

**EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY  
IN A JAMAICAN LAW PRACTICE**

The legal profession in Jamaica may be somewhat stuck at the beginning of a rapidly evolving transition period where "law" as an enterprise, based primarily on words either spoken "viva voce" or noted on paper, is changing into an enterprise driven by technology simply because the world is being driven by technology.

In that regard, lawyers, in Jamaica seem to have fallen behind the times, failing to understand the vast changes that the conversion of all aspects of law from "words on paper" to digital or electronic form will have on law and law practice. Lawyers understandably still counsel clients on a one-to-one basis, negotiate agreements and mediate disputes in face-to-face meetings, draft legal documents onto paper, represent people in physical courts, and by and large, search for law in law books located in law libraries. Our judges are still using pen by hand and paper to record testimony, a standard which dates back to the start of the last millennium.

The use of technology in all aspects of daily life is like a rising tide and the choice is simple, learn to swim in it or drown. There is no doubt that the right technology properly implemented can do wonders for any law practice. But the opposite is equally true. Misused or misunderstood technology can cause frustration at the speed of light.

The focus of this paper is to examine, from a lawyers perspective, a variety of specific but basic technology applications, which;

- 1. are commonly available and for the most part free,
- 2. that can be implemented on their own or together, and
- 3. which if used, can be very effective to enhance the efficiency of a Jamaican law practice.

For ease of later reference the technology applications are discussed under their relevant headings.

**TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALLS**

In the context of regular daily law practice one can develop the use of conference calling at pre-arranged times to conduct meetings via a speaker phone between yourself and your client in one location and another Attorney and their client at another location. This is far better than trying to assemble everyone in the same place, especially having regard to the time lost in traffic.

For a litigation based law practice the starting point can be defined by rules of practice which mandate the use of the most basic and ubiquitous technology, the telephone. Our Civil Procedure Rules (CPR) implemented in January 2003 ushered technology into the conduct of civil matters in the Supreme Court and elevated the humble telephone.

RULE 2.7 (3) -- The court may order that any hearing be conducted in whole or in part by means of a telephone conference call, video-conference or any other form of electronic communication

RULE 2.7 (4) -- The court may give directions to facilitate the conduct of a hearing by the use of any electronic means of communication or storage or retrieval of information, or any other technology it considers appropriate

The telephone conference call feature is a wonderful timesaver when the parties have agreed on the terms of an Order to be made in a matter and simply need to formalize the document by having it ratified and signed by the Court. The best approach is to state the intention to have the hearing conducted by conference call in the body of that mandatory document, the NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR COURT ORDERS

The request may be stated as follows;

**NOTICE:**

This Application will be heard VIA CONFERENCE CALL by [a Judge in Chambers] [Master] on the . day of 2007 at the Supreme Court, King Street, Kingston at in the morning/afternoon. If you do not attend this hearing either personally or by an attorney-at-law an order may be made in your absence.

Notice of this application is being given to the following persons:  
(ADD THE ATTORNEYS CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS)

After filing the Application with the Draft Court Order, signed by the Attorneys, or the parties you may then ask the Court Administrator to set it quickly before a Judge who is prepared to do the hearing via conference call. It works well for example in applications to Extend Time, or in Ex-parte Applications when time is of the essence.

**VOICE MAIL**

Voice mail has valid legal status. It was treated by the Court as a suitable form of electronic communication in *Lavers v. Northern Upholstery Ltd- t/a DFS Ltd (Daily Telegraph, July 20, 2001)*.

Voice mail helps greatly to notify clients and to receive information when you are out of office, or the office is closed. Many clients who live abroad will call according to their time, not ours, and on public holidays. An answering machine helps immensely especially if it allows you to call in and retrieve the voice mail using a security code. There are now digital answering machines which will provide several exclusive voice mailboxes and connect to more than one line. Delivery and retrieval from an answering machine is much more immediate and reliable than cellular voice mail which is much delayed and has limited storage capacity.

As regards the C.P.R. provisions Attorneys who practice primarily in the field of commercial law and especially those who deal with international contracts should take heed of the case cited. Most commercial contracts contain a clause prescribing an address for service and often suggest "any suitable" method of service of any notices which may arise from the contract. Having regard to Rule 7.8 (1) (b) and Rule 7.14 the agreed method of service of any notices under a contract should be given close attention by those commercial law practitioners. It is recommended that care should be taken in the drafting of the "method of service of any notices" contract clause to specifically exclude any service of Court process by electronic means.

#### **FAXES AND THE FAX MACHINE**

Off the shelf Fax technology is now over a quarter century old and a fax machine is now common affordable technology and should be standard equipment in any Jamaican law practice. The use of Fax technology has been made an integral part of Supreme Court practice as specific references to Fax technology and its use are stated in the new CPR.

#### **RULE 2.4 –Definition of "FAX"-**

**"Fax" means the making of a facsimile copy of a document by the transmission of electronic signals**

This definition emerged from as long ago as March 1990 in *Hastie & Jenkerson (A Firm) v. McMahon [1991] 1 All ER 255*. There the Court established that a fax is essentially a copy of another document which happened to be made over a distance by electronic communication between two machines.

The effective use of Fax technology in Supreme Court practice is governed by these provisions of the C.P.R.

**RULE 3.11 (2) (b)–Statement of case-address for service... *the telephone number and (if applicable) FAX number***

**RULE 5.12 –Proof of service by FAX**

**RULE 6.2 (c) –Method of service FAX**

**RULE 6.3 (2) –address for serving such documents-FAX number**

**RULE 6.6 (1) – Deemed date of service-FAX, other electronic method**

Whenever a fax is sent there is always the BWIA question, But Will It Arrive? The ability or not to confirm delivery can easily affect any attempt to serve or file a document by fax. Before sending an important fax it is prudent to first dial the fax number to which you intend to transmit, from an ordinary phone, just before you transmit the fax, to make sure that the line to that number is working and that the receiving machine sends a tone confirming that it is on.

**CPR RULE 5.12 –Proof of service by FAX**

- (1) Service by FAX is proved by an affidavit of service by the person responsible for transmitting the claim form to the person to be served**
- (2) The affidavit must exhibit-**
  - (a) a copy of the document served**
  - (b) a copy of any cover sheet to that document; and**
  - (c) a copy of the transmission record****and must state-**
  - (i) the date and time of the transmission; and**
  - (ii) the FAX number to which it was sent**

Fax machines put electronic date, time and contact digital signature at the head or foot of a fax telling which machine sent the fax, from which number and at what date and time. Most fax machines made since 2000 can be programmed to print a confirmation of delivery sheet with a summary of what was sent, which machine received it and when.

The effective use of fax technology under the CPR can be defeated if the fax machine is not first programmed with the correct date and time, sending telephone number and users name or Station identifier, before the Transmission Record can be relied on to provide the vital information required under 5.12 (c) (i) & (ii). That programming sets the digital signature of the machine which proves that the transmission record came from a particular machine. Should you receive service by fax which has an incomplete digital signature; ie. there is no sending telephone number and users name or Station identifier at the top of each page received then you may have grounds to challenge the Affidavit of Service filed for failing to comply with Rule 5.12 (2) in all material particulars

The Continuing Legal Education paper on, *Appropriate Technology and The New Civil Procedure Rules* – May 2003, gives insight into the case law on the use of fax under the C.P.R.  
Copies are available from the Jamaican Bar Association office.

Every aspect of a fax machines sending and receiving capability is affected by age, condition and basic settings and therefore the fax machine used in our law practices should be serviced annually.

That servicing should cover;

- (i) having the digital signature set,
- (ii) the scanner cleaned,
- (iii) the paper feed rollers changed if necessary to avoid jamming
- (iv) the ink or toner or heat printer set to the sharpest resolution
- (v) the default page size set to letter to match the mandated size of Court documents and
- (vi) the internal digital clock set to keep the correct date and time.
- (vii) fax transmission and receiving quality should be tested.

One still sees faxes coming from old machines which are not Y2K compliant where the transmission date is time stamped as sent at the start of the last century e.g. 1907 but the fax is received in 2007. If the transmission record is not correct then the purpose behind the use of the technology would have been defeated.

After the seven stages of servicing you may discover that your fax machine does not in fact "make a copy of a document" as Rule 2.4 requires and it may become necessary to repair or replace your machine to ensure that it does comply with the CPR.

On a note of caution, when a handwritten fax cover page is used, to achieve the best resolution a black ink pen should be used to fill in the details. When blue inked pens are used the writing on the fax received at the other end may prove to be illegible. This because in most fax machines, the high intensity lamp used to scan the document emits a green light which acts as a filter against the blue writing. If a blue pen is used what emerges at the other end as the Cover page of the fax (copy) may not show the critical details required under Rule 3.8.

Because computers come with modems and fax software built in you may use both a business fax and your computer to send and receive faxes. The computers fax software will provide the proper transmission record as needed and its hard drive will store the fax indefinitely to be viewed without necessarily printing it or for printing as often as required. There is computer also software that will convert the fax to a PDF file which allows it to be viewed, stored, retrieved and resent if necessary. The value of this feature is discussed below.

## DIGITAL FILES & THE LESS PAPER OFFICE

The concept of the paperless office in a law practice is a myth. The idea of a law office completely and utterly devoid of paper is akin to Dumbo the flying elephant. It is not going to happen in our lifetimes or any time soon. In our firm we have used computers fully for over 20 years and the inescapable fact is that law has too much of a paper tradition ever to hope to achieve a paperless office. The reality of our present world is that there are still times when paper is the most appropriate medium in which to record and transmit information. We all feel comfortable using paper because we know what to do with it. Offices have a set filing system for the paper.

Paper unfortunately has physical bulk and incurs great cost to manage, maintain accessibility, store and eventually dispose of. It takes up acres of spaces, even long after its usefulness has ceased.

It is very possible to use technology to effectively reduce paper volume in a law practice but to do so requires planning and implementing ways to substitute digital information in place of paper. The result will be a Law office of LESS paper, not a paperless law office.

Using less paper in a law practice is highly dependent on a unified way of keeping track of the digital data. However, many law offices don't have a planned or coherent digital filing system, and so become disillusioned with trying to reduce their paper use.

There are many forms of digital information: word processing documents, spreadsheets, e-mail, web pages, graphics, photos, text, etc.

In devising a plan for your law office you need to focus clearly on three things:

- A. **WHAT** are you going to produce/file/store and retrieve in lieu of paper
- B. **HOW** are you going to produce/file/store and retrieve that data in lieu of paper and
- C. **WHERE** are you going to file/store and retrieve it

Only then can effective use be made of any available technology to achieve the planned production storage, filing and retrieval of the information.

The time tested method used for the answer to A. in our firm, is to treat digital documents in the same way we treat paper. We give each a distinctive name related to the client, file them in electronic files named for the client, store them in electronic cabinets labeled for the type of matter. The system is hierarchal, as it uses an alphabetical index for each category of legal matter. It allows one client to have numerous files of distinctive identification in each of the various categories of; Litigation, Family, Conveyancing, Commercial, Tax Court, Traffic Court, etc. Digital files can be removed from the active file database and stored on CD's or DVD's when the actual paper file is no longer in use.

The main focus under B. is to ensure consistency. One has to decide on the digital format in which to file/store and retrieve and thankfully there is now one common storage format that does seem to suit most law practices.

In the early days of digital data there was no uniform way to look at information. Along came Portable Document Format (PDF). At its heart PDF is a standard that ensures that information can be readily accessed across many different sources of creation, early or latest editions of the same source, operating systems and computers. It is in fact independent of the creating source altogether. Invented by Adobe Systems, Inc. in 1992, PDF has become the defacto standard for file sharing and digital document preservation.

**The main reason for the adoption of PDF as a standard is the freely available Adobe Reader.** When Adobe made the Reader available for free, it meant that those creating the digital document no longer had to worry about whether their information recipients would be able to read their digital files.

One of the key concepts of the PDF standard is the idea that information stored in earlier editions of PDF be readable in future editions. In essence the digital PDF file you create today, should still be accessible 50 years from now. Indeed, there is a new standard under development called PDF/A, or archive, that is being developed for this exact purpose.

PDF files preserve the look and experience of the original document source by including the font and other visual elements within the file. Instead of printing the output to the fixed medium of paper, the information is "printed" to PDF which captures how the information would have looked if printed on paper. It is essentially a digital picture of what the paper printout would have looked like.

Annotation of PDF files ( the ability to make notes on them just as you would on paper) is now built into the Adobe Acrobat programme.

One can download Judgments or documents and save them as PDF files then use the PDF annotation tools to insert text notes that do not affect the original document. It allows a digital pen and paper markup of the document. (Show example)

### E-FILING

The idea of filing documents digitally with the courts is a reality today.

In our own Civil Procedure Rules we find in **RULE 3.8 –Filing and Service by FAX .**

Five years ago an interesting set of practice direction on the subject was issued in the UK, (see *Practice Directions; pleadings and use of electronic transmission of documents [2002] All E.R. (EC) 460;*

Also in the UK are CPR Practice Guides On The Use Of Technology. Chapter 14 Use of Information Technology

In the state of Georgia, U.S.A. the state Code enacted in 1997 as the Georgia Electronic Records and Signatures Act specifically authorizes the use of digital

files and signatures. In Washington D.C. the Federal courts such as the Bankruptcy Courts, Patent and Trademark Office and the Federal District Courts require digital filing by lawyers who practice before them and PDF is the standard format for these filings. PDF preserves the document image against tampering, retains accurate colour and can be faxed or e.mailed to effect service.

The digital document trend is on the rise as a global standard and E-filing by the public in applications to all Government entities and legal process agencies will be the standard of the future.

If there is one relatively simple but effective digital document solution to our recurring problem at the Supreme Court of lost files, misplaced documents and late notification of dates it is electronic filing in PDF format.

For us here in Jamaica it will be not a question of "if" but "when" will e. filing become mandatory.

There are huge savings in time and expense to be derived from using the web sites for the following routines;

**The Registrar General- [rgd.gov.jm](http://rgd.gov.jm)**- To apply for birth, death and marriage Certificates

**The Companies Office - [orcjamaica.com](http://orcjamaica.com)** – To make enquiries about the status of companies, their directors and assets by seeing the actual documents filed.

**The National Land Agency - [nla.gov.jm](http://nla.gov.jm)** – to research titles, land valuation numbers and examine deposited Plans

### DIGITAL DOCUMENT DRAFTING

Document drafting, negotiation of agreements and other preparation of legal documents are nowadays still done by our profession in Jamaica primarily on paper. There was a time when "red-lining" meant taking a paper document and marking the changes with a ruler and red pen. Over the years, redlining software and other approaches allowed us to do the same tasks in electronic format.

The global trend is to save time and paper by making the process primarily electronic, and more collaborative than ever.

In the meantime, however, the "Track Changes" feature contained in Microsoft Office applications has become the most commonly-used tool for tracking revisions and marking changes in documents. Track Changes was a giant step forward in collaboration technology -- it allows multiple authors of a document to easily view the changes in a lengthy document and make comments that other participants could review, all in one place. Although technology has made even greater strides with respect to document collaboration, Track Changes is arguably the most easily used document collaboration tool.

It is recommended that one spend a half hour or so taking Microsoft's Online Course on Using Track Changes -- just three short lessons, a test, and even a quick reference sheet.

Although Track Changes can be one of the most common and popular collaborative document preparation tools used in the legal profession like everything from Microsoft, it isn't perfect. Great Care should be exercised in using it because some features could lead to potentially embarrassing, revealing or compromising situation or embarrassments that can occur when Track Changes is not used in a proper manner. Here are three instances.

Back in 2004, hidden Track Changes text in a Word document revealed that the lawsuit of *SCO Group's vs. Daimler Chrysler* was originally intended to target Bank of America.

In September 2005, an official U.K. Government document purported to support a plan to hold terrorist suspects for up to three months without trial, but the Track Changes revealed a concern about that policy.

Another disclosure late in 2006, in a United Nations enquiry report on the assassination of the Lebanese Prime Minister showed that hidden Track Changes text listed the names of several prominent Syrian officials.

Fortunately, it's relatively easy to learn how to use Track Changes, and how to make sure they don't appear in documents that you might send to clients, opposing counsel, or others.

#### FOLLOW UP

In the post 2004 version of Microsoft Word is a clever little feature which appears as an icon in the standard menu bar "the little red flag". Click on it and it will give you a window in which you can set a time to be reminded about a particular document. It is advisable to use it as much as possible. The pop up reminder proves to be a relentless assistant that helps you to recall things that need to be followed up and can warn of approaching deadlines.

#### ONLINE DOCUMENT REVIEW

Presently most lawyers who need to review or draft a document in collaboration with a colleague or client, do it by printing out the draft and mailing it. Those who are more technologically savvy send the draft by e-mail?

By using the print and mail method you are handicapping your law practice severely because now clients are simply demanding better service from their legal advisors and when they recognize inefficiencies, it triggers a bad reaction because they believe they are forced to pay for that inefficiency. If you use e.mail then you are halfway to maximum efficiency.

Where one uses the traditional or e.mail method it goes through six stages;

- a) that one attorney drafts his or her version then

- b) attaches it to a letter or an e-mail to send it to another attorney
- c) that attorney physically marks up the first draft, or makes modifications on the computer in a word processor
- d) it's sent back to the original drafter for the proposed changes to be incorporated or
- e) if they are rejected the process starts all over again until
- f) a final draft can be settled for their respective clients.

But there is now a more efficient alternative available, **for free.**

Imagine a system that allows both attorneys to look simultaneously at the same document and make changes. It's more efficient than e-mailing the file back and forth, not to mention keeping attachments off over-burdened e-mail servers. Two such free systems are Google Docs, from Google Inc., and Zoho Writer from AdventNet Inc. Both give shared internet access to documents with word processor and spreadsheet editing facilities which enable simultaneous sharing any particular document through restricted access by e.mail address and password. Think of it as a sort of MSN instant messenger service overlaid on an actual document.

These Google Docs, and Zoho Writer simultaneous editing tools can prove to be very useful if the participants share the document during a conference call because the changes can be simultaneously seen and discussed by all. Recently we used the Google Docs system sharing the document between our office in Jamaica and two other Attorneys, one in Canada and the other in Australia.

### USING THE INTERNET AS AN EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

The internet has now become an integral part of business life and is a most powerful tool for boosting the efficiency of a law practice if it is used to assist almost every enquiry. It is more efficient to have broadband access both in terms of getting online promptly and saving time to send or download information. Dial up connection is for occasional use of the internet.

You can use *Mapquest.com* to check addresses before sending out correspondence and confirm the location of places. It helps to do it before you address a Fed Ex package to ensure that the address is correct and avoid an expensive return of the package undelivered due to incorrect address.

*Wikipedia.com* is the most up to date online encyclopedia. You can quickly and easily inform yourself on any subject. It helps when reading expert reports to decipher the technical jargon and check the reliability of the expert opinion offered.

*Google Earth* is an excellent tool to locate places. It is recommended for those who practice conveyancing or do road accident negligence cases and even the

criminal law practitioners who need to understand the configuration of a locus in quo.

For conveyancers Google Earth gives a birds eye view which helps identify the physical configuration of a property. One can easily tell if the land has a building that is up against a boundary long before a Surveyors I.D. Report confirms it. For Restrictive Covenant applications Google Earth gives an accurate map of the adjoining properties. It shows the shape of intersections or if the road was narrow or wide, straight or has bends or sharp turns, very helpful for road negligence matters. Google earth provides aerial reconnaissance that allows a visit to the locus without ever leaving your office.

### ELECTRONIC LEGAL RESEARCH

The old rule of using a magnet to look for a needle in a haystack still applies. Today the magnet of technology is even more powerful than ever for finding information. One word sums it up. "Google"

This search engine now dominates the internet to the extent that it is no longer necessary to know the specific web address of dedicated web accessible law libraries.

So typing "personal injury, broken wrist, damages, Jamaica" brings up 64,000 results. That's too many but one can quickly sift through the results and pick out the Jamaican Court rulings, or look at the medical discussions of the prognosis for that type of injury.

To look up the law or case law on any subject it is more effective to use Google and type in a suitable Boolean search request. Boolean logic consists of three logical operators: (a). OR (b). AND (c) NOT

To use "Google" effectively to do legal research the ten basic rules still apply.

The Continuing Legal Education paper on, *Electronic legal research-* April 2002, gives the ten basic rules to follow and explains the techniques.

Copies are available from the JA. Bar Assoc office.

Here are some of the most useful legal research web sites recommended to the Jamaican law practitioner.

### MOST HELPFUL LEGAL RESEARCH WEB SITES

[www.moj.gov.jm/law](http://www.moj.gov.jm/law) -

The Ministry of Justice web site which gives access to all our legislation

[www.worldlii.org](http://www.worldlii.org)-

the internet portal to all the worlds country's official legal web sites, by country and by category of law. It includes

Jamaica with direct links to all web published decisions by our Supreme Court from 1994, Court of Appeal from 2000, and Privy Council decisions on our appeals from 1884.

[www.bailii.org-](http://www.bailii.org-)

British and Irish Legal Information Institute- a free, comprehensive and up to date legal web site.

[www.lawreports.co.uk-](http://www.lawreports.co.uk-)

The Weekly Law Reports summarised reports of selected High Court cases

[www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/judgments.htm](http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/judgments.htm) -

This site is a free transcript archive of U.K. cases

[www.legal-definitions.com](http://www.legal-definitions.com)

res ipsa loquitur , essentially an online law dictionary.

[www.privy-council.org.uk](http://www.privy-council.org.uk) -

The Privy Council web site with full text of Judgments from 1993

[www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldjudgmt.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldjudgmt.htm) -

The House of Lords Judgments from Nov 1996

[www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/global/](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/global/)

Law reports published in the Times newspaper of London. The case date will give guidance as to the publication date to search for.

[www.austlii.edu.au-](http://www.austlii.edu.au-)

acclaimed as one of the best internet legal resource sites

### **COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY- THE FUNNEL CONCEPT**

Communication is at the heart of the legal enterprise. Lawyers communicate to clients, to other lawyers, to courts and agencies. Knowing how to use the tools of electronic communication is a broader idea than simply knowing how to use an e-mail messaging system, although that is an important start. Some clients expect fast communications and almost instantaneous legal services response. Every body wants their work done yesterday.

Knowing how to communicate electronically includes skills such as knowing how and when to use e-mail; how to set up facilities so that clients can provide feedback to the firm on client services; using telecommunications to cement relationships with clients by providing electronic notice of events important to the client, and marketing the firms services through electronic means to attract new clients who also populate cyberspace. Those who have Internet access are likely to be better educated and more affluent segments of the population. This is the

group that law firms want as clients, and the most cost effective way to reach this group on a broad scale is by electronic communication.

A fundamental approach to using modern communication effectively is to understand and embrace the "funnel concept". At present all technology communication comes by one of the following individual formats;

1. Voice telephony- fixed line, cellular and radio, live voice connection
2. Data telephony- fax
3. Message telephony- voice mail
4. Word telephony-text messages
5. Web connection- e.mail, files, images & voice over internet protocol
6. As lawyers we can add letters and documents

A funnel is a device that collects whatever falls into it, minimizes loss through spilling and directs it as one stream into a central point. The funnel concept does the same with all forms of communication coming into your law practice. The idea is to use the technology to merge the incoming communication and bridge the differing electronic format then make whatever was communicated available in the digital format which is most suitable to the circumstances.

The funnel concept is now best demonstrated by the new Apple iphone which allows the user to get information in all 5 of the primary formats listed above. In our firms law practice the concept is used in the following ways.

**Voice messages** are summarized in writing and stored on a central message sheet, one for each Attorney. All are kept in a electronic folder and are retrievable over the network or by e.mail.

**Incoming faxes** are all collected and stored digitally on a server in an incoming fax folder. The system automatically shows the date and time of the fax and the number it came from. Everyone in the office has access to look up that fax. But it does more.

**Every fax is automatically e.mailed** to our mailbox. In that way one can be anywhere, even abroad and look at the fax via the web by using a computer or a web accessible cellular phone like a Blackberry.

**Incoming documents** are taken a further step by scanning and storing them in the relevant file on computer. The system actually converts them to PDF files, stores them in the incoming folder and e-mails them to our mailbox.

These methods, in essence, use the available technology as a spout to channel the voice or fax or paper communication as a digital document to the point where it is most accessible and retrievable, anywhere at any time.

The next stage of communication technology that is emerging is web based text messaging, i.e. to send e.mail in the form of a text message to a cellular phone. This will help to reach clients quickly and accurately, reduce the cost of making cellular calls and get the information to them in a visual re-readable form even if they are out of range or their phone is off.

## CONCLUSION

The benefits to be derived by a Jamaican law practice from using these basic features of technology are surprising and it does not require going to invest in any new equipment. Simply change the way you use what you have. Some of the benefits will be realized in the following ways;

- Better use of time.
- Less loss of information.
- Reduced stationary expense.
- Less support staff.
- Fewer filing cabinets and furniture.
- Less need for extra space.
- More satisfied clients.
- Faster income generation.
- Improved profitability.
- More frequent vacations without the client even knowing you are not at work.

Our own firms major achievement through effective use of technology is that all secretarial positions have been redundant since 2000 and it has dramatically cut our staff compensation cost, which always increased each year.

When we shall have reached a plateau in this rapidly technology driven transition period, virtually every aspect of "law" will operate in some digital format of sound or image and how we gain access to it, understand it and apply it will be dictated by technology. It is this technology, which has infused twenty first century life, that will change how we think about law and the role and functions of the legal profession. It is advisable that, as lawyers, we stop watching the rising tide of change through technology and start swimming with the tide, lest we may drown.

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