

BLANKROME

**ALN's eDockets Mitigates Risk,
Improves Docketing and
Increases Efficiency
for Blank Rome**

Case Study

September 2019



Background

Blank Rome is an AmLaw 100 law firm with 14 offices and more than 600 attorneys and principals, providing counsel to clients across a number of practice areas, including litigation, environmental, IP, compliance, labor and employment, and insurance.

The Challenge

Blank Rome was experiencing challenges similar to many other law firms of its size and sophistication. As the firm grew, it found itself using three disparate docketing and calendaring systems, each initially intended to address the needs of one office or practice group. This ultimately led not only to inefficiencies in the way the firm performed docketing and calendaring but also impacted system usage because they were old, not integrated, and less than user friendly.

In addition to using the three different legacy systems to handle docketing and calendaring tasks, the firm used multiple spreadsheets and a variety of manual point solutions—depending on office location and department. There was little all-around consistency which led to serious problems impacting efficiencies and workflow. The firm realized they needed an all-in-one standardized, centralized docketing and calendaring platform that worked across all practices and geographies.

The Solution

After considering several different systems, Blank Rome selected ALN's eDockets national centralized platform as its firm-wide solution to consolidate all three older calendaring and docketing solutions with the goal of dramatically improving compliance and consistency. With its browser-based docketing platform, its ability to calculate deadlines automatically using its national court rules database and to take court data feeds from state and federal courts, as well as PACER receipt handling, eDockets stood out for its ability to streamline the complex calendaring process and the disorderly electronic court notifications process into one platform—creating greater efficiency and cost savings through automation and centralization.

"eDockets platform has delivered beyond even our original ambitious expectations. With missed deadlines such a large risk management issue, it is critical that we get them right every time. One of the great benefits of eDockets has been its national court rules databases, accuracy, and ability to calculate court dates automatically. And the ALN court rules team is second to none. Today, we have more confidence that important court deadlines are not being missed."



- Kathleen Remetta
Docketing Manager
Blank Rome

Risk Management and Court Rules Concerns were Primary Drivers

The risk management benefits of the centralized, always current eDockets Court Rules were noticeable right away. After the switch, one Blank Rome attorney discovered he had been calendaring a certain type of deadline incorrectly for over 15 years based on a misinterpretation of the court rules. With the help of ALN's Court Rules team, supported by detailed explanations and backed up by case law research, everyone agreed with the new calculations and reminder deadlines produced through eDockets. That anecdote alone proved to the firm the value of centralizing the calendaring and docketing department and the benefit of using eDockets to automatically calculate critical court dates and deadlines.

Of all the considerations when evaluating a court rules-based calendaring system, Blank Rome knew access to extensive, accurate, and always updated court rules were most critical. They felt confident knowing ALN had the largest team of licensed attorneys in the industry with the most extensive litigation, research, and interpretation experience with court rules. Those attorneys are supported by the largest dedicated team of technology experts who ensure the firm experienced seamless integrations and notifications. For an AmLaw 100 firm like Blank Rome involved in high-stakes corporate and litigation matters, having up to date calendars, rules, and dependable technology they can count on is extremely important.

Automation and Customization Deliver Immediate Results

Blank Rome experienced immediate and significant value through eDockets unique automation and customization features. Rather than just a calendaring tool, eDockets has become an information management system that helps Blank Rome capitalize on business intelligence. The system allows users to flag cases as pending, active, or closed, which makes tracking cases much easier. Blank Rome tailored eDockets to allow users to search by complaint type and added custom user fields specific to practice areas, allowing them to track criteria unique to different types of matters. To help with litigation strategy, eDockets also allows the firm to see which attorneys have gone before certain judges. The firm is currently evaluating the best way to integrate eDockets with other software systems to achieve even greater synergies.

Other key factors in Blank Rome's decision to select eDockets included the technology's ability to:

- Allow for phased deployment without disrupting users
- Provide continuous access to updated court rules and data
- Protect the firm against legal exposure from data breaches
- Integrate multiple elements into a unified dashboard encompassing emails, documents, calendars, research, and contacts
- Scalability as the firm grows

Support

Merging different technologies and different databases always is a challenge, but when it is a mission critical operation that impacts attorneys' calendars, it is imperative it is done right. ALN's reputation for having experienced and accommodating staff when the inevitable challenges and questions arise, or customizations are needed, was an important consideration for this implementation. "Along with the fact ALN met all of our main requirements, their customer support was very important to us," said Kathleen Remetta, Blank Rome's docketing manager who oversaw the implementation of eDockets.

Insights Gained by Standardizing on One Platform

Beyond keeping calendars and dockets organized and streamlined, eDockets provides insights that improve firmwide operations and knowledge management—benefits the firm did not fully anticipate when originally vetting the platform. For example, one prospect wanted to know every jurisdiction the firm had handled a matter in for the past five years. Before eDockets, this would have been a time and personnel intensive task and, at best, an educated guess. With eDockets, Blank Rome identified more than 500 jurisdictions with confidence and precision. The firm now has the ability to keep track of similar key data points easily and accurately because they have standardized on the eDockets centralized platform.

Since implementing eDockets in 2016, the number of requests that can be processed and the number of attorneys using the system continues to increase month after month. Kathleen sums up the difference it has made. "With eDockets, we have more confidence in our process and our fears of missing something or not being notified about an important date or changing court rules were alleviated. There were some initial concerns at first because people were changing from different systems. But now that we have used eDockets and have seen what it can do, I don't think we would ever go back because it gives us the fail-safe we need."

About American LegalNet, Inc.



American LegalNet (ALN) was founded in 1996 and is a trusted partner to law firms, empowering them with innovative workflow management technologies that help mitigate risks, increase operational efficiencies and reduce costs so they can focus on their core competencies. Today American LegalNet is the premier provider of "Desktop to Courthouse" workflow solutions that include eDockets, Docket Direct, Forms WorkFlow, Smart Dockets, Docket Alerts and eFiling Portal. American LegalNet is based in Los Angeles. For more information, visit www.alncorp.com or email sales@alncorp.com. Follow us on Twitter @ALN3, LinkedIn and Facebook.

