



PHILIPS

Dictation

Success story

Save time. Boost efficiency.

How McCollum Crowley boosts efficiency and time savings by integrating voice technology

The facts

The customer


McCORMICK CROWLEY
MOSCHET MILLER & LAAK, LTD.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

www.mccollumlaw.com

Philips partner

DictationProducts.com

The solution

Philips SpeechExec Enterprise Software

Philips PocketMemo Voice Recorders

Speech recognition integration

In today's increasingly fast-paced legal environment, firms across the country continue to push for greater efficiencies across the board, but some attorneys remain stuck in old habits, hesitant to adopt new technology. Many in the legal industry foster a large concern around implementing new technology and workflows, as the new processes might take time away from billable work as the firm adjusts to new operations. However, that concern could be alleviated by the fact that administrative activities, such as transcription and document creation, consume hours each day that could be spent on generating new clients or casework. While all updates in processes should be weighed and measured before implementation, these vital administrative tasks can be automated to help increase time savings and speed up processes.

Law firms are typically hesitant to adopt new technology, primarily because attorneys worry that new technology may diminish our productivity.

However, technology that accelerates productivity and improves efficiency should be a consideration amidst an increasingly competitive marketplace, especially among small and midsize firms. This is a key reason why our firm, McCollum Crowley — a litigation and business support firm with 26 attorneys practicing out of three offices in Minneapolis; Denver; and Rice Lake, Wisconsin — elected to update our document-creation workflow with advanced voice technology.

This technological and workflow evolution occurred in three phases, which were:

1. Transitioning from analog handheld tape recorders to digital recording;
2. Implementing speech recognition software to reduce typing where feasible;
3. Standardizing the firm's document creation process with a firm-wide integrated dictation and transcription management software platform.

Although the most recent phase of this evolution occurred only last year, results thus far have been noteworthy. Attorneys and support staff have reported significant time savings on document creation, which allows us to concentrate on expanding our client base, generating additional casework and improving client service through faster results.

Gradual evolution

Until 2011, our firm's attorneys utilized handheld analog tape recorders for dictation and transcription. Analog tapes presented



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McCollum Crowley has discovered, clients will be more satisfied with faster service. However, the firm can also serve more clients in less time, which increases revenue and strengthens our position in a highly competitive marketplace.

Dan Singel
Shareholder at McCollum Crowley

About the author

Dan Singel is a shareholder at McCollum Crowley representing clients in Colorado, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and North Dakota in construction, personal injury, insurance, and other civil matters.



**Philips PocketMemo
Voice Recorder**
DPM8000

numerous workflow inefficiencies and needless administrative expenses. Chief among these included handling and labeling tapes for support staff, replacing obsolete recorders and procuring new microcassettes. In addition, the document creation process with analog tapes lacked transparency, which necessitated that attorneys continually inquire with assistants regarding the transcription process.

The firm updated our recording devices to digital handheld recorders from Philips. Replacing legacy technology can initiate pushback from attorneys, but this risk was mitigated because dictation operation on the digital Philips devices is not demonstrably different from the analog recorders. The most substantial workflow change was that instead of handing a tape to an assistant, attorneys docked the recorders at their laptops and uploaded the files, a process they prefer.

After that effective upgrade, the firm introduced Dragon speech recognition software from Nuance. One of our main goals with this implementation was to reduce the amount of time support staff invested in developing lengthy medical chronologies and independent medical evaluation reports.

After performing due diligence and consulting with our long-standing voice technology vendor and expert, Ken Kloss with DictationProducts.com, we determined that speech recognition software had greatly improved in both speed and accuracy in the last several years. Beginning with the medial reports, it was quickly determined that the speech recognition reduced document creation time without sacrificing detail or quality. Subsequently, legal assistants and attorneys expanded its use for numerous other types of documents.

Integrating workflows for flexibility and transparency

With digital dictation and speech recognition implemented, the third — and perhaps most meaningful — document creation workflow advancement phase was to integrate the associated software across the firm. This essential step has helped standardize processes while offering greater practice flexibility for attorneys working out of our multiple offices.

To ensure seamless compatibility with existing hardware and software, including speech recognition, our firm chose the Philips SpeechExec Enterprise dictation management platform. Efficiency was immediately improved since the new platform automatically generates meta-data from the dictation files such as author name, date and time, and dictation file format — a feature unavailable on the previous software.

Transparency was further enhanced by the ability to label files by client or case, another feature lacking in our previous system. Attorneys can now also prioritize uploaded recordings with an intuitive user interface similar to the Microsoft Outlook email software used at the firm. With this improved visibility and integration, legal assistants can view and access each other's dictation files, allowing colleagues and administrators to distribute workloads more efficiently.

Lastly, the new platform offered Active Directory integration and concurrent licensing, to eliminate the need to purchase individual licenses for attorneys and legal assistants.

Time and cost savings

Our multi-phase voice technology upgrade transition at McCollum Crowley has saved time for attorneys and support staff while improving efficiency in several ways. For example, speech recognition has reduced document creation time in some instances by approximately 50 percent, which benefits our clients with faster document creation turnaround. These savings vary greatly depending on the legal team, but many colleagues have reported time savings greater than 1.5 hours per day, allowing them to instead focus on developing their client roster or generating additional casework.

From a cost perspective, our annual maintenance agreement support fees are less than our previous system software. The new dictation and transcription management platform's Active-Directory integration and concurrent licensing model allowed us to reduce those associated software costs, as well.

Part of being an effective lawyer is understanding your clients' budgetary realities. Clients should expect their lawyer to not just accomplish their goals in litigation, but to do so at a price and within a timeline that is fair. That is why professionals in our industry need to continually explore new technology that help firms improve efficiency, not just increase billable hours. As McCollum Crowley has discovered, clients will be more satisfied with faster service. However, the firm can also serve more clients in less time, which increases revenue and strengthens our position in a highly competitive marketplace.

