

The **Rally** Press

# The Complete Guide to Legal Subscriptions



The 8 Steps to Offering  
Subscription Legal Services

Written by William Peacock

**CHAPTER 1**

**Why Start Offering Services  
on a Subscription?**

I don't want to be a billable hour lawyer. I don't want to start a stopwatch every time a client calls, then have to remember to stop it when my daughter comes over to give me a hug or when I want to sneak into the kitchen to grab a granola bar. I want to be able to multitask and churn through boring, rote admin work while watching a baseball game. I want to do this without feeling like I'm cheating the client because I'm not devoting my entire attention or working as fast as possible.

I want to be a human. I want to be a lawyer. And I want to provide services to my clients without running the meter.

Beyond that, I'm feeling the heat. There aren't many lawyers that do what I do: divide retirement accounts after divorce. But lately, there have been a number of websites popping up that promise to draft these orders. Sure, a website can never be as good as an expert lawyer who can go through all the contingencies and concerns while making sure that the client is protected under the most inconceivable circumstances, but still—the competition hurts.

I'm not alone in my feelings. Increasingly, I hear lawyers discussing alternative fee arrangements. We are now seeing more and more bar associations permit additional competition in the legal field to non-lawyers. Often, they can act as legal document preparers or even as legal technicians that can step into a courtroom. Non-lawyers can even have ownership stakes in law firms, as we have now seen in Utah and Arizona.

Innovation is coming and it will destroy us if we do not adapt. Nobody is going to choose to pay \$300 an hour for a lawyer so that they can fret over the massive bill at the end of the case when they can just go online and find a fixed rate from a tech company.

If we do not innovate, everything but the most specialized legal work will be ripped out of our hands. Think about taxi drivers. They are extinct in most places thanks to Uber. Think about the Yellow Pages. Most would prefer to use Google. Think about paper filing services that send documents to court. (Okay, e-filing hasn't taken over everywhere, but a girl can dream, right?)

One type of innovative legal billing model that is making the rounds in legal tech circles, but has not yet caught on widely outside these ardent echo chambers, is the subscription model. To oversimplify, these are the 'Netflixes' of law. Clients pay a flat monthly rate to access quick phone calls, trivial legal services, and a bank of resources that can include educational content, sample purchase orders or contract templates.

There are so many good reasons to look at this model as an option for your firm. Subscriptions have become the default way of operating businesses online in the 21st century: software, music, movies, and even some physical services, like healthcare providers, are adopting it. It makes an increasing amount of sense if your product is continuously improving over time - something law firms traditionally struggle to do well.

## **Productization and Standardization of Law Offerings**

Productization and standardization are keys to making your business more scalable. Even doctors have figured this out, which is why when you go to a doctor's office, you are often given a number and sent to the waiting room like it's the DMV. Then, you spend about 25 minutes with the nurse and only 1.5 minutes with the doctor. Is it a little less personal? Yes...but, it also means that more people can access medical services while increasing the amount doctors take home. Win-win.

For lawyers, productization and standardization simply means turning your cases into repeatable processes. This is done through checklists, document automation, and deciding not to reinvent the wheel every time a new client comes into your office. Many of us have been doing this for decades with HotDocs and templates but it seems like we have only embraced technology to the extent in which it helps us minimize our support staff count, not to limit the number of billable hours that we pass on to the client.

Consider whether embracing new technology can help you to lower your clients' bills while still increasing your bottom line. With more streamlining and predictability, you can provide services to a greater number of people – who then go out into the world as ecstatic ambassadors for the service they received and refer more clients.

### Take Action

- Start creating checklists and flow charts for your most common case types. Can you boil them down into repeatable processes?
- Consider the extent to which you can minimize the lawyer time on the product. If you give a client a list of questions to narrow down the issues, can you automate a rough draft for simpler cases?

## Ending the Billable Hour

Another reason to embrace the subscription model and alternative fee arrangements is simply to stop using the billable hour. Every young lawyer fears the billable hour as a metric of their worth. Billable hour requirements mean late nights and weekends churning bills in the hopes of making bonuses and partnerships.

If they go off and open their own firm, billable hours are the metric that determines whether or not they can feed their families. It's dehumanizing and it forces us to live our lives one hourly increment at a time. It's also incredibly unscalable. If you are reinventing the wheel with every single client, and focusing strictly on the number of churned hours, you are not prioritizing the building of repeatable processes.

Think about how a software company operates. Everything is built as a repeatable process. First, they build for the most common scenarios, then address the edge cases. When a surge of demand arises, software teams can adapt to as much volume as they can sell.

That last part sounds especially appealing, doesn't it? Imagine going from juggling a dozen billable hour clients to having a hundred subscription clients, all of which are ecstatic that they are paying a fourth of what they did previously and turnaround time on their legal needs has gone from months to weeks.

Another great thing about subscription software companies is that they don't have as much seasonality, or feast and famine dips. Subscribers pay every month and as they continue to receive recurring value, they don't cancel automatic payments. It is a nice, predictable revenue stream.

**Take Action:**

- Look at your billings and expenses for the past year: how much revenue do you need to keep the lights on? How much could be replaced by subscription clients? Would recurring subscription revenue smooth out the peaks and valleys of seasonality?
- For the cases you have identified as repeatable and predictable: how much did you bill per matter previously? If you were to embrace automation, what would the equivalent hourly rate be?

## Client Satisfaction

Did we mention happy clients? Let's take a moment to think about why they would love this.

Clients hate the billable hour even more than lawyers do. They hate the surprise of a massive bill at the end of their case. They don't want unpredictability. They don't want the stress. They want to walk in and say, "How much is this going to cost me?" and know exactly what they will have to pay.

They also love to have a relationship with someone they can trust. The beauty of a subscription law firm is that they develop and maintain a relationship with a lawyer they can turn to for all the trivial matters that they normally would be afraid to bring up. Why pay \$300 an hour to have someone review a small contract? It doesn't matter to them that botching a trivial contract may cause hundreds of hours of litigation down the road. It's too hard to mentally justify or afford the upfront cost.

### Take Action

- Subscription, billable hour, or flat rate—do yourself a favor: ask your happiest clients for online reviews every time you wrap up a case. Positive reviews are the lifeblood of any successful online marketing campaign.
- Your clients' love for your firm will increase exponentially when you start delivering services in days, rather than weeks. They'll also love when you bill a predictable flat rate or subscription fee, rather than quoting an hourly rate.

## Holistic Legal Health

One more reason to embrace subscription billing is to encourage holistic legal health. Clients who are coming to you for the rote and routine may have turned to shoddy online templates in the past. They may have recycled old contracts or swept issues under the rug for fear of racking up billable hours. With a subscription, they can call you for a 15-minute conversation that prevents them from having a \$15,000 issue down the road. They will use high-quality contract templates that you provide, making your job easier if there is ever a contract dispute. And, when they have a bigger legal issue that isn't covered under the terms of your subscription, you will be the first person they call.

This is something that Andrew Legrand, of Spera Law, has been touting for years. His firm has been offering alternative fees for the better part of a decade and they're now a leader in subscription offerings. In their offering, they include a short amount of time for phone calls every month, something he's said drastically lowers the barrier clients feel when contacting their lawyers. This, in turn, ensures that little problems today don't snowball into major issues tomorrow.

It has been said that the difference between the high and low ends of the legal market is that the high-end of the legal market – the territory of big law and big business – is relationship-based, whereas the low end of the market is more transactional. The beauty of a subscription law firm is that it creates a long-lasting relationship with your clients. You don't have to be one of the big law firms or cater to million-dollar companies to build that kind of relationship.

### Take Action

- Consider your existing repeat clients: what prophylactic legal work would keep them out of trouble? Would they benefit from standardized purchase orders? Leases? Is it something your firm can turn into a self-service resource?

## Innovate and Stand Out

Finally, a subscription law firm gives you the ability to innovate and differentiate yourself. For those of us state-side, there's nothing more American than individuality. And there is nothing more common amongst lawyers than the billable hour. Instead of being yet another suit, consider building a completely different practice that uses software to produce documents in timely results, an online portal to review matters, or a bank of resources so clients can easily find good answers to their questions. Provide services that will not just satisfy clients, but excite them.

### Take Action

- Most lawyers struggle to express a unique selling proposition. On paper and on their website they come off as "just another suit."
- Consider whether a subscription-based service might set you apart from a marketing perspective. Even if the services offered are limited and inapplicable to some prospective clients, would it be enough to attract eyeballs?

CHAPTER 2

# How to Offer Subscription Legal Services

## Where do I find the time?

You can't reinvent the practice of law overnight just like you can't quickly pivot a cruise ship. If you have an existing law firm, it is going to be tough to change the way you practice law overnight. Jon Tobin, of Counsel for Creators, is seen by many as one of the leading advocates for subscription billing. When he switched to the model, he says that he shut down his firm for a couple of months to configure systems that would enable him to scale his practice and service an anticipated boost in client demand.

So yes, shutting down a law firm for a couple of months can be an option. If it isn't, a more realistic course might be to set aside a designated development day each week. Nothing else is allowed to touch your Friday, for example.

Build a road map of the services you anticipate will be included in your subscription offering, as well as the software tools you need to pull it off. Then, spend that designated development day doing nothing but building. Start trying these tools with your existing clients. When you have enough systems in place — a resource bank, billing and communications tools, and the software you need to operate the subscription model efficiently — launch as a pilot with a few initial clients.

Another option is to hire a law student to help with the restructuring. Those of us who have worked under the billable hour model for a long time will find it increasingly difficult to shift our mindset to something new. Fresh graduates or summer interns will typically have a strong grasp of technology and less devotion to the hourly lifestyle.

Last but not least, don't forget to lean on your legal tech software's customer service team. Most platforms, like Rally, have free or paid training programs. As long as you dedicate time to learning the software and connecting with available resources, you can likely build all of this on your own during your weekly development day. Just don't forget to ask for help.

### Take Action

- Be realistic. Look at your calendar: can you block out a couple of weeks? Or one day per week? A half-day?
- If not, can you bring on an intern, clerk, or assistant that can help map out your repeatable process checklists and flow charts into automated workflows?

## The Tools You Need

Passive income is the holy grail. It's what we're all told is the financial dream. Buy real estate. Invest in the stock market.

But no income is truly passive income. Everything from real estate to managing a portfolio will require effort on your part. The same is true of a subscription law firm. You will have to continue building out resources and answering client calls. On the other hand, a practice focused on efficiency and repeatable processes means you will have a much more predictable revenue stream. If you provide self-service tools such as contract automation, webinars on common legal issues, or "how-to" guides, much of this income really will be truly passive – your clients can use these tools and realize value while you sleep.

One of the most important tools you will need when setting up a subscription law firm is a portal for your clients to access all of these resources. Many options on the market are a poor fit for a firm that cares about its brand. They can't be white-labeled, lack flexibility in features or design, and don't really empower the client to help themselves. They are merely a file locker and secure messaging system.

An ideal client portal for a subscription law firm will empower a client to safely handle matters that they may otherwise avoid seeking professional guidance on. Of course, it should have storage to keep documents in one secure place. It may also have messaging capabilities with the law firm and educational resources. Lastly, you should look for a tool that lets you show off your firm's brand through white-labeling. Custom branded platforms like Rally give the appearance of an internally built portal, differentiating your offering and helping you put your best foot forward with clients.

Consider a small business client: wouldn't it be great for them to have a bank of sales agreements and contracts that they can generate on the fly, without having to reach out to their lawyer every time? Or better, without having to rely on templates they got off of the internet? What about all of those common, minor legal issues that they face on a day-to-day basis? Maybe they need a quick guide on employment law. Maybe they need content on labor practices and payroll. If you have e-books and webinars available as resources for these clients, they are getting value from the subscription and you don't have to lift a finger. It also helps to justify a monthly subscription fee from an ethics standpoint – more on that to follow.

### Take Action

- [Schedule demos with service providers that can help transform your practice.](#)  
Your shopping list may include a client portal, self-service document generation, a webinar or online course platform, and a tool for designing a resource bank.
- List the resources you would like to provide and play to your strengths: not everyone is a compelling writer, but you may be captivating on the screen. Start in your comfort zone and you'll be far more likely to stick with it.
- Consider the 'un-monetizeables': simple legal issues that wouldn't justify billable hours, such as a routine purchase order. Can you automate those for your clients?

## Structuring Subscription Legal Services

Of course, the whole point of hiring a lawyer is to get actual legal advice. Very few clients will be happy paying a monthly fee just to access some templates and videos. On the other hand, every lawyer's biggest fear is that people will treat them like an all-you-can-eat buffet and eat nothing but 25 pounds of steak.

This is where careful delineation of your subscription plan's terms and limits is key. When designing your legal services subscription plan, carefully consider what the client will be entitled to: five contract reviews per month, two phone calls per month, etc. You also want to be clear on the limited scope.

For example, you probably won't be interested in providing an all-you-can-litigate subscription plan. This is another good reason to run your subscription as a pilot program first. Doing so will give you a handful of clients who may use the service in unexpected ways, allowing you to modify the terms to make your service more feasible moving forward.

### Side Note

Andrew Legrand, who has been offering subscription legal services for years at his firm, Spera Law, recently sat down with Rally to talk about all things 'subscription law'. Andrew mentioned that most clients he works with don't overuse his services. In the occasional cases where it does happen, he treats it as a learning experience and tightens his offerings from there.

## Find a Payment Processor

If you are a lawyer who has accepted a credit card payment in the last few years, you have probably run across LawPay. It has long been the leading payment processor for lawyers and integrates with pretty much everything — from Clio to Rally, to your own website. As an alternative, check out HeadNote and GravityLegal, the up-and-comers that want to be the Pepsi to LawPay's Coke.

Outside of the legal arena, there are payment processors like Wave and Stripe. Both of these make it very easy to set recurring monthly subscription transactions. Wave is, in fact, free to use (aside from credit card processing fees) and includes free business accounting & invoicing.

### Take Action

- Compare monthly and transaction fees between processors. Does the provider offer any “perks” that set them apart? For example, Gravity allows firms to pass the credit card transaction fee to the client, and even maintains a list of states that have ethics rules permitting such an arrangement.

## Implement Document Automation for Routine Work

There is no lower hanging fruit than document automation for most law firms. If a lawyer is manually drafting each document done for a client, they are wasting their expertise on rote work. For decades, we have had solutions like merge fields in Word or HotDocs. In the last few years, the number of cloud-based document automation platforms has proliferated to an unfathomable extent.

Obviously, we are partial to Rally. Rally helps you build a public-facing menu of services on your website, turning you into your own little LegalZoom. It can also be a key component of your resource bank for subscription clients by letting you provide a menu of self-service options. It integrates seamlessly with your website and gives you the requisite client portal & secure communication channel. For those seeking to build a subscription practice, it’s an all-in-one toolkit — you just provide the lawyer.

### Take Action:

- Schedule demos of a few different document automation platforms.
- Consider their feature sets outside of document automation: do they integrate with your other tools? Do they offer a client portal or a website integration? What about payment processing?

CHAPTER 3

**Navigating the Ethics  
of Subscriptions**

## Structuring Subscription Legal Services

The scariest thing on earth isn't Freddy Krueger or Mike Myers. It's legal ethics trouble. Fear of committing an ethics violation, burned into our brains in law school, is one of the leading factors as to why lawyers refuse to innovate.

So what are the ethical considerations here? Megan Zavieh, an ethics attorney with her own subscription practice, went over some of the fine points in a Financially Legal podcast episode:

- **Obviate the need for trust accounting:** If you want to avoid the hassle of putting everyone's monthly subscription fees into a trust account, shape your retainer agreement or billing practices accordingly. Zavieh notes that, at least in California, a simple change of language from "billing for guaranteed lawyer time each month" to "the ability to book time with the lawyer every month" allows you to potentially skip the trust account for those funds. Or, instead of billing at the beginning of the month in advance of services, bill at the end of the month after the services have been provided.
- **Create a resource bank:** If your subscription only includes time with a lawyer, that could bring up another concern: the unconscionable fee. What if the client doesn't need to talk to you at all that month? What if the client doesn't talk to you at all for six months? Sure, there's the argument that they are paying for the availability — not the actual time — but even if that passes an ethics test under the guise of a retainer, your client may not be so thrilled if they are auto-billed for a year and get nothing in return. For client satisfaction and ethics' sake, having self-serve resources and educational materials available to the client at all times is a great way to justify your monthly fee.

- **Limited scope representation:** This is a good tip for any law practice. Your retainer agreement or subscription agreement needs to outline exactly the services that are included. When you become the go-to person for a business or individual, it is very easy to bleed into practice areas that you are not completely comfortable or competent in. Unless you want to drive yourself crazy learning every conceivable practice area, you need to learn to say “no”. Both in writing (for your retainer agreement) and over the phone when they call to complain about “that house that the ex-wife is holding onto” or “that intellectual property dispute with a company three states over which has a similar business name.”

The rules on trust accounting, unconscionable fees, and limited scope representation vary by state. As with all articles on ethics, we advise you to consult your local bar rules and an ethics attorney before jumping headfirst into a new business model.

### Take Action

- Check your state ethics rules carefully! A carefully worded subscription plan may help you avoid trust accounting, overly demanding clients, or “unconscionable fee” accusations.
- Once you’ve outlined what you want your service to look like, hire an ethics lawyer to review it.

CHAPTER 4

**Scaling Your Subscription  
Law Firm**

The wonderful thing about running your law firm like a software company is that you can scale it like one. By shifting to a business model that rewards you for efficiency—rather than efficiently recording your billable hours—you can scale your services delivered, profits, and client satisfaction exponentially.

To start, use electronic forms and signatures wherever allowable in your jurisdiction. Many jurisdictions now recognize electronic signatures as equivalent to ink signatures, yet how many lawyers do you know who have embraced e-signing for their work? Never mind the courts themselves. At one point in my own practice I had to make a call from Manila, in the middle of the night, to the clerk's office in New York City to explain that New York passed an e-signature law in the year 2000 making these signatures valid—and this call happened in 2018.

The path of an innovator can be tough in that way but you will save so much time and effort using e-signatures, rather than making clients drive to your office or mail documents, that it quickly becomes worth it.

For forms—electronic versions change everything. The client fills out a form, and all of her data is populated in your practice management or document automation platform. Instead of entering the data yourself into documents and letters, or paying someone else \$20 an hour to do it, your software does it in a fraction of a second—with fewer typos to boot!

It is the little things like this, things that seem like they would take a long time to set up but really don't, that will scale your practice faster than you could ever imagine.

We've mentioned the concept of self-service document generation as well. Not only will these save your client from using a bad internet template or an out of date form they had someone else draft a decade ago, but the constant exposure to your branding when they log on to your self-service platform will make them more likely to call you for the bigger issues as well. The more self-reliant you can make your client, the more you can keep them on a monthly subscription plan for the small, rote things and on other fee arrangements for larger issues that fall outside of your subscription billing agreement. Remember the old adage - "the best and cheapest clients are the ones you already have".

### Take Action

- Micro-efficiencies can pay off in a big way. E-signing, electronic forms, and data retention may not sound like much but the savings add up to a ton of admin time that you may not even be billing for. Clients will be ecstatic to save the hour's drive to your office to sign a document and you'll be more scalable as a business.
- Consider tools' integrations. There are hundreds of ways to create an online or electronic form but only a handful might integrate with your practice management or document drafting solutions. The same goes for e-signature platforms.
- Kill redundant services. Many firms may hold subscriptions to a CRM, Adobe Acrobat, and DocuSign - all of which may provide e-signing capabilities.

**CHAPTER 5**

**How to Market  
Subscription Services**

Finally, we reach my favorite topic: marketing and business development.

First, decide what types of users you'll be targeting. There is a big difference between advertising to consumers and advertising to fellow businesses. If your law firm is targeting businesses, they tend to make decisions more on relationships and less on fickle, transactional factors like price. Businesses will require more nurturing, more handshaking, and more time to convert into subscription clients.

Next, consider where your target audience 'lives.' Do they spend all of their time on Facebook? LinkedIn? What about offline? Can you meet them at mixers or startup incubators?

When those two pieces are understood, you can then take decisive action.

## Digital Advertising

Digital advertising is fantastic because you can clearly tie results to the efforts (and dollars) you spend in a way traditional media never allowed. You will get the most measurable results when you find the channels that your target audience uses when they are most likely to buy. Discovering this is both an art and a science achieved through trial and error. That said, lawyers are succeeding at bringing in new clients from online sources every day.

Search engines are the archetype for digital ads. Google Ads and, to a much lower volume of people, Microsoft Ads ( Bing, Yahoo, and AOL search engines) are a great way to find people who are ready to buy something today. They are already searching for your product: you just need to set up the assets to appear when they type in that specific query. The downside is that these paid ads are expensive — extremely expensive in the legal industry — and it is easy to make a mistake on one or two settings that can cost you

thousands of dollars in ad spend on irrelevant searches, so consult with a professional before jumping in with both feet.

The yin to a search engine's yang is social media advertising. Though it's not as high intent as Google/Bing, advertising on social media (say Facebook or Instagram) can provide a far larger return than traditional channels for two main reasons: it's still underutilised compared to many spaces and it gives you a chance to create ads that knock it out of the park. For example, Google ads give you 30 character headlines and 90 character descriptions, all text-based. With a Facebook ad, you can design a stunning graphic, a headline as long as you need, and more copy than you know what to do with. Done properly, you can really shine on this medium.

### Take Action

- Here are the basic ingredients to writing ads that work:
- Write clear headlines and copy (clear beats clever every day of the week).
- Design visually stimulating images (in mediums where possible).
- Ensure the content touches on pain points your audience is experiencing or solutions they're searching for.
- Present a strong offer (like a free e-book or consultation).
- When leading users to your website, ensure they land on a purposefully designed page.

When designing your ad messaging, it is helpful to think about the pain points of your target clientele. If you wish to sign small businesses up for subscriptions, consider the most common problems they have and the solutions that your subscription will provide to make their lives easier.

## Search Engine Optimization

There is also unpaid search. You've probably heard of "search engine optimization" (SEO), which is, of course, some sort of dark art or wizardry that has become a modern buzzword among marketing professionals. Kidding.

SEO isn't a big mystery. You achieve good search engine rankings in primarily two ways. The first is to ensure your site has appropriate meta data ([see what meta data is here](#)), contains relevant keywords, and provides a good user experience (i.e. they quickly find what they're looking for).

The second way is by hosting quality content on your site, helping users get what they want, keeping them on the site longer (Google likes that), and letting you rank higher by having more words (and thus more keywords) on your site.

We recommend you take a quick search online for how to improve your site for SEO - but a quick note before you get caught up in a worm-hole: Pareto's Principle deeply applies here, you'll get 80% of your results from 20% of the 'technical' SEO work (i.e. meta data, keywords, etc.) you put in.

## Content Creation

In a nutshell, content is material that your company puts out in an effort to create value for their audience. It can include e-books (like this one), webinars, blog posts, infographics, newsletters, etc. Typically, educational or entertaining content works best for organizations. ESPN's content would include basketball games, panels discussing the games, interviews with players, and so on. They keep you glued to their channel and, in the process, sell more things.

Content is the purest and best form of marketing because, when done well, it's what ranks on search engines and will continue to pay dividends for your business for years to come. It is content that appeals to your target clientele and satisfies their search queries.

If you enjoy writing, you may be your own content machine. Nobody knows your favorite practice area better than you – no marketing agency will have that level of knowledge. Make it a goal to write a blog post per week. If you want to save time, use dictation software (such as Siri, Google's voice keyboard, or Microsoft's new dictation button in Word) or outline the post and have a virtual assistant/clerk clean it up for you.

If you are less of a writer and more of a talker, you may get more benefit by getting in front of a camera instead. This is definitely not for all of us but, for those that can do it well, it's a low effort/high reward way to build content. When you get good at it, you can push out a new piece of content every day and reach hundreds (if not thousands) of people for a half hour's work.

Every time you publish a new piece of content it gives you a new reason to get in front of your audience which is good for business. Take advantage of it. When you create a new blog post, scream it from the rooftops: reach out to your email subscribers or contacts, make a social media post about it, and feature it front and center on your website.

## Website Building

This step is crucial. It's a hybrid between being an operational requirement and a marketing tool for your subscription legal services. A well-made site will help drive the acquisition of new leads, which will ultimately turn into new clients.

Your site should be thought of as a map, navigating tourists around a new city. You want to help folks get to where they need/want to go as seamlessly

as possible. Clearly explain your firm's value proposition, what you do, how to reach you, and provide a clear call-to-action.

The final point is crucial - so many websites don't lead users to a call-to-action; the user's visit ends in a complete waste of time. The action could be booking a consultation, downloading an e-book, or filling out a form. Whatever it is, ensure it's clearly identified.

You'll want to explain your new subscription services on the main page and create a new, dedicated page. On this page, identify what it is that your subscription includes, the pricing (if possible), and how to get started.

Simplicity and completion are key. You don't need to have the fanciest site on the block. You need a simple, clearly communicated site that gives users what they came to find.

Looking for inspiration? The team at LegalVision, based out of Australia, may as well teach a masterclass on designing a website for subscription legal services (pictured below). They show users exactly what they offer (including social proof), list their pricing front and center, and help new clients get started.

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[www.legalvision.com.au/subscription](http://www.legalvision.com.au/subscription)

Spera Law operates a tidy site which clearly establishes their subscription's value proposition and identifies key reasons to switch to a subscription model, giving as much information as any user will need.

[www.speralaw.com/collective-counsel-services](http://www.speralaw.com/collective-counsel-services)

For more inspiration, check out the website for Canadian-based firm, Hummingbird Law. They present their subscription plans in a large grid that highlights what's included in each tier along with their respective prices. The future client walks away from their site understanding exactly what they're getting.

[www.hummingbirdlaw.com/subscription-legal-packages/](http://www.hummingbirdlaw.com/subscription-legal-packages/)

Now, we understand that not everyone is keen on building their own website. This is where leveraging a partner can be incredibly effective.

The community of web-design freelancers has been growing rapidly for years thanks to an increasingly digital world and tools are becoming simpler to use (gone are days of coding a website from scratch). You can find web designers through groups on Facebook, sites like Upwork, or by searching on Google. Typically, the costs will be far more affordable when you go through an individual rather than an agency.

### Take Action

- Write and communicate clearly. Similar to ad copy, clear beats clever every single time.
- Treat your site like a map, ensure users can easily find what they're looking for.
- Have clear calls-to-action and try to stick to having only one or two.
- Make it incredibly easy to find your contact information.
- Add social proof when possible. This includes case studies, testimonials, and reviews.
- Use a simple colour guide. Too many colours creates more distractions than necessary.
- Show awards or acclamations to build trust.
- List services you offer or areas of specialty.

We have no affiliation with these law firms, we're just fans from the sidelines.

### Relationship Building

While online marketing is faster and more scalable than handshakes, offline marketing tends to yield better relationships with potential clients. If you have existing clients or relationships with people in your target clientele or

industry, use those. Invite them to a seminar or lunch and ask them to bring others in the industry. Offer your new subscription service to a few of them and get their feedback before launching more widely. Improve your product based on their feedback and, if they are loving the new subscription model, ask them to write a testimonial. Testimonials, reviews, and case studies are massive social proof marketing methods that turn window shoppers into paying clients.

### Take Action

- Between its lower cost per click and the product itself (a subscription service is likely helpful but not an urgent need), social media advertising might be the best fit. Brainstorm “pain point” copy variations and how your product helps or acts as a preventative measure.
- Find a virtual or in-house assistant that can set up the ads for you. Each platform has a different interface, cost and bidding controls, and targeting options that can affect the success of your campaign. You can learn these yourself - over the next year - or hire an expert to launch immediately.

# Conclusion

## Conclusion

And there you have it, our guide to getting your firm on the path to innovating, towards operating more like a software company and less like a dinosaur.

The ground is shifting and though it may seem daunting to change a tried and true model, the solo, small, and mid-sized firms are affected most.

Quick-serve options and non-lawyers are springing up and taking market share from the little guys, if you don't act quickly you'll see yourself become the Blockbuster to LegalZoom's Netflix.

Innovate or be displaced.

But there is good news. People like working with people. Your clients don't want to switch to a faceless corporation spitting non-disclosure agreements at them. They want to talk to folks they can relate to. They want to strategize, talk shop, and learn. They want to use a lawyer. They just don't want to pay uncertain fees, drive around town for meetings, or wait overly long lead times. Give them the best of both worlds.

Who knows, maybe you'll even enjoy practicing law a little more.