



THE LIFE

No Time for Chores? New Concierge Service Will Do Them for You

Posted by Dimitra Kessenides

By Tosin Sulaiman

After spending most of her career either as a lawyer or working with lawyers, Karen Pordum thinks those who've chosen that career path could use a bit of help with the mundane tasks of their everyday lives--things like grocery shopping, picking up the dry cleaning, hunting for a new apartment, or planning the next ski trip.

So Pordum, most recently the chief of marketing at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart Oliver & Hedges, is asking lawyers to outsource their unwanted chores to her through a new concierge firm she has launched with a former Quinn colleague, Courtney DiCarlo.

Legally Organized, which officially opened for business Wednesday, is the first concierge service to cater exclusively to the legal profession, the women say. It is designed to give "time poor, cash rich" lawyers their lives back.

"This is really to get the details of your life

accomplished," says Pordum, who from 1985 to 1994 worked as a litigation associate at Reboul MacMurray Hewitt Maynard & Kristol (now Ropes & Gray) and Thacher Proffitt & Wood. "When I was an associate, I... remember struggling to get all my errands done and servicing my clients at the same time."

It seems no detail is too small for Legally Organized, whose team of about a dozen carefully screened personal assistants will do everything from waiting for furniture deliveries and watering plants while clients are on business trips to researching potential colleges for their children and locating rare items, such as a vintage car.

The service also offers what it calls "When Life Hands You Lemons" assistance, for people who have locked themselves out of their house or who need help sorting out parking tickets and insurance claim denials. Asked if there's anything her staffers won't do

(besides changing diapers), Pordum says: “Obviously, nothing illegal.” She adds that she wouldn’t ask her staff to do anything that was beyond their basic expertise, such as administering medication or some type of medical care.

Pordum says she and DiCarlo, the former director of marketing at Quinn Emanuel, came up with the idea for Legally Organized when they were both in the throes of “moving hell.” Their service will initially cater to clients in Los Angeles, where the two are based. Eventually they’d like to expand Legally Organized to San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Houston, and Dallas. (They’ve considered New York City, but given an abundance of doormen and other services available to the city’s lawyers, there might be less demand.)

Lawyers who want to use the firm’s services can register at legallyorganized.com--the company is entirely web-based--and purchase packages of points, ranging from the 30-day “Mock Trial Membership” (50 points for \$50) to the “Supreme Court Membership” (500 points for \$1000), good for up to a year.

Pordum acknowledges that she and DiCarlo are starting the business at a difficult time but says that the layoffs at law firms could actually increase demand for the company’s services.

“The people who are still working at these firms are

probably under more pressure to get their jobs done and to excel because they have fewer colleagues,” she says, adding that she was once in their shoes.

“I remember being a lawyer at a time when people were being laid off--during the Savings & Loan crisis-- and we were all overworked. This is all about balancing your life. Whether you’re in a recession or a boom economy, everyone still has their to-do list to get through.”

Her view may be a little too optimistic. One large firm associate tells The Am Law Daily, for instance, that the current economic climate would make him think twice about using such a service.

“Most corporate lawyers in big firms currently have more time on their hands and are obviously more sensitive to cost than they would be in times of economic prosperity,” says the associate, who works at a large law firm in New York and asked not to be named.

He added that even when he is busy, he prefers to handle his own errands.

“I quite enjoy completing routine tasks myself and in fact, believe that it is important to do so to maintain a balanced life.”

Tosin Sulaiman is a Washington, D.C.-based freelance writer.

www.legallyorganized.com

Legally Organized is a full-service, boutique concierge firm that provides errand and personal assistant-type support to legal professionals.