

Time Matters®

Law Firm Practice Management Case Study

CHERYL CLAYTON

Searching for “brutally efficient,” discovering Time Matters® practice management software.

Almost everyone says they need more hours in the day. Attorney Cheryl Clayton took a different tack: At the age of 50, she turned her focus to making more productive use of every hour in each day.

That’s when her “brutally efficient” strategy got its start. Instead of taking up valuable time better spent helping her legal clients, the Noble, Oklahoma attorney made the decision to leverage technology to handle the endless stream of administrative tasks. She also saw the need to get better organized to keep up with her increasingly complex practice.

Although she had been using a very basic program primarily for timekeeping, she had nothing to help her manage documents, case details or contacts. That’s where the right practice management software would fill in the gaps, emphasis on “right.”

As a solo practitioner with one full-time secretary to rely on, Clayton couldn’t afford to settle for anything less than the very best available.

After demo-ing several programs to make sure she found the one that fit her specific needs, Clayton’s search for the best led her to Time Matters® client, case and document management software.

Now, more than a decade after that decision, her practice is benefitting more than ever from the move to Time Matters.

“Time Matters provided a level of efficiency and customization I couldn’t find anywhere else.”

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“Every related matter is clearly visible, including all documents, calendar events, tasks, notes and payment information. It’s a huge time savings. I can find a document from a decade ago in a matter of seconds.”

— Cheryl Clayton | Owner and Attorney, Law practice of Cheryl Clayton

“I’m not going to remember dates and names from a decade ago, or even four or five years back with my busy practice,” said Clayton. “If I want to access information related to a case or client, all I need to do is enter the practice area the work was done in and I have all the details related to that case at my fingertips. I can find it in a matter of seconds because everything’s coded. “Just a few clicks and up pops exactly what I need.”

Clayton took advantage of Time Matters customization capabilities by using the coding feature for instant recall and retrieval of past matters.

“Every related matter is clearly visible, including all documents, calendar events, tasks, notes and payment information. It’s a huge time savings. I can find a document from a decade ago in a matter of seconds.”

And being able to quickly locate and retrieve emails is critical for Clayton “considering that a typical case will have in excess of 500 emails, many of which include attachments. I save all emails under the client and/or matter and can find an email from years ago with a couple of clicks.”

“I don’t know how anyone operates without Time Matters.”

Time Matters software instantly became the backbone of Clayton’s productivity strategy. “My whole practice centers around Time Matters. It’s open all the time on my desktop.”

“I wanted functionality that would make it easy to use and understand the program,” said Clayton. “I’m a visual learner, so Time Matters was a natural for me. With its dashboards and spreadsheets, I can see things really quickly.”

Among Clayton’s favorite features of Time Matters is the “Save to” option, which she uses to make sure Microsoft® Word and Adobe® documents always stay attached to their associated matter files.

“My firm’s more profitable with Time Matters.”

“Now I scan everything and I try to be paperless as much as possible,” she said. “I use ScanSnap®, right-click on the scan button and open the document. With one more click, I save it to Time Matters. The whole process happens in seconds. It’s brutally efficient.”

As this year’s chair of the Oklahoma Law Office Management, Technical Section, Clayton is often surprised at how other attorneys keep themselves organized. “I see attorneys who keep all their documents in a Windows® file and I can’t help but shudder. I don’t know how anyone operates without Time Matters,” she says.

“I can do what I used to do in a quarter of the time now.”

Clayton admits that one of the biggest motivating factors in choosing her practice management program was the ability to capture more billable time with Time Matters.



"I don't have to think about it. Because I am always logged in to Time Matters, it helps me keep track of my time and bill it," says Clayton, who uses Billing Matters billing and accounting software to integrate with Time Matters and make sure no billable time falls through the cracks.

"I don't want to ever lose track of time. My firm's more profitable with Time Matters."

Time Matters clearly enables Clayton to be more efficient and productive, making her a loyal customer for over 10 years.

"I recently went to the ABA TECHSHOW in Chicago and saw a lot of other software out there, but I didn't even look," said Clayton.

"I love this software. What's really married me to it is the level of efficiency it brings to my firm."

"Now I have more time to spend acting as a legal adviser, instead of on administrative tasks."

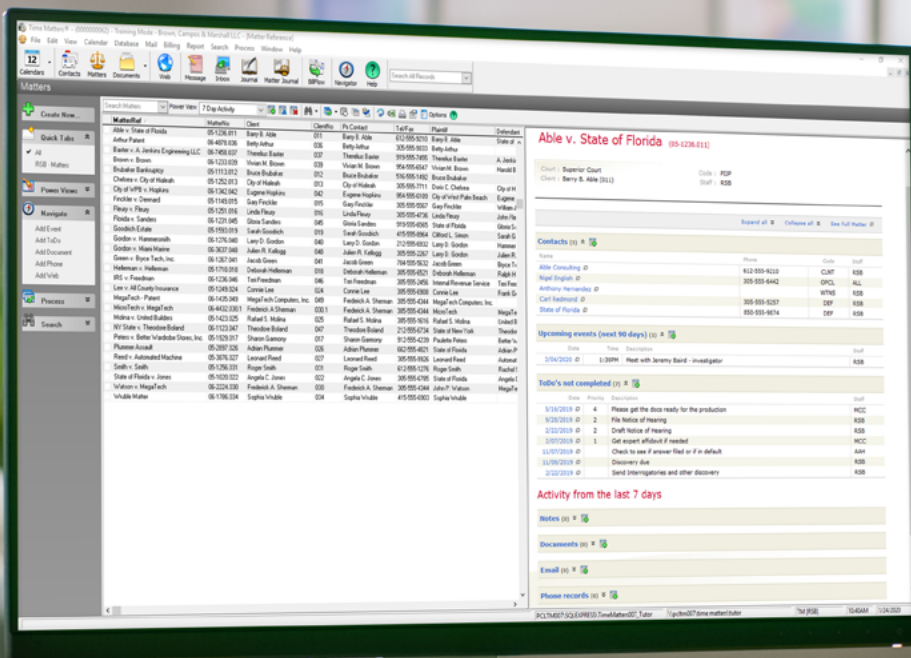
Clayton readily concedes that there are cheaper practice management solutions out there, but "you get what you pay for," she said. "It's simply the cost of doing good business. And, it's one way that actually helps you buy more time, which is an invaluable commodity."

Time that Cheryl Clayton puts to especially good use, allowing her to serve as board member of several local organizations, as well as being an active member of various state bar sections.

As a long-time subscription customer, Clayton upgrades to the newest version of Time Matters every year to ensure that she continues to operate at her most productive. "Plus, as a CLE teacher advising attorneys on how to effectively practice, I need to walk the walk and talk the talk."

And that she does, in an exemplary manner.

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Case Study Summary



CHERYL CLAYTON

P.C. Owner and Attorney
Law practice of
Cheryl Clayton

CUSTOMER PROFILE:

Cheryl Clayton, P.C. practices law in Noble, Oklahoma, serving individuals, businesses and government entities in a wide variety of areas. She has served as President of the county bar association and is a member of various state bar sections, in addition to serving as a board member of several local organizations. Clayton also does pro bono and volunteer work for organizations providing beneficial services to individuals and the public.

BUSINESS SITUATION:

In addition to running a busy practice with only a part-time secretary to support her, Clayton's bar association and pro bono and volunteer activities put her under intense pressure to become "brutally efficient" to get more done in less time. Clayton's strategy to become more productive was simple: Delegate administrative task that could be automated to the best practice management solution available. Although she had been using a very basic program primarily for timekeeping, she had nothing to help her manage documents, case details or contacts.

SOLUTION:

After demo-ing several programs, Clayton chose Time Matters® client, case and document management software to serve as a kind of "virtual assistant" to save her time and reduce administrative steps. Clayton took advantage of Time Matters customization capabilities by using the coding feature for instant recall and retrieval of past matters. "If I want to access information related to a case or client, all I need to do is enter the practice area the work was done in and I have all the details related to that case at my fingertips. I can find it in a matter of seconds because everything's coded."

PRODUCT SUMMARY:

Award-winning Time Matters client, case and document management software helps legal offices of all types streamline workflow and improve productivity in the office and on the go. For 25 years, Time Matters has given attorneys and support staff centralized searchable access to everything from documents to docketing information, contacts to calendaring and so much more. Time Matters helps attorneys devote more time to legal work instead of sorting out administrative details.

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