Training Tips to Maximize Your Software Investment

How to leverage formal vendor training to optimize your firm’s software investment and minimize your time and costs.

Finding the right practice management software is just part of the challenge for a small law firm. The next step is mastering it—and that applies to everyone involved. As a best practice, you should plan to spend the same amount of money on training as you did on purchasing the application itself. The more you learn—and the faster you learn it—the sooner you’ll recoup your software investment.

Recent studies have proven that people who attend a structured training class are 50% more productive during the introductory period of learning a new application than those who don’t. Yet many businesses delay formal training or avoid it altogether. The reasons given range from “I can’t afford it,” to “I don’t have the time,” to “I can figure it out on my own.”

Successful firms know that “winging it” is not a viable option. Software that is misused or underutilized can lead to billing snafus that impact cash flow, to missed deadlines that result in fines or other sanctions, to misfiled documents that impair client communications, and to other headaches. Firms have also learned that training is cost effective and can be scheduled at the user’s convenience.

Start with a strong foundation in the fundamentals

Professionally installed software includes preliminary training. But while this may seem sufficient at first, it barely touches the basic requirements—like navigation, data entry, and system configuration—that you’ll need to hit the ground running.

A formal, “Getting Started” program will help you understand operating essentials such as the critical interconnection between billing, matters, and content before you start entering—and possibly misplacing—data.

Add advanced training to leverage capabilities

Task-specific classes will advance your knowledge in critical areas such as streamlining the billing process and generating reports that measure your firm’s performance. You can also attend online workshops that will help you become adept at calendaring, system backup, and other advanced features. With ongoing training—available through your software vendor and independent consultants—you’ll be able to take full advantage of all the bells and whistles that attracted you to the software in the first place.
Choose a training technique that fits your learner profile

Determine the best training solution based on the kind of learner you are and your specific objectives. Your options include the following:

- **On-demand access**—A good choice for technically savvy people who are familiar with the software and want pointers for fine-tuning their skills. Classes are available 24/7 and usually include demonstrations.

- **Live, web-based**—These sessions are interactive and organized to serve role-based functions. They usually include a formal curriculum and workbooks. Students can practice and gain feedback in real-time online.

- **Classroom training**—Sometimes you need to get away from the distractions of the workplace and meet in a classic academic setting that allows you to focus on the task at hand. Classroom training allows you to do that and also provides you the opportunity to network with your peers.

Choose an instructor who will help you grow

One place to start your search for software training is the web site of the software manufacturer. Many companies have consultants that can either come to your office to assist or provide web-based training to further your staff’s knowledge of the application. The investment that you make in proper installation, training your staff, and tweaking the implementation of the software you already have should come back to you ten-fold.

A leading learning resource

At LexisNexis, we are committed to helping you spend more time practicing law and less time worrying about all the day-to-day management issues—including how to optimize your new legal software.

To this end, we provide a variety of training options which are offered through our staff of professional trainers as well as our Certified Independent Consultants (CICs).

With live classroom training, live web-based classes, and our new on-demand recorded training with 24/7 access, we have a solution to fit your schedule and your budget. **LexisNexis University** is an online portal that provides a central location for accessing training for LexisNexis products. You can track the classes for which you are registered, track your training history, and view upcoming training opportunities. Visit [www.lexisnexis.com/university](http://www.lexisnexis.com/university) to access the complete course catalogue.

Incorporating real-world examples of situations that you face every day, these classes will help you test different actions without impacting your firm’s live data. So you can learn how to get more value out of your software investment with a minimal investment of time and money.

**LexisNexis Practice Management**

**Transforming the Business of Law**

We take the headache out of the business of law. Our innovative Practice Management products, content, and services enable you to more effectively serve your clients and manage your business.

To learn more, visit [www.lexisnexis.com/law-firms/practice-management](http://www.lexisnexis.com/law-firms/practice-management) or call us at 1-800-328-2898.