

# The NETWORK

INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTIONS

## VITAL RECORDS PROTECTION

ARE YOUR RECORDS AT RISK?



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Get More From Membership!

**THE NETWORK IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY**

South Florida Chapter,  
The Association of Legal Administrators

EDITOR: Gary Smith  
Richard and Richard, P.A.  
gsmith@richardandrichard.com

CREATIVE: Laura Crovo-Lane  
lcrovo@netgc.com

**THE NETWORK**

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*JUDITH PAWLOSKI, CLM*

*PETERSON BERNARD*

As we enter the final quarter of the year, our thoughts cannot help but turn to kids going back to school, projects we must finish before year-end and the anticipation of a chill in our South Florida air when temperatures drop from 95 to 90. Brrrrr!

Most days, it might seem like too much is expected of us in our positions at law firms. We are bombarded with demands and expectations from the moment the elevator doors open until we step back on and make our descent at the end of the day. Sometimes the demands fly at us like bullets from a semi-automatic weapon, as we dodge and deflect the incoming. We respond to the pleas and entreaties of managing partners, clients, CFO's, attorneys, legal assistants, IT staff and back office support. Some days we do it with grace and ease. Other times, we struggle just to catch our breath, a plastic smile affixed to our faces. It is during that frantic moment that I call to mind the saying "To whom much is given, much is expected."

Our commitment to our law firms is primary and our volunteerism to ALA is the anchor that helps us get through the moments of the highest demand on our resources. Our Chapter is fortunate to have almost 200 highly motivated and dedicated administrators, along with devoted and generous business partners all of whom make our Chapter one of the most well respected and mirrored in the country. Yes, they talk about us at other Chapters, and all in a good way.

With this in mind, because we are given so much, much is expected of us and of our Chapter. One of the highest priorities of our Chapter is giving back to its members and the community. Our scholarship program for members provides opportunities to attend Business of Law Conferences, as well as ALA National Conferences, where members attend education sessions on the latest trends impacting our firms. Amazingly, few members participate in this generous opportunity. Please visit the Chapter's website ([www.alasofla.org](http://www.alasofla.org)) for our newly revised point system where attendance at monthly luncheons, chatting with a business partner and nibbling hors d'oeuvres at a Happy Hour can translate into points towards a scholarship.

Giving back to our community has been a passion for our Chapter since its inception. Every year, we support numerous and varied charities throughout South Florida. In the past year, we packed Hero Boxes for the troops, created Super Hero capes for seriously ill kids at Miami Children's Hospital and collected back-to-school donations for Kids in Distress. Coming this fall, we have selected Kristi House as our charity for our annual golf tournament. Although many of our members are not golfers, there are numerous opportunities to show our support, from sponsorships for our law firms to volunteer opportunities for each member. We know it's tough to get away from the office for even a monthly luncheon, but consider taking a few hours of PTO or vacation and volunteering at the golf tournament this year. You won't regret it when you see how our small efforts can make a big impact on a local charity.

So as you run around your office this fall, juggling a myriad of duties and responsibilities, take pause for a moment and consider how fortunate we are all in our Chapter community and try to carve out just a bit of time to participate in our upcoming volunteer opportunities. I promise, you won't regret it!

Thank you.

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**Out and About with ALASOFLA**

# Vital Records Protection... Are Your Records at Risk?

Contributed by [Rosemary Bashwiner](#)

Vice President, ALL-STATE LEGAL & Division President, OTS LEGAL

Compiled using the following resources:

FireKing. (n.d.) <http://www.fireking.com/>

Vital Records Protection: Key Issues for Law Offices. (n.d.) FireKing white papers. <http://www.fireking.com/>

Are you one of the 59% that believe vital records are secure in a steel filing cabinet? The simple truth is they are NOT! So what constitutes a vital record? It is a document, file, record, or photographic image which contains information that is crucial to the operation and survival of your business. Here are some important questions you need to ask yourself:

1. Where do I store my vital records?
2. How much would it cost to replace the documents which could be destroyed in a steel file cabinet?
3. Where is my computer media stored?
4. How would losing those documents affect my business?
5. How much is my business worth?
6. Who is responsible for my vital records?

The answers to these questions may be the most important information of your business career.

A shocking 50% of companies that suffer a fire are out of business within 6 months!

That number increases to 90% within 18 months! Why are these statistics so dreadful? Here are a few reasons:

1. Insurance companies are not in the business of simply handing out checks. If documentation cannot be provided, the insurance agency will not honor the claim.
2. When account receivables records are lost and monies due cannot be recovered.

50%

50% of companies who suffer a fire are out of business in 6 months.

90%

90% of companies who suffer a fire are out of business in 18 months.

3. Banks issue credit and allocate funds based on the numbers within your vital records. If these numbers can't be verified, money will not be loaned.

4. Contracts are gone and the business has to operate off human memory and essentially must start from scratch.

5. Human Resources records are crucial for compensating employees and keeping records of time owed or time due.

6. Tax returns and tax records must be maintained for a minimum of seven years ... the government does not accept fire as an excuse for not having them.

Fire can be devastating almost anywhere it occurs.

A fire's wrath is confirmed by property damage, environmental destruction, and the loss of irreplaceable documents, photos, and heirlooms.

While it is not possible to guarantee that none of this will ever happen to your home or business, it is possible to protect the things that will preserve family history or the rebirth of a business after a disaster. Having reliable fire protection storage in place safeguards both you and your clients. Right now, your office may have important client materials such as photographic evidence, original documents, and electronic media. Failing to protect these vital items from fire, flood, theft, or other

disasters may expose your firm to a professional liability claim. Fireproof files and safes are an essential piece of equipment for any law office, irrespective of the type of law they practice. Regardless of the motive for purchasing fireproof storage, all law offices should plan ahead and protect the vital information used both internally and for the benefit of their clients. It takes very little time and money to properly store sensitive material, especially given the consequences of losing everything to fire, flood, or theft. All firms should develop a fire protection policy which

disasters may expose your firm to a professional liability claim.

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identifies items that need safeguarding and specifies the types of storage necessary to protect them.

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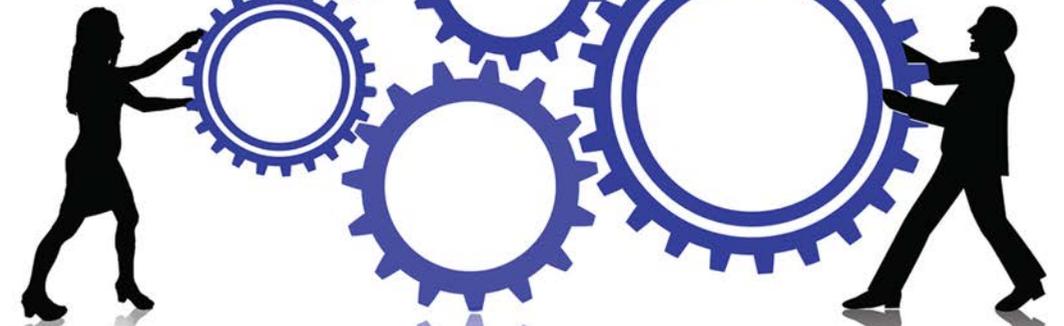
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# ALASOFLA FAMILY PICNIC & KICKBALL TOURNAMENT JULY 18, 2015



# WHY LAW FIRMS SHOULD HAVE A CLOUD-BASED PHONE SYSTEM



by **Carlos Lahrssen**  
President and  
CEO, nexogy



While the Internet has been around for a long time, the emergence of cloud-based systems has become a hot-off-the-press topic as of late. To give you a brief recap in case you've missed it, anything "cloud-based" basically means information and data is stored on the Internet. The days of losing data on your computer from blue screens or hardware malfunctions are over with cloud computing solutions.

It is this ability for growth that cloud technologies are a smart choice for Law Firms and business owners. Companies that embrace this new way of communicating and transferring data gain an edge over those that don't.

In this article, we are going to discuss some of benefits of cloud-based systems, and let you decide whether it is best suited for your business needs.

## Benefits of Cloud-Based Technology

There are a multitude of benefits when you utilize cloud-based technology, many of which appeal to Law Firms. This includes:

- **Remote capabilities:** access your information anywhere, from any device
- **Affordability:** you don't have to purchase extra software or equipment

- **Flexibility:** as long as you have Internet, you can choose how you use the cloud
  - **Scalability:** it grows with you, without growing the cost
  - **Simplified operation:** little to no learning curve to get started
- What These Benefits Mean for Law Firms

The cloud has done more than just revolutionize the way we communicate; it's revolutionized business as a whole. A great deal of traditional office tasks can now be handled on-the-go, remotely over secure cloud networks. This boosts productivity and security alike in the workplace, since there isn't centralized hardware that can be

"hacked," per se.

Simply put, cloud-based technology means savings and success for Law Firms—it also means those that embrace it will have the advantage over those who do not.

## The #1 Reason? It Helps Businesses Grow Their Success

In the case of cloud-based phone systems, all of the above reasons apply: cloud phone systems help Law Firms optimize call agent KPIs and allow scaling of operations more easily. By using the Internet for phones, you can store all of your information remotely, and your

call quality will be high-quality and top-notch. Also, you can start doing business quickly and effectively.

Cloud-based phone systems and VoIP systems give growing businesses increased flexibility and greater potential for future success. It also enables growth on-the-go; that way, companies can implement new software and tools virtually, instantaneously.

## The Takeaway

It's clear that the future lies in the cloud. Cloud technologies have changed the way businesses, well, do business, forever. Law Firms that truly wish to achieve their goals and beyond should adopt the cloud, or

be left behind by those that take the plunge. This is especially true for cloud-based phone systems, which have integrated scalability without the hardware headaches or excessive setup times.

Are you ready to see what the cloud can do for your business phone system? Make sure you find a company that understands your

pain points and can offer you an affordable and flexible solution.

*nexogy was just recognized as one of the top 50 fastest growing companies in Florida. We are an IP Telephony Company providing cloud business phone systems to small and medium sized businesses*

*in the US. nexogy's services help companies increase business productivity, lower communication expenses and improve their image. Each solution is tailored to the company's specific needs, whether it is for on-the-go workforce, call centers, multi-location organizations or start-ups.*



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Miami Shores Country Club

Tues., October 13, 2015  
11:45 - 1:30 PM  
**[Broward Monthly Lunch Meeting](#)**  
The Tower Club

Wed., October 14, 2015  
**[Miami Dade Monthly Lunch Meeting](#)**  
11:45 - 1:30 PM  
Hyatt Regency,  
Downtown Miami

Thurs., October 15, 2015  
**[Happy Hour - Broward](#)**  
5:30-7:30 PM  
Grille 401, Ft. Lauderdale  
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Sat., October 17, 2015  
**[Beginners Golf Clinic](#)**  
12:00 - 1:30 PM  
Miami Shores Country Club

Wed., October 21, 2015  
3:00- 4:00 PM  
**[Webinar: Presentation Skills: Talking Out Loud](#)**  
Broward, Miami-Dade  
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Fri., October 30, 2015  
**[Annual Golf Tournament](#)**  
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For details, contact  
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Sat., October 31, 2015  
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# SAVE THE DATE



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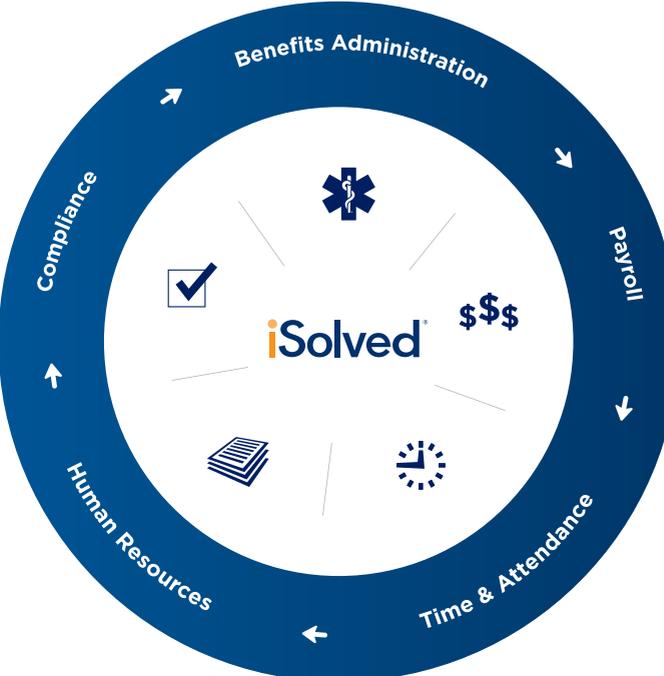
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