

# Sponsored Blog: Xira

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By Alison Hicks, Esq.

Down in South Texas, where I have been practicing civil litigation since 2006, the transition from paper to the virtual world has been slow for our judges, but also for attorneys and clients alike. I do not exclude myself from that group. I am a kinetic learner and I love paper. There I said it. I am constantly pressured by the other attorneys at my firm to get rid of my paper files, and I have resisted for years. That is until COVID-19. With our "new normal," courts, clients, and attorneys alike have been thrust, willingly or not, into various new platforms to try to ensure that the wheels of justice do not come to a complete stop. Here in San Antonio we are still 100% virtual for all hearings. The Courts have set up ZOOM and YouTube channels for each courtroom to demonstrate that they are still practicing in "open" proceedings. This has made for some quite hilarious mornings depending on who forgets to mute him or herself, or who forgets to turn off his or her background music and gets the entire site shut down for copyright infringement.

I even took the plunge and moved our server to a cloud-based company and it made the office immensely more efficient. That got me thinking--Is there a way to make our billing, calendar, and client management software also cloud-based so that I could view or update it from anywhere? (Or at anytime, because everyone knows you do your best list-making at 3:00 in the morning).

That is when I found Xira.com. Unfortunately for me, Xira is only “live” in a handful of states at this time, but they are expanding to new states soon. Xira is advertised on its site as “a directory service for attorneys that also provides an end-to-end suite of services to lawyers that allow lawyers to operate a virtual office.” Now get ready for the most amazing part...it is free to attorneys in good standing. All you have to do is sign up for an account, answer some questions about your practice area and credentials, and provide your State Bar number. The only charges are for two add-on options - \$20 for the new client initial consult administrative setup; and videoconferencing at a rate of \$6 dollars per hour. I really liked the short tutorials they had (most under three minutes) on each section of the service and how to get started.

After your account is reviewed and approved, you can link it to your Microsoft, Google, or iCloud calendars. You have a Google and iCloud calendar? No problem, you can add multiple calendars to your profile. Once approved, clients can also find you when they search for attorneys in your practice area or location. They can directly schedule an appointment based on the parameters you set up in your account. For example, if you want to have two hours’ notice before a new client comes for a meeting, XIRA allows you to set that limit and only shows clients available appointment times within those limits. It also allows you to specify your hourly rate as well as the fee for the appointment. And if that isn’t enough to make your head turn, it also allows you to link your payment account for processing online payments so the client can both set up and pay for the consultation all in one fell swoop. There is nothing I hate more than the awkward statement I routinely hear my receptionist utter before a meeting with a potential client, “And, how would you like to pay the consultation fee...”; XIRA makes that unnecessary.

XIRA is not a referral service. It does not charge the potential client for

using the service and searching for attorneys, nor does it charge the attorney if the client retains them. I found it interesting that XIRA also offers technical support to both the potential client and attorney. This could be very helpful with some of our “less technical” potential clients. Furthermore, XIRA recognizes the need for a client to hire an attorney instead of the all too common “Do-It-Yourself” legal sites popping up everywhere nowadays. I think it is important that we embrace companies that value and promote the value of a “live” attorney as XIRA does, not only in their marketing materials, but also in their responses to many of the questions posted under their technical support section.

After adding your calendar, your account allows you to add your cases, activities, and even keeps track of billing. The billing capability and layout was my favorite part of the whole system. The activity is organized in an intuitive, aesthetically pleasing manner for both the attorney and the client receiving the invoice. Moreover, XIRA keeps track of not only the invoices and billing items but also the status of the outstanding bill. Integrated into my existing practice, this alone saves my firm approximately \$3,000.00 a year from our current provider.

Check out Xira at [law.xira.com](http://law.xira.com). Xira is currently available (as of Nov 1, 2020) in Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, and Georgia. You can email [notify@xira.com](mailto:notify@xira.com) to be notified of when they are live in your specific local.

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