Autumn 2021

the law

Working with The Law Society

Armstrong Watson's specialist publication for the legal profession

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A track record of providing solutions to the legal profession

In this edition...

Exclusively working in partnership with the Law Society for the provision of the following services to law firms.

Working with The Law Society

- Strategy Planning Workshops
- Business Plans
- Benchmarking
- Mergers & Acquisitions of Law Firms
- Law Firm Valuations
- Forecasts
- Raising Finance
- Lock-up Reviews
- Pro-active Tax Planning
- Tax Compliance
- Audits
- Accounts Rules Reporting
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- LLP conversions
- Incorporations
- ABS Applications

Welcome

Welcome to the Autumn 2021 edition of The LAW, the specialist publication for the legal profession from the legal sector team at Armstrong Watson.

Law firms are continuing to perform strongly, which is very encouraging to see. The business of law has very much returned and the vast majority are actively looking to set and achieve strategic objectives. This edition of The LAW contains a summary of a **recently published book that I have co-authored, all looking to the future of finance in law firms** – we are able to arrange a discount from the publishers, so please contact me if you would like to arrange that.

We continue look to the future with the results of surveys on returning to work in the office, and also an interview with Helen Daly on processes and automation. The latter is an area that could provide huge benefit to law firms. We work in this area with Helen by reviewing and assessing how each department operates; setting desired lean processes; identifying tasks that could be automated; and then passing the mantle to Helen to arrange the automation.

We are arranging a series of client only sessions on automation, so please do let me know if you would like to be involved.

There is also a tax feel to this edition, with helpful tips on electric company cars; the impact of increased rates of corporation tax announced in the recent budget and the accompanying 'super-deduction' for capital allowances on fixed asset investment; and tips on why you might want to continue to claim child benefit even if you would not receive it.

Linked with tax, you may have seen that there is a current HMRC consultation on changing the periods of assessment for partnerships and LLPs. More detail can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/basis-period-reform/basis-period-reform-consultation. This will affect firms with year ends other than 31 March, and may well impact on the timing of tax payments and also make changes in partners more complex.

Specialists are available from all of our 17 offices, to provide pro-active support and advice to lawyers in compliance and business improvement matters. This publication is designed to allow us to share our collective experience in acting for lawyers throughout the UK.

To find out more on any of the above, including how we can work with you to help you and your clients, please do get in touch with me.

Andy Poole

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Adjusting the numbers – the future of finance in law firms

I was recently honoured to be asked to write part of a new book by Globe Law and Business on the future of finance in law firms.

Details on the book can be found at:

www.globelawandbusiness.com/books/adjusting-the-numbers-the-future-of-finance-in-law-firms

This new book follows on from the principles of my first published book:

bookshop.lawsociety.org.uk/p/financial-stability-toolkit-paperback-cd/ **where I covered the basis of running a successful law firm.**

In the new book, I look to the future of law firms and extend on those principles. I argue that although the historic principles remain; the profession was slowly modernising and then Covid hit like a thunderbolt moving the requirements of managing a law firm on to another level completely – and that there is no turning back as we move into the future.

I conclude that there is one key word to take forward to describe future management of the finance of law firms – and that is *Flexible.*

There will be a need for flexible...

- Fee earning – timing/location/method of services/self-service/automation/processes
- Office environments
- Employment/self-employment status – the rise of self-employed consultants both within law firms and within virtual/platform firms
- Reward
- Pricing
- Ownership models
- Outsourcing – turning fixed costs to variable costs, including fee earning
- Off-shoring/North-shoring
- Management – and the use of professional managers/CEOs

For more details behind this, including coverage of:

- Historic foundations
- The financial impact of Covid on law firms
- Anticipated impacts on law firms as we emerge from Covid
- Lessons learned from the Covid experience
- Law firms of the future

Copies of the book can be purchased at www.globelawandbusiness.com/books/adjusting-the-numbers-the-future-of-finance-in-law-firms

Readers of this publication can obtain a 15% discount by entering the code Armstrongwatson15 on checkout.

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Law firms - returning to the office?

Armstrong Watson's Legal Sector breakfast briefings, like many things, have moved online during the pandemic. The latest speaker in the series has been Jed Hassid from Purple Performance Limited, who led interactive sessions at seven of our locations on the subject of 'Working from Home (WFH): The implications for the legal sector and its talent'. As part of Jed's sessions, audience polls were taken on various questions, of which the responses are summarised below.

1. How many weekdays would you choose to work remotely? (Delegates were asked to choose one answer ranging from 0 to 5)

What is clear from the results is that no one wants to return to the office full time (5 days per week). Only one delegate out of all the locations voted for this option.

However, what is also clear is everyone acknowledges the importance of an office, as no delegates voted to work from home full time either.

The most popular choices were to work from home two or three days per week which was the response of **70%** of the delegates across all locations which demonstrates that some hybrid working will be sought in future.

2. What concerned you most about WFH? (Delegates were offered seven answers to choose from)

Trust of employees does not appear to be a primary issue within many of the firms who attended the sessions. Only **7%** of delegates were concerned about their employees not focusing whilst working at home, with another **11%** concerned about productivity.

The two issues that firms are concerned about are the lack of team cohesion **(39%)** and the loss of the firm culture **(30%).** Offices provide a space where training can be delivered, problems solved together and teamwork encouraged. Offices also allow you to instill the firm culture through common goals and togetherness, which can inspire performance as well as loyalty to your firm.

The final three options were, worries about employees overworking (**9%** of delegates); remaining compliant and secure (**3%** of delegates); and the impact on careers (**1%** of delegates).

3. What impact has WFH had on your firm? (Delegates were asked to choose positive/negative/neutral)

56% of the delegates chose Positive; **9%** chose Negative; with **35%** feeling the impact had been neutral.

Essentially, these results demonstrate that **91%** of delegates felt that working from home has not impacted on their business in a negative way, which is remarkable.

The discussion that followed centered around the work/life balance that many employees (and partners) have enjoyed, particularly around the time saved in not commuting and just spending more time at home. The technological improvements that have been enforced upon the profession in terms of video conferencing and IT, the use of process, as well as finding different ways to resolve old problems are all positive outcomes of the pandemic which should aid efficiencies in the future.

The discussions around the negative impacts centered around the fact that although working from home had been a positive experience for senior people, this was not necessarily the case for more junior staff. It was felt that more junior staff potentially felt isolated, had poorer working environments at home, and their careers were not developing, not necessarily because of lack of formal training, but not benefitting from 'learning on the job' by working in an office and team environment.

In summary, law firms have coped incredibly well with the enforced move to WFH due to the pandemic, and very few feel they have suffered as a consequence. However, as restrictions on life start to ease, it is clear that in most cases, there will be some return to office working in order to allow culture, collaboration and careers to thrive. Equally as important though will be the need to balance this with remote working options in order to keep the benefits and efficiencies gained in the last year by both the individuals and the firms. Hybrid working and flexibility are now very much a part of modern law firm life.

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Electric cars

Introducing electric cars into a business or organisation is no longer just about social responsibility. There are a number of benefits to driving an electric car, including some serious financial incentives such as electric car benefit in kind. There are also other considerations you need to make too. The main points to consider are listed below.

Benefits in kind

When an employee is given use of a company car by their employer, this is classed as a benefit in kind, which is taxable on the employee. The benefit in kind is calculated based on two main factors; the list price of the vehicle and the CO2 emissions of the vehicle.

For the tax year commencing 6 April 2021, the benefit in kind rate for electric cars is 1% of the vehicle list price. For example, if an employee has use of a company car for the full tax year commencing 6 April 2021 that is an electric car and has a list price of £40,000, the benefit in kind arising will be as follows: -

£40,000 @ 1% = £400

The tax payable by the employee on this benefit in kind will be dependent on that employee's other income. For a higher rate (40%) tax payer, for example, the tax payable on the above benefit in kind would be £160 per annum.

When you compare this to other non-electric vehicles as an example, a petrol car with CO2 emissions of 90 g/km would have a benefit in kind of 23% multiplied by the list price. Using the above example, this would lead to a benefit in kind of £9,200. For a higher rate tax payer, the tax payable on that benefit in kind would be £3,680.

Class 1A National Insurance is also payable by the employer at a rate of 13.8% of the total benefits in kind arising in a tax year, and therefore the low benefit in kind arising on electric cars gives rise to a much reduced Class 1A National Insurance liability also.

Tax law does not treat electricity as fuel and as such, there is no benefit in kind implications of an employee charging the car at their place of work using the employer's electric. This is regardless of private mileage. In addition, there are no benefit in kind implications of an employer paying for a vehicle charging point to be installed at an employee's home or of providing a charge card to allow access to commercial charging point.

As the car belongs to the company rather than the individual, the company will also usually be responsible for the maintenance, insurance and upkeep of the car.

Since September 2018, employers can pay employees up to 4 pence per mile for business travel in an electric company car.

Employee's personal electric car

If an employee uses their own electric car for business purposes, approved mileage allowance payments apply in the same way as for petrol and diesel cars.

As with a company car, there are no benefit in kind charges if a personal electric car is charged at the place of work using the employer's electric. However, unlike with a company car, a benefit in kind charge would occur if the employer paid for a charging point to be fitted at the employee's home, or if a charge card is provided to access commercial charging points.

Electric cars and Members/Partners

Many of the tax advantages of a pure electric car are related to the generous rates regarding benefits in kind for employees, as outlined above, which are not therefore relevant to individual self-employed members in an LLP, partners in a partnership or sole traders.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Electric cars (with 0g/km emissions) are also exempt from Vehicle Excise Duty (road tax), with Hybrid versions also enjoying a much reduced Vehicle Excise Duty in comparison to diesel/alternative fuel cars.

Capital allowances

From a business tax point of view, a business is able to claim 100% First Year allowances on the purchase of electric cars (with 0g/km emissions), in comparison to the main rate of capital allowances on other standard vehicles, which are either 18% or 6% depending on CO2 emissions of the car. When considering an electric car costing £40,000 as per the above example, the tax saving by purchasing an electric car compared to a standard vehicle would be significant.

Although the enhanced capital allowances on the purchase of electric vehicles can provide an immediate tax saving, it is important to note that balancing charges are likely to occur upon the sale of the vehicle and is likely to increase the tax due at that point (particularly if cars are changed regularly within a business). The tax saved on purchase should therefore be viewed as a cash flow advantage rather than an absolute saving.

The enhanced capital allowances are available for all businesses and are therefore relevant for LLPs, partnerships and sole traders as well as limited companies, and would reduce the taxable profit in the year when the vehicle is purchased.

Method of purchase

Consideration is required as to how you purchase your vehicle, as the accounting treatment, tax treatment and VAT treatment are all different between leasing, hire purchase and outright purchase.

As an example, when leasing a car, your firm would not receive capital allowances for the cost of the vehicle but would instead receive tax relief for the rental payments and some VAT would be recoverable from those rental payments. Whereas the hire purchase of a car means that capital allowances are received, and tax relief is also received for interest paid, but no VAT would be recoverable.

This is a complicated area and the correct treatment is not always obvious from the agreements provided by dealerships and so advice should be sought prior to making a firm commitment.

Congestion charge exemptions

Electric cars are also exempt from the 'Congestion Charge Tax', and therefore if your company cars are travelling in areas where clean air zones exist, this will provide a further saving (the Congestion Charge is currently £15 per day between 7am to 10pm).

Summary

The government is keen to get companies thinking about the tax benefits of having electric cars in their business, both by offering generous tax incentives of having these vehicles in the business, and also some fairly large tax consequences for having alternative petrol/diesel cars in the business. The environmental impact of having these 'greener' cars in the business is clearly something that the government are keen to encourage.

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Forthcoming increase in corporation tax rates – what are my options?

The Spring Budget of 2021 announced that the rate of Corporation Tax (CT) will increase from 19% to 25% with effect from 1 April 2023 for large companies.

"Large" companies for these purposes are those with profits of over £250,000 (or lower if you have more than one company under common control). Companies whose profits are below £50,000 retain the current 19% rate. However, companies with profits between £50,000 and £250,000 return to the complexity of marginal relief (essentially paying CT at a rate of 26.50% on profits between the two rates).

A number of profit levels and the corporation tax charges are considered below:

Taxable Profits	CT Now	CT Post April 2023	Difference
£	£	£	
50,000	9,500	9,500	Nil
210,000	39,900	51,900	Increase of £12,000
500,000	95,000	125,000	Increase of £30,000

It wasn't all bad news for companies though, with a temporary extension to the period a company can carry tax losses back to generate a cash tax refund. This was previously restricted to 12 months but has now increased to three years with a maximum of £2m which can be carried back. This relaxation applies for accounting periods ending in the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.

The other announcement for companies was regarding capital expenditure and the "Super Deduction" which is discussed in detail by Olivia Rawlinson's separate article.

What does the increase in corporation tax mean for my law firm company?

The table to the left sets out the increase in tax liabilities for companies, so the obvious question is whether it is still 'worth' being a company from a taxation point of view, and is there anything you should do differently?

One option may be to consider paying salaries through PAYE to the director/shareholders rather than dividends. Currently many firms and their owners generate an overall lower tax bill by combining a small salary with a higher dividend. Going forward, with salaries being a deductible expense for CT, and the CT rates increasing, it may no longer be tax beneficial to take dividends in that way. Increasing salaries may also help with pension contributions, with the allowable limits increasing with a higher salary. That said, (some) dividends may still be preferred due to their flexibility and the cash flow delay as to when the income tax will be paid.

The other consideration is a potential disincorporation. This may not be possible, and even if it is, it may well be fraught with tax and operational difficulties. There may be income tax charges in extracting assets from the company, and other tax considerations would include capital gains tax, capital allowance charges, transfer of VAT registration and PAYE schemes, and stamp duty land tax if there are any properties within the company.

It should also be noted that there are still tax advantages to a limited company including the super deduction and R&D tax reliefs which are both only available for companies. A limited company structure is also more flexible in terms of options for the shareholders if you are looking to reinvest and grow your business. The limitation in liability is an obvious benefit, but this of course can also be obtained through an LLP structure which is taxed in much the same way as a traditional partnership.

If you would like to further understand the implications for your firm, please contact the legal sector team.

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Topical tax points

1. Should I claim child benefit even if I am a higher earner?

The High-Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC) is not new and was in fact introduced in January 2013. The HICBC is a tax charge that applies to anyone whose income exceeds £50,000 and who receives (or whose partner receives) child benefit. The amount of the tax charge each year is dependent on the adjusted net income of the individual. Once your income exceeds £60,000, the HICBC would apply in full which essentially means all child benefit relating to that tax year is repayable.

Adjusted net income is calculated as your taxable income less certain allowable deductions.

Your taxable income is calculated as any employment income including benefits in kind and bonuses, self-employment income, rental income, investment income or taxable state benefits. Allowable deductions include trading losses, pension contributions and gross charitable donations using the gift aid scheme.

The HICBC can be mitigated by reducing your taxable income. One simple way to do this is to increase your allowable deductions by considering making pension contributions during the same tax year that you expect your income to exceed the £50,000 threshold. If the pension contribution reduces your income to below £50,000 then you would no longer incur the HICBC. If the pension contribution reduces your adjusted income between £50k - £60k, the HICBC will be decreased but not fully eliminated.

An additional advantage to pension contributions for those with this level of earnings is that the contributions will attract tax relief at higher rates, which in most cases will be at 40%, and often higher.

The introduction of the HICBC in 2013 led to many families where one parent's income exceeded £50,000 not claiming child benefit. This negated the HICBC and the need for a tax return to be completed by the individual (unless a return was still required due to other personal circumstances, such as self-employment or rental income .

However, even if your income is well over £50,000, if you have a stay at home or low earning spouse/partner, it is important for them to register for child benefit for each child for a number of reasons:

- Firstly, if the child is registered for child benefit, then the child will automatically receive a national insurance number at age 16.
- Secondly, if the lower earner is registered for child benefit, they can still make an election to not actually receive the money. However, importantly by still being registered, the lower earner will still receive their national insurance credit, at no cost to them, towards their state pension each year. The present rules (subject to change) state that a person must have 35 qualifying years of national insurance credit to get a full state pension. All qualifying years are important to ensure your spouse/partner receives as much state pension as possible when they come to retirement age. A state pension forecast can be requested from the Future Pension Centre on 0800 731 0175.

It is also important to note that while a claim is in force, child benefit can be restarted at any time if income drops below £50,000 in a year.

Finally, if you have elected not to receive child benefit and then income is unexpectedly under £50,000 in a completed tax year, it is possible to reclaim that year's child benefit, but a claim must be in force for this to be the case. This can be reclaimed for up to two years as long as your income is under £50,000 and can be done by calling 0300 200 3100.

2. Partnership expenses or claims on personal tax returns?

Again not a recent change, but in 2018 HMRC updated the wording in their internal manuals relating to partnership expenses, with an emphasis on expenditure being included as an expense in the partnership accounts for items incurred or claimed by partners in relation to their business.

HMRC has since clarified its position to confirm that it is not necessary for the expense to have been included within the partnership accounts. Providing the expense meets the wholly and exclusively test, then a deduction will be allowed through the partnership return even if it is not included within the accounts. It is clear that it is not possible to claim any such expenses on the individual partner's personal tax return.

Although most solicitors won't incur many expenses relating to their practices personally, this has become more topical once again due to the pandemic, specifically with regard to the working at home allowance and also any expenses or equipment that partners may have purchased for use at home throughout the pandemic for which they would like to claim a tax deduction (subject to qualification). Any such claims must be made and agreed through the partnership tax return, which is usually prepared at an earlier stage than the individual personal tax returns. It will not be possible to include such claims at a later date on the individual returns. It is important that individual partners and members understand this and provide details of any such claims to their own internal accounting teams as soon as possible, and instructions can then be provided centrally and consistently from law firms to their external accountants.

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Increased capital allowances for law firms operating as companies

The Spring Budget of 2021 announced that there would be a temporary introduction of enhanced tax relief for expenditure on qualifying capital assets up to 31 March 2023, when the rate of corporation tax for large businesses is due to increase from 19% to 25%. A "large" business for these purposes are those with profits of over £250,000 (or lower if you have more than one company under common control). To retain the current rate of 19%, profits need to stay below £50,000 for a standalone company. Those with profits between £50,000 and £250,000 face the return to the complexity of marginal relief between the two rates.

The Super-Deduction provides tax relief on 130% of the "qualifying expenditure" and is given immediately with no limit on the total expenditure (unlike with the Annual Investment Allowance).

"Qualifying expenditure" has the same definition as assets qualifying for the main rate of capital allowances (fixtures and fittings such as office furniture, IT equipment and computers etc). There is a reduced enhancement of 50% for special rate or long life assets (integral parts of a building such as electrical systems, air conditioning etc.).

One question a number of firms may be asking themselves is whether capital expenditure should be accelerated in order to obtain the super deduction. The answer to this will depend on the following:

- the rate at which the company will pay corporation tax at following 31 March 2023 (which is dependent on the profits generated);
- whether the company has any Annual Investment Allowance ('AIA') remaining. It should be noted that the AIA is currently £1million but is due to fall to £200,000 from 1 January 2022; and,
- the level of qualifying expenditure.

A number of scenarios are considered below.

XYZ Limited (which is a large business and therefore pays corporation tax at 25% from 31 March 2023) incurs £150,000 of qualifying expenditure.

With super deduction (prior to 31 March 2023)	Following 31 March 2023
Tax relief is available at 19% on 130% of the expenditure i.e. £195,000. Total tax relief = £37,050	AIA available on first £200,000 and tax relief is available at 25%. Total tax relief = £37,500

The super deduction provides £450 less tax relief now compared with the relief that would have been obtained in delaying the expenditure to after 31 March 2023.

ABC Limited (which is a small business and therefore pays corporation tax at 19%) incurs £150,000 of qualifying expenditure.

With super deduction (prior to 31 March 2023)	Following 31 March 2023
Tax relief is available at 19% on 130% of the expenditure i.e. £195,000. Total tax relief = £37,050	AIA available on first £200,000 and tax relief is available at 19%. Total tax relief = £28,500

The super deduction provides £8,550 of additional tax relief now compared with the relief that would have been obtained in delaying the expenditure, and therefore cashflow allowing it appears to be worthwhile accelerating the expenditure to before 31 March 2023.

XYZ Limited (the same large business) incurs £500,000 of qualifying expenditure and therefore has exceeded the AIA of £200,000.

With super deduction (prior to 31 March 2023)	Following 31 March 2023
Tax relief is available at 19% on 130% of the expenditure i.e. £650,000. Total tax relief = £123,500	AIA available on first £200,000 and tax relief is available at 25% resulting in tax relief of £50,000 WDA at 18% available on the balancing £300,000 i.e. a deduction of £54,000 . The resulting in tax relief is £13,500 (in the current year) Total tax relief = £63,500

As can be seen from the above, if the capital expenditure is likely to exceed the AIA then, cashflow permitting, expenditure ought to be accelerated.

- The super deduction is subject to other considerations which include the following:
- It is only available to trading limited companies i.e. not available for partnerships or investment companies.
- The assets must be new and unused.
- Cars (even electric) do not qualify . However, vans and trucks can qualify.
- The enhanced deduction is not available for intangible assets such as goodwill or patents which may be acquired on M&A transactions.
- There can be a clawback of the expenditure when the asset is disposed of depending on when it is disposed.

If you are considering investing in fixed assets in the near future, potentially linked with IT investment or office refurbishments, it would pay to consider what to acquire and when to acquire it. We're here to help.

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An interview with...

Andy Poole interviews Helen Daly, associate at Jeremy Hyman Associates – technology advisors to the professions.

Covid-19 has rapidly changed the technology requirements of the legal profession, but also the way we work and what we do. Andy Poole interviews Helen Daly to explore her thoughts.

1. What types of professional practices do you work with, and how do you help them?

We are a specialist, independent consulting business and we work with small- to mid-sized professional services firms in the legal and accountancy sectors. I lead our business in the legal sector market and my role is to work with law firms as their independent IT advisor, helping them to plan and execute a sound and achievable strategy which maximises the value of their investment in technology.

I spend a lot of my time opening up minds to new and better operating practices and encouraging a more innovative approach to the use of technology.

2. What has your experience been of the impacts of the pandemic on law firms from a technology perspective?

The pandemic has been the catalyst for a lot of change within the legal sector. It has forced firms to adopt both technology and change with more urgency and commitment than ever before. Initiatives that were previously considered low priority suddenly became critical to the firm's continued operation and viability. Firms rushed to adopt remote working and paperless processes, and there has been renewed focus on whether existing systems and processes are fit for purpose.

Many are focussing on marketing and building their online presence – perhaps quite a shift for some firms who were less bothered about their online presence before the pandemic.

A lot of firms have been forced to change trajectory and rethink their IT strategy in light of new ways of working. COVID has shone a harsh light on things, exposing cracks and emphasising issues that were already there. In many cases it accelerated the changes that firms knew they needed to make anyway but had not executed: prevarication often stops partner-owned businesses from making progress and we often help partners address this.

3. How should firms ensure that they preserve the gains that they have made during Covid?

Firms should be congratulated on doing so well during the pandemic, and proving they can in fact be agile and adapt to change. But as restrictions lift and things start opening up again, it is really important not to slip back into the old ways of working. We don't want to revert to where we came from; we made real progress during the pandemic and the last thing we want to do is to go backwards.

Firms that do revert to their old, inefficient practices will face real challenges in terms of staying competitive in the marketplace. More than that, they are likely to be perceived by their clients as having failed to evolve – there is a reputational risk here.

Going into lockdown, many firms took what they did before and adapted it so that it could be done from home. Now is the time to review those processes and adapt to the new normal.

In some cases this will mean total overhaul and simplification. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be identified, documented and trained out to ensure best practice is adopted consistently. You can't scale without having standardised, optimised processes, so if growth is you firm's goal then this should be a high priority.

4. What areas of IT should law firms be focusing on now?

As firms prepare to return to the office, many will be focused on rethinking office space layouts and how to accommodate hybrid working. But those firms that are thinking beyond that, toward the following areas, will see the most benefit:

Focus on providing a frictionless client experience:

- Digitise the client onboarding process, including compliance checks and ID verification
- Offer secure document exchange via a client portal or virtual dataroom
- Provide clients the option to use electronic signatures
- Set up workflows and link to key dates to drive alerts and reminders so that nothing is missed
- Give your people the information they need to track their performance and deliver a proactive service to your clients.

Automate:

Appropriately applied and implemented, automation can result in significant efficiency savings. Releasing people from the drudgery of mundane work that can be automated will not only free up valuable resource, but it will also enhance morale and make it easier to attract and retain staff in an increasingly fluid labour market.

Look at how automation can help improve efficiency and save time. What can you automate? Ask your people what they hate doing, and start there. Implement the right kind of automation rather than simply adding head count.

Getting more value from your existing systems:

Replacing core systems is expensive and complicated, and may in fact be unnecessary. Most firms will admit they could be getting much better use out of the systems they have already bought. This could be through improving how the system is configured, by improving how data is entered and maintained within the system, or by training their users better to ensure full and effective adoption.

Focus on innovation:

Imagine what your firm would be like if you started today. Would you have an office? If you did would it be like the office you have today? Would you have a receptionist? Would you have a phone system? Would you have invested more or less in tech over the last 5 years if you knew what you knew today?

Focus on what differentiates you as a firm, not just being better than others at doing the same thing the same way, but doing things in new and different ways. Think about what is possible, rather than what is conventional, as this is what will differentiate the leading law firms of tomorrow.

Armstrong Watson work alongside Jeremy Hyman Associates by undertaking lean process reviews for law firms by work type, identifying processes that can be standardised and potentially automated. Jeremy Hyman Associates then arrange the automation.

JH
Jeremy Hyman Associates

Helen Daly,
Senior Associate -
Jeremy Hyman Associates

Outsourced Finance Director for law firms

Many law firms would benefit from the expertise of a finance director, but cannot justify a full-time employment - Armstrong Watson take on such roles on a part-time basis, providing the advantages without the cost

Other law firms are benefitting from:

- Access to expertise and KPI reporting
- Clarity on strategy
- High level input to improve performance

Click here to visit our website or get in touch with Andy Poole for more information

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www.armstrongwatson.co.uk/legalsector