

# *Smokeball Case Study*

Jodi Allen | Director | Allen & Searing | QLD



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Allen & Searing Criminal Lawyers is a Gold Coast Law Firm practising exclusively in the field of Criminal Law.

Implementing Smokeball legal practice management software has proven to be real a game-changer for the business. The program is very user-friendly and was easy to learn. Everything is in one central place and at the touch of your fingertips. We are a team of seven, and my staff are now feeling far more efficient and less stressed since using Smokeball. This in result has had a positive impact on our overall morale.

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A firm favourite is the email management feature, which results in the automatic saving of emails to the relevant matter. This feature has been a huge time saver as we no longer have to search through our inboxes for matter-related communications. Smokeball intuitively connects right in your Outlook window and organises matter-related emails sent and received into one centralised area, removing the need to forward or save to a folder.

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Digital Memos have also been a useful tool for maintaining firm organisation. Before using Smokeball software, we would handwrite our notes, scan them, and save them to the applicable file. Now, all important details are automatically there and accessible by the whole team. This ensures everyone is well informed and nothing slips through the cracks.

Smokeball's suite of productivity features combined with their automatic time and activity tracking software (AutoTime) has enabled us to increase our earnings without charging our clients more. Prior to utilising time tracking software, we were failing to capture the accurate time spent reading emails and generating legal documents. In particular, the firm's junior solicitors were under billing for their administrative work. However, since leveraging AutoTime and Smokeball's array of legal billing tools their receipts have noticeably increased and continue to do so each month.

We are primarily a fixed fee firm; we work on matters that are both privately funded and legally aided. For private matters, AutoTime lets me know exactly how much time we are spending on an individual matter. Over time I can recognise patterns and decide whether we need to increase or reduce our fees. I can also pinpoint where we are potentially wasting time on a matter, so we can then develop a way to work smarter. For legally aided matters, time tracking helps determine whether we are dedicating too much time for the remuneration we are receiving. For our larger private matters where we tend to provide the client with a range of fees, AutoTime assists with our interim billing.

When we send through a large invoice to a client, Smokeball's automatic time tracking empowers us to bill for the value we provide by showing them exactly how much time we have spent working on their matter. Offering complete billing transparency helps us to justify the cost and avoid any potential disputes.

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Smokeball also provides the option to tick/untick invoice items, switch off the time recording for tasks you do not wish to bill for, plus offers time tracking in one-minute increments. This functionality has helped us to boost our accuracy and gain more control over our legal billing.

For the most part, I work in the office. However, I frequently need to work from home or from court. I love that Smokeball provides me with the flexibility to work from any location as it uses innovative hybrid cloud technology and is available on both a computer and mobile app. The Smokeball mobile app allows you to view all matter details - including emails, documents, memos, and contacts - no matter where you are. This mobility is especially advantageous when we're in the courtroom and required to share specific details regarding the matter with the magistrate. It also removes the inconvenience of having to bring in large files.

The client support and training Smokeball software offers is exceptional. If we encounter an issue, or if there is anything we are simply unsure of, their support team will get back to us promptly and will rectify the problem that same day. They also actively listen to client feedback and will develop our recommendations into the software. This has been highly beneficial as this has enabled us to tailor the software to our practice.

I highly suggest other law firms to implement Smokeball legal practice management software. It is a worthwhile investment that will take your business productivity, flexibility, and profitability to the next level. My staff and bookkeeper love it. Just make the switch!