



# Billable hours:

How your firm is **bleeding hours**  
—and money



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# Introduction

In a law firm, every billable minute counts. But in the midst of managing multiple cases, answering client calls, or juggling court deadlines, it's easy for those crucial billable hours to slip through the cracks. These lost hours aren't just minor oversights—they are a steady drain on your firm's potential revenue and growth.

Every inefficiency, every task that goes untracked, adds up fast. And let's be honest: there's only so much you can do manually before things start to fall behind.

Technology has the potential to help you capture every minute you're working. In this guide, we'll show you how to use simple tech solutions to streamline communication, automate time tracking, and make sure your billable hours reflect every moment of effort.



## Section 1: The hidden costs of missed hours

When a client call goes unlogged, an email reply isn't tracked, or meeting prep time slips through, it's not just a few minutes lost—it's a steady drain on your firm's revenue. These untracked interactions accumulate over time, costing potentially thousands each year. Beyond the lost income, every missed hour is time your team could have dedicated to high-impact work, affecting both efficiency and client satisfaction.

Often, these missed hours result from hidden inefficiencies: scattered systems that don't communicate, time-consuming manual logs, or constant daily interruptions. Every minute spent searching for notes or re-entering data is a missed billing opportunity. This is the kind of time leak that even the most organised firms face, and it's a challenge well worth addressing.

## Section 2: Common pitfalls that lead to missed billable hours

While you may have systems in place, the reality is that even the most established firms experience gaps in tracking. Here's a look at the most common pitfalls that result in missed billable hours, and how they impact your bottom line:

### Outdated technology and manual tracking



Relying on manual processes—like spreadsheets or handwritten logs—to track billable hours introduces a high risk of error. Manual processes are inherently slow and prone to oversight—details slip, and hours go unbilled. This “off-the-clock” time adds up quickly, and although these manual methods might feel familiar, they can ultimately lead to significant revenue loss for your firm.

### Lack of real-time logging



Without a system to capture interactions as they happen—whether in person, on the phone, or via email—there's a high risk of missed entries. Real-time logging can feel like a luxury in a growing firm, but it's a necessity to ensure that each client touchpoint translates into revenue. Without it, your team might spend hours each month trying to remember every detail and interaction, leading to gaps and inaccuracies in billing.

### Disconnected communication systems



Without a centralised communication system, important client interactions can become scattered across emails, calls, and meetings, making it harder to track them accurately. When your team spends time searching through multiple platforms to retrieve a client's email or follow-up note, valuable time is lost. Centralising communications enables all client interactions to be accessible in one place, reducing time wasted on double-entry or backtracking.

## Section 3: Actionable solutions: how to capture every billable minute

To ensure that every client interaction and task is tracked accurately, growing law firms can implement a few targeted strategies that boost efficiency without adding to the workload. Here's how to capture every billable minute.



### 1. Automate call tracking with voip

Phone calls are a major part of client communication, but manually logging each call is tedious and error prone. One of the most effective ways to keep track of every client call is by using a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system. VOIP is a phone system that runs over the internet instead of traditional phone lines. This means that the details of every call are automatically recorded, including its length, timestamp, and even client notes in some systems.

**Tip:** Choose a VOIP solution that integrates seamlessly with your case management system, so each call log syncs directly with client files, making it easy to access and track later.



### 2. Centralise all client communication

When you're managing multiple cases and handling client demands, it's essential to keep all communications in one place. With tools like Microsoft Office's Outlook or Teams, you can centralise all emails, calls, and meetings, allowing for easier tracking and coordination. Syncing client communication ensures that every exchange, from email threads to follow-up calls, is accessible, reducing time spent searching for records or updating multiple systems.

**Tip:** Utilise cloud-based storage and synced calendars to keep interactions organised and eliminate the need for duplicate tracking. This approach boosts collaboration and cuts down on time lost to fragmented communication.



### 3. Use real-time time-tracking tools

While VOIP and centralised communication systems help track specific client interactions like calls and emails, real-time time-tracking tools capture every task you work on, from drafting documents to conducting research. These tools automatically log the time you spend on all activities, running quietly in the background and recording every minute. With real-time tracking, you gain a comprehensive view of where time is allocated, ensuring nothing is overlooked in billing.

**Tip:** Review your real-time tracking reports regularly to identify any time sinks or inefficiencies in your workflow. This insight not only improves billing accuracy but also highlights areas where your firm can streamline tasks to boost productivity.





## How Vodacom Business can support your firm's growth

As your law firm grows, so do the demands on your technology. At Vodacom Business, we understand that the right technology foundation is essential for supporting your firm's long-term success. Our goal is to be more than just a provider—we want to be a partner in your journey, taking on the technical complexities so you can stay focused on what you do best.

Whether you're looking to enhance communication, improve efficiency, or create a future-ready practice, we're here to help you achieve those goals. By working together, we can help your firm thrive, giving you the confidence to meet challenges head-on and build a practice that's ready for whatever comes next.

Let Vodacom Business handle the technology, so you can focus on what truly matters: your clients, your cases, and your vision for the future.

## Conclusion

Running a law firm is about more than managing cases—it's about creating a sustainable practice where every second worked builds value for your clients and your team. By implementing straight-forward systems to capture billable hours, you're not just plugging revenue leaks; you're building a practice that's agile, accountable, and prepared for growth.



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