

# THE **INNOCENCE** NETWORK

## Case Management System Resource Guide

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Innocence Network Support Unit

# Innocence Network Case Management System Resource Guide

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## Introduction

The casework performed by Innocence Network member organizations is fascinating and complex. Like other law firms, Network members are concerned with tracking a case's litigation status, but the arc of an innocence case includes the often lengthy and multifaceted process of case evaluation and/or intake. Being able to readily and accurately track each moment of a case's lifespan is an essential part of the work of every Network member organization. Thankfully, in recent years an increasing number of technological tools have been developed to make tracking this information easier and more reliable. All case management system software providers should have the capacity to record and retain this information (although, some providers are better than others).

Further complicating Network members' case data is the sheer *number* of cases to track, when we consider rejected, pending and active cases. In order to have a true understanding of your organization's workload, you need the ability to look at your cases from a birds-eye view. How many cases does each staff attorney have? What types of requests are you receiving? What percentage of cases do you accept? With a 360-degree perspective, you can better assess how staff is spending their time and the kinds of cases that tend to be most successful, which can help you increase your organization's impact. Therefore, a truly functional database should be more than just a repository of information – it should generate accurate, timely and easily accessible reports.

Navigating all the various case management system options can be overwhelming, and there are several high-level concerns that most Network members have when deciding to invest in a new system. This *Innocence Network Case Management System Resource Guide* begins with a discussion of these concerns, including the types of software available, questions to ask when thinking about how to ensure security, and an explanation and breakdown of the costs associated with acquiring a new system (“Case Management System Overview,” page 3). Next, the *Resource Guide* offers an at-a-glance, compare-and-contrast chart which examines the basics of the five case management systems most commonly used by Innocence Network members (“Case Management Systems At-A-Glance,” page 10). This chart is followed by links to additional case management systems and other resources. Finally, the Appendix provides a detailed breakdown of each of the five case management systems included in the chart, including the pros and cons of each system reported by Network members (“Breakdown of Case Management System Providers,” page 15).

Although the needs of every Network member are different, the research the Network Support Unit conducted suggests that Clio is the most useful and affordable option for Network members (particularly for those who are affiliated with a law school). Clio is followed by Salesforce, which can be a good option for organizations seeking a database that can also be used for relationship management and fundraising. Due to a high number of complaints, limited functionality and great expense, we found Amicus Attorney to be the least advisable choice.

It is our hope that the *Innocence Network Case Management System Resource Guide* will better equip Innocence Network members in the selection and adoption of a new case management system. Questions about this guide and the software products mentioned should be directed to Rachel Schwartz, Innocence Network Operations Associate, at [rschwartz@innocencenetwork.org](mailto:rschwartz@innocencenetwork.org).

## Case Management System Overview

There can be a variety of reasons for choosing a new case management system. For newer or smaller Network members, you may have come to the point where you need to move away from tracking cases in Excel spreadsheets or on paper. Alternatively, you may be a larger organization already using more sophisticated software that is just not meeting your needs. Selecting and implementing an entirely new case management system can be time-consuming and a drain on your organization's resources, so it is a good idea to consider some high-level issues before making a transition.

First, you need to examine your organization's current state and have a clear vision both of what this new system will do and the process for getting there. What does your workflow look like? Who will be staffing or overseeing the implementation of a new case management system? Next, you need to understand the basics of the software options available. What do they look like? How do they operate? How does one implement the system? How much do they cost, and where do those costs originate? Finally, we all know that the security of client information is paramount. How secure are these systems, and how can we make them even more secure? It is helpful to have a general understanding of each of these areas before evaluating any software provider individually.

## Organizational Considerations

Investing the time and resources into selecting and implementing a completely new case management system – or any database, for that matter – warrants careful reflection and consideration at the organizational level. Pricing and affordability is of great concern to every organization, and is addressed in the *Case Management System Costs* subsection that begins on page 6.

### Clear Purpose and Scope

First and foremost, think carefully about what your organization is looking for in a case management system. Keep in mind that a case management system can serve two distinct functions: the first enables you to easily track the lifespan of one particular case, and the second allows you to have a 360-degree view of your organization's overall workload. Sometimes this second function is more difficult to set up and learn. If this is not an objective that your organization is looking to address at this moment, that is worth recognizing. Furthermore, some Network members might find it helpful to employ *two* separate case

management systems – one for tracking case intake, and another for managing active legal work. Considering the differences in the type of information captured at these two stages and depending on each organization’s particular operation and needs, it may be advantageous to have two distinct systems (provided that data can be easily transferred from one to another). In any case, think critically about the system you are currently using and what precisely you are looking to improve.

It is also important to consider the future of your organization as your new software system must accommodate any growth your organization may experience in the upcoming years. If your organization can foresee making any substantive changes in the near future to things like the number of people you employ, the kinds of cases you accept, or the volume of your caseload, think about how these factors may affect the kind of system you need. Establishing the system’s scope and range will have a real effect on the cost and execution of this project.

### **Shared Vision**

Before purchasing any new software, an organization needs to agree on the purpose of the system and how it will be used. While the director may have a clear vision about what the organization needs, it is important to incorporate input and generate buy-in from those who will be the primary users of the software: case reviewers, staff attorneys, administrative staff, and so on. These are the individuals who understand the day-to-day needs of the organization’s technology and who will be entering and extracting information from the new system. The more input these users have on the front end, the more useful the final product will be.

### **Implementation**

It is essential to designate a point person (a staff member or volunteer) who will oversee the implementation of the new system. This individual should have fairly advanced technological skills. Depending on which system you choose, this person may be responsible for customizing fields, importing existing data, and training other staff on how to use the software. This individual *must* be familiar with the organization’s current case management system and have an accurate understanding of the organization’s workflow. You want to ensure that the new technology compliments and assists with the work of your staff, so it is vital that the person responsible for implementation have a solid understanding of how your organization operates before setting up something new. This is especially relevant if you will be relying on your software to produce frequent and accurate reports.

If you do not have a staff member or volunteer with the capacity or adequate technical skills to oversee this project, consider hiring a technology consultant. The consultant should still work in tandem with a staff member who will actively use the software and is familiar with the organization’s workflow. See more about tech consultants in the *Case Management System Costs* section beginning on page 6.

You will probably not be able to anticipate every need your organization will have at the beginning of the process. Thus, when choosing a software provider, ask about the relative ease of functions like editing a field name, creating a task alert or changing the reports that you run.

Will someone on your staff be able to make these kinds of changes themselves, or is it a complex process? Ideally, you want the ability to adjust the system as you start to use it.

### **Best Practices**

*System Administrator:* After the system is in place, a staff member with capacity and a reasonable degree of technical savvy should be designated as the system administrator. Again, this individual should be very familiar with the organization's case workflow, and can be the same individual who oversaw the implementation process.

*Reporting and Data Integrity:* Being able to pull accurate reports is one of the most important features of any data management system, particularly if you are required to provide updates to funders and/or auditors. Furthermore, consistent and precise record keeping may become a matter of legal liability. Because a report is only as good as the data that is initially entered, it is important to establish a committed culture of use among your staff. To ensure data quality control, all staff members who have access to the system must have thorough training and a high degree of accountability.

### **Software Considerations**

There are other high-level decisions to be made about the software that you choose, as it relates to your organization's work.

#### **Customization v. "Out-of-the Box"**

Depending on the capacity and interest of your organization, you may want a greater or lesser degree of flexibility within your case management system. Some software packages, like Amicus Attorney or Clio, are designed specifically for legal work. Others such as Salesforce, Filemaker Pro and Microsoft Access are more general relationship management/database tools. This second group will require a much higher level of customization at the start than software that is designed for tracking casework. The benefit to having a completely self-designed system is that you can really tailor it to the individual needs of your organization. This is especially attractive since innocence work, and case intake in particular, is so nuanced. However, be wary of the perils of over-flexibility: the more you customize something, the less able a technical support team may be to troubleshoot questions or solve unique technical problems. It is very easy to fall down a rabbit hole of an over-customized, overly-convoluted system that is difficult to learn, difficult to organize, and difficult to fix if problems arise.

Out-of-the-box solutions will most likely be more basic and may limit your flexibility, but they will also likely be easier to learn. It is important to note, however, that no off-the-shelf legal software is designed for innocence work, so you will likely need to customize any system to a certain extent (assigning field names for your stages of case intake, for example).

#### **Data Storage and Entry**

Take some time to reflect on the kind of information that you are going to be entering into the system. How much data does your organization currently have? How much do you anticipate

this to grow? What kind of data is taking up the most room? Be sure to choose a provider or package that allows for some flexibility here; you do not want to incur an unknown cost for buying new data storage space once your current package runs out.

In addition, consider how easy it is to get data in and out of your system. Does your existing data need to be manually entered into the new system, or can it be uploaded automatically? Will you be able to pull all your information from this system and transfer it to somewhere else if necessary? If it is cloud-based, can you back up on a server? See more about cloud-based providers in the *Security Considerations* section beginning on page 7.

## Case Management System Costs

Budget can be an important factor in choosing a case management system. For some Network members, it is the sole deciding factor. To help determine what your real financial investment might be, consider the following:

**License vs. Subscription Costs:** Most software providers will either charge you for individual licenses or for a monthly or annual subscription fee.

1. *Individual licenses:* If you are purchasing individual licenses, think about how many active users you currently have. How many might you have in the future? How expensive is it to obtain additional user licenses going forward? Do licenses need to be renewed annually, or is it a single up-front cost? Keep in mind that it is considered bad practice to share licenses, so each active user should ideally have his or her own license.
2. *Subscription fees:* If you will be paying a routine subscription fee, calculate how much five or ten years of subscription to this service will cost. Have the fees gone up significantly in past years, and might they increase in the future? Are there other hidden costs or is the subscription a flat fee?

**Implementation:** Costs for implementing a new system can be quite high, especially if you want to customize your own software. While it is best to have a staff member or volunteer dedicated to this task as mentioned above, it might be necessary to engage a consultant. Skilled tech consultants can be expensive, depending on the scope of the project. They typically charge by the hour and the implementation of a new case management system will likely require a lot of hours. The cost for these services varies drastically; a start-to-finish implementation and customization for a product like Salesforce has been valued as high as \$60,000, although one Network member was able to complete the project for under \$7,000.

If you do not have the resources to hire a consultant, and do not have a qualified staff member or existing volunteer available, it might be worthwhile to look for a grant to fund this process. For example, the [Taproot Foundation](#) offers competitive grants specifically for Salesforce implementation and adoption. Another option is to recruit a technically knowledgeable volunteer who can help with system implementation. Highly skilled volunteers can be found through volunteer matching services such as [Volunteermatch.org](#), and they do not necessarily

need to be local. Be sure that the volunteer is willing to dedicate several months of time to working very closely with you on this project.

**Technical Support:** Once a product has been purchased and the system has launched, different providers offer varying degrees of ongoing technical support. Especially if you do not have a staff member who feels confident in his or her technical abilities, it is smart to ask your provider about the costs for ongoing or ad hoc technical support. Is there an hourly rate? Is it provided via a pre-purchased package? What is the tech team's availability and how quick is their response time? Will you have a designated representative you can call, or do they use a help-desk ticketing system? Be aware that if something goes suddenly wrong in the system, "emergency response" fees can be quite high.

**Other costs:** Costs can be hidden in areas like purchasing supplemental data storage, software upgrades, back-up storage and additional features. If your vendor does not offer certain services that you know you will want (document storage or email integration, for example), ask about the costs of adding these on at the beginning.

## Security Considerations

Most Network members are rightly concerned with the security of their case management system. There are two kinds of case management system platforms, and each has its own set of security considerations. The first is called **cloud-based software**, which means that data is stored and accessed via the Internet. The second is called **server-based software**, which means data is stored in a central server located in your office or a remote site. To be perfectly frank, there are no providers that can make an absolute guarantee that nothing will happen to your data – servers crash and the Internet could go down. It is in the interest of all providers, however, to invest the most resources in ensuring the security of their clients' data. Most highly-regarded case management systems should be dependable, if you know what questions to ask. The decision to use a cloud-based or server-based provider depends on how comfortable you are with keeping your information stored on the web or in a physical place. Below are some things to keep in mind when making this assessment.

### Cloud-Based Software

Several of the top case management solutions are based in the cloud. There are advantages to using cloud-based software, particularly when it comes to convenience and affordability. Cloud-based software allows you to log in securely from anywhere via a web browser or mobile device. This is particularly useful for organizations that cover a large jurisdiction as it allows staff to make real time updates to case files while they are traveling, and makes it easy for students or volunteers to update files from wherever they are located.

Of course, there are important concerns regarding the security of cloud-based systems. Most of the language used around software security is quite complex and technical. To make things a bit more digestible for you and your staff, ask cloud-based software providers about the following:

- a) **Who is actually operating the cloud?** Data can be stored in clouds that are hosted either by the vendor themselves or by a bigger infrastructure provider like Google, Microsoft or Amazon. If a vendor is using something like Amazon Cloud (which hosts data for companies like Instagram), the security checks and updates are likely going to be more reliable.
- b) **Ask for more details about a vendor's encryption levels.** Most organizations will say they have "Grade A" or "bank industry standard" security features. These terms are a bit nebulous, so you want the provider to offer specifics by asking them for more technical details. While you may not be able to understand all the complicated terminology, if a company is willing to be transparent and show you that extra information, it is a good sign that they know what they are doing. At the very least, a vendor should provide you with their "ISO grade." The ISO, or International Organization for Standardization, helps set the most rigid standards for information security controls using cloud computing services. As of September 2014, the recommended grade is ISO 27001:2013. For more information, visit <http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/management-standards/iso27001.htm>.
- c) **What protections is the provider taking to secure their users during the log in process?** The process of entering your username and password is sometimes called "in transit," and is a critical moment for the database's security. Providers should have certain protocol for how it protects "in transit" use.
- d) **What protections is the provider taking to secure the data while the system is in use?** The security protocols may look different during the time you are logged on and are actively using the database. You want to know about the security features for this period, as well.
- e) **What are the "access controls" in place?** Most cloud-based providers allow you to customize and control which user can view, edit, save and/or delete certain sets of records. This means you can assign greater or more restricted access to certain information as you see fit, allowing individuals to see only certain cases, only certain parts of cases, etc. This also provides accountability for the integrity of your data, enabling you to see who is editing which records, what they changed, and when. Make sure this is a feature that your system provides.
- f) **What are the "data portability" features like? Are there additional costs to data extraction? Does the program reverse-engineer the data, or is it kept in a well-published format?** It is important to ensure that you retain both legal and technical control of all your data in case you ever wish to leave your chosen vendor. "Data portability" refers to how easy it is to extract all the data from the software in a published format. Some solutions will encrypt the data in a certain way that makes it difficult or expensive to extract – requiring you to pay extra to get the data out. Look for providers who allow you to easily export your data into a CSV or Excel file.
- g) **Have the vendor's security features have ever been audited?** A high-quality product's security program should be audited by a third party. If the system has been audited, ask to see more details about the auditor's report. Again, even if you do not really know how to decipher the report, the fact that the vendor is willing to share the report with you is important.

- h) **Have there been any “incident reports” (security breaches) in the past?** Have any of the vendor’s clients ever experienced a security breach? If so, what did they do? What is their policy for handling such a breach in the future? Look for a detailed account with hard facts, not a vague policy that was not or will not be enforced.
- i) **What is the provider’s policy regarding national security requests for data?** Does the vendor publish transparency reports about requests for your data? How protective is the provider of their clients’ data in the wake of requests from national security agencies or law enforcement?
- j) **What is the vendor’s policy in case there is a real emergency, like an Internet outage?** Some vendors provide additional hard drive back up services (which might be an added cost). If you are concerned about the storing information in the cloud, you may want to think about backing up your data in a hard drive, as well.

If you are concerned about backing up your data, and a hard drive back-up is too expensive, you can routinely export your data in PDF or CSV files and store it on your local hard drive. Again, make sure to check your vendor’s data portability features to see how easy this will be to do (see question [f] above).

### **Server-Based Software**

The older and more traditional option, server-based software, tends to be more expensive but can provide more comfort in security. To access a server, you must be physically present in the office, where one or more computers are enabled with the software that you log into. Servers are typically housed on-site. Remote access can be set up so you can log onto one of those computers from somewhere else. Many of the questions about security for a server-based provider will be similar to those of a cloud-based provider (questions [c-i] above are also applicable to server-based providers). In addition, consider the following:

- **Who maintains the server?** Unlike cloud-based providers, physical servers usually need to be maintained in-house. For Network members affiliated with a university, the university’s IT department may provide this type of support. Otherwise, you need someone on staff, or a vendor or consultant who will keep up the server’s maintenance and assist with troubleshooting.
- **How are updates implemented and pushed out?** How often will the provider be making updates? Who needs to initiate them? How long does the process take and how might it affect the server’s usage? Can updates be run and installed by your staff or database administrator or does it need to be done by the vendor?
- **What does the back-up process look like?** It is important to keep a copy of your data off-site in case of an emergency (like a building fire). Backing up a server’s data will mean physically copying the data and transferring it to a storage place off-site. Back-up can also be done to a cloud server. Routine back-ups should be done monthly, weekly or even daily, depending on how much data you have. Remember to calculate the costs of physical back-ups and incorporate that into your budget.

## Case Management System Providers At-a-Glance: Compare and Contrast Chart

The following chart offers a quick overview and comparison of the five case management systems most commonly used by Innocence Network members, as reported on the 2013 Innocence Network Annual Report Survey. These five providers are:

1. Amicus Attorney: <http://amicusattorney.com/>
2. Clio: we examined Clio twice, as it has two distinct packages – its standard non-profit package (<http://www.goclio.com/>) and the “Clio Academic Access” program (<https://www.goclio.com/partnerships/academic-access/>) for university-affiliated members
3. FileMaker Pro: <http://www.filemaker.com/>
4. Microsoft Access: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/access/>
5. Salesforce: <http://www.salesforcefoundation.org/power-of-us/>

More information about each of these providers, including feedback from Network members who currently use each product, can be found in the Appendix. Other well-regarded case management systems not examined in this document include Justware, Perfect Law, Perfect Practice, Rocket Matter, Sharepoint and Time Matters.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the Network Support Unit does not recommend any one particular software provider since every organization’s needs are different. You are in the best position to decide which product is best for you. However, based on the research we conducted, including interviews with Network members about each of the five most commonly-used providers, we found that Clio best meets the overall needs of Network members. It is affordable (especially for members with a law school affiliation), easier to customize and learn than other providers, is reliable, has great customer support, and has well documented, extensive security features. Salesforce is also a good option for Network members, although requires more work on the customization and implementation side. Because of its more limited functionality, great expense and general frustration voiced by some Network members, we would hesitate to endorse Amicus Attorney.

Software:	*Cost:	Security:	Set up and Training:	Technical Support:	Other uses:	Upgrades:	Network Member Reference:
Amicus Attorney	1 <sup>st</sup> license varies from \$499 - \$999. Additional licenses range from \$399 – \$699.	Predominately server-based software, but more limited cloud-based services are offered under a different package.	Needs to be done independently. A variety of online training tools are available.	Offers 30 days of support during initial set-up period. Additional technical assistance must be purchased via an annual contract package.	Relationship management and communication needs.	Must be purchased.	To speak to a Network member about Amicus Attorney, reach out to Katie Seward from the Innocence Project Northwest at <a href="mailto:kseward@uw.edu">kseward@uw.edu</a>
Clio (for stand alone non-profits)	Non-profits are offered a ~20% discount off of the <a href="#">regular pricing</a> package, as negotiated with individual sales representatives. The total comes out to about \$49 a month, per user.	Cloud-based software. See Clio's <a href="#">security guide</a> for more details. Additional back-up is available for purchase via <a href="#">Amazon S3</a> .	Free set-up, data migration help, and training. Unlimited access to online webinars, training videos, and other tools.	Free technical support is available via email or phone (8am – 8pm EST) or via a help desk ticketing system.	Tracking student/ volunteer/ employee time for grants and other reports; document sharing.	Automatic upgrades, new features, and other additions are seamlessly added to accounts monthly.	To speak with a Network member from a non-profit about Clio, reach out to Keegan Flaherty from the Montana Innocence Project at <a href="mailto:kfmtip@mtinnocenceproject.org">kfmtip@mtinnocenceproject.org</a>

\*All costs approximated and are as of September 2014.

Software:	Cost:	Security:	Set up and Training:	Technical Support:	Other uses:	Upgrades:	Network Member Reference:
Clio (for law-school affiliates):	Free via the “Clio Academic Access Program.” Includes unlimited user licenses and data, and access to all services available to paying customers. <a href="#">Application required.</a>	Cloud-based software. See Clio’s <a href="#">security guide</a> for more details. Additional back-up is available for purchase via <a href="#">Amazon S3</a> .	Free set-up, data migration help and training. Unlimited access to online webinars, training videos and other tools	Free technical support is available via email or phone (8am – 8pm EST) or via help desk ticketing system.	Tracking student/ volunteer/ employee time for grants and other reports; document sharing.	Automatic upgrades, new features and other additions are seamlessly added to accounts monthly.	To speak with a Network member from a law-school affiliated project about Clio, reach out to Cheryl Anayana from the Arizona Innocence Project at <a href="mailto:Cheryl.Anaya@nau.edu">Cheryl.Anaya@nau.edu</a>
FileMaker Pro:	Non-profits qualify for a ~65% discount for individual licenses, running about \$65 a month, per user (for under five licenses).	Server-based software. Can use on designated computers, or can be accessed remotely if granted log in.	Needs to be done independently. Fairly straight-forward set up process and easy to migrate data. Customization might take a long time.	Technical support can be purchased at \$45/ hour.	Tracking student/ volunteer/ employee time; basic development or fundraising needs.	Some small system updates are automatic, but full upgrades need to be purchased. Discounted upgrades are available depending on eligibility.	To speak with a Network member about FileMaker Pro, reach out to Cheryl Sullivan from North Carolina Center on Actual Innocence at <a href="mailto:csullivan@nccai.org">csullivan@nccai.org</a>

Software:	Cost:	Security:	Set up and Training:	Technical Support:	Other Uses:	Upgrades:	Network Member Reference:
Microsoft Access:	Costs are included with the Microsoft Office 365 for Business package (about \$12.50 a month, per user)	Server-based software. Can be used on designated computers, or accessed remotely if granted log in.	Needs to be done independently. Microsoft offers many templates and tutorials for how to set up your program in Access.	Minimal support from Microsoft. Users have access to crowd-sourced forums and online tutorials.	Integrating with other Microsoft products.	Upgrades would need to be purchased and installed separately.	To speak with a Network member about Microsoft Access, reach out to Richard Davis from the Innocence Project New Orleans at <a href="mailto:RichardD@ip-no.org">RichardD@ip-no.org</a>
Salesforce:	Non-profits receive up to 10 free user-licenses for the "Salesforce Enterprise Edition" package, as well as discounts for additional licenses (about \$30 per user per month) and other Salesforce products.	Cloud-based software. Used by major banks and the President's office. For specifics, visit <a href="http://trust.salesforce.com/">http://trust.salesforce.com/</a>	Needs to be done independently, and can be complex. However, Salesforce has a rather prolific bank of online tutorial videos and training modules.	Free technical support available via a help desk ticketing system. Non-urgent requests will be answered within 2 days. "Premier" support with quicker response times can be purchased at a discounted rate, \$22.50 per user per month.	Team and task management; fundraising; mass-email, marketing.	Automatic upgrades, new features and other additions are seamlessly added to accounts routinely.	To speak with a Network member about Salesforce, reach out to Seth Miller from the Innocence Project of Florida at <a href="mailto:smiller@floridainnocence.org">smiller@floridainnocence.org</a>

## Additional Resources

- For a more detailed study of case management systems, see The Open Society Foundations' Working Paper, "[Primer: Support Technologies for Human Right Lawyers](#)" (December 2013).
- For more about cloud computing and software, read this [2012 TechSoup article](#).
- For a similar comparison chart featuring other software providers not included in this document, see the American Bar Association's [Practice/ Case Management Software Comparison Chart](#), last updated in June 2013.

## Conclusion

If you are considering making a major change to your case management system, the Network Support Unit hopes that the information in this guide will help better prepare you to ask the right questions both internally (about your staff, about your organization's current and future resources, and about your workload) and externally (of each software provider). Once these questions are answered, you will be able to choose and implement the case management system that meets the particular needs of your organization and make your work more streamlined, efficient and productive.

## Appendix: Breakdown of Case Management System Providers

### Amicus Attorney

*Currently used by four Network member organizations*

Amicus Attorney is a commonly-used legal practice management software that can be tailored to fit the needs of innocence work. It offers a desktop server-based platform as well as a cloud-based one, which is much less expensive but has more limited features. Because of the many other more sophisticated cloud-based options available, we have only reviewed the desktop server-based package.

Amicus Attorney is definitely on the expensive side, even with a non-profit discount. An initial license can cost anywhere between \$499 to \$999, depending on what kind of package you choose. Additional licenses run from \$399 to \$699. Upgrades and technical support can be quite expensive as well. Amicus Attorney is a popular choice among law schools that can bear the brunt of the costs and offer some independent technical support. Functionality and ease of use on this product varies according to different users. One Network member found the search and reporting features to be very limited.

#### **Network Member Feedback**

*The following is based on the feedback from two Network members using Amicus Attorney (both affiliated with a law school).*

##### **Pros:**

- Can be used as a contact-management tool for other purposes like tracking relationships with donors or pro bono firms
- Easy to create template letters and forms

##### **Cons:**

- Very limited search functions
- Difficult to create relevant reports
- Expensive
- Lengthy customization process

### Clio

*Currently used by seven Network member organizations*

Clio is currently the most widely-used case management software within the Network. It offers two different packages that are essentially identical except in price. For all organizations that

have a proven affiliation with a law school and uses law students, Clio has a completely free package called Clio Academic Access. An application process is required in which you must provide evidence of your affiliation with a law school. If accepted, organizations earn unlimited user licenses and access to the same implementation help, training, and support services that paying customers have. For non-profit organizations unaffiliated with a law school, a 20% discount can be negotiated with your sales representative. The estimated cost for an independent non-profit with no law school affiliation is \$49 a month, per user.

Also a legal practice and case management software, Clio is easier to customize for innocence work than a product like Salesforce. It is geared towards small to mid-sized law firms, which aligns well with the size of most Network members. While the customization process can be lengthy (as with all providers), the training and technical support offered has been widely praised.

Clio is primarily a cloud-based package but offers a significant amount of information concerning their security system. As noted in the *Security Considerations* section on page 7, transparency and willingness to discuss security features is a good sign of a provider's reliability. In addition, Clio offers a partnership with Amazon S3, a highly-regarded online storage service that allows you to easily copy all your data and back it up in an external cloud at a very minimal price. Having your data stored in two separate clouds, while certainly not necessary, may be a low-cost way to provide you more peace of mind. Finally, Clio's data portability feature is very flexible, allowing you to export your data into a PDF or CV file easily for routine back-up onto your local hard drive, if desired.

If you are interested in speaking with a Clio representative already familiar with the Innocence Network, reach out to Shelby Hejjas at 1-888-858-2546, x159 or [shelby.hejjas@clio.com](mailto:shelby.hejjas@clio.com)

### **Network Member Feedback**

*The following is based on the feedback from two Network members using Clio (one stand alone non-profit and one project affiliated with a law school):*

#### **Pros:**

- A good tool for tracking student or volunteer hours
- Easy to share documents and set up permissions
- Great customer service and technical support

#### **Cons:**

- Takes some time and training to become comfortable with the database
- For non-profits, the cost for multiple user licenses can be expensive
- While there is a retrieval system in place, one Network member had a student delete a case that they were unable to recover

## FileMakerPro

*Currently used by four Network member organizations*

Filemaker Pro is a well-regarded data management system, although it is not specific to legal services. It is server-based and licenses are purchased individually or in a bulk for a group over five. It can be expensive, although the non-profit discount runs at about one-third the corporate price (averaging about \$65 a month, per user). While upgrades, technical support and other features can be quite costly, FileMaker Pro does offer a number of deals and sales through resources like [Techsoup.org](http://Techsoup.org).

Overall, Network members seem satisfied with this product, although not overly enthusiastic. It has no particularly remarkable features, but works well after it has been set up and implemented.

### **Network Member Feedback**

*The following is based on the feedback from two Network members using Filemaker Pro:*

#### **Pros:**

- Easy to customize and edit fields at various points
- Easy to import Excel spreadsheets
- Easy to search
- Good reporting tool that also creates nice graphics

#### **Cons:**

- Because users log-in remotely to the server, they can get kicked off easily
- A bit expensive
- Requires a lot of time to set up and customize

## Microsoft Access

*Currently used by five Network member organizations*

Microsoft Access is one of the least expensive and simplest case management options. If you are currently using another Microsoft product (such as Word or Excel) to track your cases, Microsoft Access is an easy transition. The user costs are already accounted for if you have purchased a Microsoft Office for Business program. The real financial investment will come with the customization, implementation, and training costs discussed on pages 6-7.

It is worth noting that Access' low cost comes with very minimal functionality. This system is desktop-based and provides you with just the bare-bones tools of a very basic database. If you

are only seeking to enter data and run very simple reports, this is a fine option. For anything beyond that, Microsoft Access may be unable to meet your needs.

### **Network member feedback:**

*The following is based on the feedback from one Network member who uses Microsoft Access:*

#### **Pros:**

- Integrates well with other time tracking systems
- Operates easily on older, slow computers
- Easy to import Excel spreadsheets with case information

#### **Cons:**

- It is easy to make a mistake when editing, entering, or searching content
- Very minimal functionality

## **Salesforce**

*Currently used by four Network member organizations*

A popular customer relationship management (CRM) software provider for both corporations and non-profits, Salesforce has the advantage of being both highly customizable as well as reliable. All non-profits are given up to 10 free user licenses through the Salesforce Foundation (no matter the size of the non-profit), so the user costs are low. Institutions of higher education also receive 10 free user licenses per school, so Network members that are housed in law schools may be able to take advantage of this deal as well, if those licenses are not already in use by others within the university.

While Salesforce has the potential to be a very powerful tool for a number of organizational needs, it does require a significant commitment to maintain in terms of knowledge and resources. Even though the case-management component may not be out-of-the-box, the basic design of Salesforce is consistent enough that a representative from Salesforce should be able to provide adequate support to your account. The customization process can be done in-house via a “point and click” solution, but is likely to be very complicated. Most Network members might want to enlist a volunteer or hire a consultant to oversee the customization process, which can become costly in both time and money.

If you are interested in speaking to a Salesforce representative already familiar with the Innocence Network, reach out Billy Anderson at 415-589-2820 or [william.anderson@salesforce.com](mailto:william.anderson@salesforce.com).

## **Network member feedback:**

*The following is based on the feedback from two Network members who use Salesforce:*

### **Pros:**

- Excellent for creating accurate reports (for grants, work management, etc.)
- Easy to create and adjust permissions
- Can set up “tasks” that coincide with case management due dates/action items. (Reminders can also be set up and integrate with certain email platforms.)
- Easy to upload spreadsheets and other documents
- Easy for staff to train each other

### **Cons:**

- There can be *too much* flexibility and potential utilization – Network members may not have time or resources to learn and actively use them all, which can be overwhelming
- Full customization, implementation, and adoption can take a long time
- Reporting may be difficult to learn
- The free data storage available to non-profits is limited to 1 or 2 gigabytes and can be eaten up quickly