The Complete Guide To

Time Matters in The Cloud

What Law Firms Need to
Know About Time Matters in the Cloud

Uptime
LEGAL SYSTEMS

Introduction

[Time Matters](#) is a long-standing, powerful practice management and document management platform for law firms. Many law firms across North America rely on Time Matters to manage their clients, matters, and documents.

However, have you considered Time Matters cloud hosting?

Today, more and more firms are looking to break the chains of expensive, in-house servers, rid themselves of the headaches of managing IT, and empower their team to work from anywhere. This prompts many law firms to look to the cloud for its capability as a decentralized, externally-hosted method of running the tools your law firm needs every day.

If you have some apprehension about utilizing the cloud for your law firm, and utilizing it for Time Matters in particular, we have you covered. You no longer need to choose between the robust nature of premise-based software (like Time Matters) and taking advantage of the benefits of the cloud.

In this article, we'll explore how to migrate and operate Time Matters law practice management software in the cloud.

Related:

Practice **Go**

CLOUDIFY TIME MATTERS

Just Time Matters in the Cloud: Turn Time Matters into a cloud-based application. Eliminate servers and access Time Matters from anywhere.

LEARN MORE →

Practice **Foundation**

FULL PRIVATE CLOUD

All of your software, documents and data in secure Private Cloud. Work in a flexible virtual desktop environment; optionally add Office 365 + support.

LEARN MORE →

Who This Guide is For

This guide on running Time Matters in the cloud is for anyone that uses Time Matters (or plans to) and wants to explore doing so in the cloud.

This includes:

- **Law Firm Partners** that drive the IT strategy for their law firm

- **Law Firm Administrators** that are charged with managing the firm's technology

- **Law Firm IT Consultants** that are looking for solutions for their client's applications
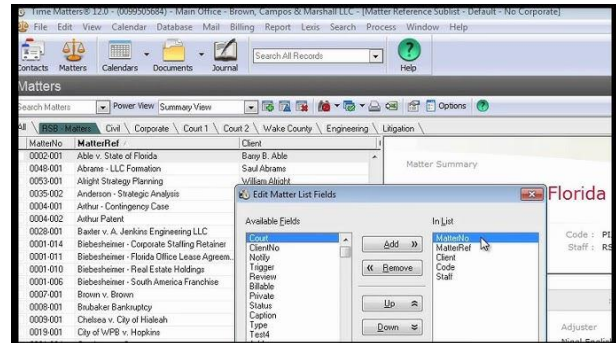
In this, our ultimate guide to Time Matters cloud hosting and moving Time Matters to the cloud, we'll walk you through everything you need to know to assess and implement Time Matters in the cloud.

Introduction to Time Matters

If your firm already uses and knows Time Matters, feel free to skip ahead. If you're new to Time Matters, or considering it for your firm, we'll provide a brief overview.

Time Matters, a product of PCLaw|Time Matters, is a long-standing law firm Practice Management and Document Management software. Time Matters is server/desktop-based software, which

means it can run on-premise (on your firm's in-house servers) or hosted in Private Cloud (which we'll cover shortly).

At a high level, the Time Matters software provides:

- Client & Contact Management

- Case / Matter Management

- Time & Billing

- Calendar

- Document Management

- Email Management

Highlights

Do you value having a tailored solution for your law firm's needs?

Time Matters is most well-known for its *strong customizability*. With the help of a certified consultant, your firm can

create custom matter screens, custom workflows, and create a number of workflows that match your firm's process and procedure.

Time Matters is built on top of the Microsoft SQL database engine, which means custom reports, queries and dashboards can be created for your Time Matters database.

Stand-Out Features

Customization

From customizing the front-end, such as matter screens or reports, to customizing the back-end, and creating custom database queries, workflows and events, Time Matters is one of the most customizable law practice management platforms. Firms with the need to tailor a product to their practice and process should take a close look at Time Matters.

Integration with PCLaw and Juris

Time Matters includes basic billing capabilities – which may suffice for your firm. If not – Time Matters integrates well with PCLaw

(accounting for small law firms) and Juris (accounting for midsize and larger firms), each of which exist in the broader LexisNexis / PCLaw|Time Matters ecosystem.

Having the ability to integrate with accounting tools that may better fit the bill is essential for law firms that are currently sizable – as well as easing the growing pains for others.

Network of Authorized Consultants

Time Matters is very powerful and very customizable – but really getting the most out of it, and tailoring it to your firm, requires an expert. Fortunately, Time Matters has an authorized consultant program and a large network of independent legal software consultants who can help your firm maximize your investment in the software.

Who Time Matters is Good For

[Time Matters](#) is a good fit for firms that need a sophisticated system to manage the specifics of each case/matter.

Time Matters is also a good fit for firms that need document management capabilities within their practice management software.

And, considering how integrations can save you time, money, and effort, it's important to remember that Time Matters is a good fit if your firm already uses PCLaw or Juris for billing/accounting.

Don't Sacrifice the Right Software for the Cloud

The cloud brings many benefits to small and midsize law firms (which we'll enumerate shortly). Some law firms, looking for the reliability, security and mobility of the cloud assume that the only way to achieve these benefits is to abandon their software and move to a web-based software application.
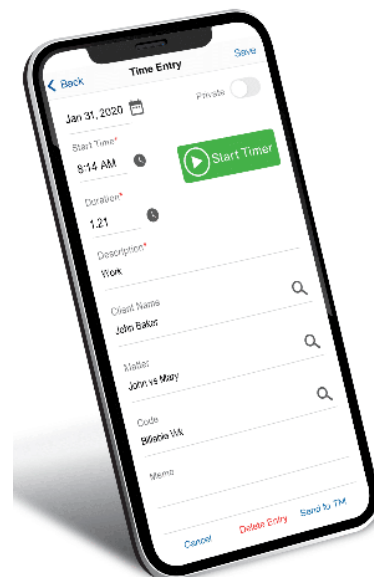
However, as you may know, server-based software commonly features more robust aspects that you have used, or will use, to achieve optimal success. Don't give up something that works this well for your law firm if there's a way to work around that!

You can, and should, have the best of both worlds.

Time Matters Go Mobile App

There's an immense convenience when you can operate from multiple devices. You never know when you'll need to manage something from the road. This is something that Time Matters has taken into account.

Time Matters also has a mobile app, called Time Matters Go, which allows you to enter billable time and perform routine tasks from your iPhone or Android smart phone (though this does not inherently move your Time Matters to the cloud – more on this shortly).

The problem with numerous web/cloud-based law practice management applications is that they are, in comparison to server-based applications, watered-down or bare-bones.

Case in point – Time Matters is a robust, developed practice management and accounting software that objectively does much more than today's web-based software.

We've witnessed more than a few law firms move from robust applications like Time Matters to a web-based alternative…
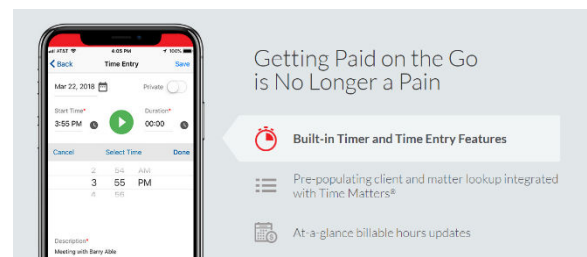
Only to be disappointed and eventually switch back. Why waste your precious time and resources?

The good news is that you can keep the on-premise software you're committed to *and* enjoy the benefits of the cloud in a Time Matters hosting solution.

[Time Matters: Complete Review, Features, Pricing](#)

[Time Matters® Go – An Uptime Legal Review](#)

Why Time Matters is Better in the Cloud

Time Matters is great. And it's even better in the cloud.

For most law firms, life is simply better in the cloud; and Time Matters is no exception. You can run Time Matters in the cloud, and before we explain exactly how Time Matters cloud

hosting works, I'll take a moment to explain why, in most cases, Time Matters is better in the cloud.

Related Video:

[Time Matters and PCLaw in the Cloud](#)

1. The Best of Both Worlds

The cloud brings mobility, accessibility, and security. Time Matters provides a rich, comprehensive platform for managing your firm's cases and accounting. Being able to combine the various positive aspects of both gives the firm the ability to have your cake and eat it too.

In other words, by choosing to run Time Matters in the cloud, your firm can keep the extensive legal software that your firm is committed to and relies on, while enjoying the flexible advantages of the cloud.

2. Managing Servers & IT is a Pain

For a long time, managing and supporting on-premise servers was simply a necessary evil you had to undertake in order to run quality legal practice management software.

Applications, like Time Matters, bring a lot of value to law firms, but it requires a server (one way or another). As a result, law firms had to face the music and just get a server.

Said server requires a lot of maintenance – both proactive (to keep it up and running) and reactive (to fix things when they break).

To illustrate some of the headaches you would have to face in order to run Time Matters on-premise, consider the following.

You'll need to:

- Purchase Server Equipment Every 3 - 5 Years

- Purchase and Implement Microsoft SQL Server

- Implement and Manage Backups & Disaster Recovery

- Implement and Manage Data Security (Encryption, etc.)

- Perform Routine Preventative Server/IT Maintenance

- Retain an IT Consultant or Firm to Keep Everything Running

Running Time Matters in the cloud (Time Matters hosting), on the other hand, gives you the *benefits* of having Time Matters, without the inherent *drawbacks* of server ownership.

Why not hand off those responsibilities to someone else, so you can just enjoy the good parts?

3. Work from Anywhere

Being tied to one computer, one office, or one location is a huge disadvantage to the modern law firm. Attorneys and support staff need to be able to work anytime, anywhere. Then need to be able to enter billable time from home, review a contract while traveling to the airport, and check their court deadlines while at a client site. Necessary operations aside, isn't the convenience worthwhile?

Running Time Matters in the cloud gives your entire firm the same access to your software (and, with the right solution, *all* of your applications, documents and email) from any kind of device and any location.

Ditch clunky VPN and remote-computer-login "solutions."

Time Matters in the cloud, via a Private Cloud, provides a secure, easy-to-use Virtual Desktop that gives you access to your legal software, documents, and email from anywhere.

Unchain yourself from the office and you'll never want to go back to how things were.

4. Data Security & Compliance

As law firms, you have ethical obligations to keep your firm and client data secure. Cyber-attacks are only becoming more prevalent, and compliance requirements are only becoming more stringent.

When it comes to cybersecurity, there has been significant hesitancy when it comes to adopting the cloud. However, your Time Matters software, and your law firm's data, are orders of magnitude more secure in a reputable cloud platform than on your servers in-office.

The reason?

Cloud service providers are in the very business of keeping their client's data secure, and usually employ stringent security measures.

Now compare that to a server in your law firm's office, sitting unmanaged, in a coat closet or copy room. This is typically what we see with many firms.

Unfortunately, having higher security can become expensive rather quickly, and the better security you want or require, the higher it will get.

It simply doesn't make economic sense for all but the largest law firms with in-house servers to invest in the resources necessary to build this higher level of security.

However, it *does* make economic and pragmatic sense for a cloud provider to invest in building and managing bank-grade security for their servers. And as a client within that system, you get your own slice of that fortune-500 caliber infrastructure without having to bear the financial burden.

And don't make the mistake in thinking that just because your data is physically stored in your building, it's actually more secure in a way that matters.

If your firm (a) has a server, and (b) is connected to the Internet, then you're *already on the cloud* in the sense that hackers and other online threats can reach you.

The only question is: Who's managing your security? (Or—is it being managed at all?)

Related:

[Law Firm Cloud Security – 12 Things to Look For](#)

5. Work With Windows and Macs

Do you prefer Windows or Mac computers more?

Increasingly more law firms are using Mac computers, at least in part. Some law firms (typically smaller ones) are all-Mac by practice.

Others have a mix of Windows and Mac computers.

Even law firms that are all-PC in the office often have members, even senior partners, who use a Mac from home.

It's not uncommon for people to have their strong preferences when it comes to what computers they use. Having the freedom to choose which computer you use gives you an advantage in terms of productivity, comfort, and overall contentment.

Moreover, most -desktop-based law firm software is Windows based, which severely limits Mac users' ability to work from their Mac computer.

Historically, this required running Parallels or similar virtual Windows software on your Mac, which is infamously slow and clunky.

Running Time Matters in the cloud, particularly in a Virtual Desktop

platform, gives your Mac users the exact same access and interface with your Time Matters platform (and the rest of your law firm software) as your PC users.

Virtual Desktops are, by their nature, platform agnostic.

6. More Reliability, Less Downtime

Capable Private Cloud platforms, like Uptime Practice, are built with enterprise-grade infrastructures and are managed round-the-clock by experienced professionals.

This minimizes downtime for your firm and maximizes productivity.

Professional-grade Private Cloud solutions typically include:

- Redundant Physical Servers
- Redundant Routers & Network Equipment
- Redundant Upstream Internet Providers
- Redundant Data / Hard Drive Arrays

- Geographically Redundant Data Centers
- Multiple Redundant Data Backups
- Point-in-Time Data Recovery / Restoration
- Routine System Maintenance & Patching
- 24 x 7 x 365 System Monitoring

In this case, we mean redundant in the sense that we mirror these various aspects to ensure your data is safe and backed-up. All of these measures add up to optimal reliability and uptime for your systems and your law firm.
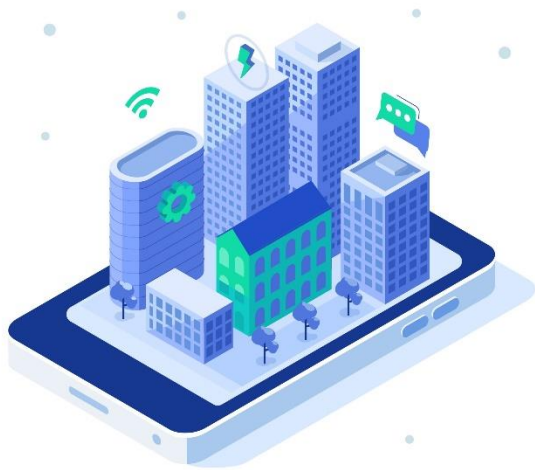
7. Flexible & Scalable

The cloud itself is *flexible and scalable*, and running Time Matters in the cloud is no exception.

Owning and running your own servers adds a layer of rigidity to your operations. Utilizing the cloud solution that Uptime Practice can provide avoids some of the technological growing pains that accompany your growth and success as a company.

With a Private Cloud solution, you can add (or remove) users, applications, storage, and other features when you need them.

Unlike the rigidity and financial commitment of server ownership, the cloud helps your law firm stay agile.

8. More Economical

We've worked with many law firms to conduct a side-by-side financial analysis of cloud vs. on-premise IT, and we consistently find that the **Total Cost of Ownership is <u>notably less</u> in a Private Cloud**.

This is almost always the case, and keep in mind that we are factoring in the up-front costs, monthly and potential unplanned IT costs

associated with server ownership, and local IT support.

We'll cover the economics of Time Matters in the cloud in more detail below (and we'll provide some nifty tools for you to conduct your own financial analysis).

9. Centralization

In the last years, Remote/Work from Home and Hybrid Models have become an industry norm. With these models' growth in popularity, creeping decentralization becomes a real risk.

Law firms with multiple locations have been working against this problem for a long time. Now add employees that work (partially or entirely) from home, and the risk of data and applications being spread apart in too many different locations becomes pronounced.

Whether you're interested in the convenience of being able to access your data from a centralized cloud, or you're concerned about having your data and applications too spread

apart, a cloud platform could be your solution.

A Private Cloud platform serves as your firm's single, central hub, where Time Matters and all of your firm's applications and data lives.

One system to log into, one virtual workplace, regardless of the geographical makeup of your team.

Related Video:

[Why You're Struggling to Work from Home](#)

Time Matters as a Cloud App

Time Matters is a premise-based software. This means that it was designed to run on a server. Historically, law firms would retain their own servers to host software such as

Time Matters. As a contrast, cloud-based software functions through the internet and you would access it through a web browser – surpassing the need for in-house servers.

With that being said, there are a few different work-around methods that **allow you to run Time Matters in the Cloud.**

Let's discuss.

First off, you're able to "cloudify" Time Matters utilizing a simple cloud platform such as [Practice Go](#).

With systems like Practice Go, you can effectively have Time Matters in the Cloud and operate it as a web application – ridding yourself of the need to keep it on your private servers.
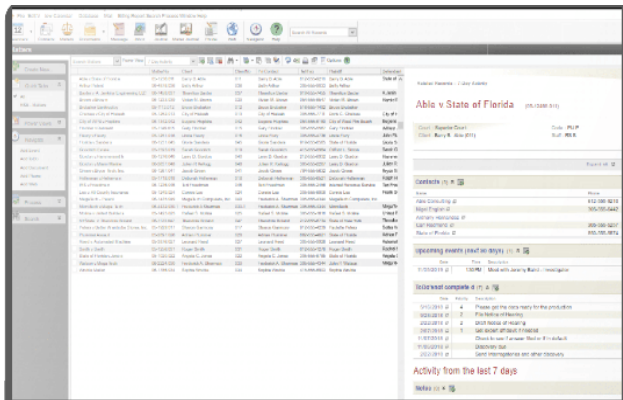
I know this sounds great, but there is one catch I should mention...

Solutions, such as this one, are best practice when a law firm *only* requires Time Matters, or another singular software, in the cloud. With any other software you use, you will need to have

another strategy in place for each system/software.

If it turns out that you're looking for a more holistic solution, you may want to evaluate if using a Private Cloud or Virtual Desktop is a better solution for your firm.

Continue reading for more information on these options.

Time Matters in a Private Cloud

Now that we've covered why Time Matters is better in the cloud, let's talk about *how exactly Time Matters in the cloud works*.

To do that, let's first take a short step back and describe the difference between cloud-based (web-based) software and on-premise/server-based software.

Before cloud computing was mainstream, most software in the world (including practice management software such as Time Matters) was installed on the firm's on-premise server and ran from each of the employee's individual desktop computers.

The software's "engine," or core components (including the database), lived on the server.

All of this meant that using software, such as Time Matters, **necessitated a server** in order to operate.

That is: owning (and therefore maintaining) a server became a fundamental prerequisite to use the software. Owning and managing servers and in-house IT was a requirement, and sometimes viewed as a necessary evil, in order to use law firm management software.

And that's simply the way it was.

But not today.

Today, we have the technology that we call a *Private Cloud*. A private cloud is a hosted, managed IT platform that provides the same (or better) function that a server would; it hosts a law firm's legal applications, documents, email, and more while providing greater mobility, reliability, and security.

Server-based software like Time Matters requires a server -that hasn't changed. In the case of a private cloud, the private cloud *is* the server.

To be more specific, a **typical law firm private cloud for Time Matters will often include:**

- **Hosting for Time Matters** and your other legal software

- **Cloud storage** – a filesystem for your files and folders

- **Support for Time Matters** – including updates and maintenance

- **Office 365** – for productivity

- **Microsoft SQL Server** — Database Engine for Time Matters

- **Exchange Email**

- All necessary **server maintenance, backups, and security**

- **IT Help Desk** support for your team

The "Private" in Private Cloud

Private Clouds are so-called because every law firm, called a "tenant" in cloud computing parlance, has their own segregated, dedicated working environment.

In most cases, this means:

- Dedicated/Private Virtual Servers

- Dedicated/Private Virtual Network (VLAN)

- Dedicated/Private Active Directory

- Dedicated/Private SQL Server/SQL Database

If you're not familiar with these technologies, what it amounts to is

that your law firm has its own private space for its software, documents, and data separate from other law firms.

This gives your firm an added level of data security and privacy.

Related:

[Private Cloud 101 for Law Firms](#)

That's the "back-end" of running Time Matters in the cloud. You and your team will interact with the Private Cloud via what's known as a **Virtual Desktop**.

Time Matters in a Virtual Desktop

We've covered the benefits of running Time Matters in the cloud and how a Private Cloud is a means to that end.

But what does working in a Private Cloud *look* like?

How does each person in your firm *use* it?

The answer is: a **virtual desktop**.

A Virtual Desktop is just like any desktop, like the Windows or Apple desktop you log into and use at home or work, which is hosted in the cloud, so you can access it anytime, anywhere.

Typically, your Virtual Desktop will have the software that you need every day, like Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, along with your law practice management software, accounting software, and even your document management software.

The Virtual Desktop makes your law firm's software, which is otherwise only available from your work computer or while connected to your office's servers, available from any computer in the world.

Note: Virtual Desktop solutions are also sometimes referred to as "Desktop-as-

a-Service," or DaaS (analogous to "Software-as-a-Service, or SaaS).

How Virtual Desktops Work

In a traditional computing environment, your core law firm software is installed on your physical, *local desktop*.
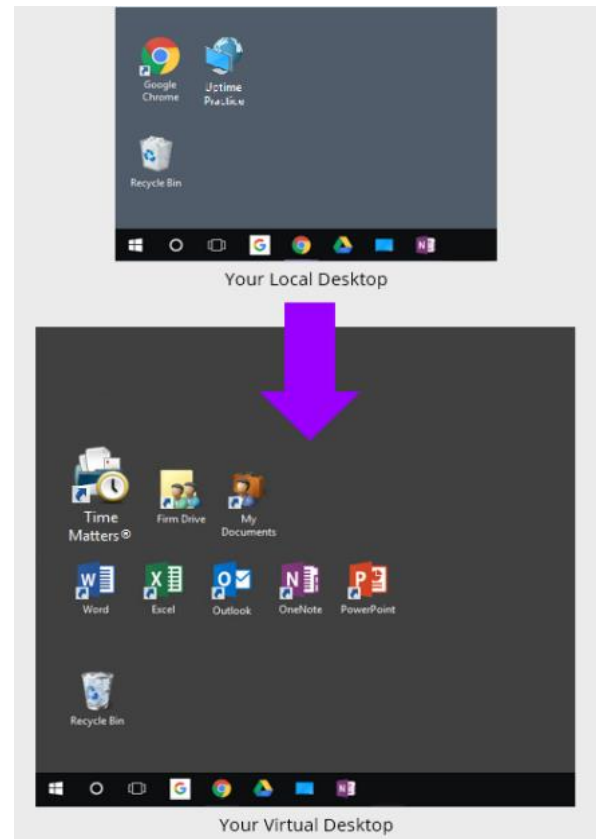
That is: the workstation or laptop you use in the office. In this traditional model, everything runs locally, and your applications are installed on your individual computer.

Meaning, if your laptop breaks or gets lost, you could potentially lose whatever hasn't been backed up.

A Virtual Desktop is different.

In a Virtual Desktop environment, very few applications, if any, are actually installed on your local computer.

Often, the only icon on your local desktop is a shortcut to log into your Virtual Desktop.

Your Local Desktop

Your Virtual Desktop

When you (or anyone on your team) logs into a Virtual Desktop, you'll have access to all of your law firm's software, documents and data.

This includes:

- Your Time Matters Software

- Your Other Legal Software

- Your Productivity Software (Microsoft Office)

- Your Documents, Files and Folders

- Your Outlook & Email

This gives your entire firm access to Time Matters (plus all of your applications, documents, and data) **from anywhere and on any device**.

Virtual Desktops also mean that you no longer need to install, update, and maintain each of your applications on every computer within your firm. Instead, your Cloud Service Provider simply keeps all software updated for you.

Related:

[Virtual Desktops for Law Firms](#)

Should My Law Firm Use Virtual Desktops?

Virtual Desktops bring numerous advantages to law firms.

Specifically, **Virtual Desktops are likely the best technology route in any of the following scenarios:**

- Your firm is committed to the Time Matters software

- Your firm uses a combination of devices (Windows, Macs, Tablets)

- Your firm needs to be able to work from anywhere

- You're tired of dealing with servers and IT headaches

- Your firm needs to keep your applications and data secure

If one or more of the above scenarios are relevant to you, you should probably consider the benefits of a Virtual Desktop. Odds are, you'll start using one and wonder why you took so long to switch over.

We'll cover selecting the right Virtual Desktop provider and doing your due diligence shortly.

Before that, please watch the video below to get an idea of how Virtual Desktops look and function.

Virtual Desktops Demonstrated

For an example of working in a Virtual Desktop, watch our [demonstration of Uptime Practice.](#)

Migration: How to Move Time Matters to the Cloud

Now that we understand how Time Matters in the Cloud works, the benefits, and the functions, we'll walk through *how to move Time Matters to the Cloud.*

This process is typically administered by your chosen Cloud Service Provider, but it could be done via a combination of IT consultants, software consultants, and cloud hosting providers.

Steps to Move Time Matters to the Cloud

Step 1: Onboarding Project Manager

Your Time Matters cloud migration should begin the same as any well-managed project: with a single point of contact. Having a single person to talk to helps avoid confusion as they walk you through the process.

Your project manager (at Uptime Legal, we call this person the *Onboarding Manger*) should begin by clearly setting expectations and clearly communicating the next steps – removing any uncertainty on the path that lies ahead. Your Onboarding Manager should define specific timelines, expectations, and what is needed from you for the process to be efficient and successful.

Step 2: Discovery

While a good cloud service provider will have a well-defined and documented process for onboarding, the process should never be *cookie-cutter* because no two law firms are alike. Ensure that your Onboarding

Manager takes the time to get to know you and your needs.

Specifically, a good Time Matters cloud migration process should begin with **deep discovery and assessment of the firm's current environment, including:**

- Inventory of Software to be Migrated

- Inventory of all Documents and Data

- Identifying Email Accounts and Settings

- Documenting Third-Party Services, Logins and Accounts

- Inventory of Network Devices and Peripherals

- Testing of Firm Internet Speed

Step 3: Build

Next, your Time Matters hosting provider will begin building your private cloud environment.

If you have a good provider, they will have a well-developed process and can build your private cloud quickly. The Onboarding Manager and the accompanying engineering team will

install your software, provision your email accounts, and generally spend time building the "shell" of your complete IT platform.

This process includes:

- Provisioning of Virtual Servers

- Setup of Each User Profile / Virtual Desktop

- Installation of Your Firm's Software

- Setup of Your File System (Including Permissions)

- Thorough Testing of Your New Cloud Environment

Step 4: Go-Live

Next, your Time Matters cloud provider will begin the process of collecting your data from current locations.

Each element of your firm's technology will be migrated over – component-by-component.

This cutover process includes the migration of:

- Each Application's Data/Database (including Time Matters)

- Your Filesystem, Files and Folders

- Your Email Mailboxes and Distribution Groups

- Utility Functions (Print Servers, DHCP, DNS, etc.)

The physical transfer should be seamless, and all data will be transferred *securely* to the new cloud platform.

The Onboarding Manager and his team should thoroughly test every application (once data has been imported), and test computers and peripherals.

The Time Matters hosting provider should be very flexible in scheduling the cutover, including executing it over an evening or weekend, so *the entire cutover process takes no more than a day, and results in little or no user downtime.*

Doing it this way ensures that you are not wasting time.

Step 5: Training & Ongoing Support

A good Time Matters hosting provider knows that first impressions matter.

The key to employee adoption is a reliable, easy-to-use system from Day One. Your cloud provider should have a comprehensive plan for training your entire staff and provide an extra layer of handholding, as necessary.

The Onboarding Manager, who "owns" the migration, should be there for you on the front lines. You are going to want their help with training and tying up loose ends.

This well-managed, highly operationalized process shouldn't end with the migration, and you won't want it to. A good provider of Time Matters cloud hosting will have systems for both "on-demand" support as well as account management. The latter is a process that makes certain that beyond the day-to-day technical

needs, you have a true partner and legal technology advisor.

I can't stress this enough: A meticulously managed onboarding will be the difference between catastrophic failure and glorious success.

Everything we have outlined here is what is required for a seamless, successful transition of Time Matters (and your firm) to the cloud.

You need not feel overwhelmed.

And, if you are, that's all the more reason to ensure that you have a trusted manager helping you along the way.

The Economics of Time Matters in the Cloud

Beyond the functional, reliability, security, and mobility benefits of Time Matters cloud hosting, there's also the *financial* case for moving Time Matters to the cloud.

Running Time Matters in-house, with on-premise servers is a deceptively expensive proposition.

You need to buy servers. You need to buy ancillary IT infrastructure, like backup systems, battery backups, and more. You need to hire a capable IT consultant to not only set up the server but proactively manage and maintain it.

And these costs are always higher in any given year than you think they will be.

To understand the economics of moving Time Matters to the cloud, we need to compare a Private Cloud solution to the costs of in-house, on-premise servers and IT.

Watch the Video:

[The Financial Case for Cloud Computing for Law Firms](#)

On-Premise IT

Up-Front Costs

First, analyze all costs incurred for each new server cycle (typically 3 to 5 years). That is, **buying and implementing server infrastructure, and typically includes:**

- Server Purchase

- Backup Hardware & Software

- UPS / Battery Backup

- Windows Server Licensing

- SQL Server Licensing

- Desktop / Network Setup

- Implementation (IT Consultant)

I recommend that, for each of these items above, you get pricing and record it in a spreadsheet.

Add up the total costs (be sure you're not missing anything).

Then, you'll have a sense of the total up-front cost of another cycle of on-premise IT.

It's important to note that many of these costs are ultimately driven by the software your law firm uses.

How many, and how powerful of servers do you need?

Do you need multiple, dedicated servers?

Will you need VMWare virtualization?

This is ultimately determined by the software you use, namely Practice Management and Document Management software, and the server requirements of those applications.

This is to say that there is a solid amount of variation to consider. Most law firms have specific combinations of needs, so it helps to create a baseline understanding of what costs you will incur upfront.

From there, creating a tailored plan will help you understand both what your specific company needs are and what you will need to be successful.

For now, a fundamental understanding of your needs to get started is enough to at least determine which direction you should go in.

ITEM	ON-PREMISE
Users (Total Firm Employees)	5
UP-FRONT COSTS	
Server Purchase	$ 3,750
Server Backup System	$ 750
UPS / Battery Backup	$ 750

Want some help?

Use our [Cloud Cost Calculator](#) to tally up all relevant up-front costs for your firm.

Ongoing Costs

Next, analyze costs incurred on an ongoing basis. Identify monthly recurring costs, as well as annual costs (renewals, maintenance), and determine your average monthly or annual recurring costs.

For most law firms, these often include:

- Managed IT Service

- User Support / IT Help Desk

- Offsite / Remote Backup

- Remote Access Solution (VPN, RDS, etc.)

- Practice Management Software

- Office 365

- Security Maintenance & Renewals

Add up what you do, or will, spend on an ongoing basis. This should include fixed monthly costs (such as a Managed IT Provider contract) as well as sporadic, less predictable costs (such as hourly IT support).

For the latter, if you're unsure of a reasonable budget for this amount, I recommend finding the average over the past two or three years.

Always a good reminder – it's better to overshoot what your estimated budget is than to underestimate it.

Add all of these up and determine your average monthly IT spending.

On-Premise Costs: Unplanned

Finally, we need to identify and budget for some level of unplanned IT expenses.

Proactive IT does significantly reduce the chances and impact of unforeseen IT problems, but over enough time they're likely to occur, nonetheless.

These unplanned costs may take the form of:

- Unplanned Server Crashes
- Unplanned Network Repair
- Unplanned Data Recovery Costs
- Software Updates that Prompt Server Upgrades

As you can see, some costs are fixed and predictable while others are wildly unpredictable (but should be budgeted or accounted for in some way).

Again, you don't need to get carried away, but planning for a higher budget

is always better than grossly underestimating your costs.

Finally, add up your up-front costs, monthly recurring costs, and your budget for unplanned/unforeseen costs.

This is your **Total Cost of Ownership for On-Premise IT**.

Compare to Private Cloud

Now let's compare this Total Cost of Ownership to that of a Private Cloud.

We've already demonstrated that a Private Cloud is objectively better than in-house IT in terms of reliability, security, and mobility.

While these factors are definitively important, we understand that financial considerations are up there too. So.

Simply comparing the costs of in-house vs. cloud-based IT shows that Private Cloud is also more economical than in-house IT.

Private Cloud costs typically include:

- One-time Implementation Fee, typically ranges from $2000 to $6000

- All-Inclusive Monthly Fee, often around $105 to $159 / User / Month

Something of note is that (with the right Private Cloud provider) these figures are inclusive of all technology that you would otherwise have to buy and maintain. On-premise IT (as we've illustrated above) is fraught with hidden and unpredictable costs.

Essentially, we must conclude that fully managed Private Cloud costs are simple, clear and predictable.

Related:

[The Financial Case for Cloud for Law Firms](#)

[Download the Cloud Cost Calculator – Run Your Own Financial Comparison](#)

The Time Matters Annual Maintenance Plan

Time Matters can be subscribed to in the form of a monthly Subscription-Based License (SBL) or purchased as a perpetual license with along with an Annual Maintenance Plan.

If you use Time Matters, we recommend either acquiring it in its SBL model or that your firm acquires (and renews) an AMP every year.

With SBL or an AMP, your firm is entitled to:

- Software Technical and How-To Support

- Time Matters Training & Education

- Software Updates and Improvements

- A Time Matters Account Manager

- Access to Time Matters Cloud Hosting Options

Related:

[PCLaw® and Time Matters® – Why Your Law Firm Needs an Annual Maintenance Plan](#)

[Time Matters Support – How to Get Help for Time Matters](#)

Doing Your Due Diligence & Mitigating Risk

Now that you have a sense of how Time Matters in the cloud works and how moving Time Matters to the cloud will benefit your law firm, let's talk about the all-important job of *doing your due diligence*.

There are a variety of ways your firm could accomplish a transition of Time Matters to the cloud. Whatever direction your firm goes, it's important to do your homework.

In recent years, a problem for law firms has become that more and more companies, from small, local IT shops to generalist (non-legal-focused) cloud server providers are throwing their hat into the ring and declaring, "Hey, we do Time Matters cloud hosting now too!"

This is a potential pitfall for law firms.

Here's why.

Running and maintaining Time Matters in the cloud isn't for amateurs.

Hosting Time Matters, in particular, requires special configuration and deep software expertise. It's important to choose a provider that you don't have to worry about falling short – now and later.

How to properly engage in due diligence when selecting a Private Cloud provider for your law firm is a subject unto itself, but here are a few **key areas to review when evaluating potential hosting companies:**

- Verify that the provider is an **authorized Time Matters hosting partner**

- Verify the provider has **successfully hosted Time Matters for at least 20 law firms**

- Verify the provider will **encrypt your data in-transit and at-rest**

- Verify the provider backs up your data to **multiple data centers across the US**

- Understand what the provider will do if **served with a subpoena regarding your data**

- Validate that your data will **only be stored in your country** (data sovereignty)

- Verify that you will retain **exclusive ownership of your data**

- Ensure the provider's data center is **SSAE16 audited and certified**

- Verify the provider **owns the server equipment** (and is not simply reselling Azure or Amazon)

- Verify that the provider offers at least 99.99% Uptime

- Verify the provider is and remains **compliant with all software licensing** (Microsoft, VMWare, etc.)

- Understand the provider's size (in terms of revenue and employee count)

Related:

A Match Made in the ☁

[LexisNexis and Uptime Legal – a Match Made in the Cloud](#)

Once you've developed a short list of potential Time Matters hosting providers, do your homework on each company.

We recommend at least doing the following:

- Obtaining and contacting references

- Asking for and reviewing the provider's case studies / success stories

- Reading the available Google reviews for the provider

If the company is reputable, you can see the Google reviews for a Private Cloud provider (or any business), by simply performing a Google search for that company.

The reviews will show up in the search results sidebar.

Uptime Legal Systems

| Website | Directions | Save | Call |

4.9 ★★★★★ 135 Google reviews
Software company in Eden Prairie, Minnesota

Address: 7500 Flying Cloud Dr. #640, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

You visited today

Hours: Open · Closes 10PM ▾

Phone: (612) 746-5603

Learn more about doing your due diligence:

[25 Things to Ask Your Legal Private Cloud Provider](#)

Time Matters in the Cloud – Frequently Asked Questions

CAN I RUN TIME MATTERS IN THE CLOUD?

Yes. You can run Time Matters in a Private Cloud with a company that specializes in hosting law firm software.

HOW DO I MOVE TIME MATTERS TO THE CLOUD?

Time Matters can be moved to the Private Cloud by a company that specializes in hosting law firm software. Learn more.

WHAT IS A PRIVATE CLOUD?

A Private Cloud provides all necessary IT functions without the need to maintain on-premise servers. Learn more.

WHAT IS A VIRTUAL DESKTOP?

A Virtual Desktop allows your law firm to access and use your legal and productivity software from any device. Learn more.

HOW RELIABLE IS TIME MATTERS IN THE CLOUD?

It depends on the cloud provider. With a reputable provider, a Private Cloud is orders of magnitude more reliable than maintaining on-premise servers.

HOW SECURE IS TIME MATTERS IN THE CLOUD?

It depends on the cloud provider. With a reputable provider, a Private Cloud is orders of magnitude more secure than maintaining on-premise servers.

WHAT DOES TIME MATTERS IN THE CLOUD COST?

It depends on the cloud provider, the number of users in your firm and the other technology needs of your firm. For many law firms, running PCLaw in the Cloud costs between $115 and $159 / User / Month, which does not include the cost of the PCLaw itself or the Annual Maintenance Plan (AMP). Learn more.

DO I RETAIN OWNERSHIP OF MY DATA?

It depends on the cloud provider. As such, you should read the contract carefully, and ensure there is explicit language to this effect.

WHO MAINTAINS AND UPDATES MY SOFTWARE?

This depends on the provider. Some cloud providers require that a third-party VAR or IT consultant perform all updates. Uptime Practice, by contrast, manages all software updates and maintenance for you.

WHAT ETHICAL CONCERNS EXIST AROUND CLOUD COMPUTING?

Now that cloud computing is mainstream many bar associations have shared their opinions on cloud computing, and even recommend it. According to an article posted on the ABA website:

"Most fears about trusting client information to 'the Internet' are misplaced. One misconception is that client information may be intercepted as it travels across the Internet. Modern encryption has progressed to the point where it is unbreakable. Cloud companies understand that their reputations for protecting customer information are crucial. A single security breach would cost them dearly. Your client information is more secure stored on a reputable, professionally managed cloud server than on your office computers."

WILL MY PRINTERS AND SCANNERS WORK IN THE CLOUD?

This depends on the cloud provider. In the case of Uptime Practice, your Private Cloud will work with virtually all printers, scanners and peripherals. Your local and network printers will appear and work within your virtual desktop just as they do on your local computer.

CAN I USE TIME MATTERS ON A MAC?

Time Matters is Windows-based and cannot run on a Mac computer. However, certain Virtual Desktop solutions, such as Uptime Practice, enable you to run Time Matters in cloud desktop from your Mac computer.