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Between Scylla and Charybdis: Managing Information Overload

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BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS: MANAGING INFORMATION OVERLOAD

In Greek mythology Scylla and Charybdis were mythical sea monsters on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina between Sicily and the Italian mainland. Scylla was described as a six-headed sea monster on the Italian side of the strait and Charybdis was a whirlpool off the coast of Sicily. They were located close enough to each other that they posed an inescapable threat to passing sailors because avoiding Charybdis meant passing too close to Scylla and vice versa. In Homer's Odyssey, Odysseus was forced to choose which monster to confront while passing through the strait. Odysseus opts to pass by Scylla and lose only a few sailors, rather than risk the loss of his entire ship in the whirlpool.[1]

As lawyers we often feel that we are in the same place as Odysseus, trapped between the demands of our clients to keep abreast of all information and developments regarding their actions and the administrative and other demands of practicing law. We may thrive on having the right information at the right time. But too much information, poorly organized threatens to overload legal professionals. And, of course, our fear of missing out may cause us to be distracted and lose focus.[2]

Today's attorneys manage email, case files, court opinions, statutes, regulations, and notes. We must choose how to manage information and when to disengage with information delivery systems so that we can focus on the practice of law. What strategies and technology tools can help organize the mass of information so that you can find and recall information when communicating with a client, opposing counsel, or others or when taking a break to focus on other legal tasks?

WHAT DOES INFORMATION OVERLOAD MEAN FOR LEGAL PROFESSIONALS?

What is information overload and what are the results? "Information overload occurs when the amount of input … exceeds … processing capacity. Decision makers have fairly limited cognitive processing capacity. Consequently, when information overload occurs, it is likely that reduction in decision quality will occur."[3] Prior to this, in 1970, Alvin Toffler popularized the term and wrote "…researcher … strongly agree on two basic principles: **first, that man has limited capacity; and second, that overloading … leads to serious breakdown of performance**."[4] We hope that these materials will help address how to organize information so as to expand limited capacity and thus help prevent performance breakdowns.

Interestingly, although there is statistical evidence of an exponential growth of the amount of information available, a 2016 Pew Research Center survey found that the large majority of

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[1] Wikipedia: *Between Scylla and Charybdis*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Between_Scylla_and_Charybdis (last visited 2/1/2010).

[2] Bill Jawitz, *How FOMO Hurts Attorneys*, SUCCESSTRACKESQ, https://successtrackesq.com/successtips/how-fomo-hurts-attorneys/

[3] Cheri Speier, Joseph Valacich, & Iris Vessey, The Influence of Task Interruption on Individual Decision Making: An Information Overload Perspective, 30 DECISION SCIENCES 337, 338 (1999).

[4] Alvin Toffler, FUTURE SHOCK, 351-352 (1970).

Americans do not feel that information overload is a problem for them. Only twenty percent indicated they feel overloaded by information, a decline from a decade ago.[5] Equally intriguingly, those who had more pathways to access digital information expressed fewer concerns about information overload.[6]

Yet, attorneys, who are generally not "device poor" and who have multiple pathways to digital access, seem still to be suffering from information overload. Walt Hampton, a JD and executive coach regarding law firm management, shares that many attorneys complain that although they like their work, they feel so scattered, unfocused, and exhausted because of the culture of distraction and information overload in which they operate. "Everything seems urgent; everything competes for our attention; everything wants to be done … now"[7] And in one 2012 report fifty-eight percent of Millennials stated that they felt workplace overload, with forty percent responding that they experienced information and technology overload.[8]

Although information is fundamental to a law firm, it is not managed well. One managing partner noted that his firm was a long way from optimizing the capture and organization of information. An equity partner in another firm noted that his firm spends a lot of time looking for information and would rather spend that time "thinking". He also noted the disadvantages of e-mail communications suggesting that each "time my brain stops as a result of an e-mail notification, there's an impact. There is very little time to just close your door and deal with a matter. There is so much informational stimulation that you get overwhelmed."[9]

By the end 2015, attorneys on average were creating or receiving more than 70 documents every day, including emails, email attachments, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PDFs, client records, opposing counsel records, etc.[10] If that number remained constant, that would certainly present an information overload situation. However, the number is not a constant. Between 2013 and 2015 there was a fifty percent growth rate. Not surprisingly, email communication and email habits are partly responsible for this growth.

As EvolveLaw has stated It is no wonder that "so many lawyers feel overwhelmed! But data is only part of the problem." The number of support staff, the people attorneys have traditionally depended on to file and find information, has drastically decreased, while clients continue to demand greater efficiency and services.[11] In fact, the ABA Section of Litigation Task Force on

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[5] John Horrigan, *Information Overload*, Pew Research Center Internet and Technology (Dec. 7, 2016), http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/12/07/information-overload/.

[6] *Id*.

[7] Walt Hampton, Just One Thing, Conn.Law. Apr/May 2015, at 33.

[8] Brittany Stringfellow Otey*, Buffering Burnout: Preparing The Online Generation for the Occupational Hazards of The Legal Profession*, 24 S.Cal.Interdisc. L.J. 147, 160, (Fall 2014), https://gould.usc.edu/why/students/orgs/ilj/assets/docs/24-1-StringfellowOtey.pdf.

[9] Nina Evans and James Price, *Managing Information in Law Firms: Changes and Challenges*, Info.Research, http://www.informationr.net/ir/22-1/paper736.html.

[10] Guest Blog: Surprising Statistics About Lawyer Information Overload, EvolveLaw (May 4, 2016), http://evolvelawnow.com/blog/surprising-statistics-about-lawyer-information-overload/.

[11] EvolveLaw, *supra* note 10.

Mental Health & Wellness noted that it was its desire "to initiate a discussion about what lawyers and legal employers can do to foster mental health in a profession, and quite honestly, a world, of information overload, 24/7 client demands, and all that comes with these phenomenon."[12]

Susan Burak, a registered clinical counsellor and Associate Director of the Lawyers Assistance Program of British Columbia, speaks about the benefits of the continually evolving digital world, but also recognizes the burdens imposed by the instability and demands that result in "anxiety, depression, and [overwhelming] stress" related to the workplace in which attorneys operate.[13] She notes, "With ore information coming at us than we can process, we can easily become overwhelmed … Never in history has the human brain been forced to track so many data points."[14]

Burak suggests one method to deal with information overload and "over-conceptualization" is to breathe in order to reset your body "system so you integrate your sympathetic nervous system (fight, flight, freeze or flee) and your parasympathetic nervous system (relax reflect respond) … check … yourself using the HALT model." Considering whether you are feeling "hungry, angry, lonely, or tired … "[15] Simply taking care of yourself and your brain is an often overlooked means of dealing with Attention Deficit Trait (ADT), a "neurological phenomenon … caused by brain overload … [with] the core symptoms … [of] distractibility, inner frenzy, and impatience."[16]

Burak recommends that if the HALT model does not provide an explanation reflect upon whether you are engaging in too much multitasking. Citing empirical research, Barrak concludes that multi-tasking does not increase but rather reduces productivity and decreases the ability to focus and concentrate on completing tasks.[17] Seeking assistance through bar association provided services such as the Lawyer Assistance Program can be a useful means of identifying additional ways of shaping your environment to better deal with the issues brought on by information overload.

TRY TAMING THE CHAOS IN YOUR MIND FIRST

Change your Habits to Better Manage Information

Think thoughtfully about work flows or habits, so that you create your own automatic responses to certain stimuli to keep you more organized. *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg illustrates many habits of successful individuals and organizations that have improved their individual

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[12] ABA Section of Litigation Task Force on Mental Health & Wellness, Annual Conference, *Maintaining Mental Health in a Changing Legal Profession* (May 3, 2018), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/litigation/materials/2017-2018/2018-sac/written-materials/maintaining-mental-health-in-changing-legal-profession-beth-fenton.pdf

[13] Susan Burak, *LAP Notes*, 74 ADVOCATE 577, 578 (2016), HeinOnline.

[14] *Id.* at 578.

[15] *Id.*

[16] Edward Hallowell, *Overloaded Circuits: Why Smart People Underperform*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Jan. 2005), https://hbr.org/2005/01/overloaded-circuits-why-smart-people-underperform.

[17] Burak, *supra* note 13, suggesting that "extreme multi-tasking and information overload cost the U.S. economy $650 billion a year in lost productivity."

performances. Think about your daily commute to work, do you always remember what happened along the way or think through every turn? No, quite often your mind goes on 'auto pilot' along the way and you are able to concentrate on other aspects of life and you do not need your full concentration to drive. When you were learning to drive, driving required more of your concentration then it does now, so remember when you are forming new habits, it will require greater concentration and focus. If you can create work habits that are as automatic as driving your car, you can free up your concentration to do the higher-level work.

For example, one way to free your mind is to do a brain dump. This is a process of creating a list of everything that may be "floating around in your head."[18] Then you can place these into categories of items to do today, delegate, do this week and things to drop. Following such a strategy clears items from your mind and gives you permission to relax so that you can focus on priority matters.[19]

Try Meditation

One way to calm the chaos is to train your brain to be able to concentrate on a single task. With phones and computers, our minds have gotten into the habit of having constant distractions. One way to train your brain is through mindfulness or metta meditation, or a practice of meditation where you turn your focus inwards towards the sensations of the body or your breathing. There are other types of meditation that may also help to work on focus. With meditations that have you focus on your breath or your body, you are training your brain to softly focus on the mundane details of your body and to tune out the running dialogue so you can be entirely present on future tasks. Two apps to get started: Insight timer (community vibe, free guided meditations, a timer, tracks your progress, and it is largely free)[20] and Headspace (boasts corporate clients, more creative meditations, and tracks your progress).[21]

Manage Your Screen Time

Moment is an app which can be used to track your screen time on your phone, but can also be used to schedule 'Screen Free' time.[22] If you need to concentrate on a task for 30 minutes, turn that on and each time you pick up your phone it will remind you that this is your screen free time and get you back on track.

If you have an iphone, the Screen Time feature became available with iOS 12 settings in September 2018. Screen Time allows users to not only monitor their usage but to set limits on app usage. Additionally, Downtime is another new tool in iOS 12 intended to help users shift focus away from tech at bedtime. Downtime "cuts off access to all apps except for a few

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[18] Laura Shin, *10 Steps to Conquering Information Overload*, FORBES.COM (Nov 14, 2014, 08:00am), https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurashin/2014/11/14/10-steps-to-conquering-information-overload/#25dfddcb7b08

[19] *Id.*

[20] INSIGHT TIMER, https://insighttimer.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[21] HEADSPACE, https://www.headspace.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[22] Moment, https://inthemoment.io/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

whitelisted exceptions that … [users] want available at all times."[23] iOS 12 also included an overhaul of the Do Not Disturb and notification features of the iphone.[24]

Also manage your push notifications, make sure what is coming through to your screen is only the important information. If you are having tons of push notifications, you will be constantly distracted by those notifications.

Stop Trying to Multi-task

Susan Barrak, mentioned above, is not by any means the only person who counsels lawyers against trying to deal with information overload by multitasking. Jennie Bricker, an Oregon-are attorney in private practice, recognizes that attorneys "[a]s humans, we are capable of doing one thing at a time, competently. Or we can switch rapidly back and forth between two tasks — which is what we call "multitasking" — and perform both tasks badly."[25] Bricker, citing the comments of David Meyer, the Director of the University of Michigan's Brain Cognition and Action Library, acknowledges that multitasking for most peoples is "counter-productive, stressful and ultimately futile."[26] Meyer notes that when multitasking an individual has

> "… less attention available to store memories." Thus, a lawyer who attempts to carry on a phone conversation while responding to an email is unlikely to recall the substance of either. The "overloaded brain" of the multitasker "shifts its processing from the hippocampus (responsible for memory) to the striatum (responsible for rote tasks), making it hard to learn a task or even recall what you've been doing once you're done" [27]

Instead of multi-tasking, try other techniques to help limit the distractions.[28] Don't give in to the idea that "resistance is (probably) futile."[29]

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[23] Chris, Welch, How to Use Apple's New Screen Time and App Limits Features in iOS 12, THE VERGE (Sep 17, 2018, 2:01pm EDT), https://www.theverge.com/2018/9/17/17870126/ios-12-screen-time-app-limits-downtimefeatures-how-to-use.

[24] Jason Cipriani, iOS 12: Do Not Disturb and Notifications Get Major Overhauls, C/NET.COM (Sept. 17, 2018 7:00 PM PDT), https://www.cnet.com/how-to/ios-12-do-not-disturb-and-notifications/.

[25] Jennie Bricker, *Where No One Has Gone Before Practicing Law in the Digital Age*, 72 J. Mo. B. 18,19 (2016), HeinOnline. Also available at Jennie Bricker, *Where No One Has Gone Before Practicing Law in the Digital Age*, Or. St. B. Bull., Aug.--Sep. 2015, at 18, https://www.osbar.org/publications/bulletin/15augsep/digitalage.html.

[26] Bricker, Or. St. B. Bull., *supra* note 25, at 19.

[27] *Id.*

[28] Additional reading on this topic includes Edward M. Hallowell, Driven to Distraction at Work: How to Focus and Be More Productive (2015), Daniel Levitin, The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload (2014) and David Rock, Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long (2009). Or for a shorter piece on the topic see Darla Jackson, *OBA CLE Materials: UNPLUGGING & DISCONNECTING: The Benefits of a Planned Break from Technology*, https://works.bepress.com/darla_jackson/38/.

[29] Bricker, *supra* note 26.

USE LEAN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT TECHNIQUES

Lean process improvements are used in many different industries to improve the flow of products, but can also be implemented in the office environment. You can use lean processes for a full-on implementation in your office, which will have the most benefit, but you can also use lean ideas and techniques for your own personal benefit. *Lean Thinking: Banish Waste and Create Wealth in Your Corporation* by James P. Womack and Daniel T. Jones is an excellent place to start. Here are some simple lean techniques that you can use to implement in your own work and office.

Process Map

A process map is a visual of how a certain process is done. The best way to fully utilize a process map is to map out how you currently do things in minute detail, this can be done with sticky notes. Then take a step back and determine where there are redundancies in your work, or steps that can be eliminated. Once you have determined the process, you can create your final process map, which can be used as a visual aid for yourself or others who are working with you as to the steps in the process. There are also online tools, such as Lucidchart,[30] that can help you create this.

Kanban Boards

A Kanban board is a visual of how a project is processing through certain steps or benchmarks. Usually there are columns and rows and a sticky note or other visual progresses through the different columns or benchmarks that must be met or completed. A Kanban board could be used in your office or staff conference rooms to visualize the steps that are completed.

You can also create a visual Kanban board through a program like Trello.[31] Trello creates 'columns' and has cards with notes and sublists that you can edit, and the card moves though the columns. Each card could be a client matter that you are moving through the steps of a litigation or closing, making sure you are hitting each benchmark and completing those tasks along the way. The board can be shared with multiple users.

Bullet Journaling

While Bullet Journaling[32] is not considered a lean technique, it is a flexible approach to breaking down projects which don't have a more formal home in lean process or in your own office process. Bullet Journaling is an old fashioned pen and paper that is not actually a journal, but is a to-do list, a calendar, journal, and whatever else you want it to be. What sets Bullet Journaling apart is that it has an index of all the information in your journal and gives you the flexibility to jot down big projects and how to break those projects down into discrete daily or weekly 'to-dos' alongside my daily project. I can also jot down notes from a meeting that occurred that day, that

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[30] LUCIDCHART, https://www.lucidchart.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).
[31] TRELLO, https://trello.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).
[32] BULLET JOURNAL, https://bulletjournal.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

does not have a place in a file. Bullet Journaling is a great if you need some more flexibility then a Kanban board, especially when your daily tasks may vary greatly from day to day.

THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT HOW YOU COMMUNICATE AND STORE INFORMATION

Judicially Decide What Will Come into Your Email

If you hyperventilate each time you see your inbox,[33] you need to consider ways to direct as much communication out of your inbox. Email has become a place for all kinds of communication – spam, friends, employees, colleagues, bar associations, news, emergencies. It is no wonder that it is difficult to manage with a single tool.

Consider if there are certain emails that should never come to your inbox. Respondents to one survey judged nearly one-third of the messages they receive to be unnecessary.[34] Unsubscribe from every marketing email and bar association digest if it does not serve you. Carefully select the information that you pay attention to and use alert functions from research products or general sources, such as Google Alerts, so you can keep on top of the latest developments in areas of interest without having to seek out the items or cull through numerous sources. As such you can be your own gatekeeper.[35]

Consider using Slack[36] for interoffice communication or if you use gmail, use the messaging feature for interoffice communication. Microsoft Teams may also serve as an alternative.[37]

Try texting friends, coworkers, or even clients. Zipwhip[38] allows attorneys to send and receive text messages from their computers using existing business phone numbers. And the existing integration with Clio, attorneys can archive and invoice their text conversations within the Clio legal practice software.[39]

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[33] E-mail apnea, has been defined as the "unconscious suspension of regular and steady breathing when people tackle their e-mail." Paul Hemp, *Death by Information Overload*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Sept. 2009), https://hbr.org/2009/09/death-by-information-overload.

[34] *Id.*

[35] Gwen Moran, How To Rescue Your Attention Span From Information Overload, FAST COMPANY (Sept. 2, 2016), https://www.fastcompany.com/3063407/information-overload-is-killing-your-attention-span-heres-how-to-fix-it.

[36] SLACK, https://slack.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[37] Rob Marvin, *Microsoft Teams vs. Slack: What's the Difference?* PC MAG.COM (Jan.24, 2019 11:30AM EST), https://www.pcmag.com/article/349274/microsoft-teams-vs-slack-whats-the-difference.

[38] ZIPWHIP, https://www.zipwhip.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[39] Of course, when using any cloud based technology an attorney needs to ensure that the vendors providing software or services has adequate security protections to ensure the maintenance of confidentiality consistent with the attorney's ethical responsibilities. The Legal Cloud Computing Association provides standards that can serve as a basis for such an inquiry. LCCA, Security Standards, http://www.legalcloudcomputingassociation.org/standards/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

Managing Your Firm's Social Media or Your Own Social Media?

There is an app for that! Use systems like Buffer[40] and Hootsuite[41] to schedule posts to go out, so you can focus on your work and not the timing of your posts to hit peak internet traffic. Trying to make impressive photos for Instagram or Facebook, use Canva[42] to create free or low-cost images for your social media campaign. There are also many royalty free or copyright free websites for high quality images, such as Pexels.

Use Shared Drives and Document Automation

Use collaborative tools, where possible, such as Google Drive and OneDrive to make it easier to send and receive information. Or consider Box for upload and download to share information with clients. Take advantage of all the materials here at TECHSHOW, regardless of whether you attended a specific program. Amy has a spent the better part of two days putting closing documents that she uses into a mail merge format and Adobe PDF with form fields that automatically calculate everything. The commitment of that time has saved her many, many days of unnecessary work. Even learning how to use "quick parts" for your email can save you the time of typing routine responses.

Use a Document Management, Practice Management Knowledge Management Solution to Help with Organization and Retrieval of Information

Document management solutions are designed specifically for document management, including emails. The idea behind these solutions is that they take control of your save function and force everyone in your organization to save all documents within the document management software. This makes it easier to enforce compliance across your organization. Additionally, these solutions usually require you to profile a document to make it easier to find. Further, the most popular document management systems integrate with Microsoft Office applications allowing users to quickly access needed information stored from the applications they use. The Microsoft integration also allows users to save new documents created in Office applications directly into the document management system.

On the flip side, is the expense involved in using a document management software. Given the pricing models available for these solutions, they are generally not affordable solutions for solo or small firms. Most offices probably won't start looking at document management software unless they have at least five and possibly ten attorneys and staff. In fact, according to the most recently published ABA Legal Technology Survey (2017), only 34 percent of solo attorneys responding indicated that they use document/records management software.[43]

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[40] BUFFER, https://buffer.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[41] HOOTSUITE, https://hootsuite.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[42] CANVA, https://www.canva.com/ (last visited Feb. 3, 2019).

[43] ABA Legal Technology Resource Center, 2017 LEGAL TECHNOLOGY SURVEY REPORT: LAW OFFICE TECHNOLOGY II-xxiv & II-27 (Questions 18a-j)(2018). Of those using document management software, in excess of 86% indicated they were very

Three document management systems often mentioned by those whose responses are reported in to the 2017 ABA Legal Technology Survey included "iManage (22%), Worldox (12%) … and Netdocument (9%)."[44] While not mentioned in the survey report, MetaJure is another product that is increasingly popular in the document management and knowledge management areas.[45]

MetaJure was "... first marketed as an enterprise search platform when a group of lawyers launched it in 2007 … Even though the product now focuses more on DMS, many law firms use it on top of other DMS systems as a way of enhancing document collection and search …"[46] For instance, WorldDox integrates with MetaJure to allow attorneys to find documents and data stored in all their systems, including those that may be stored on local hard drives.

MetaJure ILLUMINATE is a Software as a Service product that serves as a document management and knowledge management system. MetaJure was developed with the concept that most document management systems are "a bother to use." Documents must be filed and tagged in a certain manner as well as checked in and out. While, as noted above, there are advantages to such systems, when a technology "solution" is bothersome to use, lawyers don't use it. As a result, many of the documents and emails that should be in the DMS may not be included. But as Robert Ambrogi notes in his review, "Rather than make the user have to file or tag or profile or do anything out of the ordinary to documents, it finds everything and makes it all available through a Google-like search interface."[47]

MetaJure is most commonly used by midsize and larger firms ranging in size from eight users to 200 users. MetaJure ILLUMINATE, the SaaS version of the product, is particularly useful in assisting firms index data that is in legacy or unique data locations. And, MetaJure automatically performs optical character recognition on image-only PDFs, to ensure that all documents and data are searchable.[48]

Solo and small firms often prefer to keep their document management within their practice management software. With document management within practice management, you have the advantage that everything related to your matter is all in one place. Time and billing, contact information, attorney and staff notes and documents can all be accessed from the same dashboard. This can be a real boost to efficiency. Additionally, many practice management

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or somewhat satisfied with the features and functions of the software they personally use. *Id*. at II-40 (Question 18bb-b).

[44] ABA Legal Technology Resource Center, *supra* note 43, at II-xxiv.

[45] Document management may also include an aspect which has become widely referenced as knowledge management. Knowledge management tools are described as going "beyond full-text indexing and attempt[ing] (sometimes through patented artificial intelligence software) to conceptually map documents and find related documents, even if specific words in a user's initial query are not in the "hit" document. "Active agents" go beyond the internal document repository, and search for related documents and data on external systems …" David Kiefer & Marc Lauritse, *Technology and Legal Practice Symposium Issue: Recent Developments in Automating Legal Documents*, 52 SYRACUSE L. REV. 1091. 1094 (2002).

[46] Robert Ambrogi, *MetaJure Takes a User-Friendly Approach to Document Management*, LAWSITES (Apr. 17, 2017), https://www.lawsitesblog.com/2017/04/metajure-takes-user-friendly-approach-document-management.html.

[47] *Id.*

[48] Ambrogi, *supra* note 46.

solutions are now integrating with Office 365 so as to ease interface between often used applications and the practice management solution. Further, practice management solutions provide apps that allow attorneys to access information via mobile devices when they are not in the office.[49]

Document storage features built into law practice management software vary and may include:

• the ability to store and associate documents with client matters;

• basic document versioning;

• a notes feature;

• document collaboration using secure communication portals

• and the ability to share documents using secure online client portals.[50]

While most practice management solutions (PMS) do have a search tool feature, the functionality of the search varies significantly and is not as robust as the search function provided by document management and knowledge management solutions. Additionally, the PMS do not routinely perform OCR so as to provide the ability to search PDF files.

SUMMARY

In summary, information overload is a significant issue for attorneys. Failure to address information overload has resulted in increased stress and anxiety for many attorneys and continues to be a source of mental health issues in a profession already plagued with such concerns.

Multitasking is not a successful means of addressing the continually increasing flow of information. Rather, multitasking decreases productivity, results in increased anxiety, and reduces the ability to focus, think creatively, and make sound judgments. Additionally, multitasking and information overload are imposing significant business loses on the legal services industry and attorneys.

To better cope with the increasing amount of information use lean management techniques and tech tools that help you organize your information. These tools include document and email

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[49] Darla Jackson, *Selecting a Law Practice Management Solution*, 88 Ok. B. J. 1586 (2017), https://works.bepress.com/darla_jackson/32/ discusses many of the features available in current practice management solutions.

[50] It has been suggested that the ability to use a secure client portal is likely to increase in importance based on the direction of ABA Formal Opinion 477, in which the ABA Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility concluded that sensitive client information should no longer be shared using unencrypted email absent client consent.

management technology as well as practice management and knowledge management products and services.

Finally, remember to limit your distractions, clear your mind, and just breathe. Additional resources regarding information overload are available from the Information Overload Research Group.[51] If this doesn't help, there are further resources that you can turn to for assistance. Your local bar association has lawyer assistance programs to advise you on potential solutions, and if necessary, to ensure you have access to qualified service providers.

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[51] Information Overload Research Group, Resource Center, https://iorgforum.org/resource-center/ (last visited Feb 28, 2018).