

LEGAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

One-day conference

The only event for practice managers
in small to medium law firms

Thursday 17 May 2012, London

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Who will benefit

Practice managers and practice directors
from small to medium law firms

This event is also relevant for people who
are doing a practice manager or similar role
under another name such as CEO, COO,
operations director, business manager,
business support director, finance director,
finance manager and accounts manager

LSN research has highlighted how practice managers in small to medium law firms can often feel isolated, not only in their own firms but also from their peers. As non-lawyers with a unique multi-disciplinary role, with no specific practice manager events in the marketplace to attend, until now, there is often very little support or opportunity to benchmark with peers.

LSN's one-day **Legal Practice Management** conference is the only event to bring together practice managers and practice directors from small to medium law firms to discuss common challenges, share insight and ideas, and build vital relationships with peers.

With the legal landscape changing so dramatically in light of legal services reform, alternative business structures, emerging technology and increasing regulation, it is essential that you are kept abreast of new developments, particularly as law firms seek to rapidly professionalise, bringing a more strategic practice manager role to the fore.

Featuring streamed breakout sessions to cater specifically for the differences in role, and an expert panel of legal practice managers to enable you to hear directly from your peers, this unique event will examine the challenges you and your firms face as the market changes shape and the role of the practice manager in a changing legal world.

Timetable

09.00 Registration and coffee

09.30 **Chair's opening remarks**
Joy Vollans, Chief Executive Officer, EMW

09.40 **Responding to increasing competition in the small to medium legal market**

- Who are the new entrants and brands and how are they impacting the market?
- How can firms respond to the new competition? Do they need to change structurally and operationally to compete?
- The pressure to merge
- What is your role as a practice manager in assessing new opportunities and helping the partnership?

Neil Rose, Editor, Legal Futures

Interactive Roundtable Discussion

10.30 **Keeping up with the pace of technology and investing in it to compete**

- Keeping abreast of emerging new technology
- Identifying technology that will truly add value and filtering out the ones you don't need
- Investing appropriately in IT to drive efficiency, maintain compliance and secure competitive advantage
- Getting the most out of the technology you have and securing the right returns
- Roundtable discussions:
 - Which systems or tools are the most effective and demonstrate the best ROI?

Alan Cousins, Practice Director, Paris Smith

11.30 Coffee

Delegates may choose to attend one of the following two sessions

12.00 STREAM 1

Facilitated Workshop

The SRA Handbook 6 months on; ensuring correct interpretation and application for small to medium-sized firms

Address any doubts head on by attending this interactive session!

- The code of conduct and outcomes focused regulation
- Risk management and compliance plans overview - "Know your business"
- Brainstorming business hazard scenarios
- Key measurement data, especially for SRA reporting

Kim Hobbs, Practice Manager, Curwens and Risk & Compliance Advisor, Compliance Check

12.00 STREAM 2

Panel Discussion

Influencing partners, managing relations and driving cultural change

- Developing mutual trust and respect to enable you to get on and do your job
- Influencing and inspiring partners to take action on your ideas and recommendations
- Managing relations and dealing with difficult people
- Encouraging partners to think more like managers; running firms like businesses and less like partnerships
- Changing attitudes and behaviour

*Cleo Howell, Practice Director and Partner (non-lawyer), Last Cawthra Feather Paul Mannering, Practice Manager, Gullands
Gill Garrett, Director of Finance and Business Support, Partner (non-lawyer), SA Law*

13.00 Networking lunch

Timetable

Delegates may choose to attend one of the following two sessions

14.00 STREAM 1

Facilitated Workshop

The reality of COFA in practice and the impact of COFA (and COLP) on the practice manager role

- What does the role of COFA actually entail?
- How will COFA (and COLP) impact the practice manager role and workload?
- Integrating the roles into your firm's culture, ensuring good working relations between the roles and other members of staff, and gaining essential support
- Practical guidance and worked examples on reporting as your firm's COFA; managing the SRA relationship
- Ensuring firmwide compliance

Richard Hill, Practice Director, Stepien Lake and Vice-Chair, ILFM

14.00 STREAM 2

Facilitated Workshop

Successful HR best practice in small to medium law firms

- Recruiting the right staff, interview techniques and preparing for the next generation
- Engaging and motivating staff, particularly during times of financial constraint
- Retaining staff and keeping your workforce happy
- Establishing career paths and managing career expectations in a modern law firm
- Managing redundancy; what are the alternatives

Caroline Calverley, Practice Manager, Chafes Solicitors

15.00 Coffee

15.30 A practical guide to law firm mergers and acquisitions

- How would a merger or acquisition impact your firm and what should you expect?
- Managing the practicalities, IT, PII, staffing, policies and other integration issues, timescales and risk
- Retaining and defining your role post merger
- How you can help your firm to identify potential targets and the ones to avoid

Richard Wyatt, Managing Director, Cambridge Blue Square Management and ex-Finance Director at Tollers

Panel Discussion

16.10 The role of the practice manager in a changing legal world

- How has the role of the practice manager changed?
- Examining the impact on the practice manager role of law firm management rapidly professionalising and the implications and opportunities this presents
- Managing the evolution of your role; how can you prepare for it, how can you demonstrate value?
- What's the future career path for a practice manager? Where do you go from here?

***Caroline Davison, Operations Director, Berwins Solicitors
Martyn Bateman, Practice Manager, Breeze & Wyles Solicitors
Brian Rogers, Operations Partner (non-lawyer), Lewis Hymanson Small***

16.50 **Chair's closing remarks**

17.00 Networking drinks reception

Don't miss this unique opportunity to network and share experiences with your peers

Expert speaker panel:



Alan Cousins, Practice Director, Paris Smith

As Practice Director for Southampton-based firm, Paris Smith, Alan is responsible for the main administration functions of this 30 partner firm – HR, IT, Accounts, Compliance and General Office. Alan also works with the partners on formulating the firm's strategy and business plans. He recently undertook a comprehensive review of the firm's IT, resulting in a decision to outsource IT support to a third party, and has extensive experience of implementing new systems and tools.



Brian Rogers, Operations Partner (non-lawyer), Lewis Hymanson Small

Brian has more than 20 years' experience as a senior management executive having worked as practice manager at Linder Myers Solicitors and Whittles Solicitors, and as operations director at Rowe Cohen Solicitors; he was instrumental in setting up his current Manchester-based firm, Lewis Hymanson Small. In his current role, Brian is a non-lawyer operations partner responsible for the day to day management of an 8 partner firm.



Caroline Calverley, Practice Manager, Chafes Solicitors

As Practice Manager for Chafes Solicitors, Caroline's role encompasses strategic planning and the supervision of Accounts, Marketing, IT, HR and Facilities for an 8 partner, 4 office firm in the North West. Caroline has a wealth of experience having previously run her own management consultancy for small law firms. She has also worked as a practice manager for law firm, Smith Forts and architectural practice, Stephenson Architecture. HR qualified, Caroline is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and a Fellow of the Institute of Administrative Management.



Caroline Davison, Operations Director, Berwins Solicitors

Caroline joined Harrogate law firm Berwins as Practice Manager in June 2005 and became one of the first non lawyer directors in the country, and one of 7 directors at Berwins, on incorporation in 2009. As Operations Director, Caroline heads Berwins' Operations Support Unit responsible for keeping the rest of the organisation in check, and enabling Berwins' lawyers to provide the best possible service to its clients. Caroline has more than 20 years' experience in legal practice management having previously fulfilled the role of Practice Manager at Ford & Warren.



Cleo Howell, Practice Director and Partner (non-lawyer), Last Cawthra Feather

Practice Director, Cleo Howell joined West Yorkshire firm, Last Cawthra Feather, in 2001. Cleo is responsible for the finance, facilities & administration functions and assists with the development of strategy and the overall management of this 3 office, 14 partner firm. A qualified management accountant with an MBA, Cleo is also the firm's COFA and was appointed a non-lawyer partner in 2010.



Gill Garrett, Director of Finance and Business Support, Partner (non-lawyer), SA Law

As Director of Finance and Business Support at St Albans-based, SA Law, Gill is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of this 13 partner firm and overseeing the accounts, HR, procurement and IT functions. SA Law was launched as a commercial breakaway from Pictons in 2005 where Gill was practice manager for 22 years. In 2009, Gill became one of the first non-lawyers in the UK to achieve partner status.



Joy Vollans, Chief Executive Officer, EMW

Joy joined Eyton Morris Winfield as Practice Manager in 1999 and was promoted to Chief Executive Officer in 2005 when the firm converted to an LLP. Joy has a seat on both the strategic and operational boards and is responsible for the overall operational management of EMW – a 29 principal commercial firm with offices in Milton Keynes and London. A qualified management accountant with an MBA, Joy is a full equity principal of the firm.



Kim Hobbs, Practice Manager, Curwens and Risk & Compliance Advisor, Compliance Check

Practice Manager, Kim Hobbs joined Curwens – a 13 partner firm with 4 offices in North London and Hertfordshire – in May 2007, having previously held a similar role at Pickworths for 4½ years. Working closely with the partners, Kim's role covers areas such as compliance, marketing, management, strategy planning and training. Kim also co-manages Compliance Check, a Curwens sponsored risk and compliance advisory service, which he jointly established in 2011.



Martyn Bateman, Practice Manager, Breeze & Wyles Solicitors

Martyn is the Practice Manager for Breeze & Wyles – a 9 partner firm with 4 offices in Hertfordshire and North London. Martyn leads business planning for the firm and heads the Administration Department which deals with the firm's premises, people, IT systems and accounts; he is also the Firm's Compliance Officer for Finance and Administration and Money Laundering Reporting Officer. Martyn's early career was in the Court Service serving in Crown and County Courts throughout the Midlands before a short spell as a Business Management consultant.



Neil Rose, Editor, Legal Futures

Neil has been writing about the Legal Services Act since its genesis in the OFT report of 2001 and is a recognised market commentator in this area. Neil founded *Legal Futures* in April 2010 having worked on the *Law Society Gazette* for the last 12 years, latterly as Deputy Editor. In 2008, he set up his editorial consultancy, Written Media and is the editor of the award-winning *Legal Executive Journal*, as well as *Costs Lawyer* and *Criminal Lawyer* magazines. Neil is also a regular contributor to other publications, including *The Times*, and writes a regular column for the *Guardian's* online law section.



Paul Mannering, Practice Manager, Gullands

As practice manager for Gullands, Paul is a member of the management team for this 10 partner firm based in Maidstone, Kent. With a background in legal accounting having been a legal cashier at Watson Farley & Williams and Lowes Solicitors, Paul joined Gullands in 1998 and was appointed IT and administration manager prior to becoming practice manager in 2006.



Richard Hill, Practice Director, Stepien Lake and Vice-Chair, ILFM

Richard Hill is Practice Director and Compliance Officer for Finance Administration (COFA) for London-based Stepien Lake, responsible for finance, compliance, IT and marketing whilst also dealing with the overall management of this 6 partner firm. Richard is also Vice-Chair of the ILFM (Institute of Legal Finance & Management).



Richard Wyatt, Managing Director, Cambridge Blue Square Management and ex-Finance Director, Tollers

Prior to founding Cambridge Blue Square Management, where he helps law firm management to achieve their objectives, Richard was the Finance Director for Tollers – a 12 partner, £10m turnover regional law firm with offices around Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes.



Delegate fee

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Email **sami@legalsupportnetwork.co.uk**
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