

FIVE REASONS LAW FIRMS HIRE VIRTUAL PARALEGALS

I read an article recently on [Software](#) called [Business | 5 Reasons Law Firms Hire Virtual Legal Receptionists](#), by Ben Anton, which was a dead-on description of why virtual receptionists are so beneficial. It prompted these thoughts of my own.

Here is my assessment of why law firms – and solo practitioners – benefit from hiring virtual paralegals.

Time is at a premium in any business, but this seems particularly true in the small or solo law office. While there may be the same amount of work as in a larger office, there are fewer hands to do it. Moreover, particularly in this economy very small offices are not in a position to add to their payroll by hiring a full time paralegal to help them bear the load.

So using Anton's article as a springboard, here are five benefits lawyers and small firms can receive from hiring a virtual paralegal:

1. "Increased happiness and job satisfaction." Successful law practice involves a wide spectrum of tasks – from very substantive legal research and analysis, to drafting legal documents, to managing and organizing client and production materials and communicating with clients. Hiring a virtual paralegal to assist with document management and simple drafting tasks, for example, can free a busy attorney up to perform the substantive research, briefing, and client communications most suited to his or her training and expertise. This makes everyone happier.
2. "Increased efficiency." Virtual paralegal services can make a lawyer more efficient. The ability to delegate suitable tasks to his or her paralegal, be it procedural research, drafting of simple pleadings, or assisting with discovery or trial preparation, enables a lawyer to handle a larger client case load and still assure competent representation of each client.
3. "Lower labor costs." Hiring a virtual paralegal can be much more cost efficient than hiring a full-time, in-house paralegal. A virtual paralegal is only paid for time actually worked. No more paying for down time or overtime. In addition, the small office saves the benefit costs associated with full-time employees. And finally, because a virtual paralegal works from his or her own office, there are no costs for work space, supplies or equipment.
4. "A better office environment." When lawyers and any staff they do have are freed to perform those tasks they are best at, while a virtual paralegal takes care of all suitable paralegal tasks, the work load is eased for everyone. Moreover, we all know that deadlines loom at times and create mountains of work that must be gotten through, regardless of the limited number of hands on deck or hours in the day. A virtual paralegal can help shoulder the extra work during those crunch times.
5. With a virtual paralegal, lawyers have an added tool at their disposal for assuring that each task in each of their cases is being handled, and nothing is falling through the cracks. This enables lawyers to assure that each of their clients receives the attention and excellent legal services he or she deserves. It enables lawyers to be as responsive as possible to all their clients, which provides a competitive advantage in today's competitive market.

Solo practitioners and small law firms reap many benefits by employing a virtual paralegal to assist with the work load, including improving case management, creating more efficiency, and of course, saving costs. This does indeed make for happier lawyers and ultimately, happier clients.