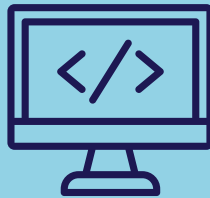




**Law Society
of Ireland**

IT PROCUREMENT ESSENTIALS





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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline best practice for selecting a new service provider. Depending on the complexity and cost of the service, firms may wish to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) or obtain quotations and demonstrations from several providers before making a decision. The RFP can be simple or complex depending on the type and cost of the service/system being purchased.

The RFP should be sent to a minimum of three providers.

The team selecting a new service generally consists of members of the Finance team and users who currently use a similar system in the firm and who will be using the new service when implemented.

Note the following once you have received the proposal from each provider:

Evaluating Proposals

- Is the document of high quality?
- Was it delivered on time?
- Does it cover all of your requirements clearly?
- Is the provider financially stable?
- Is the provider willing to respond to changes to the firm's original request or move beyond the scope of the agreement when necessary
- Is the proposal at or below the proposed project cost?

Items relating to a significant system implementation e.g. new Practice Management or Document

Management System

- Who is managing the project – provider or is it a joint effort with the law firm?
- Is the data being cleansed before or after the migration?
- Is the transfer from one system to another going to be 'big bang' or a gradual migration of users and data?
- How is the data going to be backed up? What service levels are guaranteed in the event of an outage or disruption?
- The RFP response must include clear features/benefits of the system ie the accounts system, time recording, cheque printing/draft billing etc, case management and workflow features.
- How much training / skills transfer is being provided?

Expertise and specialisation

Ensure the provider has the expertise your firm requires, whether in areas such as cloud services, cybersecurity, practice management systems or document management solutions. Providers often have particular specialisms, so it is important to assess their experience, certifications and track record in the areas most relevant to your firm's needs.

Scalability

Choose a provider who can scale as your business grows and support your firm with your future needs.

Track Record

Ask the provider for examples of where they have delivered similar solutions in the past ideally to other law firms? Can they provide references from firms of a similar size and complexity? Specific certifications relating to the expertise is important and ensure that several engineers have these skills and not just one.

Security

Ensure that the provider has a strong focus on security. Ask them for their security certifications – this is an extremely important requirement.

Where is your key data stored if your firm is sourcing a cloud service. What data is stored?

For additional guidance and resources to remain GDPR compliant, visit www.lawsociety.ie/Practice-Essentials

Support

Request that the provider includes their support and maintenance SLA. Ensure the following meet your firm's needs:

- Response for Priority 1, 2 and 3 issues
- Hours of cover – ensure that the provider can deliver the hours of support which your firm requires e.g. out of hours, weekend cover etc

Exit Strategy

If the relationship ends, how will data be returned, migrated or securely deleted and what costs will apply?

Further guidance, insights, resources and template policies are available at www.lawsociety.ie/tech-in-practice & www.lawsociety.ie/Practice-Essentials



This resource was developed in consultation with the Law Society of Ireland.

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