

What is Law Firm Digital Transformation in Today's Digital World?



law-firm-digital-transformation

It sounds like an unhelpful and useless cliché.

The term “*digital transformation*” has become a broad, widespread and seemingly useless term. It’s a mandate law firms are told they need to follow. A rallying cry pundits used to warn law firms that they’re behind the times.

What is it *really*?

It seems most pundits and firms aren’t clear on the meaning of the term.

What is law firm digital transformation?

There are so many different and conflicting definitions.

- It’s all about going paperless? **No**

- The changes associated with the application of technology? **No, whatever that means**
- The third stage of embracing digital technologies? **Still no**

Okay then, what is it?

Here's a helpful way to define law firm digital transformation:

"Digital transformation closes the gap between what digital customers already expect and what analog businesses actually deliver."

This is certainly more helpful than the other definitions I shared earlier. Why should we place our trust and confidence in *this* definition overall the other unhelpful definitions we saw just now?

It comes from [Greg Verdino](#).

Greg Verdino is viewed as a leading thinker on digital transformation. He's the author of [microMARKETING: Get Big Results by Thinking and Acting Small](#). Here's why his definition is so helpful.

It's actionable.

It creates questions, sets boundaries and requires change. It's relatively easy for law firms to look at this definition then figure out what needs to be done.

Here's why digital transformation matters

Most law firms are fighting change.

According to a [recent survey](#) by PwC, found **80 percent of law firms believe** digital transformation is *vital for future success*. This certainly seems reasonable, doesn't it?

Here's the problem.

A startling **77 percent of firms** haven't bothered to begin making the transition.

The change has already started.

We're in an "[Innovate or Die](#)" cycle. There is a media emphasis that's placed on big businesses. The problem here is that businesses large and small are being left behind. Law firm clients place a special emphasis on speed, flexibility, responsiveness and above all value.

It's happened before.

Alta Vista, Blockbuster, Borders, Kodak, Polaroid, Toys "R" Us and Woolworths. These are recent, well-known and noteworthy examples. Each of these companies saw the writing on the wall. Kodak [invented the digital camera](#) in 1975 but their groundbreaking invention never saw the light of day. They filed for bankruptcy in 2012.

Firms today are facing the same problem.

Client expectations have shifted dramatically changing the way clients and firms do business. A growing number of clients expect an "*always-on*" availability from their firm and the attorneys handling their matters. Today clients expect attorneys to be available via phone, text, email, video conferencing, live chat and even [Whatsapp](#).

Are firms prepared?

Several large firms are. [CMS](#), an international law firm with 73 offices in 4,500 employees, have gone all in on digital transformation. They've restructured their firm in a dramatic way to adapt to the current climate.

See for yourself.

Can you see the implications?

Thanks to digital transformation, they're growing at 10 percent year-over-year. Their profits have skyrocketed and they've saved \$100 million. As a result, they've grown their business, in their core practice areas, at a dramatic rate.

This is what law firm digital transformation is all about

Adaptation.

The speed of business continues to accelerate. Client demands continue to grow, change and adapt to the demands placed on them. It isn't just the traditional model that's changing, it's the rate of change. Change cycles are happening faster, with disruption coming in three to five year waves.

Are you ready?

Most firms aren't. While "*digital transformation*" seems like a broad, unhelpful and useless cliché, it's actually an indispensable term. In my next post, I'll provide you with actionable tips you can use to get ahead of the curve.

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