

UCaaS Solutions for Law Firms: Embracing the Age of Micro-Niche



By **DOUG BONDERUD** - Contributor

Lawyers have a problem. According to Lawyerist, there's a disconnect between what lawyers are selling and what clients want to buy: Law firms advertise myriad legal services, but clients just want their problems solved.



By using UCaaS solutions to consolidate multiple communication channels under one technological umbrella, law firms can achieve the level of specialization clients demand.

As noted by Forbes, this is driving the rise of "micro-niches" — extremely narrow areas of specific legal experience. Here's a look at how law firms can leverage emerging technology, such as unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS) solutions, to embrace the micro-niche.

Micro-Niche, Macro Impact

Why do micro-niches matter? Each client has a problem that requires specific legal action. The Forbes piece noted, for example, that while a health care practice sounds good in theory, in which area is the expertise? Clients might be facing issues related to medical device

use, health care data collection, or genomics editing — each of which requires specialized knowledge and experience to properly litigate.

As noted by Special Counsel, firms are also developing micro-niches in areas such as drone technology, elder financial abuse, and marijuana law to ensure that they have the depth of services and expertise demanded by clients. Put simply, generalized knowledge doesn't translate to expert recognition. Clients want problems solved by someone who knows exactly what they're doing and has the knowledge to secure positive outcomes.

The bottom line for law firms is that specialization now plays a critical role in securing and retaining long-term clients. Firms must also demonstrate a level of effortless tech-savvy that matches that of their clients.

The Tech Expectation

Micro-niches also extend to technology. Another Forbes article emphasized the importance of "understanding technology's application to and impact on the delivery of legal services." Firms need lawyers with deep-dive knowledge about creating secure e-documents, ensuring that electronic media is properly stored and regularly audited, and the ramifications of cyber harassment and online information sharing.

But there's also a more generalized expectation here that overlays the need for micro-niches: All lawyers, no matter their area of expertise, must be able to confidently leverage current technologies. Think of it like another type of basic credentialing: Ten years ago, clients might have searched for law firms online to evaluate claims about win-loss ratio and industry reputation. Today, clients want lawyers who communicate readily by phone or email, can easily link secure documents for signing or processing, and are familiar with basic applications of technology in the courtroom. Clients now assume that lawyers know the law — they need to be convinced that firms understand technology.



Six Ways to Make UC Integration Pay Off

As CRM continues to evolve, technologies such as chatbots and Unified Communications will go from being nice to have to pure necessity.

Embracing UCaaS Solutions

So what's the use case for UCaaS solutions? Definition is helpful here: These tools effectively combine multiple communication channels under one technological umbrella. Benefits include:

- **Easy Connection.** Law firms don't communicate across a single channel. Lawyers hold in-person meetings with clients, then follow up with emails and text messages. Video chats may be required to reach experts halfway across the globe. Unified communication solutions enable firms to communicate how they want, when they want and without the need for bespoke setups at each individual contact point.
- **Simple Handling.** One of the biggest headaches for any organization is managing communication channels when needs suddenly change or connection issues emerge. The right UCaaS deployments ensure that video calls can be changed on the fly to audio connections if latency or traffic problems emerge.
- **Adaptable Options.** Lawyers are required to handle sensitive information divulged by clients in face-to-face meetings, and there's no faster way to damage client relations than with constant interruptions from mobile devices about emails, calls, and texts. UCaaS solutions allow lawyers to set up do-not-disturb and message forwarding options to ensure that they're getting the data they need without losing focus. For example, incoming emails can be converted to voice messages, enabling lawyers to access critical information even if local internet connections aren't reliable.
- **Improved Collaboration.** Great law firms thrive on collaboration. While micro-niches are distinct, each one benefits from interaction with nearby experts who can offer insight about process, expected outcomes or similar cases. UCaaS lets lawyers across the hall — or the country — easily collaborate by sending messages, documents, and multimedia files for review and modification.

The bottom line for law firms is that specialization now plays a critical role in securing and retaining long-term clients. Firms must also demonstrate a level of effortless tech-savvy that matches that of their clients. Lawyers tasked with carving out an area of expertise don't have time to fight with communications technology that doesn't facilitate ease of connection, channel handling, and collaboration. In the age of micro-niches, specificity is the necessary outcome — and UCaaS empowers the transition.

Explore our law firm solutions and learn more about how a move to UCaaS can support your legal practice.