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# White-Collar Criminal Defense:

An Overview of the Paralegal/Legal Assistant's Role

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# Current & Emerging Court Reporting Technologies Are Keys to Controlling End-to-End Cost

**By Will Robberts**, Executive Vice President, Esquire Deposition Solutions

In today's economy, both law firms and corporate counsel are seeking greater value and cost savings through legal services—this includes court reporting. While there are a number of controversies swirling around cost savings in court reporting services, many may be missing the boat in the effort to save valuable dollars.

In most cases, greater economies of scale can be achieved through the adoption of technologies already on the market, as well as newer technologies. This includes Realtime court reporting, electronic signatures, video synchronization, and integrated portals. Each provides inherent value and when you look at them as a whole, the opportunity for end-to-end cost savings becomes more apparent.

**Realtime Court Reporting:** In terms of cost-savings, Realtime court reporting is a true winner. It provides instant text translation for display to the legal team—whether they are onsite, in another city, or in another country. With Realtime court reporting, attorneys have access to transcripts instantaneously and can search and even annotate text during proceedings. This saves valuable time and money that would have otherwise been associated with travel, including the cost of airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and other incidentals.

Another benefit of this technology is that a court reporter, as well as hearing-impaired judges, jurors, litigants, and others, can now fully participate in legal proceedings. In fact, numerous legal professionals who are hearing impaired indicate a preference toward Realtime court reporting rather than working through a sign language interpreter.

**Electronic Signatures:** Electronic or e-signatures enable court reporters to digitally verify and sign a transcript, which protects the integrity of the document. When a reporter electronically signs a transcript, the entire document is mathematically analyzed to produce a digital "fingerprint," which is then encrypted along with a unique digital I.D. On receipt, the "fingerprint" and I.D. are checked. If even a single character has been changed, the transcript will fail to verify.

As electronic filing becomes more prevalent, the importance of secure e-signatures will only become more critical because it provides an extra layer of security that did not exist in the past. In addition, more secure, proprietary forms of electronic signature technologies are coming online, along with opportunities to enhance the value of this verification tool.

**Video Synchronization:** As far as new technologies on the market, Transcript Management is one of the most exciting and relevant in the ability to achieve end-to-end cost savings.

Video synchronization is basically the ability to take a video deposition and synchronize it to the text of a transcript and pertinent exhibits.

Newer solutions integrate video synchronization with more robust transcript management functionalities. This product, for instance, provides the ability to organize transcripts, text, exhibits, and video clips and then export those to other documents and presentations—including PowerPoint.

The true value comes into play by helping a team more efficiently review critical information and prepare a more compelling presentation.

**Client Portals:** Online scheduling of depositions is not new, but innovations and greater functionalities through streamlined client portals can save time and money while simplifying certain administrative processes including:

- Booking a deposition
- Cancelling, changing, or modifying a deposition
- Reviewing an upcoming calendar
- Sharing a calendar with co-counsel
- Reviewing transcripts, invoices, and statements online, and
- Providing payment using a credit card.

This more efficient technology will enable the storage and downloading of transcripts and exhibits through one portal—making it easier to locate information as it is needed. Different court reporters and court reporting firms currently utilize various forms of this technology—but the creation of a one-stop shop will make these day-to-day activities much easier for legal teams to manage.

When utilized through an integrated approach, the collective benefits of court reporting technology help provide value and cost savings through all stages of the legal process. It is important that we utilize these technologies to their full advantage.

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