

Episode 6: Shifting Mindsets: How Client-Focused Approaches Can Improve Law Firm Success with Matt Spiegel, CEO of Lawmatics

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Welcome to Season 2, Episode 6 of Legal News Reach!

[National Law Review](#) Web Publication Specialist [Crissonna Tennison](#) and [Matt Spiegel](#), Co-Founder and CEO of [Lawmatics](#), discuss the mindsets that are necessary for law firm success. Practicing law isn't just about winning cases—it's about creating a supportive client experience in and out of the courtroom. How can firms integrate legal technology to center their clients, boosting their business success in the process?

We've included a transcript of the conversation below, transcribed by artificial intelligence. The transcript has been lightly edited for clarity and readability.

Crissonna Tennison

Thank you for tuning into the Legal News Reach podcast. My name is Crissonna Tennison, Web Publication Specialist for the National Law Review. In this episode, I will be speaking with Matt Spiegel, founder of Lawmatics. Matt, can you tell us a little bit about your background and what led you to start Lawmatics?

Matt Spiegel

Yeah, sure. So first of all, I'm very excited to be here, so thank you guys for having me. But yes, I'm Matt Spiegel, I am the founder and CEO of Lawmatics. I was a practicing lawyer, I don't actually practice anymore, I haven't practiced in like 11 years or so, but I still have my bar card. Long story short, I had a problem at my law firm that I wanted to solve with technology, and ended up starting a company called MyCase. So I founded MyCase, back in, like 2010. For those of you that don't know, MyCase is now one of the biggest practice management software platforms on the market. So I was the original founder of that company, I also ran the company for five years. And then I left, and after a couple years doing some things unrelated to law and legal tech, I decided to come back into the legal tech space. I'm a glutton for punishment, and Lawmatics was what I decided to build. And it was really a product of what we saw when I was at MyCase. We saw the shift in the market, we saw

lawyers starting to think about their law firm like a business and not just like a law firm. And when they start to do that, then they need business tools, right? They need the same kind of tools that other companies throughout industries, different genres of companies, tools that they've had forever, right? And so there was a little kernel of this idea of lawyers shifting to this mentality, you know, back in 2014. And so fast forward to 2017, we really saw this starting to become an opportunity that we thought was going to be a big one. And so we built Lawmatics to really address the business needs of a law firm and not as much of the practice management needs, right? The practice of law, we felt like that was pretty well taken care of. Our goal was to focus on the business side of it, you know, the lead management, the marketing, the automation, that sort of thing.

Crissonna Tennison

That's awesome, and it sounds like a major change for you. When you were first starting your switch from being a lawyer to starting MyCase, what skill sets did you have already? And what skills did you have to develop along the way?

Matt Spiegel

Yeah, so it's a good question. I mean, obviously, starting a software company is pretty different than being a lawyer. But I would say that I was probably a bad lawyer. And I just was always, I always had the skill set to be a decent entrepreneur, I guess. But I was probably just a really bad lawyer. It was very different. Well, I should strike that. Because the way I approached law--I was a criminal defense lawyer. And so I was in court all the time, I was doing a lot of trials, you know, it's a very unique practice area. But I treated my law firm like a business right from the get-go. So I worked at a big law firm for like, four years, and then I started my own practice. And when I started my own practice, I was like, "I need to treat this like a business." And I think that was the way I thought about it, even more so than being a good lawyer. And I think that was just because I was probably very entrepreneurial, even then. And so I was thinking about my law firm as like a business that I could build, not necessarily, "I'm a lawyer, I'm going to practice law." So I think I always had that mentality, it was just manifesting itself within the confines of the legal space with starting my law firm. But as soon as I saw this need in the market for a product, which became MyCase, I kind of ran with it. It was like, "Wow, I'm building this business, a law firm, which can be big, but it's going to have a ceiling, or I can start this, like, software company, which the ceiling is unlimited." That just felt so much more exciting to me.

Crissonna Tennison

I do think it is very interesting that you brought up the entrepreneurial mindset, because from what I've observed there does seem to be a difference between that mindset and a lawyer mindset. It's really interesting to hear you break that down a little bit.

What are some challenges that you're most proud of overcoming in starting both MyCase and Lawmatics?

Matt Spiegel

What I'm most proud of, I think, is the legal tech space is not an easy space to enter. You know, there are a lot of companies that get started and not a lot of companies make it through. The fact that I've been able to build two companies in legal tech that have both been able to support these teams--like what I'm the most proud of in MyCase and Lawmatics are the teams that we built. They're the people

who made the company go and at MyCase, we just had an incredible team. It was such a great culture and at Lawmatics I think it's even better, like, you know, we've built such an incredible team with with such an incredible culture, and it's such a fun place to be and to work at. And so that's a hurdle, right? It's hard to build good cultures. You know, it's hard enough to build one company, one startup that becomes successful, let alone two in the same space, especially when the space isn't the biggest space in the world. So I think for me, you know, that hurdle of coming back into the legal tech space and trying to innovate in it, I'm think I'm most proud of that. And then the fact that we've been able to build such great teams. And that has nothing to do with the legal tech space, that's just, you know, company mindset in general, company building in general. I think if I had to say what I'm most proud of it would be the teams that we've built.

Crissonna Tennison

That makes a big difference. And I feel like the teams you're able to build and the workplace culture you're able to foster really is everything when it comes to building a company.

You say that you saw some problems that you thought could be solved while you were a practicing defense attorney. So what exactly were you looking for that wasn't available?

Matt Spiegel

MyCase came as a result of client communication problems. So my first company was a result of actually a State Bar complaint that I got. When I started my first law firm, I got a State Bar complaint pretty much right away. And it had nothing to do with the way I practiced, it was nothing to do with the outcome of the case, it was simply, "Hey, you didn't call me back quick enough." Right. And this is a tale as old as time. This is like, the most common complaint at every state bar still, even 12 years later, is attorney-client communication. And so I thought there has to be a better way to communicate than like, just calling me on the phone when I'm in court all day, every day. That cannot be the answer. And so I sought to develop a client communication portal. And that is what MyCase started as. Now it evolved into something so much more powerful and such a more robust piece of software. But the initial version, the initial idea was just simply a client communication portal. And so that's how MyCase came about. Lawmatics really came about from what I observed talking to thousands and thousands of law firms in my time in MyCase, and what we saw was this shift, this idea that lawyers were starting to think about their law firms as a business, and not just the practice of law. And when I saw that, it's like these people, if they have that mindset shift, they are going to experience some challenges with how to do that. Right? If they're going to start doing marketing, if they don't have a way to measure those marketing efforts, they're going to be met with challenges, if they don't have the ability to automate touchpoints, nurture campaigns, newsletters, like all the different things that are kind of marketing 101, if they don't have that infrastructure in place, they're going to be met with a lot of challenges. We anticipated that happening. And that's sort of the problem that we look to solve with Lawmatics. And again, we weren't reinventing the wheel. Products to solve the problems that Lawmatics solves have been around for decades, products like Salesforce, or HubSpot, they've been around for a really, really, really long time, they are not new concepts. What is new is a platform that is specifically built for law firms. And that's where lawyers are a bit unique. They do and I'm not gonna say they require, but they do significantly better and they adopt more often tools that are designed for them, because they do have some unique requirements. And so that's ultimately the problem that we look to solve with Lawmatics.

Crissonna Tennison

So as a lawyer, and as a person who's running a law firm, you want to provide a great client experience, but you actually need to find clients in the first place. So what can law firms do from a marketing and client intake perspective to help this process?

Matt Spiegel

It's about the client journey, right? A law firm needs to think about, "What is the journey that a client goes through with your law firm?" and we break that journey down into three phases.

Phase one is the intake phase, which is from the moment that they reach out to your law firm, by whatever means, all the way through to the point where they sign a fee agreement, and they pay you your retainer. Then you have phase two, which is an active case, you're actually handling a case for them that has a definitive start and end time. And then phase three is after the case is over. Now, they are a former client. That is a very important part of the relationship.

So what Lawmatics is designed to do is help you with everything in phase one and everything in phase three, the practice management software like MyCase, they are designed to handle everything in phase two. So that journey starts from the very moment that a client reaches out to your law firm. And you have to understand that from that very moment, you have opportunities to delight your customers, and you need to think about it in terms of customer service: what kinds of service, what level of service are you providing to your client? And this is right from the get-go. So if someone reaches out to you, and they fill out a form on your website because they're interested in talking to you, and maybe they don't hear anything from you until the next day, that's not good customer service. The first impression that they're going to get is that you don't respond to things very quickly. And so that initial moment of contact, there's an opportunity to delight your customer, right, you can immediately engage them and show them that you're on top of it. And that's not something that a lot of law firms can do without the help of technology, right? You need technology to help you with those automated touch points. And so that's just one example. But every step of the journey is an opportunity to delight your customer with customer service, not law. Forget about law. Right now we're just talking about providing good bedside manner, good customer service. I have a saying that I'd love to repeat, which is that you could be the best lawyer in the world, but if you provide bad customer service, you are going to have a failing law firm. And the vice versa is true. You could be a mediocre or even a bad lawyer, but you could provide really, really excellent customer service, and you could be wildly successful. The outcome of the legal matter is not always the most important part of that relationship.

Crissonna Tennison

That's something that I never would have thought about. But that makes sense that as a lawyer, of course, obviously, you want to win your case for your client, but you really want them to feel cared for and respected and like they can get in contact with you. And yeah, that is a lot of work to keep that going, especially because being a lawyer and running a law firm is so much work.

Matt Spiegel

Some of it is totally impossible! So here's another example, let's say after the case is over, something that would be a pretty nice thing to do would be to just send your former clients a note on their birthday every year, pretty simple. But you've got 2000 old clients, how are you going to keep track of all their birthdays and make sure you're sending an email? It would take you, it would take an army to do that. So if you have a tool that can automate that whole process, all you do is click one button

when you first set up the software, and then in perpetuity, every one of your former clients is going to get an email on their birthday every single year. So there's so much that you can do that you can't do manual, you have to have technology to help you do it. I think that that's really important for law firms to understand when they're looking at, "Well, what does this mean? How do I provide good customer service? Like what role can technology play?" I think it's just really important to think about things that way.

Crissonna Tennison

The last few years have been a really chaotic time, especially for growing law firms. So what kind of feedback have you gotten from users of Lawmatics during this time?

Matt Spiegel

So the feedback that we get from our customers is pretty profound. So it's two things, it's what Lawmatics has enabled them to do. And then, you know, maybe not as sexy of a response is the amount of time that Lawmatics has saved them. So obviously, a product like Lawmatics that does so much around automation is going to save you time that really can't even be put into words, the true impact can't just be measured. And you know, some law firms are saving 20 hours a week. And that's just a crazy amount of time. And the impact that has on a firm as a whole is pretty remarkable. But it's really what Lawmatics has enabled them to do. Right? I mean, Lawmatics has really enabled growth for its customers. I think that's the way to look at it. I think law firms before you know, our customers, before they used Lawmatics, it was really difficult to facilitate big growth for them. I'm not saying that law firms couldn't grow before, that's not true. But our customers were really struggling with certain aspects of it. They were getting into marketing, they were getting into intake management and thinking about things beyond just practicing law and how to attract more leads, and how to convert more of those leads into customers. But they had no way to manage it all. Maybe some of them knew what best practices were. But they couldn't actually deploy those practices because they didn't have the ability. Lawmatics has really enabled them to do the things that they've wanted to do on the lead management, the conversion side, the generating leads, it's really pretty cool to hear the stories from these law firms that were struggling before to execute on growth plans, and now are exceeding what they thought they would be able to achieve.

Crissonna Tennison

I'm curious to hear more about why it's so essential for those people who are running growing law practices to invest in quality practice management and CRM software. At this point in the game, how much do firms risk falling behind their competitors if they don't use one?

Matt Spiegel

Personally, I feel like practice management software, right, like the MyCases, the Clios, the Practice Panthers of the world right now, I feel like that's kind of table stakes, there are definitely still a lot of law firms out there that don't use a platform like that. And for those firms, there must be some valid views. And but the vast majority of firms out there will have some sort of platform in place to help them with their time and their billing and their case management. I think that that's table stakes in the industry now for the most part. But if you don't have that, if you're like doing your billing manually, that just is a colossal waste of time. And you would be falling behind the rest of the industry significantly, just because of the time that you're wasting to input billing hours and send out invoices and things like that. But as far as CRM, this actually has the potential to make you fall behind even more. So first

of all, we are at the inflection point for like CRM software and law firms. It is starting to become the focus of law firms, their understanding just how valuable it is and what they can do with it. And there's a massive shift going towards this type of thing. That's one reason why, you know, if you're not on that boat, then you just fall behind technologically, but more importantly, it's the byproduct of using a product like this. It's the shift in thinking that is happening where you're really going to fall behind because what it means is that law firms are out there thinking about marketing. They're thinking about lead generation, they're thinking about how to get more business and build their law firm. That means they're going to be going out and taking leads from you if you're not also thinking about that. So it's so much more than just a piece of software that you're talking about adopting, you're talking about adopting a strategy for your business and your growth. So if you're not on board with that, you are going to fall behind in ways that you probably haven't necessarily thought of just yet.

Crissonna Tennison

That definitely makes a lot of sense. When we look at recent years, how have expectations of legal clients evolved, kind of along the lines of what you're saying, if more and more firms are starting to really reorient their thoughts toward how they run their businesses and interact with their clients? How have their expectations evolved? And what changes have you seen in law firms and their operations since you started practicing?

Matt Spiegel

What we've really seen, I think, again, to me, it's just been the wide adoption of some type of software platform and that software platform being in the cloud. So in starting MyCase, I was one of the people who was at the forefront of this shift to cloud computing in legal. I've gotten to observe this whole thing over the last, more than a decade at this point. And it's really profound. It's really cool. Right? It's a mainstay in law firms now, cloud software. And what that's enabled, operations are just easier. And there's less operative people at a law firm, I think now, right? It's just, it requires less, because so much is in software, it's automated, it's easy to access, it's just makes things more streamlined. And so we see less of a need to have operators in a law firm and the ability for lawyers to focus more on actually handling their cases. A lot of this depends on the size firm that you are at. There's a massive segmentation inside of the law firm industry, right? Like if you have solo and small law firms, they operate very differently than midsize or large law firms.

Crissonna Tennison

That kind of goes along with things that we've heard about in the past and prior conversations about CRM systems in general. Do you think that law students will have to start having practical knowledge of CRM systems as they enter the industry?

Matt Spiegel

No. I mean, it can't hurt. But no, we saw this with practice management, too. I remember at MyCase, I would go down to the law schools, and I would help teach classes on managing a law practice and practice management software and what that meant and what it was. So the concepts we were teaching, but we weren't giving them familiarity with the actual software themselves. I don't think it's difficult to pick up, I don't think it's really that critical. What I think is important is understanding the importance of these concepts to the business. But I don't think it's critical for people coming into law firms to like, have knowledge of the systems. I mean, that would be a bonus, it would be cool. I don't think it's something that is required.

Crissonna Tennison

So along those lines, would you say there's been a change in law school education, in terms of a focus on how to run a law business? Like is that something that's showing up a little bit more in legal academia than it was in the past, or maybe when you were in law school?

Matt Spiegel

So when I was in law school, it was really not a focus. Within five or six years after I left law school, it started to become a focus again, I started getting invited into law schools that actually had practice management classes, right, like how to run a law firm. To be honest with you, in the last few years, I haven't seen it as much. So I don't know if there was a small shift towards it, like 10 years ago, and now it's shifted away from it. Maybe people thought that it wasn't a practical class. I don't really know. But I don't think that we've seen a massive shift towards it in the last five or six years. I think it's valuable to be honest with you. I think everyone always says, you go to law school, and the stuff you learn doesn't necessarily help you as a subject matter. It doesn't necessarily help you, when you get out of law school. What law school does is teach you how to think like a lawyer. Right? And that's like the old cliché, but I think it's relatively true. If law school is focused on the practicalities of running a business and running a law firm. I think that would be incredibly helpful. But unfortunately, I don't have that much influence over this.

Crissonna Tennison

For our listeners who are interested in checking out Lawmatics, can you kind of take them through the process of getting started using your platform? Where can they find you?

Matt Spiegel

Finding us is very easy, anybody can go to our website, www.lawmatics.com. And from there, what we always have people do is we have them sign up for a demo. And when I say signing up for a "demo," I use that term a little bit loosely, because what you're really doing is you're going to be talking to one of our specialists, who's really going to spend some time learning about your law firm trying to, first of all make sure that as a law firm, you're ready for a tool like Lawmatics, like Lawmatics is going to make sense for you as a law firm, and then starting to understand "What do you do currently? What are your processes like?" and then starting to show you how Lawmatics might be able to help. So when we get on this demo, it's almost like a consultation. We have a lot of best practices that we share with people during this consultation, this demo, to hopefully get these law firms thinking about things a little differently. We really like this process. And that's the most important thing for people to do is to just come to our website, sign up for that demo, you're going to learn a little bit about Lawmatics, you might learn a little bit more about your law firm and certain steps you might need to take in order to execute on some of the initiatives that you're looking to execute on at your law firm. And then we will show you how Lawmatics hopefully can help you do that.

Crissonna Tennison

That's awesome. It sounds like the Lawmatics experience can be tailored to a variety of different law firm types.

Matt Spiegel

Lawmatics is really for everyone and anyone. We see it all across the spectrum. Sometimes brand new firms that are just trying to set up their tech stack and Lawmatics is the foundation of it or law firms with several hundred lawyers who have been around for a long time, but they need to update their tech stack and they see a lot of value in it.

Crissonna Tennison

Our time is coming to a close, so are there some points you would like to showcase that align with your organization's experience?

Matt Spiegel

Lawmatics is Lawmatics, it's great if people want to check it out, I encourage them to do that. But what I encourage all lawyers to do, regardless of the software platform, is to just start thinking about your law firm a bit differently and start thinking about your law firm as, you've got to be good at customer service. You have to think about satisfying your customers outside of their case, you cannot think, "if I get them a great outcome, if I'm a criminal defense lawyer, and I just defended my client out of prison," you can't just assume that that's going to be enough, that that's going to make them really happy. What you need to do--and this is a point that I was thinking about earlier that I want to bring up now--is this is what you need to remember. And if you remember this, I think it gives you a different lens to look through almost all practice areas, right? Almost all of them fit into this mold, where it is the most important thing happening in their life. If it's a criminal offense case, if it's a personal injury case, if it's a bankruptcy case, if it's a family law case, immigration, all these practice areas, like the vast majority of practice areas out there, the case that you are handling for your client, it is the most important thing that they have going on in their life. For you it's just another client, right? And so sometimes it's hard to have that perspective. But if you think about it like that, if you think "Hey, wait a second, this is the most important thing happening in their life. If I had the most important thing happening in my life right now, how would I want to be treated?" If you shift to that line of thinking I guarantee you will provide incredible customer service, and that's going to benefit your firm.

Crissonna Tennison

Yeah, that makes a lot of sense, especially because if they're dealing with something that is the most important thing in their life, and you're the person guiding them through that, then that relationship is pretty important. So thank you for kind of expanding on that a little bit more.

Thank you to Matt Spiegel for taking the time to join us on the podcast to talk about Lawmatics and the different mindsets that can help a law firm be more successful. We really appreciate you joining us today.

Matt Spiegel

Yeah, thank you guys so much for having me. I really appreciate it.

Conclusion

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