

Amicus Attorney News

The Official Newsletter of Amicus Attorney

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Volume 3
Issue 6

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amicusattorney.com

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Share the News.

Do you know others who would like to receive this newsletter? Simply send this issue to them and with one click of the SUBSCRIBE button, they'll start receiving it monthly.

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1. [What's New at Amicus Attorney?](#)

Summertime may be here, but you wouldn't know it at Gavel & Gown Software. Our Products and Development teams are working away, the Marketing and Sales Teams are preparing for the annual Certified Consultants Conference, and Technical Support, in an effort to continually upgrade skills has embarked on an extensive training exercise.

While we may not be taking time off to enjoy the summer, we do hope that our readers are able to take some time away from the office to relax and recharge. Just like the ad says, with Amicus Attorney, you can Do More, Bill More, and Go Home Early. If your firm has a story to share about how Amicus Attorney has changed your work environment, we would love to hear about it. Please send an email to the Marketing department (marketing@amicusattorney.com) with your comments, and we might use your story in a future issue of the newsletter.

Legal Laugh

Your monthly dose of humor...

Missed An Issue?

No problem. [Click here](#) to view or print from our past issue archives.

2. [You Have to Try This!](#)

Practical Tips and Tricks from Amicus Attorney Certified Consultants



Searching for Events in the Calendar

By: Chris Arrendale of Best Law Firm Solutions, Inc.

Have you ever wanted to search for an event in the Amicus Attorney calendar? With the Search Calendar feature you can look for events in Amicus Attorney including both to dos and appointments.

"Search Calendar"

1. Go into the Calendar module of Amicus Attorney
2. Select Edit from the top menu
3. Select Find
4. The following window appears:



5. Type into the Search area what text you are looking for
6. In the Where section select your search criteria including: Appointment titles, To Do Titles, Calendar Notes, Appointment Notes, and To Do Notes
7. In the When section select the ranges for your search
8. In the Show section select if you want to see the first matching event or all matching events for the Search.
9. Select OK
10. This will then show you your search findings.

This is a handy feature for Amicus Attorney users that remember some notes that were entered on an event and would like to find more information about that event.

Compliments of:

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Chris L. Arrendale, is an Amicus Attorney Premier Consultant with Best Law Firm Solutions. He is the Director of Technology as well as a certified law office software consultant. Chris received his AA from Oxford and his BA in Political Science and Sociology from Emory University. He received his MS in Software Engineering and Information Technology from Southern Polytechnic State University (Magna Cum Laude). Chris is a Microsoft Certified Professional, Microsoft Office Specialist and holds certifications in Microsoft XP, Office XP, PC Master Technician, NT Administrator, Networking Technician, Information Security, E-Commerce, Wireless Concepts, Internet Technology, and Webmaster. Chris is also an active member of the Association of Computing & Machinery, as well as the IEEE. He has many years of experience working in a law firm environment and consults on hardware, software, trial presentation, network, security, wireless, and handheld needs. He is also a certified consultant/trainer on Amicus Attorney, PCLaw, CaseMap, TimeMap, NoteMap, TextMap, Amicus Assembly, Worldox, CompuLaw, ActiveWords, Adobe Acrobat, and is an authorized reseller of Word Perfect, Microsoft Word, and PaperPort.

Converting a Note

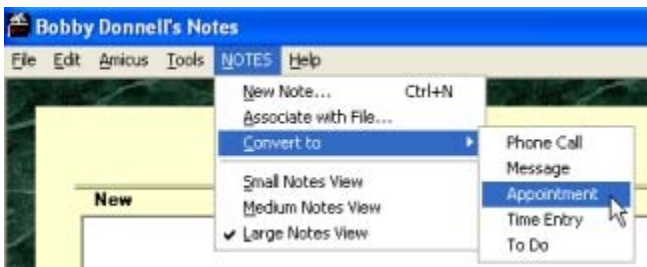
The Notes Module in Amicus Attorney V+ is a great tool that allows you to quickly jot down that thought, without having to clutter your desk with little pieces of paper. With the notes module, simply put down the information, and then later on convert it to the appropriate record.

Enter the details of the note, and it gets saved on your unassociated notes list. When you have a chance, you can store the information in the appropriate place. It can be converted to an appointment or to do, a phone call or phone message, even a time entry.

Any saved note can be converted to another record. Simply view the details, and at the bottom of the Note you can choose the new type of record. Then click Convert.



You can also use the NOTES drop-down menu at the top of the Notes module to convert any Note to another record type. Simply Choose NOTES > Convert to, and select the relevant record type.



The Notes module provides an easy way of recording your information. No transcription errors trying to decipher that hand written note stuck to your desk. The information is already in Amicus Attorney, because you jotted it down there initially. All you have to do is convert it so that it is stored in the right place. It couldn't be any easier.

4. Legal Tips

Tips from Legal Industry Experts on How to Effectively Manage Your Practice



Unspoken Staff Opinions: Do We Want to Know?

By Nancy Byerly Jones

If you could read the minds of your staff members on any given work day, what do you suppose you would learn? Far more than you want to know most likely, but narrowed down to just law firm issues, would you expect to hear any of the following comments?

- I love my job (most days that is!) and the folks with whom I work.
- It's great to have a job I enjoy doing.
- The attorneys at our firm work really hard, but they always seem to make the time to thank us for a job well done. Wonder if they know how much that means to us?
- I'm so proud to work for a firm that treats clients like real people and with such genuine compassion.
- We work some really long hours, but it all balances out with our generous vacation policy which the attorneys mandate we take each year.
- We may not have the luxury of a lot of spare time, but I sure appreciate the attorneys making it a priority to

meet with us to go over our priorities and to answer any questions the staff may have.

- I went into another law firm the other day and was shocked at how curt and downright rude the receptionist was to me. If that happened at our firm, she would be history in no time!
- We know if we have to make a personal call during the day it's okay to do so, but that's because the attorneys trust us and know we won't abuse the privilege.
- My lawyer's office is not always the picture of neatness especially during a trial, but at least she's open to letting me help her reorganize and clean it up from time to time.
- I don't always agree with decisions made by the partners, but I trust them to make the right decision for office. They care about and appreciate everyone of us and it shows in their day to day actions and their long term decisions for the firm.

What about these kind of comments?

- You'd think it would kill Mr. "X" to say hello to we lowly staff persons whenever he passes us in the halls.
- Apparently this firm considers being arrogant, disrespectful, greedy and disorganized as prerequisites for being a lawyer in this hell hole.
- If you have time for two hour lunches, golf games and long weekends, why can't you take 1 hour a week to meet with me to discuss the week's priorities, to share any concerns or suggestions and to just touch base in general?
- I am so tired of being asked to lie to clients and others when you won't take their calls.
- Why won't you hold clients accountable for the payment of their fees. Putting our paying clients cases on hold while you work on the freeloaders' cases seems so unfair and uneconomical too.
- You expect me to treat clients with a friendly, professional and helpful attitude and yet you don't practice what you preach. You wouldn't believe how many clients chew me out because of their anger about your not returning their calls or not letting them know what's going on in their cases.
- You are always rushing us from one overdue matter to the next that I can hardly think straight. I know my work quality suffers from having to work in crisis mode every day.
- I dread asking for vacation time; the way my supervising attorney acts before and after my vacations is awful. (See author's LWUSA column on "How Vacation Polices Mirror a Firm's Culture" / June 24, 2002). He constantly complains about how bad the timing is for me to be gone, lets me know how difficult my being away will make his life and never ever would he think to wish me a great vacation or to ask me was it a good one.
- Interesting how some staff members seem to get away with being chronically late for work, spending lots of time on personal calls and emails and taking longer than our hour for lunch. Why are the rest of us held accountable to follow office policies while the chosen few boldly ignore those same rules?
- Based on who has the final say in this place, that old Murphy's Laws of Justice adage rings true: "Many organizations are like sewage plants; the really big chunks rise to the top!"

Repercussions

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to recognize the negative fallout caused by people:

- who are disrespectful to and look down on their staff or co-workers;
- who seem oblivious to other employees' feelings and value to the firm;
- who take their staff for granted without any appreciation attached;
- who expect employees to produce an outstanding work product in spite of the constant crisis environment they must function within;
- who criticize often and publicly and praise rarely if ever; and
- who treat others rudely, but expect (make that demand) respect from them.

None of us can function at our full potential or enthusiastically for long under these type of conditions and yet far too many lawyers expect their employees to do just that. If brought to their attention, they try to explain and excuse their behavior with comments such as:

- I'm not here to win a popularity contest, but to run a successful law firm;
- If an employee can't stand the heat, they need to get out of the kitchen;

- I'm not a social director; my job is to satisfy my clients not be Mr. Congeniality to staff; or
- If they don't like it here, then they should leave and good riddance.

Denial or Realism?

If we come back with these or other similar retorts, we are in extreme denial of the damage being done within our office walls - damage to morale, productivity, employee stability, client relations, teamwork and ultimately the bottom line. Just as we would not want to be the victim in an abusive relationship, we should not expect our employees to "just deal with it" and do the job they were hired to do. When this happens, the poison of our neglect runs deep and steady within our firms in more ways than we can quantitatively measure.

What Is Your Staff Thinking?

What would you want your employees' opinions to be about you and the other attorneys in your office? Being brutally honest, what would you be thinking if you were in their shoes and worked as a staff member in your office? If you suspect their opinions are more negative than positive regarding how they are treated by you or your colleagues, what corrective actions should be taken to improve things?

For starters, gather input from each member of your staff about what the firm's greatest strengths are and what it's greatest weaknesses are. This can be done anonymously via confidential questionnaires and surveys, via one on one conferences or department/group sessions or a combination of all these things. Such a process will help to show if there is a common concern among staff members about being treated disrespectfully by any of the attorneys in your firm. Even if their perceptions are a bit exaggerated in your opinion, they are their real perceptions. And how they view their world within your office walls will absolutely affect the quality of their work product, their attitudes and morale.

Dealing with Partners Who Are Jerks?

Finally, what can be done if you treat your staff just fine, but it's one or more of your partners who wins the "Really Big Chunk " award in your office (as in : "Many organizations are like sewage plants; the really big chunks rise to the top!")?

There's no magic wand to change personalities, but we can control with whom we will associate professionally. If you have a partner who treats staff in a demeaning or otherwise neglectful manner, you can take steps to confront him or her about the situation and to insist that changes be made. Or, you can choose to keep things status quo.

If your choice is the latter, that means you accept and allow such negative behaviors in your firm. Furthermore, you will no longer complain or worry about low office morale, bottom line financial disappointments, frequent employee turnover, decreased productivity and similar fallout.

The harder choice to make is to confront the issues head-on. Improvements will not happen over night, but in the long run, your courage to face these issues and your resourcefulness in finding the right solutions for your office will pay off enormously both short and long term.

As with all of our practice management challenges, the choice is ours to make as to whether we will ignore things or tackle them head-on with an open mind, patience and determination. While so many things in life are out of our control, we can decide with whom we will work. If you were a staff member would you be more productive, loyal and happy working in a bullying, disrespectful office or in an environment which values and respects all employees? * *See also: "Minimizing Employee Headaches and Maximizing the Quality of Legal Teams", LWUSA, August 19, 2002, Nancy Byerly Jones).

About the Author:

This article was originally published as one of the author's monthly columns in Lawyers Weekly USA (May 2005). Nancy Byerly Jones is on a special, temporary assignment with her jurisdiction's District Attorneys office. For that reason, she is taking a temporary leave of absence from her law practice and mediation and arbitration work. She continues, however, to work with law firms as a management consultant, retreat facilitator, coach and mediator. Nancy is a regular contributor to Lawyers Weekly USA. For more information, to suggest topic ideas for this column or for electronic copies of the forms related to this month's column, please call (828) 264-1448 or send an e-mail to nancy@nbjlegal.com.

5. FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

Our Technical Support Team Provides Answers to Some Common Technical Questions



When typing slowly on the Files or Contacts index, why does the selection jump around from letter to letter?

Issue:

The Quicksearch that allows you to type the first few letters of a File or Contact name in order to jump right to it jumps around from letter to letter as you type them.

Cause:

There is an automatic time-out for the typing that is set to 0.5 seconds. If you type slowly, you will go beyond this half-second limit and Amicus will think you are starting a new search.

Solution:

You can increase the amount of time given to you to type.

1. Close Amicus
2. Go to the Start button and select Run
3. Type in AA50.INI and select OK (for version 4, type AA40.INI)
4. Look through the file for the KeyboardTimeout preference in the [User Preferences] section
5. Change the setting from 500 to 2000 for 2 seconds.
6. Close and save the changes to the file
7. Start Amicus Attorney and try it out.

For more time, go back into the AA50.INI file and increase the KeyboardTimeout again. The setting is in thousandths of a second so for n seconds, just enter in (n x 1000) as the number of seconds. Usually you don't need to go any higher than 5000 or 5 seconds.

YOUR LEGAL LAUGH

Your monthly dose of humor...



Compliments of: www.legalhumour.com

6. **Amicus Attorney Premier Consultants** Training and More!



Amicus Attorney Premier Consultants are professionals who are nationally qualified to sell and install all Amicus Attorney products and to provide their customers with on-site training and support.

Training Programs Offered by our Premier Consultants:

Here are a few of the training sessions being offered by some of our Premier Consultants. For more information or to register for a class, please contact the consultant firm directly. All times listed in ET unless otherwise indicated.

CD-ROM TRAINING

2b1, Inc.
San Francisco, CA
415-284-2221
www.2b1inc.com

Amicus Attorney V Basic Training: PC Desktop training for the Amicus Attorney user. Easy-to use and easy-to-follow animation covers the most used features of Amicus Attorney V.

For more information, visit their web site: www.2b1inc.com/t_products.htm

CLASSROOM & ONLINE TRAINING

Amicus Attorney V classroom and online training by:

Best Law Firm Solutions
Atlanta, GA
(770) 998 3800
www.bestlawfirm.com

Date	Time	Training Session	Location
August 23, 2005	9 am - 10 am	Amicus Attorney Basics This 1 hour workshop provides a basic look at the Amicus Attorney Basics including creating and setting up files, creating and setting up contacts, and a broad view of the program. You will be contacted via email with a link to the workshop after registering.	Online
August 23, 2005	11 am - 12 pm	Amicus Attorney Events This 1 hour workshop provides a detailed look at the Amicus Attorney Events including the calendar, to dos, linking events, group calendar, and searching the calendar. You will be contacted via email with a link to the workshop after registering.	Online
August 23, 2005	2 pm - 3 pm	Amicus Attorney ComCenter This 1 hour workshop provides a detailed look at Amicus Attorney ComCenter including the phone log, messages, email integration with Microsoft Outlook, searching the ComCenter, and capturing time for these functions. You will be contacted via email with a link to the workshop after registering.	Online
August 23, 2005	4 pm - 5 pm	Amicus Attorney Library & Notes This 1 hour workshop provides a detailed look at Amicus Attorney Library and the new V+ Notes Module. We will discuss setting up the library for your firm's needs, launching pages from the library, the Internet Explorer Library Button, the Microsoft Word/Corel WordPerfect library button, and creating and sending Notes and Stickies. You will be contacted via email with a link to the workshop after registering.	Online
September 7, 2005	1 day workshop	Amicus Attorney One Day Workshop This 1 day workshop, in conjunction with the South Carolina Bar Association, provides a detailed look at Amicus Attorney. In this course we discuss all functions of this award winning case management	Columbia, SC

product. We will go over files, contacts, calendar, notes, time entries, and other functions of the program.

For more details and to register, please visit: www.bestlawfirm.com/register.aspx

ONLINE TRAINING

ProBill Law Firm Solutions

Boca Raton, FL

800-299-9177

www.probill.net

administration@probill.net

For more information, contact ProBill Law Firm Solutions via e-mail or phone.

Date	Time	Training Session	Location
Flexible Dates	9:00 am 11:00 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5:00pm Weekend and late nights available.	eClass Training (Web Based training) - <i>choose from:</i> Basic Application Training Advanced Application Training Application Troubleshooting Quick Start (New Clients Only)	Web based - You can take eclasses directly from your own computer.
Aug 22, 2005	9:00 am	TRN201 <u>Amicus Attorney V - Basics</u> (Setting up Contacts, Files and using the Calendar, Telephone & Email features)	Web based
Aug 22, 2005	11:00 am	TRN202 <u>Amicus Attorney V - Advanced Calendar</u> (Court rules, attaching actions to a calendar event such as generating a document or sending an email, working with the group calendar and more)	Web based
Aug 22, 2005	1:00 pm	TRN203 <u>Amicus Attorney V - Document Assembly</u> (Merge information from Amicus Attorney into your documents while linking the document to a File for future reference.)	Web based
Aug 22, 2005	3:00 pm	TRN204 <u>Amicus Attorney V - The Library</u> (Organize your research materials for easy retrieval, i.e., word processing documents, spreadsheets, websites, paid services)	Web based
Aug 22, 2005	5:00 pm	TRN205 <u>Amicus Attorney V - ComCenter</u> (Everything you need to know about managing emails in Amicus including attaching emails to Files and Contacts. This class also covers other functions of ComCenter namely sending interoffice messages and initiating phone calls)	Web based
Aug 23, 2005	9:00 am	TRN206 <u>Amicus Attorney V - Timeslips Link</u> (Use Amicus Attorney to track your time as you work then transfer it to Timeslips for billing. Exchange contact information between the programs.)	Web based
Aug 23, 2005	11:00 am	TRN207 <u>Amicus Attorney V - QuickBooks Link</u> (Use Amicus Attorney to track your time as you work then transfer it to QuickBooks for billing. Exchange contact information between the programs.)	Web based
Aug 23, 2005	1:00 pm	TRN208 <u>Amicus Attorney V - PCLaw Link</u> (Use Amicus Attorney to track your time as you work then transfer it to PCLaw for billing. Exchange contact information between the programs.)	Web based
Aug 23, 2005	3:00 pm	TRN209 <u>Amicus Attorney V - ESILaw Link</u> (Use Amicus Attorney to track your time as you work then transfer it to ESILaw for billing. Exchange contact information between the programs.)	Web based
Aug 23, 2005	5:00 pm	TRN201+ <u>Amicus Attorney V+ - NEW FEATURES</u> (Notes Module, a virtual legal pad, cross reference to files, manage your stickies. E-mail notification, Palm Link enhancements, additional closed file options)	Web based

Pricing: 1st attendee or class - \$99 US (\$119 CDN), 2nd attendee or class - \$89 US (\$109 CDN), each additional attendee or class - \$79 US (\$99 CDN)



Events

Watch for Amicus Attorney at these events.



top

Some of our top Premier and local consultants will be at these Regional Events demonstrating Amicus Attorney. Stop by and get all of your Amicus Attorney questions answered!

For a complete listing of National and Regional Events visit www.amicusattorney.com/news/news_events.html

2005

Date	Event	Location
September 8 - 10, 2005	<p>State Bar of Georgia Solo and Small Firm Institute and Technology Conference</p> <p>Steve Best of Best Law Firm Solutions, an Amicus Attorney Premier Consultant, will be a featured speaker and exhibitor at this event. Throughout the conference, please visit the Best Law Firm Solutions booth for a demonstration of Amicus Attorney.</p> <p>On September 10th, from 9:00am - 11:15am Steve will be speaking on the Ins & Outs of Software: Part 1: Time Billing and Accounting Part 2: Practice Management</p> <p>Best Law Firm Solutions Atlanta, GA (770) 998-3800 www.bestlawfirm.com</p>	State Bar - Atlanta Headquarters Atlanta, GA
September 14, 2005	<p>TexLaw Management 2005</p> <p>For more information or to register: http://www.texlaw.com/registration/index.html</p> <p>Clyde Bennett & Associates, Amicus Attorney Certified Consultants, will be exhibiting at this conference conducting demonstrations of Amicus Attorney</p> <p>Clyde Bennett & Associates (512) 442 3744 Austin, TX www.cwbserv.com</p>	Belo Mansion & Pavilion Dallas, TX

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