

Is It Time to Drop the Fax Alternative?

Are people dropping their fax line alternative for scan/email and other alternatives?

Still keeping mine because a few clients and others still insist on fax.

Shell Bleiweiss, Illinois

\$10 a month for fax to email until folks really start scanning.

Clark V. Stewart, Alabama

When I started my practice earlier this year, I stubbornly opted out of all fax options thinking that email would be sufficient and that fax machines were an old relic. However, I have since learned that I was mistaken:

1. I work with some lawyers who do not use email and I need a quick way to communicate with them in writing;
2. Many of my local courts allow fax filing, but not e-filing;
3. I can serve someone via fax easily, but to serve them via email I need their permission or they need to have included their email in their pleadings;
4. Many doctors, banks, etc. still demand fax over email when dealing with records requests;

5. Some less computer savvy clients may want to fax documents (although I haven't experienced this yet).

I'm sure there are other reasons that I'll discover later.

I recently went ahead and subscribed to an e-fax service for \$9/mo so that I can email a fax number and the recipient receives it in traditional fax form and I can receive traditional faxes through my email.

Lacy M. Smith, Louisiana

+1 to the replies above. In NJ, we are a bit behind the curve when it comes to electronic court systems. I ran into an attorney the other day who still utilizes a type writer (!?) instead of a computer. Needless to say, I won't be expecting him to email me anything. He does understand the fax machine, however, and we have been corresponding through that.

Matthew Rasmussen, New Jersey

I'm dropping mine just this week. I think I've used it twice in two years.

If I used it, I'd keep it.

All the best,

Ari Hornick

I've had eFax for 3 years now. Phone bill went from \$85/mo to \$17/mo.

Russ Carmichael

I have been using an electronic fax service for five years or more (I use Trustfax). Until recently, I could not serve anyone by email, but I could by fax. It is cheaper than certified mail. To those that only use an efax provider, I would remind you that you don't own the assigned number. I pay for a line here that is forwarded to the efax provider so that I can always maintain the number.

Email has some delivery issues, and more opportunities for a glitch. In litigation, every judge understands a fax confirmation page. I don't know that proof of service will be accepted other than through the mandated efilng system. I don't plan on getting rid of it, although use will continue to decline.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

I use smartfax, \$6.95 per month and more free pages (250) than I'll ever use. I get about half a dozen faxes a year, and send maybe half that, so I keep toying with the idea of dropping it.

Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

I have been told that a plain old fax provides more document security than email, and than any document containing sensitive information (tax returns, for instance) should be faxed rather than emailed.

J. Robert Thompson, Georgia

Everything depends on your set up. There are platforms with bank-grade security you can use for email. Nonetheless, your point is valid.

Darrell G. Stewart

To pile on to this, I think it ultimately depends on the sophistication or tech-savviness of the party you're dealing with. Most of my clients are tech-savvy and email and fax is the same to them as their fax is an electronic one anyway. These clients usually have scanners as well.

Entities (e.g. hospitals, courts, etc) vary, but most I've encountered tend to use fax still.

I have some clients who are not tech savvy as well. For them, their smartphone is their computer so if they have to print something, they go to Staples, OfficeDepot, etc and from there, it's easiest just to fax it back.

Fax lines are cheap per month so it's not a big cost. I don't advertise my fax number, though, as I don't want to encourage it's use.

Andy I. Chen, California

Andy's got a great point. I have a fax line, but I don't put it on my signature block, business cards, etc. any more. If people need it they can ask.

Kevin W. Grierson

We're not lawyers (admit it, you knew) but we did that years ago. We do still have eFax (comes with our phone system) but we never use it. If somebody insists on sending us a fax (once in the last 5 years) we can look up our fax number and give it to them.

We don't put our fax number on cards, website or stationery anymore.

Disclaimer: Still never been a lawyer.

Ben M. Schorr, Arizona

\$25 for VOIP and unlimited fax through Nextiva. No problems at all. I fax a lot still. It's funny because I bet most faxes have two e-fax'ers on either side, so they're better off emailing but nope, fax it is.

All good I use whatever is convenient and will have both.

Joseph D. Dang, California

I find faxers fall into three categories: Luddites (includes doctors), entities that want to slow you down - insurance companies, and obnoxious adversaries that want to make it harder to OCR their words.

Jeffrey Burack

\$59 yr for nextiva fax, no VOIP

Margaret Wadsworth

Your message cracked me up. I thought you were joking at first. I really did not know that any attorneys still used a fax machine. Sure, I realize there are a lot of "multipurpose" printers that toss in fax capability, but it seems pretty silly to me to actually use them for faxing.

Since 2002, I've been using Maxemail as my only "fax" provider. If you must use a fax, it is much better to have some fake fax like that, which will at least send you PDFs of the documents. I occasionally get spam faxes that Maxemail filters out. I mostly use it for non-legal family stuff, most

often when some medical service provider or other Neanderthal needs something by fax. Then, I just scan it in with my printer or my iPhone, and use MaxeMail. I still get mail for my son, who moved to Manila, and use an iPhone fax app to snap a "fax" photo that allows me to e-mail a PDF of mail that seems important.

But if you are paying for something like a landline fax line, please stop. Help us kill that beast.

John T. Mitchell, Washington, DC

If you work with the IRS you have to have a fax or e-fax available, or you mail it in and wait 6-8 weeks.

D. Mathew Blackburn, Colorado

Mail *what* in versus fax? All I can think of offhand is an SS-4, and that's better handled online.

Michael A. Koenecke, Texas

To speak with the IRS on behalf of a client, one must fax the POA while the

IRS employee remains on the phone to get the taxpayer/client's written authority.

Deb Matthews, Virginia

2848's and 4506-t's mainly

D. Mathew Blackburn

You can send it in by mail and hope it's on file by the time you call, but most clients don't want to wait that long, and you're on hold for 1-2 hours before you find out if they've got a copy.

D. Mathew Blackburn

The ONLY reason I still maintain fax capability is to communicate with the Internal Revenue Service.

Brian Yacker, California

There are e fax services that integrate with email. You merely email your

attachment to the fax number @fax87.com and your email is the cover sheet.
The system then sends you an email fax confirmation.

I use fax87.com.

No need to ditch the fax, just rethink how you use it.

P. Jayson Thibodaux
