

Media Mention: Jerry Sayre Discusses Legal Services Billing with Triangle Business Journal

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Raleigh labor and employment Jerry Sayre was quoted extensively in an article published on July 14 in the Triangle Business Journal about the evolution of the traditional approach to billing legal services using the billable hour and how law firms, including Ward and Smith, are embracing a shift to different pricing models that benefit clients' needs for predictability in their legal spend. You can read more about Ward and Smith's approach to billing [here](#). Read the entire article, behind the Triangle Business Journal paywall, [here](#). An excerpt from the article with Sayre's comments is below:

Jerry Sayre, a Raleigh-based attorney at Ward and Smith focused on employment law and litigation, says that, several years ago, his firm formed a committee and began analyzing data on the matter.

"We'll compile as much data as we can, and certainly, if there is a long history with a client, that's very helpful," he explains.

While, he says, there's always an aspect of unpredictability with another party's attorney or the government on the other side of the table, he adds that, "if you look over a large enough period of time and data set, they're going to be trends..."

For instance, the firm can put together an estimate that, on average, a certain matter is never going to be "more than x, less than y." If firms and clients reach an alternative fee arrangement through these means, both sides will do fine, he says.

Sayre says, "Currently, well in excess of 10 percent of [the firm's] revenue comes from some sort of AFAs," and that he "absolutely expects that to grow."

"Not only does this work, but this can be a very attractive way of building a relationships with clients," he adds.

Sayre says increasing the use of AFAs in the legal industry is "recognition that everybody needs to make doing business with them as convenient and easy as possible."

"If you don't evolve," he says, "you're going to lose clients."