

AbacusLaw + Abacus Private Cloud: The Way to Achieve the Flexibility Law Firms Need Today

When it comes to technology, law firms have seen a rapid evolution over the past 25 years. While the legal industry, rightly or wrongly, had a reputation for being slow to embrace innovation, the reality is that attorneys who thought they'd never move beyond typewriters are now turning to the cloud to handle everyday tasks. [Keough & Moody, P.C.](#) is a perfect example.

Keough & Moody is a boutique civil litigation firm based in Chicago and Naperville, Illinois, that provides full-service representation to condominium, townhome and homeowners' associations, not-for-profit corporations, businesses and financial institutions, with a particular focus on community associations. Shannon Schwarzwaldner, the senior managing paralegal at Keough & Moody, has been with the firm throughout its technology journey – spanning that full spectrum from typewriters to cloud solutions.

The firm has been with AbacusNext for the long haul, and despite their best efforts, the competition has never managed to convince them to switch to other solutions. For Schwarzwaldner, the combination of running AbacusLaw and operating in Abacus Private Cloud has allowed the firm to not only provide the best possible level of service to its clients, but to continue to seamlessly do so in the face of all the uncertainties the past year has served up.

New Solutions for a Long-Standing Client

Keough & Moody was one of AbacusNext's first customers. The firm started using AbacusLaw in 1997 when it went in search of an all-in-one legal practice management tool with built-in-accounting and AbacusLaw fit the bill. The tool has the flexibility to work with any practice area, and it has helped Keough & Moody consistently deliver top-notch legal services to its community associations clients.

Like many other modern firms, Keough & Moody decided to make the move to the cloud in 2017 and did so by switching over to Abacus Private Cloud. As Schwarzwaldner explains, the firm needed more flexibility, among other things. Before the cloud, all their hardware and infrastructure were physically located at the firm. The prospect of maintaining that physical environment indefinitely just didn't work. Moreover, in addition to more flexibility, the firm wanted more security. Abacus Private Cloud offered what was needed on both fronts.

At a Glance

About Keough & Moody

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**Shannon Schwarzwaldner,
Senior Managing Paralegal**

Why AbacusNext Has Been the Right Answer

Schwarzwalder has been involved with Keough & Moody's decision to work with AbacusNext since the beginning. When she first arrived at the firm, there weren't even computers – everyone was still working on typewriters. The goal was to get the entire firm to move over to computers and start utilizing the kinds of technologies that would make everyone's jobs easier and allow them to provide better service to clients.

After the initial technology switch, Schwarzwalder worked with some of the firm's attorneys to begin evaluating practice management solutions. At this point, she can't even remember which other solutions they considered. She just knows the bottom line: "We selected AbacusLaw and have been happy over the years."

AbacusLaw functions as an all-inclusive solution for the firm – Schwarzwalder can do everything from keeping track of dates and deadlines to accessing contact information to billing and more, all in one place. It also offers the security today's law firms need, with some internal training features to boot, making it easy to get staff up and running on the system.

Standing Out from the Competition

A few characteristics and capabilities were must-haves for the firm in whatever solution it ultimately chose. The first was flexibility. "This continues to be one of the reasons we like AbacusLaw over other products," Schwarzwalder explains. Other companies have pitched the firm on products over the years, including companies that many others in the industry use, but those products just don't have the flexibility Keough & Moody needs to serve its clients.

The team at AbacusNext is another major reason the firm hasn't switched products. "The responsiveness that I get from our account manager has been instrumental in our staying with Abacus," Schwarzwalder explains. As compared to other tech experiences in the past, working with the direct account manager at AbacusNext "was like night and day" for her.

The icing on the cake? The ability to migrate data. For Schwarzwalder, migration of data has historically been a giant pain point. The fact that the firm could migrate its data to AbacusLaw and then not have to deal with it again was a big factor in everyone's satisfaction. "We're glad we didn't go to another company," she says.



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A Seamless Solution for Remote Work

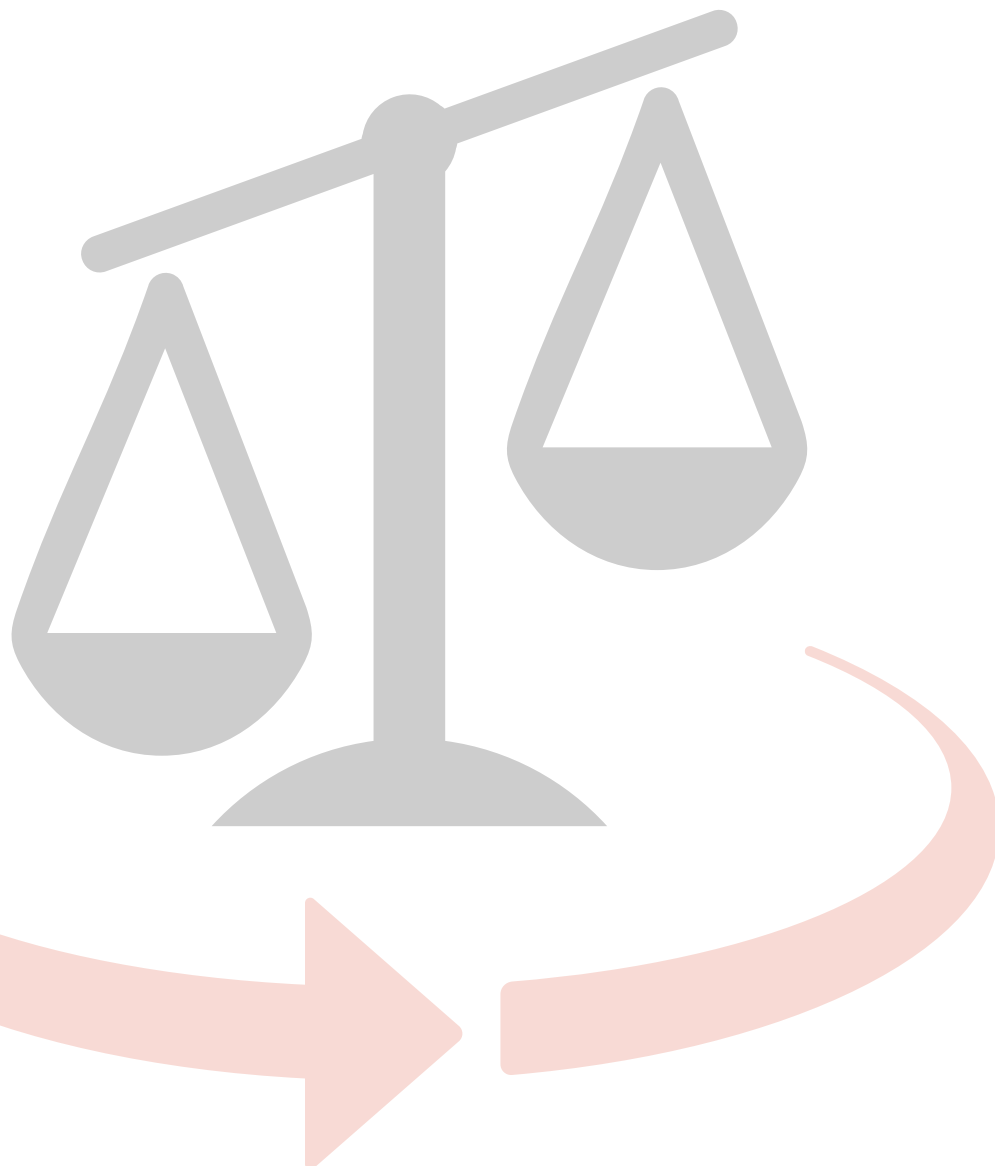
Just like everyone else, Keough & Moody was forced to adopt remote work overnight when the pandemic hit. Using AbacusLaw in Abacus Private Cloud, however, meant that the shift went off without a hitch.

"When COVID-19 hit, we sent everybody home, and there was no disruption in service at all. It was all in place – our staff was used to it and knew how to use it. We had remote working capabilities and were 100% ready to go the next day," Schwarzwalder explains. "Working from home was totally seamless. We saw

other firms struggling – but because we had AbacusNext, we were able to work remotely easily.”

Since deploying AbacusLaw in Abacus Private Cloud, the remote capabilities have been one of the greatest features Keough & Moody has taken advantage of. The benefits don’t end there, though. The tools also give the firm uniformity of purpose. “Everyone is using the same product and language, for everything,” Schwarzwaldner explains. “This allows us to work together as a team, since everything is all in one place.” Because the firm was already using these products before the pandemic hit, all their files were right where they always were when everyone started working from home. Thanks to AbacusLaw in Abacus Private Cloud, outside of being physically in the same office, Keough & Moody’s work was exactly the same.

So, is Schwarzwaldner happy she helped make the decision to start working with AbacusNext all the way back in 1997? “We generally love working with Abacus,” she says. “It’s been great. It does all the things we need it to do, and when we find something else we need, we have been able to come up with a way to do that.”



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