Accelerating the Redesign of Support Services to Meet Escalating Client Demand for Cost Effective Legal Services

In 2023, BigHand gathered a total of 825 responses from law firm leaders, operations teams, and support services managers from firms of 50+ lawyers in North America and the UK.

The report highlights how firms are accelerating changes to the support structure, emphasizing the importance of informed cost reductions and technology adoption to enhance efficiency, client relationships, and service delivery. Here are the themes that emerged...

1. Demand for Legal Services has Declined

75% of firms confirm they have experienced a decline in services in the past 12 months

87% of law firm clients have become far more cost-conscious

2. Support Staff Crisis Looming

2/5 of firms expect to lose up to 40% of support staff to retirement by 2028

53% say support staff attrition is increasing.

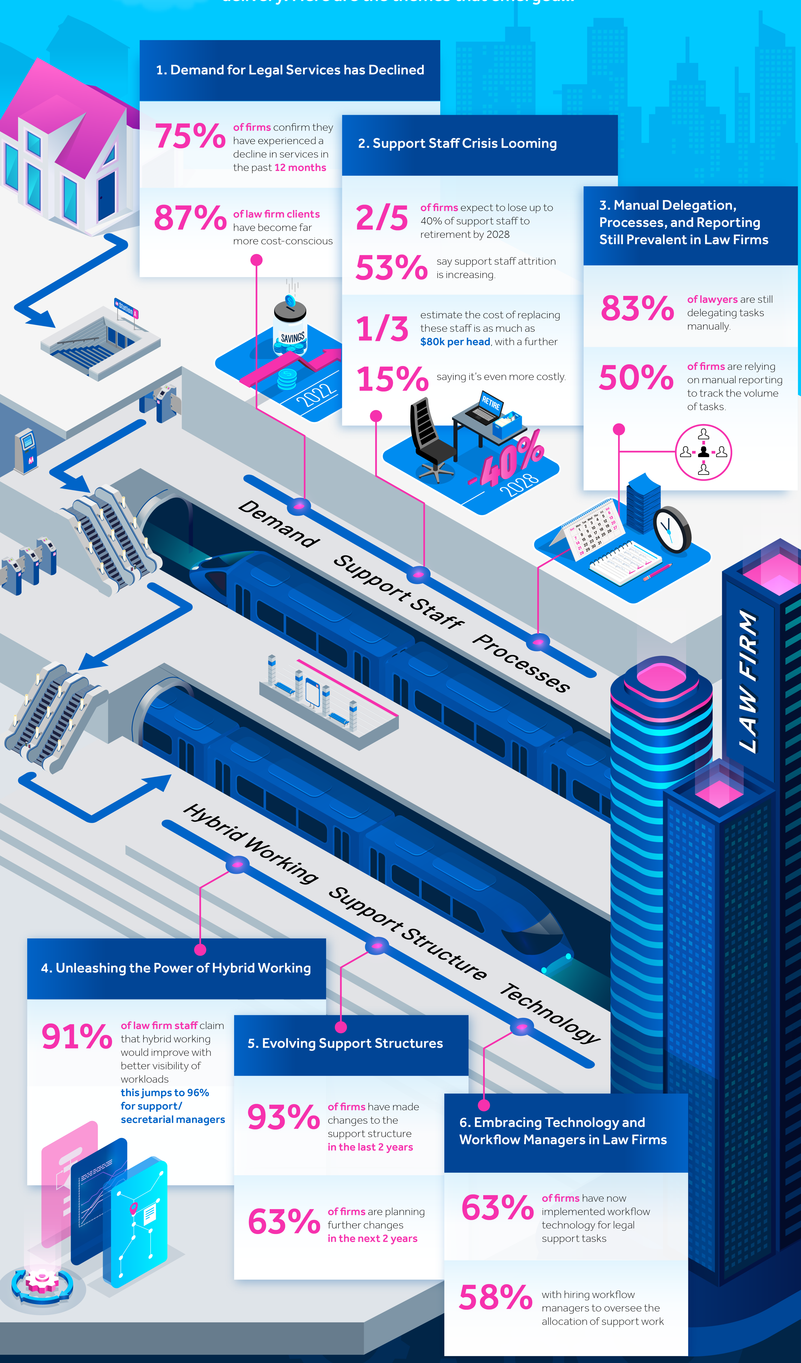
1/3 estimate the cost of replacing these staff is as much as $80k per head, with a further

15% saying it's even more costly.

3. Manual Delegation, Processes, and Reporting Still Prevalent in Law Firms

83% of lawyers are still delegating tasks manually.

50% of firms are relying on manual reporting to track the volume of tasks.



4. Unleashing the Power of Hybrid Working

91% of law firm staff claim that hybrid working would improve with better visibility of workloads

this jumps to 96% for support/ secretarial managers

5. Evolving Support Structures

93% of firms have made changes to the support structure in the last 2 years

63% of firms are planning further changes in the next 2 years

6. Embracing Technology and Workflow Managers in Law Firms

63% of firms have now implemented workflow technology for legal support tasks

58% with hiring workflow managers to oversee the allocation of support work

CONCLUSION

Demand for legal services is decreasing and the need for cost-effective delivery is rising, impacting client relationships and profitability.

Firms continue to lose staff to attrition, retirement and reduction, and replacing them comes at a considerable cost.

Visibility of workloads in a hybrid working world remains a challenge – most staff believe hybrid working would improve if firms invested in tools to solve this.

Support structures continue to evolve, with more centralized and specialized teams being introduced.

The right people, processes and technology are now vital for providing cost-effective legal service delivery. Getting the operational structure right is vital for profitability and client retention.

BigHand

About BigHand

BigHand's People Productivity tools are being embraced by a growing number of firms to support their strategic objectives. Explore bighand.com for insights into how BigHand Workflow Management, a task delegation solution, streamlines work allocation to suitable support staff, optimizing cost and ensuring efficient monitoring until completion.

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