



Michael Morse, P.C.

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Industry

Legal

Challenges

- Leverage technology to improve process of organizing and presenting case materials

Solution

- Legal collaboration
- Dynamic case presentations

The law firm of Michael Morse settles cases faster and maximizes dollars using powerful capabilities in Adobe Acrobat software to create dynamic PDF files that organize and present case materials that leave little room for dispute.

Results

- Increased case load
- Increased settlement amounts
- Accelerated settlement life cycle
- Streamlined communication and collaboration
- Reduced supplies cost and power usage
- Integrated with document management system

Systems at a glance

- Adobe Acrobat Standard

Michael Morse, P.C.

Michigan's largest accident injury legal firm uses Adobe® Acrobat® software to streamline operations, protect the rights of clients, and maximize settlements

Electronic case documents improve client outcomes

When Michael Morse began his firm's transition to a paperless legal practice, he not only improved his firm's internal operations, he improved the lives of his clients. For the past several years, Morse and his staff have continuously perfected how they are using Adobe Acrobat software to reach the ultimate goal all accident injury lawyers seek—maximum settlements on behalf of their clients.

Respected by his peers as a no-nonsense specialist who knows how to leverage technology, Morse prepares settlement packages that clearly demonstrate the core of each client's circumstance. "Most lawyers just 'say it' and don't 'show it' like I do, and that gives me a competitive advantage," says Morse. "By using Adobe Acrobat software, our team can assemble dynamic PDF documents that are key to winning cases."

"People can't believe the size of the dollars I'm getting on my cases. And that is because my case documents in PDF are so effective," says Morse, who strictly adheres to the adage that a picture is worth a thousand words and is working hard to convince the legal community to adopt more modern philosophies about the use of technology solutions like Acrobat.

According to Morse, it is still extremely rare to see pictures in legal documents, but it certainly makes sense. When Adobe Acrobat software is used to assemble a wide variety of case documents in dynamic PDF packets, such as a client's x-rays or a photo of a patient receiving medical treatment, it brings a level of clarity to a real-life situation that words alone cannot. He adds that mediators, arbitrators, facilitators, and other attorneys who receive the case documents in PDF can easily access, navigate, and digest the material regardless of the original file format, thanks to the ubiquity of the free Adobe Reader® software.

Building solid cases

Previously, cases being prepared for mediation or arbitration were built on paper. A typical case binder could be anywhere from 150 to 1,500 pages long, and was printed and mailed to at least five recipients. Multiply that by the ten arbitrations or mediations a week that Morse attorneys handle, and the numbers could total about 30,000 pages a month.

Not only is the process time consuming for firms, it is expensive. The high cost of paper, toner, envelopes, dividers, binders, postage, and power consumption for printers can be prohibitive. The Morse firm wanted to find a more cost-efficient way to prepare and distribute case materials that better aligned with more profitable, sustainable business practices.

"After seeing an Adobe presentation about Acrobat software, I sat down with my IT staff and we began what was to become a total commitment to electronic organization and presentation of our case materials," says Morse. Since then, Morse's organization works continuously to improve the way the firm generates, distributes, and presents materials.

The content in every case file created using Adobe Acrobat software is organized to maximize impact of the argument. It starts with a case summary, which is electronically signed in Adobe Acrobat by the case lawyer. Down the left-hand column is a list of the contents, which allows one-click navigation to any page in the PDF. As readers drill down into the content, they find critical points highlighted as well as embedded hyperlinks to exhibits, including police reports and x-rays. In addition, readers can add their own highlights for easy reference back to important pages.

"Shifting to electronically organizing, presenting, and distributing materials using the rich functionality of Adobe Acrobat will ultimately benefit the legal profession as a whole. Leveraging dynamic PDF enables improved communication among participants in a case, and results in greater awards."

Michael J. Morse
Attorney and owner, Michael Morse, P.C.

"Acrobat enables us to create a more engaging, impactful experience for our case documents, as rich media can be embedded and all necessary content can be included," says Morse. "Our case binders created using Adobe Acrobat represent all the aspects of a case. Essentially, the binders are educational tools for adjusters, facilitators, arbitrators, and defense attorneys to learn about the medicine behind our client's situation. When you're looking at an actual photo of a patient getting an injection, the reality of what this accident victim lives with every day is crystal clear." Morse also increased the interactivity of the case binders by embedding video clips into the dynamic PDF files, which adds further impact to his cases.

Arguing for greater adoption

Admittedly, Morse is ahead of the technology curve when it comes to preparing cases electronically for private settlement conferences. But his proven success speaks for itself. Professing that greater adoption of Adobe Acrobat software will improve the entire legal process, Morse speaks at many professional meetings and technical conferences evangelizing the benefits of Adobe Acrobat not only for private settlement conferences, but in the hope that using interactive PDF will become standard practice in the state's court systems.

Adobe Acrobat software is deployed on every computer at the Morse firm, and the use of Acrobat Dynamic PDF has proven valuable in all aspects of the firm's operations. Case materials are being prepared and distributed faster, speeding up the settlement process from inception to completion. Adobe Acrobat integrates seamlessly with the firm's document management system, making it easy to archive and review PDF binders that contain everything related to a case in one convenient place.

The firm's caseload is growing because new clients recognize that Morse's settlement sizes are greater than the competition's. Internally, legal and IT staff have the opportunity to collaborate and communicate faster and more accurately using the comment and review functions in Acrobat software—streamlining everyday workflows and further accelerating the life cycle of case preparation.

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