

CRAWFORD, WISHNEW & LANG SIMPLIFIES LITIGATION WITH SMARTER DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

iManage cloud-native platform is a perfect fit for the boutique law firm's needs, at a surprisingly affordable cost



Industry:

- Legal

Headquarters:

- Dallas, US

iManage footprint:

- iManage Work 10 in the Cloud
- iManage Share

About Mkenga Na Namwaka:

Mkenga Na Namwaka has been providing IT services to the legal sector since 2014, and developed a subsidiary called Uboraworks to focus exclusively on this industry. It specializes in solutions that help lawyers to thrive and be more productive.

When Crawford, Wishnew & Lang (CWL) was founded in 2018, they wanted to hit the ground running with a great document management system. The firm tried other document management solutions, but none seemed to fit the fast-paced practice and it reverted back to traditional methods of document management. Five years later, the firm set out a plan to overhaul much of its case management technology to accommodate its growth, including testing the market again to see if a document management system would fit its needs. With support from Mkenga Na Namwaka, an IT service provider that specializes in legal sector solutions, the firm chose to implement iManage Work 10 on the iManage Cloud platform.

A high-performance document management system, iManage Work provides a feature-rich user experience that enables Crawford, Wishnew & Lang lawyers and staff to work faster and smarter. This frees attorneys to spend more time with clients and sharpen the firm's competitive edge.



I thought iManage would be out of reach for small firms, but it wasn't much more than we were already paying and offered exponentially more functionality.

T.J. Jones, Partner, Crawford, Wishnew & Lang

Business outcomes:

- Smarter capabilities boost efficiency
- Clean user interface reduces complexity
- Easy collaboration improves client experience
- Scalability supports growth

The challenge

Managing a high volume of data without slowing lawyers down

CWL was established by a small team of lawyers who split away from a larger firm. Some of the practice groups at that firm had used a practice management tool (ProLaw) for their documents, but the software wasn't universally adopted, so many of the lawyers stored their documents on a shared server. The attorneys at CWL wanted to centralize their client materials and work products on a single document management system.

T.J. Jones, a partner at the firm, recalls, "When we were setting up our new office, I took ownership of data management. I've used or researched almost every document management system, eDiscovery platform, and backend litigation software out there, because we wanted to build a system that would last as we grew."

CWL initially used another cloud-based document management system, but the implementation did not meet the firm's expectations and ultimately the plan to use a true document management system was scrapped. "The functionality of the platform would probably have worked for us, but the implementation was a disaster," Jones explains. "Our partner wanted us to send off hard drives of data to migrate, but we couldn't afford a week of downtime. We did not feel like the implementation partner understood our business or what we wanted from a document management system."

With the business taking off, CWL set up an internal architecture for a hybrid of on-site and cloud-based data storage using multiple other software solutions. However, when the volume of data and number of lawyers in the firm grew, it needed a more scalable solution with smarter capabilities to help lawyers work faster.

"We grew to the point that the combination of systems we had been using to accomplish the core functions of document management started to become incompatible, due to the size of our data, as well as the updates to the systems we were using, which made them no longer compatible with others," says Jones. "It made me rethink how we were storing data and I decided we needed a better approach to data storage that would scale with our growing firm."

The solution

Comprehensive document management in the cloud

When Jones researched document management systems, he heard wonderful things about iManage. But, as a smaller firm, he assumed it would be too expensive. "I thought iManage was out of reach for small firms, but the pricing was much more flexible than I'd assumed. It wasn't much more than we were already paying and offered exponentially more functionality," he explains.

By teaming up with iManage partner Mkenga Na Namwaka, the implementation was "night and day different" than the firm's previous experience. Elsante Mnzava, Founder and Owner at Mkenga Na Namwaka, assessed the team's requirements up front and designed the implementation to mirror the firm's existing processes.



Lawyers sell time. iManage makes us more competitive by freeing up more time to spend with clients.

T.J. Jones
Partner, Crawford,
Wishnew & Lang

Following a successful data migration, he offered onsite training to CWL's team and installed plug-ins to connect iManage with Microsoft Office.

Eleven lawyers and six non-legal staff work in iManage Work 10 in the Cloud. Its central workspace supports daily tasks such as searching and saving files and enables users to jump between emails, Word documents, and spreadsheets without manually switching apps.

"Our lawyers love how simple it is to collaborate in iManage. They can edit documents concurrently without any version control issues, which makes life so much easier," says Jones.

Non-legal staff use iManage Cloud to create templates, update calendars, and save and finalize documents by attaching them to relevant matters as a PDF. "Staff love having at-a-glance visibility using the iManage Work panel in Outlook and being able to save and find things in just a few clicks. They actually spend more time in iManage than our lawyers do," remarks Jones.

CWL implemented iManage Share to promote secure online collaboration with colleagues and clients. The firm also plans to roll out iManage Drive so people can sync workspaces from iManage Work to their local drive and make those files available on their computer anytime and anywhere, even when they are offline.





Business outcomes

Empowering lawyers to spend more time with their clients

iManage empowers CWL to organize terabytes of data and make it searchable and actionable. The integration with Microsoft Office is seamless, with no lagging or performance issues. Crucially, the environment provided by the iManage Cloud platform saves the firm time while providing a better user experience.

“We work on challenging cases. Every matter is unique; nothing we do is run-of-the-mill,” shares Jones. “Previously, we might have had 30 different versions of a complex motion, but now there’s just one. Knowing that we can find the right information quickly in iManage is invaluable.”

The firm appreciates having a document management platform that perfectly fits its needs, at a surprisingly affordable cost. Staff can refine searches, establish their own filing conventions, and plug in more functionality as their needs change — like their plans to add iManage Drive to maintain workflows when users go offline, and also to integrate DocuSign to speed up signing documents.

“iManage is easy to use and has a clean user interface. Coupled with plug-ins, our team didn’t need to get used to a radically unique way of working. They have all the features they’re familiar with and more — and that was great for user adoption,” says Jones.

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About iManage™

iManage is dedicated to Making Knowledge Work™. Our cloud-native platform is at the center of the knowledge economy, enabling every organization to work more productively, collaboratively, and securely. Built on more than 20 years of industry experience, iManage helps leading organizations manage documents and emails more efficiently, protect vital information assets, and leverage knowledge to drive better business outcomes. As your strategic business partner, we employ our award-winning AI-enabled technology, an extensive partner ecosystem, and a customer-centric approach to provide support and guidance you can trust to make knowledge work for you. iManage is relied on by more than one million professionals at 4,000 organizations around the world. Visit www.imanage.com to learn more.