how well they were doing," [Customer Contact] says. "Now they see the number every day when they log in. Attorneys want to know exactly where they are in relation to their targets, and the more precise, the better."

Lawyers are reporting back to firm leaders and engaging in meaningful dialogue about how they spend their time. When a target is too high or too low, they can make informed decisions about the workflow adjustments needed.

Firm leaders can also identify areas of efficiency more easily. They develop a more accurate projection of firm strengths, which they can use to better meet client demands for value-based services by assigning cases to lawyers who can handle them the most effectively and the most efficiently.

"Tech Vendor is OUR Solution, Not Just the Standard Solution" – [Customer Contact, CTO at Customer]

Displaying the billable hours target is just one example of enhancements Tech Vendor makes at the request of a single client and then delivers to all subscribers for free.

[Customer Contact] notes, "If we have small changes that only are for Customer, Tech Vendor makes the changes for us. We can send changes or bugs directly to the programmer and he corrects them more or less within the same day. And they are always easy to reach. Because of this, we really feel that Tech Vendor is OUR solution, not just the standard solution."

Protecting Future Growth

Customer has used Tech Vendor for five months. The next step, [Customer Contact] says, is to integrate Tech Vendor's time capture feature with attorneys' smartphones. Afterward, the daily reports and pre-made time entries will also include calls made to and from attorney smartphones. Customer can now better support attorneys as they increasingly rely on smartphones and tablets,

This adaptability future-proofs Customer's timekeeping system. Initially, Customer made a smooth transition to a smart, sophisticated software its leaders can rely on to meet today's most pressing timekeeping challenges. But ultimately, they adopted an agile solution that will grow with them well into the future.