

Law firm is powered by Apple.

Steve Hitzeman Law Practice
Green Bay, WI

It's all about relationships for attorney Steve Hitzeman. He enjoys and values them with his clients – and with his MacBook Pro, just one piece of his Apple-only office.



One of the beauties of starting your own business is getting to make your own choices.

For Steve Hitzeman's solo Green Bay law practice, the technology choice was easy: Apple. Striking out on his own from a large firm saw him choose a Macintosh desktop, a MacBook Pro, and an iPhone.

"I thought, if I am going to start my own firm, I want to run it with all Apples," Hitzeman said. "I really like the simplicity and ease of use of Apple products."

It was "Steve's love of the Macintosh," said Andrew Pavek, Camera Corner Connecting Point Account Executive and Apple Specialist. "Steve fell in love with Daylite, a Macintosh-only customer-relationship management package."

Hitzeman's Macintosh relationship started when he bought one for his family. He liked it well enough, he bought a MacBook. And liked that so much, he began taking it to work. "Once I did that, I liked the (operating) system a lot better," Hitzeman said. "When I go back to Windows, it is difficult. It is cumbersome and not logical. I simply hate using Windows. I go back to Apple and like that side much better."

Hitzeman finds himself in Windows at times, due to a request from his accountant, to use

QuickBooks for Windows. Pavek set him up with VMware's Fusion software, allowing the lawyer to run Windows on his Mac.

Daylite, on the other hand, runs only on Macintosh. Hitzeman won't hesitate to say it's his single most important piece of software. "Daylite allows me to track relationships and referral sources," he explained. "At this early stage in the business, I do very little advertising. My business has always been, and continues to be, based on referrals. It is very important to me to track who refers a potential client. Daylite allows me to, quite easily, see the relationships between my clients. I can see who sent me a case, and what other relationships have developed, as time goes on."

Hitzeman Law is a small office, with just attorney Hitzeman and his paralegal, Karen Giese. When a new call comes in, Giese begins entering information into Daylite. The referral source is entered, along with background. Later, Hitzeman reads the entries and contacts the caller. "Every time we talk to a client or potential client, we add more pieces of information to Daylite," he said.

Daylite allows Hitzeman Law to store information without generating any paper. "Only when they hire me, do we open a physical file, so we live and die by that Daylite record," said Hitzeman.

Hitzeman has easy access to Daylite and everything else around his own office, because of Wi-Fi set up by Pavek. Hitzeman has easy access from the road because his iPhone connects into his Daylite data. "It is huge for me to be able to access my Daylite contacts and notes, from my iPhone," said Hitzeman, who is only too happy to share that fact.

A colleague at another firm was frustrated he can't use his Blackberry to access his firm's Windows-based contact manager. "I told him, 'I can do that quite easily,'" recounted Hitzeman, who invited the attorney over for a little discovery meeting.

What a visitor is unlikely to discover is Giese or Hitzeman tangling with technology. If it gets interesting, they phone Pavek. "We get a very quick response, which is huge," Hitzeman said. "It's just Karen and I. I am often out of the office. When that happens, it's nice that Karen just calls or emails Andrew, who always responds quickly.

"Andrew has invested a lot of time into my firm, and wants to see me succeed," said Hitzeman. "When we started out, it was very, very hectic. I was dealing with opening a new business and keeping existing clients comfortable with the transition. Andrew helped us get through all of that."