



# Attorney Cuts Hours 23 Percent and Boosts Billings 30 Percent—and it's All Legal

## Overview

**Location:** Little Rock, Arkansas

**Industry:** Legal services

**Customer Profile:**

Herbert T. Wright Jr. is an attorney in Little Rock, Arkansas.

**Business Situation:**

Wright needed a more efficient way to manage his law practice—and a more effective way to manage the hundreds or thousands of pages of documentation generated by each case.

**Solution:**

Wright turned to LexisNexis® Total Practice Solutions to automate much of his office operations, to expedite his legal research, and to digitize and centralize his document management.

**Benefits:**

- Productivity up 23 percent
- Billings up 30 percent
- Return on investment of 200 percent
- \$18,000 saved on office assistant
- 75 percent reduction in time for document management

## Product Summary

**Total Practice Solutions**

**Practice Management**

—Time Matters®

—Billing Matters®

**Research Solutions**

—lexis.com®

**Litigation Services**

—CaseMap®

—TimeMap®

When billable time isn't recorded at a law practice, when bills go out late, when appointments are missed or letters misdirected, it's like throwing money out the window, especially for a solo practitioner with a finite amount of time to bill. That's why attorney Herbert T. Wright Jr. turned to LexisNexis® Total Practice Solutions. By centralizing and automating practice management, by expediting legal research and integrating it with his other practice tools, and by digitizing the document management of case files, Wright's practice of law is more effective, and his productivity and profitability are up as well. The only measure that's down is one that Wright isn't complaining about: the number of hours he spends working.

## Situation:

Herbert T. Wright Jr. didn't know which was worse: not having an assistant to manage his filing, billing, appointments, and related paperwork—or having that assistant.

When Wright began his practice as an attorney, he managed the paperwork on his own, until he found it was taking up an increasing share of his evenings. He hired a part-time assistant to take over the administrative tasks and that assistant soon became a full-time employee—and that employee was soon joined by a second. The administrative expense had grown, but Wright could concentrate solely on his cases. Or so he thought.

This staffing solution seemed to work—until one of his assistants went out sick for a week and Wright had to take over. He discovered that the filing, billing, and correspondence were all backlogged. Not only were these activities not being handled promptly, they weren't being handled accurately. With several rolodexes in his office, it had been too easy for his assistant to use the wrong rolodex—and outdated addresses—when sending correspondence. Some pleadings and other documentation also carried inaccurate numbers.

*“When I delegated an activity to my assistant, it was tough to effectively track whether it had been completed.”*

**Herbert T. Wright Jr., Attorney, Wright VanNoy**

“After I recovered from the panic attack, I went to work to fix the problem,” says Wright.

“Fixing the problem” for an attorney with very limited staff required a technology solution that would automate and facilitate virtually every aspect of operations. For Wright, a criminal attorney, accepting a case immediately implied a fairly standard timeline of activities, generally including: pre-arraignment meetings, arraignment, pretrial meetings, discovery motions, jury selection, trial, and appeals or closure. The way he’d been doing business required Wright to keep all these steps in his head, to manually insert them into his calendar for each client, and to hope that his calendar and the one that his assistant kept for him always matched.

“With a system like that, it was easy to miss dates and deadlines,” says Wright. “And when I delegated an activity to my assistant, it was tough to effectively track whether it had been completed.”

Beyond the administration of his office, Wright wanted better ways to manage his legal research and case preparation. Without adding staff, Wright wanted an online research tool that provided rapid access to the broad range of resources he needed, including Arkansas case law, law review articles, statutes, opinions from the attorney general, and more.

And then there was the issue of managing the flood of documents generated by each case. While a “simple felony” might take up just 200 pages of documentation, a case in federal court could easily equal 5,000 pages of documentation. Wright used a table in a word-processing file to keep track of all the people involved in each of his cases. But that system did nothing to reduce the burden of document management for each case and as a result was extremely time consuming.

Wright had to separate the hundreds or thousands of pages associated with a case into piles, put each pile in a separate folder, then review every page and make handwritten notes as he went along. Even with indexes for each file, finding a document during a trial often required Wright to request a recess.

Wright needed a better way to run his law practice.

*“CaseMap is the tool I need to understand my clients’ case strengths and weaknesses—and what that means for how my client should proceed.”*

Herbert T. Wright Jr., Attorney, Wright VanNoy

**Solution:**

Wright now has that better way, thanks to Total Practice Solutions offered through LexisNexis®. Wright’s office now runs on Time Matters® and Billing Matters® software for practice management, *lexis.com*® for legal research, and CaseMap® and TimeMap® software for litigation management.

Wright was up and running quickly with Time Matters and Billing Matters, thanks to its Microsoft® Windows® interface, which made the software extremely intuitive to use. When Wright gets a new client, he or his assistant opens a new matter in Time Matters, which serves as the single, central site for all information related to that matter—and that single site is accessible to both Wright and his assistant, eliminating the redundant effort and possibility for errors created by the separate calendars they previously maintained.

Wright had configured Time Matters so that accepting a case, triggers automated workflow that puts tentative markers in his calendar for each of the activities associated with a typical case, including pre-arraignment meetings, arraignment, pre-trial motions, and so on. As each of these steps is confirmed, Wright or his assistant replaces the tentative dates with actual dates confirmed by the parties. Templates for each of the work products that Wright needs—letters to his client, pre-trial motions, witness lists, jury instructions, and so on—are associated with each Time Matters milestone, making it easy for Wright to insert the case-specific information and complete the letter or form.

Wright takes advantage of the Time Matters integration of contacts, calendar, and case files. When a client moves, for example, he changes the address on his contact and that change is reflected in his matter and everywhere else that information appears across his firm. And the new information is immediately available to his assistant, eliminating another possibility for errors. When a client calls and Wright is unavailable, his assistant puts the information in the Time Matters matter space and, when he returns the call, the record of that call, along with his notes, are automatically filed in the matter. Time Matters even prompts him to record his time, which is also filed in the matter. Wright synchronizes Time Matters with his BlackBerry®, ensuring he has current contact and scheduling information at all times when he’s away from the office.

***“When I connect an electronic document to CaseMap, I can pull up the document immediately, wherever I am, without having to search for it.”***

**Herbert T. Wright Jr., Attorney, Wright VanNoy**

Wright also uses the Time Matters matter space to store all documents that his office generates related to a case. Electronic files—such as word-processing documents—are saved in Time Matters using a simple “save as” command added to the word processor. Paper-based forms are scanned, converted to Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files, and saved to the matter space.

For research, Wright takes advantage of both *lexis.com* and its integration with Time Matters software. For example, the workflow he created in Time Matters prompts him to get the relevant statute from *lexis.com* when he’s sending a letter to his client, so he can share that information with the client. All of the state-specific resources that Wright needs are available from a single Arkansas tab on *lexis.com*. And a drop-down menu shows Wright the previous 20 resources he’s used—an especially valuable feature for returning to often-used resources as quickly as possible. Wright uses the research tool at least four times a day. In addition to connecting his research directly to the matter on which he’s working, the integration of Time Matters software into *lexis.com* prompts him to record his research time for billing.

For managing the hundreds or thousands of pages of documentation associated with a case, Wright again turns to LexisNexis Total Practice Solutions—in this case, to CaseMap® and TimeMap® software. CaseMap replaces the word-processing table that Wright formerly used to keep track of people associated with a case. Now, his CaseMap file on a case tracks people, facts, issues, document index, questions, and case law. And far beyond maintaining a roster of names and dates and facts, CaseMap provides links to the source documents, so that Wright can immediately go to the relevant documentation whenever he needs it, also eliminating the need to refer back to and search for any paper.

*“I have more confidence in my notes about the document than I had when I was relying on my handwritten scrawls.”*

Herbert T. Wright Jr., Attorney, Wright VanNoy

### **Benefits:**

The benefits of LexisNexis Total Practice Solutions on Wright’s law practice have been profound. He says that his office is managed much more effectively; he’s able to advise his clients with more insight and to be a better advocate for them—and he works fewer hours and spends less on administration while his practice continues to grow.

### **Managing the Practice with 15 Fewer Hours per Week**

Take practice management. Thanks to Time Matters, an automated and centralized practice management tool offered through LexisNexis, Wright has cut the number of hours he spends on his practice each week from 65 hours down to 50—a 23 percent reduction—while maintaining and even increasing the number of cases he handles. The tremendous boost in productivity buys Wright more time for his personal and family life too.

Nor is Wright bound to his office as he was before. By synchronizing his Time Matters and CaseMap content from his desktop to his BlackBerry and his laptop, respectively, Wright has full access to his case files and other content wherever he goes. An hour or two spent with LexisNexis tools by his pool at home eliminates the need for a run into the office on a Saturday afternoon. Similarly, an hour or two in the early morning spent with those solutions enables him to go along on family vacations without putting time-sensitive client matters at risk.

And when adverse weather keeps him from getting to the office during regular business hours, the LexisNexis solutions on his laptop and BlackBerry enable him to be responsive to his clients. Having his files and other content on his mobile devices is also a highly cost-effective insurance policy against a disaster—such as a fire or flood—that could damage or destroy the primary sets of those materials in his office. Wright hasn’t yet had to take advantage of this disaster-recovery benefit of his LexisNexis solutions—but he’s glad he has it.

**Billings up 30 Percent, 200 Percent Return on Investment**

The use of Time Matters software has enabled Wright to increase his billings by 30 percent without spending any more time on his cases—just by capturing 30 percent more of the time he already spends on clients. And Billing Matters has enabled Wright to increase his cash flow by getting invoices out on the fifth of every month instead of the 15<sup>th</sup> or, as sometimes happened, skipping a month.

The use of these LexisNexis solutions has saved Wright the \$18,000 he formerly spent on one of his two assistants. He estimates the solutions paid for themselves in added revenues within the first six months of use, for a return on investment of 200 percent.

**Providing Greater Insight into Cases**

LexisNexis Total Practice Solutions has not only made Wright a more productive and profitable attorney—it's enabled him to provide better and more insightful counsel to his clients, as well.

“In advising a client whether to negotiate a plea or go to trial, I need a quick assessment of the strength of a prosecutor’s case,” says Wright. “The prosecutor is always happy to tell me how bad it is for my client. CaseMap is the tool I need to understand my clients’ case strengths and weaknesses—and what that means for how my client should proceed.”

In one murder trial, for example, much of the prosecution’s case rested on cell phone records of calls among the victim, the defendant, and other parties. Wright entered all of the records into CaseMap and produced a chronology of the calls using TimeMap. The result: Wright says he had a better grasp of the evidence than the prosecutor did, enabling him to give his client better advice than he would have otherwise provided without CaseMap and TimeMap.

And this added insight comes without added effort. Wright says he spends 75 percent less time searching for case documents than he did before using CaseMap. “When I connect an electronic document to CaseMap, I can pull up the document immediately, wherever I am, without having to search for it,” he says. “Not only that, but I have more confidence in my notes about the document than I had when I was relying on my handwritten scrawls.”

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## About LexisNexis

LexisNexis ([www.lexisnexis.com](http://www.lexisnexis.com)) is a leading provider of information and services solutions, including its flagship Web-based Lexis® and Nexis® research services, to a wide range of professionals in the legal, risk management, corporate, government, law enforcement, accounting and academic markets. A member of Reed Elsevier [NYSE: ENL; NYSE: RUK] ([www.reedelsevier.com](http://www.reedelsevier.com)), the company does business in 100 countries with 13,000 employees worldwide.

### About the Case Assessment & Analysis Suite of Products

The LexisNexis Case Assessment & Analysis Suite of products— LexisNexis Total Litigator, CaseMap®, TextMap®, TimeMap®, and CourtLink®—helps you pull together all the facts, issues and research in any case to determine the best, most effective course of action; quickly and with confidence. To learn more about our tools and services visit <http://law.lexisnexis.com/caa>.

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