

Easing 11 Pain Points with Document Automation by Contract Express

Where does advanced enterprise software reside in your law firm? Is every practice group and attorney invested in the merits of document automation to make your workflow faster, more efficient, more productive, and less costly?

Many law firms are slow to adopt technology and playing catch-up becomes the daily grind. For the law firms that wisely invest in document automation solutions, like Thomson Reuters Contract Express™, they notice a visible easing of pain points in document drafting alongside significant benefits. Customers indicate that Contract Express® brings value throughout the firm from partners to junior associates and the knowledge management team.

Easing Pain Points of Manual Document Drafting

If your law firm is still manually drafting lengthy, repetitive, or complex documents, there is likely a high level of pain and waste associated with that. Let's look at some of those pain points and see whether document automation with Contract Express may mitigate that discomfort.

1 Too much time spent drafting documents.

It's true. Attorneys spend an exorbitant amount of time making complex and repetitive changes to documents. Is that time well spent? Document drafting aided by automation is where the legal industry is heading. When a law firm adopts Contract Express, it can significantly shave document drafting time. In an August 2017 online survey of legal professionals by ALM about document automation, survey respondents said Contract Express cuts their time by an average of 82%.

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3 Less billable time for attorneys.

Time spent drafting is often unbilled time. Therefore, when attorneys "waste" time drafting documents manually, they lose hours they could bill back. Contract Express helps attorneys find more time for billable work because less time is needed to draft documents. What also occurs is a transition from plain vanilla client documents to higher quality presentations that create positive reactions. The discussion soon centers less around billable time and more around quality work products that streamline productivity and efficiency while creating satisfied clients.

2 Lack of creative AFAs.

General counselors are always seeking alternative fee arrangements (AFAs) from the law firms they hire. Your law firm may be stumped on new, creative AFAs to implement. With Contract Express, there's a self-service model that can be implemented. Law firms can set up a self-serve client portal and add the questionnaires and forms clients need so they can contribute to their own legal work. Attorneys are freed up to work on other matters and negotiations – where their expertise is needed most. What's more, risk for error is reduced at the onset of a matter, while the partnership between firm and client is strengthened.

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4 Single-sided solutions.

Many software solutions serve a single purpose which begs the question, why invest in low-value software? Thomson Reuters solutions integrate nicely, and that goes the same for Contract Express with Thomson Reuters Practical Law™, Drafting Assistant®, and HighQ. Attorneys using Practical Law® can access over 300 automated templates in Contract Express and get even more functionality using Drafting Assistant to enhance document creation and the finished product.

5 Unidentifiable forms.

When your knowledge management team develops forms to disperse throughout the firm, each form often takes on a life of its own, becoming unrecognizable. Contract Express eliminates that by enabling authorship in tandem with knowledge management, which helps standardize forms and templates.

7 Gap in technology innovation.

There are many law firms that still have a ways to go in filling the technology gap. That also means core support teams may not have the opportunity to learn new skills that help position the firm competitively. Document automation is part of the legal framework now, and Contract Express is an intuitive automation tool with many ways for attorneys and the administrative team to learn the basics of document automation.

9 Practice group web page inefficiency.

Practice group web pages used for internal training, access to document repositories, and approved forms and templates require updating on a regular basis. When firms use Contract Express, there is opportunity to hyperlink forms and make them accessible from anywhere, get links to tutorials, add requests for forms assistance, and also request help updating forms for fast turnaround.

11 Lack of interest in document automation or fear it won't work.

Traditionally, the legal industry is fearful of technology. Slow adoption of technology solutions hinders growth and workflow efficiency. When partners and knowledge management take the leap and try Contract Express, this is what happens: document automation becomes increasingly popular and projects roll through the door in consistent fashion. A vault of forms that are consistently automated ensure practice groups work efficiently and productively. Contract Express becomes the solution that informs thinking and conversation around project improvements on behalf of clients.

6 Contextual learning confusion.

Those who develop and write forms know the context and word choice they're using. However, junior associates do not have that context, making it cumbersome for them to understand. Contract Express provides guidance, with preview and note options that provide excellent training resources for associates and other attorneys not as familiar with the legal documents in question. The Thomson Reuters solution enables authors to develop forms at whatever level is most comfortable regardless of the context of the wording.

8 More partner ownership of forms.

Forms can become tedious for attorneys when they invest valuable time and specialty expertise, especially when the form is created and updated manually. With Contract Express, the knowledge management team can work closely with the attorney to assist in updating his or her forms. Because of document automation, the process is less complex, and the attorney gets more assistance from the support team making this a win-win for the firm.

10 Less subtle thinking about quality work products.

Contract Express is a trigger for knowledge management to raise the bar with practice groups to create high-quality documents that are more centralized to the entire firm. Knowledge management can interact with attorneys and help direct work product that streamlines workflow using Contract Express features and benefits.

Get to Know Contract Express

Contract Express is intelligent document automation that lets you be a lawyer. It streamlines the creation of standardized contracts from your own legal expertise, dramatically reducing errors and freeing you up to do higher value work.

To get further acquainted, set up a [Contract Express demo](#) with a Thomson Reuters account executive or visit legal.thomsonreuters.com/en/products/contract-express.