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# INTERNET, INTRANETS, EXTRANETS . . . OH MY! A LAWYER'S QUICK PRACTICE PRIMER ON THE OTHER "NETS"

by

**Ross L. Kodner, Esq.**

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Law firms today that are not Internet-connected are already being looked upon as the oddballs — members of the legal "technopeasantry"; clearly second-class technology citizens. More and more clients are beyond merely asking their counsel to communicate via e-mail and send legal work product via Internet message attachments. Rather, the period of gentle requests from clients for electronic collaboration is over. More often than not, the ability of a law firm to communicate electronically with clients is now a requirement which must be met to continue the relationship. The stories about law firms who lost clients — often significant accounts representing equally significant revenue — because of their inability to comply with the client's requirements related to electronic collaboration are commonplace. We all have heard about these situations and hope it won't happen to us. But unless a law firm gives itself some serious bootstrapped education about the various ways in which it can leverage the communication and collaboration capabilities offered by the Internet, it **could** happen to you.

That's where this article comes in. The focus is on the different types of Internet resources available for collaboration — between law firms and clients, between law firms and co-counsel, between law firms and experts, between law firms and courts. We will look at newer adjuncts to the Internet — In**TR**anets and **EX**tranets. These new Internet-related tools are giving savvy law firms a major competitive edge in both securing and retaining critical clients, especially for those firm involved in multi-state corporate or litigation practice.

The value of the Internet itself to lawyers in all walks of question is already a given. As a legal research resource, lawyers everywhere tap into free or low-cost local, state and federal laws and regulations as well as a massive body of appellate decisions on both a state and federal level. Tort lawyers, for example, conduct medical and injury research and even capture anatomical images from websites and incorporate them into their client-related documents. Corporate lawyers

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locate SEC information, corporate organizational information, labor law and employment information and more on the Internet. General practitioners find everything from tax information to help with estate planning to wage and earnings information help nail down divorce property divisions and maintenance calculations.

More and more lawyers are using the Internet beyond access to traditional websites with content such as that mentioned above. The Internet has become the communications medium of choice for many clients--especially business clients involved in litigation. Two primary factors have contributed to this. First, e-mail is fast, direct and convenient as a way to quickly distribute editable documents. Second, the Web browser interface has become ubiquitous, largely because of the extreme ease of use and also because the same interface can be used to access a virtually endless range of information. One does not have to use a separate word processor, spreadsheet, calendar or even e-mail program to access documents, spreadsheet information and electronic communications--one consistent interface can handle all three of these functions--and more. Combining these two technologies--Internet communications and the Web browser interface in several new ways brings collaborative capability that lawyers, clients and co-counsel had not heretofore experienced.

Clients, especially those of the large corporate variety have been on a permanent quest to reduce outside counsel costs. At the same time, these clients have worked to maximize the collective value of the legal services provided by multiple outside counsel. One of the ways that corporate or insurance clients are working to achieve these goals is by encouraging collaboration among various outside counsel. An example would be the ability of all outside counsel to access shared case calendars, or perhaps a shared repository of deposition transcripts or even a textbase consisting of all the pleadings, motions and expert reports prepared to date in the case. The end results are a lessened chance of duplicative work, better "real-time" monitoring of the work being done by varied outside counsel and lower legal fees. And the way these companies are choosing to accomplish this is with private Extranet technology. Expect the frequency of occurrence of such client-driven requirements to increase, and likely never decrease. This is no longer the future of client relationships . . . it has become our present.

Two new technologies are at work here--all variation on the already familiar Internet theme. These include Extranets and Intranets. There are also Internet "creatures" called Document Repositories and Virtual Private Networks, but those are beyond the scope of this article. Let's define Intranets and Extranets, one at a time, and then look at practical applications.

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First, according to Lee Glickenhau<sup>1</sup>, a “recovering” litigator who founded legal Extranet provider, T-Lex, “a Web based “Extranet” is an excellent device for managing both **relationships** (long term interaction between clients and firms) and **matters** (cases or other transactions of limited duration). The inherent flexibility of these systems allows them to be adapted to meet the particular needs of each client. Perhaps the Net’s greatest value to lawyers is the role it can play as the foundation of a restricted access network for managing legal work, collaborating and improving both the efficiency and quality of legal efforts.”

Glickenhau further elaborates in defining the concept of an Extranet by explaining that “it is now possible for multiple organizations to share information and exchange resources by carving out a private piece of cyberspace for themselves. Bigger than an **intranet**, but smaller than the **Internet**, “**extranets**” are restricted access Web-based networks which cross organization lines. Extranets are being hailed in many quarters as the next big thing (“*Innovation is Seen Happening Around Extranets, Java,*” Web Week, January 6, 1997). “Extranets are believed to be the next major wave of business use of Internet technology.” Id. And for good reason. Using an existing infrastructure, off the shelf software and modest access costs, Web-based extranets offer an attractive solution for increasing efficiency and quality in the legal world. This approach offers a new opportunity to use technology to achieve a higher level of communication, collaboration, and coordination than has been practical in the past

Simply put -- the Web can provide an excellent mechanism for managing cases, accessing documents, and generally enhancing the relationship between a client and its firms, or among multiple firms.”

So an “Extranet” is simply a private place on the Internet for people to share information-- in this case the “players” involved in a case sharing everything from case information to pleadings to transcripts of depositions to discovered documents stored as images to motions to expert reports and briefs. All in all, a very simple concept--a private access website hosted either by the client, the law firm or an outside company specializing in such legal services like Glickenhau’s T-Lex.

The next question is how one actually goes about creating an Extranet--and if one uses one of the three major legal-oriented and legal-experienced Extranet providers (Legal Anywhere at [www.legalanywhere.com](http://www.legalanywhere.com), T-Lex at [www.tlex.com](http://www.tlex.com), and TrialNet at [www.trialnet.com](http://www.trialnet.com)) how does

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<sup>1</sup>Lee Glickenhau, a former litigator, is founder and President of T Lex, Inc., of Brookline, Massachusetts (<http://www.tlex.com>), which provides both legal extranet services and The Massachusetts Legal Exchange.

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the process work? What's involved? Who pays for the services? Lee Glickenhau answered these questions as follows:

“[Regarding his own firm, T-Lex, Inc.] what we do is create a custom site for each client. . . . [An] extranet is a private (and secure in our case) multi-organization web site. In terms of scope, it falls between the Internet (available to the whole world) and an Intranet (available to just one organization). With an extranet, you can distribute information in a browser based environment and make the information available to people on a "by invitation only" basis. Only people from those organizations (and only those individuals you authorize) that you give access to can get to the site.

So, what we do is create a site for each client and design it in a way that allows the client to collect and distribute the information that it cares about. Each organization cares about different info (more on this later) and the ability o customize a site at reasonable cost is a tremendous power.

In general terms, the extranets we build allow companies/firms to store, search and retrieve data in two broad categories:

1. "Legacy" information or accumulated intellectual capital. This is the information that an organization accumulates over time and which in can draw on for future work..A brief bank is a classic example, but almost any type of information of value falls into this category. So, our users can search a brief bank database by keyword, applicable law, etc to find past work that deals with the issue they are now facing. When they find something, they can download it in either Word or WP, open it in the word processor and adapt it to the project at hand, Time saver extraordinaire.
2. "Matter" information. Information about current matters (cases/deals). Like any case management system, users can track calendars, pleadings, documents and images, witness info and associated transcripts, etc, draft collaborative documents, to do lists and a lot of other things. This lets multiple firms work together on a major matter, and give in-house attorneys an excellent tool for managing matters handled by outside firms

How's it being used? Our system is currently being used in 3 "structures"

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1. Major Litigation: [An example would be that] our client is national counsel managing about 1000 products cases in 50 states. 50 local counsel are also involved, as several corporate clients. The extranet is used to allow all users to track primarily schedule/calendar info and info about claimants (medical info, alleged injury, expert testimony, etc) In addition, the "Science Team" attorneys from about 6 firms) has a restricted sub-area of the site at which they can consolidate, search, etc technical and scientific material relevant to the cases. Other stuff is also included (prototype pleadings, counsel info, etc) but the primary info of value is calendaring and claimant-related.
  2. Joint Client Effort: [In another example] a consortium of 5 insurance carriers is using the system to pool resources on lead paint litigation. Their primary info of value is expert witness related. Since the same experts appear in these cases all over the country, we have set up a system for them to track expert profiles, and associated documents -- notable transcripts, CVs , reports and voir dire. Comments about each expert can be attached to their profile, as is information about each case in which they have been involved and profiles of both plaintiff and defense counsel. Transcripts can be full text searched and downloaded to be used for impeachment and/ or witness prep. Its now simple to get all past testimony and publications for an expert. This site also contains an extensive technical literature database of lead paint related articles.
  - 3,. Company managing Portfolio of Litigation: [In yet another example] a major company (Fortune 25) is using their [Extranet] system to consolidate and manage its book of cases (several thousand). The two main areas of the site track legacy information (firms can draw on past work) and case specific material. Firms enter calendar info, do budgeting for cases and submit status reports online. This greatly simplifies the management function and allows for more collaborative efforts. Cuts down on paper too. Billing information is entered as bills are submitted and the system lets users see budget vs. actual for each case.

All of the pages [on each Extranet] contain [web] hyperlinks so, when a status report lists witnesses, one click takes you to a profile of the witness and related documents for that witness Etc.”

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Security of the information transferred across the Internet and stored on the Web servers that host an Extranet is certainly an issue. Glickenhau asks the key question: “what kind of security does the Web offer? Can’t anyone just steal your confidential data as it zips across the infobahn?” The answer is that security on the Internet is not really a “bigger” issue than security with other forms of communication. In discussions related to preparing this article Glickenhau recounts tales of his litigation days when lawyers would lose briefcases brimming with confidential case-related documents or chancing the risk of easy eavesdropping in on their cellular phone conversations. So it would be unreasonable to assert that the Internet offers any more significant security challenges than non-Internet-based collaboration--it’s merely a different range of risk.

Glickenhau pointed out that there are two primary areas of security risk in dealing with a Web-based system for legal collaboration, as follows:

- “1.Restricting access (making sure the bad guys don’t get into your system and take a stroll), and
2. Protecting information in transit from your [PC system] to the client/user (making sure the bad guys don’t swipe the goodies off the wire [while the data is in transit to or from the Extranet website])

Ways to address these security issues include hosting of the extranet at an undisclosed address on the Web. In this way, a “private” site can be hidden from Internet search engines (such as Altavista, Hotbot, Lycos or Infoseek) and its address can be kept private. Another method suggested by Glickenhau is that the Extranets “address can be periodically changed to make it even more difficult for unauthorized people to even **find** the site, much less gain entry to it. (Obviously, authorized users would have to be notified of a changed Web address).”

Typically, Extranets, most often control access in a very traditional way--the issuance of user ID’s and passwords. Practically speaking, this serves as a very effective deterrent to unauthorized access. While password-cracking programs are available to “hackers” and “crackers”, one can also have a policy of regularly changing and re-issuing passwords for even greater security. Further, commercial Extranet providers can offer multiple levels of passwords so that some law firms and/or clients who are participating can access some, but not all of the information. For example, among five law firms sharing an Extranet on a consolidated asbestos defense matter, two of the firms may not be involved in a series of third party claims. They may access most of the case information stored on the Extranet but accessing information on the third party claims requires another User ID and password - which they do not have.

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Another security method pointed out by Glickenhau is particularly interesting: “a Webserver can be configured to permit access only to a client that is accessing the site from a specified IP address (e.g., “207.56.362.98”) or domain (e.g., “myfirm.com”). While these systems reduce flexibility (one of the nice things about a Web-based extranet is that users can access it from their office, their home, a hotel, court, a deposition conference room, or anywhere else there is a phone line), they increase security. Newer on the block are “digital IDs” -- essentially personal IDs issued to an individual (or organization) by an independent certifying authority such as Verisign. Using state of the art cryptography, these IDs ensure that only authorized users can enter a private site or network. They are easy to configure and relatively inexpensive (about \$10-20 per user). This system solves the problems of lost, intercepted, or cracked passwords.”

There are other companies offering similar legal Extranet services, as previously mentioned. Richard Klau, an attorney working for Virginia-based legal Extranet provider, TrialNet (<http://www.trialnet.com>) offered the following comments:

“TrialNet creates private networks for corporate clients so that all of the client's outside counsel can collaborate. Lawyers can share depositions, trial transcripts, observations about plaintiffs' counsel, and many other things that are valuable when preparing for a case, but often "hidden" inside one individual's head.

In years past, a system like this was only possible as a dial-up bulletin board system; today, it works precisely because Internet access is so common. Clients don't need additional hardware to install, and lawyers don't need to invest in costly upgrades to access the network - all they need is a web browser and Internet access.

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Examples of how this benefits the client and the lawyer are many. Lawyers get access to more people who practice in a similar area of law - so a question is more likely to be answered. Clients get the benefit of more consistent work product out of their counsel - now, they all have access to the same information. And they both benefit from more open communication and the stronger relationship that results.”

Peter Ozolin, another lawyer who has hoisted the Extranet banner with his Oregon-based Legal Anywhere (<http://www.legalanywhere.com>) described his firm's services:

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“LEGAL ANYWHERE will provide you with a ready-to-use network kit or will custom-build your network at a much higher cost. Unless you have special needs, you probably don't need a custom-built network.

Here's what you get with the standard Collaborator service:

- ◇ Document sharing.
- ◇ Client or case-specific bulletin boards for posting and sharing short thoughts, and reminders.
  
- ◇ Conference rooms that you can use for holding online discussions.
- ◇ An electronic calendar.
- ◇ A list of contacts.
- ◇ A database for "documents of interest."
- ◇ A search function.

You can exchange legal documents and billing information, conduct legal research, and schedule events. It reduces the need for overnight delivery, faxes, and long-distance and conference calls.

For example, if you're working on a case, Collaborator provides a bulletin board where you can post messages and comments about the case, or you can go to the conference room and "chat" about the case. All relevant discussion is kept in an organized place, and archived so you can check back to see what people have said about the case. The search function helps you locate a comment or reference you might have lost track of.

As a result you can eliminate expensive conference calls and disorganized floods of e-mail, which you can never find later when you really need them.

Of course, you can also share documents. You simply download a stored document in order to view it. Downloading files is easy; you simply click on the title you want and save it to your computer.”

Ozolin provided cost information as well. He indicated that LEGAL ANYWHERE charges a one-time licensing fee of \$399 per user and only counts users within the contracting firm - the firm's clients and outside lawyers who will be given access are free. If LEGAL

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ANYWHERE hosts a client's Extranet (as opposed to putting it on one's own firm's internal webserver--which may be beyond the technical capabilities of many smaller firms) there is a \$10 per month posting fee for each user, which, once again, only counts in-firm users. There is also a yearly maintenance fee of 20 percent of the initial licensing fee, which pays for upgrades to the software and new features. According to Ozolin, this "comes out to about \$600 for a sole practitioner the first year and \$200 per year after that."

Yet another Extranet option--consider it a "lite" Extranet for lawyers is the new service, offered for free, by the popular legal research "portal" website called FindLaw (<http://www.findlaw.com>). It's new FindLaw Office service effectively works as if they were giving you and your clients a private "hard drive" that happened to be located on the Internet. This "private hard drive", access to which is gained by assigned User IDs and passwords, allows you to organize cases and documents into folders--and you decide who can access those folders and who cannot. The FindLaw Office system allows you to give you and assign different access privileges to different users, much as previously described in the T-Lex examples, *infra*. For example, according to FindLaw Director of Strategic Alliances, lawyer Peter Krakaur, "you may grant access to certain folders to clients but with no ability to modify documents, while co-counsel in another firm may have unrestricted access to the case files and have the ability to comment on and modify pleadings, etc. Your partners meanwhile, may have access to all case files." FindLaw indicates that the case files stored in the FindLaw Office system are secure because every document is encrypted and you have complete control over who has access to which folders. The drawback of FindLaw Office is that there is little customization permitted since you are paying . . .well . . . nothing.

Plaintiff's tort lawyers, under deadline and "issues" pressure, have leveraged Extranet technology as well. The American Trial Lawyers Association (ATLA) has established and promoted to its member, the Web-based "ATLA-Net" system. This permits registered ATLA members (a User ID and password are required) to search repositories of briefs and depositions, as well as take part in on-line discussions on various tort-law related topics. Expect more and more legal organizations to communicate this way.

Another example of a legal-oriented Extranet in action is the system used by the planning board for the ABA's TECHSHOW legal technology conference (<http://www.techshow.com>). This event, as the world's largest conference and exposition on legal technology, requires a significant amount of coordination and planning. To track the 100+ educational sessions and 100+ speakers annually involved, the group uses a Lotus Domino web server provided courtesy of event sponsor, Sussex Systems (<http://www.sussex.com>). This allows Web-browser-based private

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access to all the information the members of the planning board work with to “build” each year’s conference.

Sometimes what our clients think and feel are more important than our own motivations as lawyers. Lee Glickenhau astutely observes that “an extranet offers the same things that a private network [inside a law firm] offers -- efficiency, improved quality of work, and enhancement of communication among people working together (even if they are doing it under separate roofs). In fact, a fair claim can be made that a legal extranet isn’t simply desirable, it’s essential”.

Technology has put an end to the days when the lone ranger used familiar methods to win a case or make a deal. Things move too quickly for anyone to work alone. Survival depends on a constant search for better ways, and technology pushes us along that path. Information that previously took days or weeks to get by mail is now available electronically in minutes. Companies facing global competition cannot afford to re-invent the legal wheel every time a new matter is filed in a different venue.

Thomas L. Sager, associate general counsel, E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., “7 *Paradigm Shifts That Will Transform The Legal Industry*,” Corporate Legal Times, March, 1997. What the client wants, the client will get and what clients want more and more today are law firms with the organizational savvy and moxy to pro-actively pursue Extranet technology in the handling of their cases.

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Compared to an Extranet where the focus is to share information with a group of lawyers, firms and clients outside your office, an Intranet is essentially the opposite. An Intranet can be considered the Internet, but a private piece of it contained entirely within the physical confines of a law firm’s internal network systems--outsiders normally do not have access to a law firm’s Intranet.

Writing in the Technology Update of the October 1997 issue of the ABA’s *Law Practice Management* magazine, Burgess Allison, in his usual direct fashion says “An intranet is orders of magnitude less expensive than custom client/server systems.” Glickenhau points out that this “is

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one of the reasons that many companies are implementing web browser-based intranets to supplement -- or supplant -- their traditional internal PC networks.” He further notes that “a study by International Data Corp found that the typical Intranet has a return on investment of over 1000%. IDC writes: “The greatest area of savings is increased productivity. For every company profiled so far, having immediate access to information through an Intranet made employees more productive” (Ian Campbell, *“The Intranet: Slashing the Cost of Business”*).

According to the popular “technical definitions” Website Whatis.com (<http://www.whatis.com>), an Intranet is:

“A network of networks that is contained within an enterprise. It may consist of many interlinked local area networks and also use leased lines in the wide area network. Typically, an intranet includes connections through one or more gateway computers to the outside Internet. The main purpose of an intranet is to share company information and computing resources among employees. An intranet can also be used to facilitate working in groups and for teleconferences.

An intranet uses TCP/IP, HTTP, and other Internet protocols and in general looks like a private version of the Internet. With tunneling, companies can send private messages through the public network, using the public network with special encryption/decryption and other security safeguards to connect one part of their intranet to another.

Typically, larger enterprises allow users within their intranet to access the public Internet through firewall servers that have the ability to screen messages in both directions so that company security is maintained. When part of an intranet is made accessible to customers, partners, suppliers, or others outside the company, that part is called an extranet.”

Okay, translated to plain English, an Intranet uses a Web browser as an interface to access internal law firm information. Guess what? The Internet is already considered passé by those who consider themselves technologically in the know. Egads! This shows how fast everything related to the Internet moves--it is transforming how we think of PC networks with the next phase of evolution being Intranets.

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Let's backtrack for a moment. The Internet uses a particular set of standards for how to transfer documents, display them, send e-mail, connect workstations, etc. Putting together these standards provides a basis for a kind of network. Most of us know this network as the Internet--sort of a network of networks, if you will. If you run these "standards" on an internal network--inside your law firm or legal department, you have an Intranet. Why would you do this?

Intranets run with just about any kind of computer as a workstation--You are no longer locked to a single manufacturer. Macintoshes and Windows PC suddenly speak a common language. Since all your information can be accessed with common web browser software like Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer, they are very, very simple for people to understand and use.

While the current traditional software systems we use--such as word processors, case managers, billing systems, calendars, etc.--are evolving to fit into this Web-browser-centric kind of world, there are lots and lots of things a law firm can do with an Intranet right now (and by the way, this is not a mutually exclusive concept--you can run an Intranet within the physical structure of a more traditional fileserver-based network).

**So let's work with a simpler real-world definition.** An Intranet is an internal network run on Internet "open" standards.

What are the advantages of an Intranet?

- ✓ It is cheap
- ✓ It is simple and permits very rapid development
- ✓ It offers users a common, simple, interface (*i.e.* a Web browser)
- ✓ It allows organization of material by subject instead of by the software application that created the material (this moves us from relatively unnatural software-centric thinking to more logical task-centricity where the work we are doing becomes more important than caring about which particular tool is need to work with our law firm's information)
- ✓ It allows easy incorporation of internal access to external information by connecting the Intranet to the Internet
- ✓ It allows easy incorporation of external access to internal information (so a law firm could allow its clients to access on a limited basis, information the client wants to see such as the latest document revision you have for them, the status of their case, the latest bulletin your firm has put out on an issue related to their case, news about your firm, etc.)

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The "cheap and simple" elements of an Intranet are really related to the "lowest common factor"--the approach of "open standards." The common user interface (typically a web browser) is important to lawyers. Lawyers tend to use a lot of programs sporadically. Learning how to use the different interfaces is a real challenge for many of us--seemingly every program works, looks, and acts differently. It can be maddening for a lawyer already so busy they can barely keep their heads above water servicing a large and demanding client base.

Information organization is also important to lawyers because of the variety of information sources they use. A paper client file may contain research, correspondence from others, bills, depositions, contacts, etc. In typical computer systems this information is stored first by program, then by client. There often is no comprehensive and contiguous "client file". Rather there are word processing files for the client, address book entries for the client, billing files for the client, etc. The Intranet makes it much easier to put this information together by subject, without those artificial delineations according to the program that created the piece of work product.

Internal access to external information reflects the easy ability to incorporate into a law firm's Intranet resources that are on the Internet. The same Web page on "wills" can have pointers to both internal firm guidelines for will generation, appearance and content, as well as examples of wills for specific client situations, and forms and external, Internet-located resources on wills. This is of growing importance. It also reduces costs as fewer wheels are reinvented.

The last point, external access to internal information is of growing importance. Law firms want to establish relationships with their clients, and sharing information is one way to cement the relationship. A few lawyers have already woken up to the advantages of giving the client direct read access to the client file, and direct access to memos on legal matters. More will do so.

So what might one put on an Intranet in a law office?. Well-known legal technologist Burgess Allison (author of the ABA Law Practice Management Section's best-selling "Lawyer's Guide to the Internet" and Law Practice Management magazine's "Technology Update" columnist) compiled a list, although the limit to what an Intranet can accomplish is primarily your own imagination:

- ✓ Client Matter Lists
- ✓ Conflicts Checking
- ✓ The Office Rolodex
- ✓ Ticklers and Calendars
- ✓ Outstanding Bills

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- ✓ Client Billing Histories
  - ✓ Client Payment Histories
  - ✓ Financials for those who should have access to them
  - ✓ Work in Progress Reports
  - ✓ Office-wide Announcements
  - ✓ Office Policies and Procedures (and Checklists)
  - ✓ Frequently Asked Questions about software programs the firm uses so lawyers and staff can “click” first to get answers to their questions
  - ✓ Internal Work Product Indexing and Retrieval
  - ✓ Employee web pages
  - ✓ Group or Practice Area Web Pages
  - ✓ Discussion Groups on practice area issues or firm governance topics
  - ✓ Links to Frequently-used External legal-related and other useful Internet websites

(Allison's full article on Intranets is in Law practice Management, July-August 1996 at <http://www.abanet.org/lpm/magazine/tu965.html> and is highly recommended reading).

A use not directly cited by Allison, but probably a common one is the building of a document management system.

One law firm in Iowa which uses Lotus's Notes software internally to maintain "to do" lists, memoranda, calendars, etc., makes the information about a matter available to its client on the Web (with security to bar access to things that the client should not be privy to). The client is able to see what was done on their case, what is to be done, and what it is costing them.

A year ago, Intranets were "not quite there yet" for the **average** law firm (certainly firms comfortable with being on the leading edge of technology should already be beyond experimenting with Intranets and actually have usable ones rolled out and in use) but interest in them and frequency of use have been progressing at startling speed. They offer high utility to law firms and ultimately, if we had to look into an admittedly murky crystal ball, will replace networks of PCs as we now know them. Lawyer and legal technologist, John Hokkanen, at Atlanta's Alston & Bird has created a law firm Intranet kit called "Pure Oxygen." In the best spirit of the Internet and collegial sharing of information, Hokkanen's makes this Intranet roll-out kit available to anyone interested, free on a CD-ROM. For information visit, <http://www.alston.com/cdorder/cdorder.htm>.

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Another great resource on the overall topic of legal Intranets and Extranets is the Law Practice Technology Center at <http://www.lptc.com>.

So the bottom line is that whether you start with a small Intranet to learn the Web-based collaborative ropes or your reality jolt is a key client requiring you use their new case-related Extranet, this technology is here and here to stay. As with all things technological, today's lawyer is always in a better position through pro-active knowledge building to be prepared for that first client request than being in the uncomfortable knee-jerk reactive position.

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### **Author Biographical Information**

**Ross Kodner** is a lawyer who some say "saw the light" when he founded Milwaukee, Wisconsin's MicroLaw, Inc. in the early years of the PC age, back in '85. He spends all his time working with his team of 13 professionals have helped over 450 law firms and legal departments across North America integrate technology into their practices. He is also the developer of the ground-breaking "Paper LESS Office™" concept and co-writes a regular column for the Law Office Computing magazine called "The Circuit Court". He is very active in his own State and County Bar's technology groups and is the Chair of the ABA Law Practice Management Section's Computer & Technology Division as well as serving as a member of the Executive Board for ABA TECHSHOW 2000 and the ABA Program Planner for Legaltech Dallas, Legaltech New York and Legaltech Chicago. His personal motto, which appears at the end of all his e-mail messages is "Friends don't let friends word process without Reveal Codes." He can be reached at [rkodner@microlaw.com](mailto:rkodner@microlaw.com) and via <http://www.microlaw.com>.