

McCormick Braun Friman LLC

“**...Come to think of it, calling IT MAX Group was one of the most fruitful phone calls I’ve ever made. Just last year, we saved over \$25,000 in IT costs, and I would guess over \$400,000 in legal time. I couldn’t be happier.**”



Michael T. McCormick
Partner
McCormick Braun Friman LLC

At McCormick Braun Friman LLC (MBF), keeping customers happy is not a matter of choice. With diverse practice areas that include estate planning, tax law, mergers & acquisitions, real estate law and corporate law, the 15-attorney team knows they have to be always available, always efficient and always on top of their game. For years, however, the firm’s outdated IT infrastructure played against the goals that partners set for themselves. “We have worked very hard to turn MBF into one of the most successful teams in our space,” said Michael McCormick, one of the firm’s founders. “From the start, our strategy has been to combine bullet-proof representation and broad range of legal counsel one can find at a larger law firm with a small-firm attention to detail and service. This strategy has done wonders for us over the years, but it took us a while to realize that our IT systems did little to support it.”

The Need for Change

The problems started with waiting. Everything took time: from booting up computers in the morning to loading email applications to starting and working with tax and legal software that attorneys needed. “It was insane,” remembers McCormick. “In the morning, I want to be off the train at 6:55am and be at my desk and working by 7:10am. With our old setup, you could forget about that: you needed 20 minutes just to boot up!” The team tried to leave their machines turned on overnight, but that caused them to become unstable and crash during the day, often during client meetings. Valuable data from the meeting was lost, and meetings often ran

over due to time wasted in restarts. Then came server trouble. The firm’s three servers weren’t powerful enough to handle intense file sharing, email, calendaring, business applications and mobile email needs of the growing office. Without proper management and under heavy loads, servers crashed and needed to be restarted at random times during the day, all but halting work in the office.

Finally, McCormick Braun Friman lacked much needed essentials like data backup, robust remote access and a strong firewall. These gaps severely hampered productivity and left the firm exposed to huge compliance and business risks in the event of a major data loss. “We knew that this was an issue, but our consultant somehow never suggested a solution, and we never had time to ask,” said McCormick. “Besides, we were being charged \$2,000 to \$3,000 a month on a time and materials basis just to support our existing network, so we thought any real improvement would cost us an arm and a leg.”

Then a friend at another law firm suggested that MBF talk to an ITMAX Consultant. Having recently surmounted major IT challenges themselves, the firm found that the ITMAX Group approach resulted in better performing systems, lower costs and greater flexibility than they ever experienced. One free consultation later, the partners at McCormick Braun Friman learned they might just never have to deal with poorly-run IT systems ever again.

SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGIES DEPLOYED

- **ITMAX Support remote and onsite hardware management**
- **Streamlined office network with new server equipment**
- **Offsite data backup**
- **Firewall and intrusion prevention system**
- **Remote access solution**

BENEFITS

- **Saved over \$25,000 in annual hardware and software support costs**
- **Saved an estimated \$430,000 per year in billable time**
- **Reduced exposure to security threats, regulatory compliance fines and major data loss incidents**

The ITMAX Group Solution

Rather than trying to fix the symptoms of MBF's system and network woes, ITMAX Group went for the cause. The firm's network was reconfigured, and a single more powerful server was deployed to replace the three older machines. With greater server performance and no need to transfer data between servers, the new setup fixed most of the firm's application performance issues. ITMAX Group was able to negotiate a lower price for the new equipment through its volume contracts and moved all the files, folders and applications to the new server during the off-hours to avoid disrupting MBF's operations.

ITMAX Group then established flat-fee support agreements called ITMAX Support for the majority of the firm's IT hardware, including PCs, servers and printers. Under the support agreement, an assigned ITMAX Technician is always available to troubleshoot hardware or software problems remotely or onsite. If covered equipment malfunctions, the same technician can arrange for service under the manufacturer's warranty or help procure and install the parts needed to fix it. With ITMAX Support, McCormick Braun Friman got its monthly support costs to around \$400 — down five- or six-fold from the \$2,000 to \$3,000 per month the firm previously paid an independent contractor working on a time and materials basis.

Finally, partners at MBF went through a thorough technology

review session with an ITMAX Consultant. The goal was to familiarize the attorneys with the latest tools and technologies used by their peers in the legal community, including common applications, expected ROI and ways these technologies can be used in the firm's setting. For partners at McCormick Braun Friman LLC, the math on new IT investments is simple: a tool that saves an hour a day per attorney can increase company's revenues by anywhere from \$40,000 to \$85,000 per year. A tool that helps the firm better serve its clients and attract new ones is simply invaluable. "We will never deploy technology for technology's sake," says McCormick. "But we will absolutely make pointed, strategic investments to keep us ahead of the curve. It's great to have a trusted partner who has done the homework and seen things work and fail at companies like ours."

Since the initial technology review, McCormick Braun Friman has deployed technologies like remote access for all of its attorneys, an intrusion prevention system and a data backup solution. These measures, along with the overhaul of the firm's office infrastructure, have helped the company increase caseload capacity and significantly reduce vulnerability to security and data loss incidents.



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About ITMAX Group

In business for over 10 years, ITMAX Group provides IT support and services to small businesses in Chicagoland. We have helped many companies like yours to stabilize IT budgets, increase productivity and eliminate technology headaches. Spend your time doing what you do best — and let us do the same for your business.