Rainmaking For Lawyers

Customer Relationship Management

Law Firm CRM Consulting

Collaborating with Law Firms to Get the Most from Their Investments in CRMs

Rainmakingforlawyers.com
310 734 6073

Law Firm Consulting

Whether you are considering implementing a CRM to attract more clients or have invested in a CRM and are disappointed with the results, we can help you make your CRM work for you.

One of the most promising and yet frustrating areas of business development for law firms is buying and implementing Client Relationship Management ("CRM") software.

The potential benefits of a well-designed CRM are unmistakable. A CRM allows lawyers and others to share information and coordinate their business development and sales activities. CRMs are especially useful for law firms that serve business clients and other organizations that employ multiple points of contact. Without a CRM it is likely that different lawyers will interact with the same potential client or referral source without knowing it. Without a CRM, the left hand does not know what the right is doing and often does not know that the other hand even exists. And basic software such as Outlook is unsuited to allow true collaboration. That is why studies have shown that the return on CRM software is enormous—as much as eight dollars of revenue for every dollar invested.

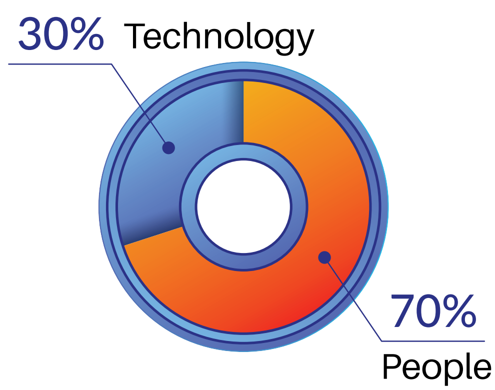
Despite its enormous upside, CRM technology has been oversold, and often dramatically so. Not so much for what a CRM can achieve, but for how much must be done and done correctly and in the right order for the CRM to provide a substantial return on investment. Expectations of how many attorneys will use the system regularly are also exaggerated.

That is where we come in. Regardless of which specific CRM you are considering or have tried to use, the basic challenges and obstacles are the same. Thus, whether you are beginning to consider the benefits of buying and implementing a CRM, seek to get value on your investment and avoid pitfalls that have tripped up your competitors, or whether you have already stepped in it, and want to chuck the whole thing, we can help you get the most from your CRM or turnaround a tough situation.

"Our Team has worked with over 150 law firms implementing CRM systems"

To successfully introduce a CRM system, you must focus on technology and people. The technology track being around 30% and the people track 70% of the project. Nearly 75% of all CRM projects fail to provide the return on investment that law firms are looking for and the reason is not the software, it is poor user planning and adoption.

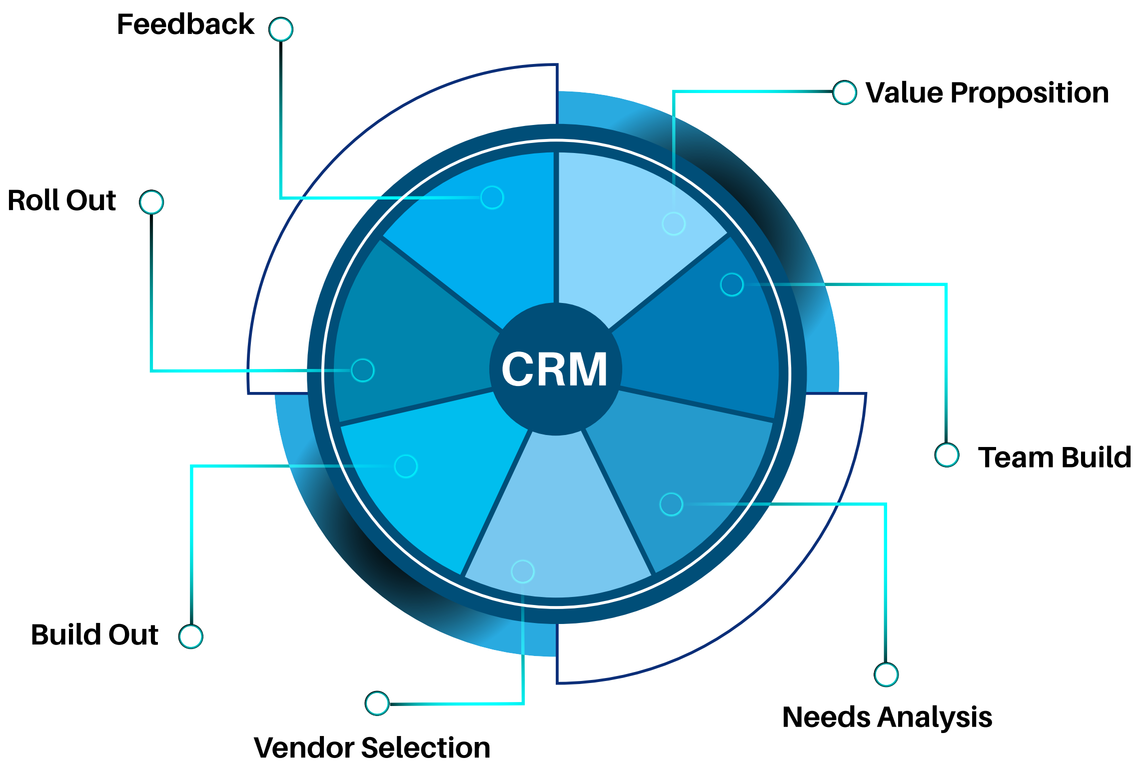
CRM Projects are a mixture of Technology (30%) and People (70%)



Nearly 75% of all CRM projects fail.

The reason is not the software - it's poor user planning and adoption

In our experience, a successful CRM implementation includes seven elements:



These elements do not need to be performed in a particular sequence and it is possible to fix a CRM implementation that has gone sideways. These stages are, however, a useful way to understand what a CRM involves and how to avoid adding your firm to the list of those that failed to achieve the desired returns on their CRM investment.

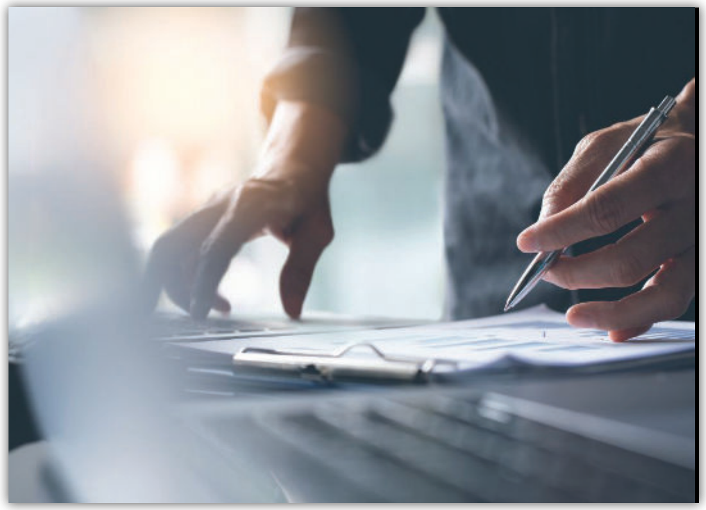
Value Proposition

CRM systems are designed to help law firms manage interactions with their clients, increase customer satisfaction, and drive revenue growth. The first step is to determine whether a CRM could potentially increase revenues. Most commonly the managing partner or other senior member of the management team concludes that the firm could increase revenues by improving coordination among its current and aspiring rainmakers. CRMs can also be used to provide decision makers with real time data about billable hours, utilization, and other key metrics.

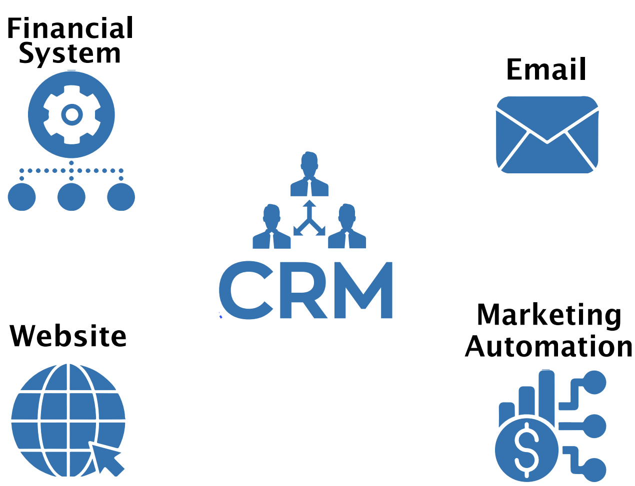
Build Your Initial CRM Team

Evaluating a CRM requires a team. At a minimum, the firm should appoint a team comprised of a senior management member, an IT department member, and someone from finance and accounting. This is because your CRM needs to align with your existing systems, most notably with your finance system. That is the technology side of the equation. In addition, it is essential to get the input of key lawyers, usually rainmakers, about what they want out of the CRM. Too often law firms wait until the CRM has been purchased and built to get buy in from lawyers. The better approach is to get key stakeholders involved early on.

Needs Analysis



Too many law firms figure out what they want the CRM to do after they talk to the companies that sell and build customized CRMs. This practice tends to increase the cost, and more importantly generate a system that has more bells and whistles than is required. And this added complexity is one reason why fewer lawyers use the system once it has been rolled out. We work with CRM management teams to help them determine what are the essential elements for their CRM. For example, some firms build CRMs to be used primarily by the firm's marketing professionals, whereas others want systems that are primarily used by the firm's biggest rainmakers and practice area heads. There are no one-size fits all solutions, which is why it is so important to have a keen sense of the key elements of what you want before you fully engage in the sales process. from lawyers. The better approach is to get key stakeholders involved early on.



Vendor Selection

This is the moment of truth when you decide to commit financially to a CRM system. Evaluating a CRM proposal is more difficult than firms realize. There can be more than 20 specific elements to the proposal, each of which may impact the quoted price. Having worked with over 150 law firms implementing CRM systems, we can help you select the right software for your firm, including evaluating and comparing price quotes on more than two dozen distinctive features.

You do not need unanimity to build a successful CRM, but before you commit to a five, six or seven-figure expenditure, make sure that you have the support of key lawyers who have the time and are willing to provide feedback to the company building

the CRM as it is customized. We can advise you as to who should be on the Pilot Group and act as a liaison to the vendor.

Build Out

Once you select the CRM vendor and the system you want, that system needs to be customized. CRM implementation is at its heart an engineering project, which means that it can be expensive and difficult to make changes mid-stream. Making significant changes to what data you want to collect and who will use it is not like moving paragraphs around on a brief or contract.

Once your system is configured, it is time to convert, import or connect the data to the CRM. Testing is key and you need to allow time for cleaning your data or stepping back to make sure everything is in the right place, and everyone can only see and do what they are supposed to. The system is only as good as the data it contains--garbage in, garbage out. Quality data sells the system to the attorneys, enables them

to identify information and connections they did not know and opportunities they did not know existed. This is the stage where your Pilot Group provides feedback as the CRM is customized.

Roll Out

The best way to roll out a CRM is to do it in phases. This allows you to integrate your CRM into your operations without overwhelming your systems. CRMs require training--more than most law firms initially realize. Training requires training materials, ranging from user guides, presentation slides, to in-person training, demonstrations, and webinars that can be downloaded at the user's convenience. The training goes beyond which buttons to press, or which reports to run, and includes business development training that will show lawyers and/ or your marketing team how to make the most of the information and opportunities to develop their respective books of business.

In addition, you will need a communications strategy to help your people appreciate the benefits of the CRM. This includes a way for lawyers to share success stories in which the CRM helped increase revenues or where sharing information helped avoid a dicey situation with a potential client.

Pilot Group members can also act as early adopters, helping explain the system's benefits to other firm lawyers and staff members. And if you are recovering from a sub-optimal attempted roll out, the communication strategy will even be important in overcoming already existing resistance or frustrations. We can help organize and reconstitute a new Pilot Group to assist in the re-launch of your CRM.

Collecting Feedback

As with most enterprise-level software, CRMs will need to be updated. That is why it is useful to collect information about changes you want to incorporate into the next version or customization of your CRM.

We are available to help you navigate all the stages of launching or turning around a CRM and will work with you to create a customized solution for your firm and situation.

Contact Us

If you would like to know more about how we could work with you and to hear more about the services we could provide, please contact or George Brandon:

George Brandon
310.734.6073
George@rainmakingforlawyers.com

Gideon Grunfeld
Gideon@rainmakingforlawyers.com

George Brandon, Vice President

George heads up the technology aspects of our CRM consulting. He has been on the front lines of law firm CRMs for more than 25 years. In 1994, he designed one of the first law firms CRM systems, developed by an in-house team, that was rolled out to all the offices of a large UK international law firm. This was so successful that in 1997, (two years before Salesforce launched), he was recruited by Elite Information systems to move to the U.S. to become Elite's CRM subject matter expert (SME), working closely with clients and prospects, collaborating with them to implement and roll out CRM systems to users. During this time, George worked with over 150 law firms, including some of the largest international firms in the world. George has spoken about CRM implementation to law firm retreats and at venues such as the Marketing Partners Forum, Elite Information Systems' Annual Conference.

Before joining RFL in 2021 as a Vice President, George was a senior executive at a regional law firm where for ten years he managed the firms' marketing and business development services and then at an Am Law 200 firm, where he managed three of the law firms' business units.

Gideon Grunfeld, President

Before founding Rainmaking For Lawyers in 2004, Gideon worked for nearly a decade as a large law firm litigator and antitrust lawyer, first for Skadden Arps and then for Covington & Burling. He represented clients including Pepsi, Ralph Lauren, John Deere, and Exxon. Having a background as a human resources executive, he combined his areas of expertise to coach lawyers in building their books of business and to consult law firm leadership in aligning their practices to their values and goals. Gideon has assisted long-term clients in expanding to additional offices and directly contributed to the acquisition of millions of dollars in new business.