

InnovAction

InnovAction Applications Are In

The deadline for the InnovAction applications was on June 1st. We asked applicants to provide a summary that we could make public, motivated in part by our interest in sharing with the legal profession innovation inspiration.

The text below was submitted by the named organization as part of its InnovAction application with the understanding that it would be made public. Other than copy edits and adding links, the text appears as submitted.

Dynamic Lawyers Ltd., Carabash Law www.DynamicLawyers.com

Straight after getting called to the bar, I developed a website called www.DynamicLawyers.com to improve access to justice for everyday people in Toronto, Canada. www.DynamicLawyers.com allows users to freely and anonymously post their legal issue(s) online and receive free information and quotes from local lawyers practicing in the area of law required. This website has definite advantages over traditional methods (discussed below) of finding a lawyer. Lawyers registered on the web compete against each other, pitching their services in an effort to be retained by the user. www.DynamicLawyers.com charges lawyers a modest monthly fee of only \$50 to access and respond to the posts. Users have no obligation to select or follow up with a lawyer. Overall, www.DynamicLawyers.com is a novel website that helps everyday people find the right local lawyer for the right price while simultaneously giving lawyers access to people looking for their services.

Firmex Inc. **Firmex Virtual Deal Room**

Firmex is the first commercially available Software as a Service product that: 1) Makes running a corporate transaction greatly more organized and efficient from start to finish, 2) Gives all parties to a transaction far more accessible and convenient access to documents relevant to their business, and 3) Is branded with the name and graphics of the law firm — if the licensee is a law firm, this branding by the law firm makes a strong marketing statement to all other collaborating users, including clients and other advisors.

The initial prototype was developed by Version 5.1 Inc. (a website developer) under the guidance of Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg LLP. In 2006, Version 5.1 incorporated Firmex Inc to develop and capitalize a software company to market a commercial product. Over 230 organizations have licensed the Firmex product since January 2007 (many of which are law firms in North America and in several offshore countries) and they collectively and continually give feedback and input to the product's ongoing evolution. In the space of two years, the Firmex product, using the power of Web 2.0 technology, has transformed transactional work, providing corporate attorneys and their clients with increased control, organization and satisfaction.

Heritage Law **Innovative Law Firm Model**

We have an innovative model of legal practice, centered on the concept of how to enable both work life balance for our staff and maintain top service levels for our clients. We are currently an all-female firm, specializing in wills and estates, family law and mediation, whose four lawyers and six support staff all work as independent contractors, primarily from their homes. Technology plays a critical role in our success. Heritage Law is “paperless” and utilizes practice management software to centrally manage billing, time tracking, matter information, contacts, appointments, documents and document assembly. All staff log into one remote, secure server over the internet which is a repository for all firm data and software applications. We have a VOIP phone system which allows ten staff in ten different locations to use the same phone line and system. We have a remote answering service which answers client calls during the business day if a staff member is out of the office and routes the message to the appropriate person to deal with. All staff have a computer, high speed internet, a VOIP phone and a scanner at their home offices.

Pro Bono Net **Pro Bono Manager**

Pro bono work is critical to law firms as well as to the constituents that they serve. Pro bono work helps firms differentiate themselves, attract and develop attorneys and increase attorneys’ satisfaction with their work. In most firms, managing pro bono work is fraught with administrative and reporting challenges costing the firm billable time and resources. Effective management and reporting tools are required if firms are to meet their altruistic and business goals.

To meet these challenges, Pro Bono Net, a nonprofit leader in innovative programs that increase access to justice, created Pro Bono Manager. Pro Bono Manager, developed with leading law firms, is a customized, hosted pro bono practice management system that helps firms increase pro bono participation, manage pro bono caseloads more efficiently and raise internal and external awareness of pro bono efforts. Leveraging Pro Bono Net’s expertise in using technology to support pro bono attorneys, Pro Bono Manager takes advantage of a nationwide network of public interest legal groups to provide access to materials, volunteer opportunities, training events and relevant news. The service was developed in part with a grant from the Gates Foundation, and is currently in use at eight leading law firms.

Morrison & Foerster LLP **Recruiting Campaign**

Over the last two years, we have developed a distinctive (if sometimes controversial, for those not part of our target audience) recruiting positioning for MoFo that capitalizes on our unique culture (described as our “mofo mojo”). Our MoFo mojo sets us apart from other large law firms. This concept comes to life on our Careers website (www.mofomojo.com) and through our recruiting brochures, invitations, advertisements, electronic banners and giveaways. This recruiting season, we chose to focus on two particular aspects of our culture and did so through two brochures (our Labels brochure and our Pigeonholed brochure) and through a series of collateral materials.

New Family Organization Family **Justice and Law Advocate**

Irit Rosenblum broke fresh ground defending a universal right to family as intrinsic to the practice of law. Rosenblum pioneered a new sphere of legal rights surrounding the family based on the conviction that the rights to marry, divorce, have children, bequeath and inherit assets, and conduct family life are human rights and must be attainable to all regardless of faith, nationality, sexual orientation or status. She founded New Family to fill a critical gap in the practice of law in Israel: to attain the right of every individual to establish a family and to exercise equal rights within it. For the 2 million people in Israel who are subject to discrimination due to family status, New Family's achievements have been invaluable. A central aspect of Rosenblum's work is innovating legal solutions that circumvent or mitigate infringements on rights. Rosenblum pioneered contractual marriage and Domestic Partnership Identification Cards, which confer couples that cannot legally marry or do not wish to marry by the required religious rites legal status and rights equal to married couples.

Novus Law, LLC **Novus Q™ – A Quality Management System for Document Review**

Quality management related sanctions for e-discovery and document review mismanagement cost law firms and their clients more than \$1.5 billion annually. At Novus Law, we consider that to be too much risk, too much money and totally unnecessary. When we spoke with litigators and asked, "What is it about the document review process that "keeps you up at night?", they responded, 1) the inadvertent production of privileged documents, 2) an incorrect understanding of what's important, thus "missing the all-important hot document", and 3) inconsistencies in the procedures used by reviewers – "it won't be defensible in front of the judge". Novus Law researched the best quality management systems in the world from the manufacturing, supply chain, healthcare, professional services and other process-focused industries, and created an unparalleled quality management system for document management review and analysis called Novus Q™. The first time Novus Q™ was used it yielded a 33% improvement in accuracy over industry standard results based on an independent quality review audit, and within months Novus Q™ was consistently delivering accuracy rates for document review greater than 99%. These results are unheard of in the legal industry and are setting a new standard for quality.

Practical Law Company, Inc. **Creating Efficiency for business lawyers**

Practical Law Company (PLC) is changing the way business lawyers work. We employ attorneys with significant experience practicing with the world's leading law firms and legal departments (e.g. Davis Polk, Skadden, Pfizer, Sullivan & Cromwell) to provide practical, up-to-date resources that help business lawyers practice more efficiently and provide greater value to clients. Traditional legal publishers are not meeting the needs of transactional lawyers, especially in this climate where innovation and delivering greater value is of critical importance. PLC provides the practical, generic level of information needed by all business lawyers that allows them to get up to speed quickly, stop reinventing the wheel and focus on client and firm specific work. We launched our first US services in December 2008 to wide market acceptance – not only to the services themselves, but also to our core principles of innovation, value and quality. PLC began in the UK in 1990.

Raymond & Bennett LLC

Fully digital law practice with emphasis on value billing and alternative fees

In two years, we have created a new law firm design on the leading edge in technology, firm management, and the use of alternative fees. Raymond and Bennett was founded on the core principles of excellent client service, lean practices, value billing, and effective use of technology. R & B is a fully digital law firm (no paper files!) with all case materials securely stored, fully text searchable and universally accessible from any location with internet access. We outsource our secretarial work to a U.S. based vendor over the internet. We have a mix of “brick and mortar” and “virtual” associates. R & B is a green firm. When we print, it is on recycled paper. The paper we receive is scanned and sent to the shredder and recycled. Our “brick and mortar” attorneys also work at least one day per week from home to save on gas and commuting. We offer all our clients alternative fees based on value billing. We call it our RealValue campaign. To get back to our profession’s roots and away from the dying billable hour, we offer alternative fees to save our clients money and tie our fees to results.

Schottenstein Zox & Dunn Co., LPA

Cross-selling legal services through internal public relations

We are proud to serve world-class clients and to continually achieve exceptional results for their companies; it’s why we’re in business. But our success doesn’t have to end there. Our experience gained through these valuable relationships can be leveraged further to benefit both our clients and our professionals. Instead of channeling our firm’s public relations efforts externally to generate sales, we have chosen to focus our public relations efforts internally to originate leads and opportunities from within the firm. Through spotlights on cross selling success stories and our attorney’s unique experience and skill-sets, our target audience – the entire SZD team – becomes engaged in the firm’s collective capabilities and client relationships and can use this knowledge to enhance the scope of services the firm provides to all clients. We established an internal public relations team to research, interview and write compelling business development stories to detail the legal work our attorneys are handling and the results they are achieving for clients. The articles are written in true journalistic style by an experienced news writer and editor retained to focus exclusively on generating internal success stories, legal Q&A’s and business development features that bridge our client relationships and varied experience.

Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Pro Bono Administration Tool

Seyfarth Shaw's IT Department built a web-based application that allows attorneys and staff who administer the Firm's pro bono legal services program (the "Pro Bono Team") to monitor the Firm's pro bono matters. With this new pro bono application tool, affectionately known as "the ProBot," the Pro Bono Team now has real-time access to the firm's pro bono hours, matters, costs, and other information. Under the prior system, the Pro Bono Team had to use manually generated reports from the Firm's Finance, Human Resources, IT, and Professional Development departments, as well as an online pro bono proposal form and multiple Excel spreadsheets, to track and monitor pro bono cases. The Pro Bono Team needed a more streamlined system for responding to the myriad internal and external information requests it receives, and the demands it faces in monitoring and reporting its pro bono work. The ProBot allows the Pro Bono Team to easily generate reports and mine information, thereby allowing the Team to better track, patrol, and encourage the Firm's pro bono efforts, and to allocate more resources to non-reporting activities, ultimately elevating the level of the Firm's pro bono program and saving the Firm money.

Valorem Law Group

Creating the Firm and Killing the Billable Hour

We listened: Our clients told us they wanted: a. To know the actual cost of litigation so they could budget accordingly; b. Lawyers who don't boil the ocean to make a cup of tea; c. Strategy driven results they have asked for – not by the amount of hours billed; and d. Lawyers who would assume some risk on a matter – something businesses operate with every day. We acted: On January 2, 2009 four of us (all partners and self-proclaimed "large firm refugees") risked our children's college educations to revolutionize the law firm business model and "kill the billable hour" by handling complex business litigation using non-hourly billing methods. "Valorem," meaning "value" in Latin, is the name we chose because it shows our commitment to providing true value and results, not hours. We reinforce our commitment by providing a "Value Adjustment Line" on every invoice. If the clients do not believe they received the value we committed to providing, they are free to revise the bill accordingly. We designed every aspect of the firm, from our office layout maximizing collaborative space to compensating all partners equally, to minimize the "me" factor and maximize the "client" factor.