The Wisdom of Procrastinating

We seldom think of procrastinating as a good thing. (Take for example, seeing the dentist.) But when it comes to technology, postponing purchasing decisions can sometimes work in your favor. In this article, we suggest two proven strategies that lawyers and law firms can use to help decide the right time and method for adopting new technologies, and give a specific new product example.

Being First Isn't Always Best

Given the rapid pace of technological change, being an early adopter can be problematic. Because almost all technology is developed iteratively over time (a polite way of saying versions 1 and 2 of a product often suck), waiting seems like a completely rational strategy.

Think about the first and even second generation electric cars, cell phones, flat panel TVs, smart phones and watches (no offense Apple). These are all good examples of product purchase decisions that consumers were smart to postpone.

Lawyers as Laggards?

Lawyers and law firms are not typically known for rapid adoption of new technologies. After all, our core competency is legal services, not computers and information technology. And besides, evaluating the myriad of software and hardware options is time-consuming and difficult. Unless it's really broken, it's better not to try to fix it, right?

On the other hand, we all know that postponing modernizing our tech systems for too long can create problems, too. Putting off purchasing legal technology for too long can leave your firm at a competitive disadvantage, and maintaining outdated hardware and software can actually cost you more, not less.

So what can a law firm do to stay in the "sweet spot" between over-eager early adopter and technology laggard?

Proven Strategies

It turns out that there are a couple of proven strategies that successful firms employ to solve this seeming conundrum, even firms that feel they are behind the technology curve.

The first strategy is to insist on upgrades that can be slipstreamed into your firm's existing systems and deployed incrementally. It's the large enterprise-wide changes that frequently prove disruptive and problematic. Mobile devices and apps are good examples of technologies where you can dip your toe in the water before diving in headfirst.

A second strategy is to look for opportunities to leapfrog to next-generation technologies that avoid the pain, expense and problems of early innovations. Examples of two groups who successfully employed this approach include developing countries that elected to go straight to wireless phone systems, skipping the need to develop costly landline systems; and communities that build out local solar and wind power rather than complicated central power plants and distribution systems.

Learning from Others' Mistakes

Leapfrogging opportunities, however, do not come around every day. You need to seize them when they do. Take for example the issue that all lawyers and law firms have with where to store and how to manage their documents. Technology suppliers have responded with document management products that almost 50% of law firms have tried. But customer satisfaction with these first generation "DMS" products is quite low. The

systems require manual uploading and tagging of documents, and important categories such as email and attachments are left out. Ask a lawyer at a firm that has a DMS, and they'll probably tell you that their system is difficult to learn and use, inflexible, and always incomplete because so much of the firm's information necessarily resides outside the system.

If your firm is part of the 50% that has not already purchased a document management system, this could be your chance to leapfrog.

Next Generation Document Management

The good news is document management is changing. Just as new approaches and technologies have transformed telecommunications and media, there are now entirely new and more powerful ways of dealing with the perennial problem of how to store and manage work documents.

One such example is MetaJure, a company founded by lawyers and technologists who realized that asking busy professionals to spend time tagging and resaving all their documents into a separate system that requires hours to learn is a non-starter. Why not instead use 21st Century computing power? Today's systems have been proven in other sectors to automatically and effortlessly capture, preserve and understand 100% of a firm's documents and then make them accessible through a familiar yet powerful search application. Why not apply these same principles in the legal industry?

That's the thinking behind MetaJure, the first fully-automated, smart document management system.

Seeing is Believing

DMS automation has significant benefits.

- Automation eliminates the need for lawyers to be their own "document and email file clerks"

- Finding documents and emails is fast and easy thanks to powerful, state-of-the-art algorithms

- With access to 100% of their documents and emails, lawyers can quickly fulfill record retention and retrieval obligations and avoid associated ethics complaints and malpractice claims

But, don't just take our word for it. Learn how MetaJure works and integrates with your existing software.

- Watch this 90-second [video](#) about MetaJure
- Schedule [a personalized demo](#) of MetaJure today

Contact us to learn more: Tel: 206.812.8750 | sales@metajure.com

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