

## WHAT CONSUMERS WANT

An article entitled "eLawyering: Providing More Efficient Legal Services with Today's Technology" by Richard S. Granat in the September 2008 edition of the NYSBA Journal identifies a number of important criteria of what consumers of legal services really want. Although the article touches on many more aspects of eLawyering, a few comments which are extraordinarily pertinent to your estates practice are the following:

"Thus, ... marketing strategies for law firms that serve consumers and small business require a deeper understanding of what consumers want and why they are seeking alternatives to lawyers."

A study from the United Kingdom has indicated the following: "Consumers want:

- information about what their case is going to cost;
- an idea of how long their case will take;
- progress updates on their case;
- prompt response to letters and phone calls;
- prompt responses to their complaints."

Lawyers can address this trend by doing the following:

"Increasing the transparency of the transaction between client and lawyer by moving away from hourly pricing towards fixed pricing and/or pricing by result. The lack of transparency in lawyers pricing creates tremendous anxiety on the part of consumers (clients)."

"Improving productivity of the legal transaction and passing the savings on to the client. Consumers suspect that lawyers are using information technology to increase their productivity by automating more routine legal tasks such as document preparation [and estate and trust administration]. They resent the fact that productivity enhancements are not passed along to the consumer in terms of lower prices."

**Comment:** *A number of TEdec installed users have informed us that they are able to reduce their fees (compared to competition in the area), pass on some savings to the client, and increase their net effective rate by utilizing TEdec.*

Granat concludes by saying, "The future belongs to law firms that learn how to use internet technology [information technology generally including automated system] to disrupt their competition by offering a client experience that is both low cost and high quality."

**Comment:** *This is what TEdec is designed to do – allow users to offer a client experience that is lower cost and higher quality – delivery of high quality on-time legal services to the consumer client at a reasonable cost to the client and high profitability to the firm.*