

## Templates and tools for effective trial presentation.

### SmartDraw Legal Solution



# Picture Perfect

**Reviewer 1:** Reviewed by Al Harrison, a Houston-based intellectual property attorney specializing in computer technology, patent law and related mediation.

Lawyers are professionals trained in legal matters ranging from prosecuting tax filings to resolving controversies via litigation or dispute resolution. That said, what is the link between the practice of law and drawings creation?

### Significance of a Drawing Application

Attorneys routinely include visuals such as pictures, images, charts and diagrams in exhibits intended for use during client conferences, settlement negotiations, alternate dispute resolution procedures, pretrial conferences and during trial.

Typically, to meet specific deadlines for creating these types of images, and to avoid incurring prohibitive costs associated with creating drawings, lawyers frequently are compelled to accept outsourced drawings that bear at least a reasonable relationship to the visuals that were contemplated for reaching the target audience. However, by using SmartDraw Legal Solution by SmartDraw.com as a presentation tool, attorneys and firms can conveniently and inexpensively create effective drawings in-house.

### Availability of Templates

SmartDraw Legal Solution has all the enhancements of the company's latest release, SmartDraw 7, but it also includes about 1,000 templates designed to be adapted to a diversity of law practice concentrations. The categories of templates include accident reconstruction; case

planning, which includes calendars, timelines and project planning for family law; flowcharts; organization charts; criminal law; estate planning; intellectual property and patents for engineering, Information Technology, science and software; medical malpractice and personal injury; and real estate for building plans, maps and image layouts.

Keep in mind these few examples of templates, symbols and schematics are a mere fraction of the panoply of the program's available resources. To invoke any appropriate resource, you can click on the "Symbols" tab or the "Wizard" tab on the left side of the screen. The "Symbols" tab presents you with the inventory of templates from which you make your selections. The "Wizard" tab interfaces with a "Wizard" function that walks you through the prerequisite steps to selecting and using a plurality of templates and more. Once you learn how to operate SmartDraw, you can double-click a template to load it into the "Drawing Workspace" screen for editing.

### Adaptability of Selected Templates

Once a template for a particular scenario has been selected, you can invoke the program's drawing tools to customize and adapt the template in which a professional visual aid has been created. To adapt a template, you can use the appropriate toolbar button corresponding to a particular editing command, which operates on the template located in the "Drawing Workspace" screen. Alternatively, you can invoke a command from SmartDraw's "Tool Bar" menu

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**Reviewer 2:** Reviewed by Jason E. Havens of Havens & Miller, which focuses on complex estate and charitable gift planning, with offices in Florida and Louisiana.

Most lawyers would like the ability to illustrate concepts, timelines and other related legal information for their clients. However, many lawyers fear using presentation software applications such as Microsoft PowerPoint and Corel Presentations. To some extent, their fear is well-founded because there is a dearth of templates available, which could prove confusing and time-consuming to some. Thanks to SmartDraw Legal Solution that no longer is the case.

### Significance of a Drawing Application

SmartDraw Legal Solution goes a step beyond SmartDraw 7 by providing many presentation templates for law-

yers, from accident reconstruction and corporate flowcharts, to estate planning techniques and real estate illustrations. Based on my experience, the best way to communicate estate planning information is by using illustrations. Pictures literally are worth a thousand words for attorneys and their clients.

SmartDraw allows me to create a simple illustration to communicate a complex topic. With SmartDraw Legal Solution, I can choose the "Charitable Lead Trust" template or the "Charitable Remainder Trust" template, and if desired, I can customize it to my client's situation.

### Availability of Templates

If a lawyer can't find a template to use within the extensive SmartDraw Legal Solution edition, there just might not be a precedent. Certainly, there are sit-

uations not covered by the program's preloaded templates. However, even if a template doesn't exist, you can use SmartDraw Legal Solution to customize an illustration using its extensive capabilities, or you can design your own template from scratch.

SmartDraw Legal Solution includes the following template categories, each with multiple templates available: accident reconstruction, calendars, timelines, project planning, family law, flowcharts, organizational charts, criminal, estate planning, medical malpractice, real estate and many more.

### Adaptability of Selected Templates

SmartDraw templates are easy to change. The entire program works as a drag-and-drop application, allowing you to click and move any type of object or

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## FOR THE RECORD

SmartDraw Legal Solution			
SmartDraw.com www.smartdraw.com (800) 768-3729			
Price: Introductory offer of \$297 per license. Regular price is \$449. Windows 98/ME/2000/XP; 100MB to 2.5GB disk space; 128MB RAM.			
Harrison said:		Havens said:	
FEATURES	<b>Significance of a Drawing Application</b>	With this program, you conveniently and inexpensively can create effective drawings in-house.	An application like this is important because pictures are worth a thousand words for attorneys and clients.
	<b>Availability of Templates</b>	There are more than enough to work with. A huge resource for templates.	More templates than you could think of, and even if a template doesn't exist for your needs, you can customize one.
	<b>Adaptability of Selected Templates</b>	Great tools make it easy to create and adapt templates and drawings.	Very easy to change and adapt.
	<b>The Learning Curve</b>	It's the easiest drawing application I have ever used.	Easy to use. There is no learning curve.
	<b>Last Draw</b>	Tons of templates, icons and tools make it truly effective and easy to use.	Easy adaptation of extensive legal templates and ease of use make it a great choice.
JUDGMENT	<b>Pros</b>	Its intuitive interface and readily accessible functions and features enable attorneys to create client-specific and case-specific professional drawings in record speed and at minimum cost.	It's extremely flexible and has extensive templates in most practice areas. Compatible with other leading software applications.
	<b>Cons</b>	SmartDraw is so versatile and efficient to use, it's hard to take when a template is unavailable for a particular visual-aid context. However, the probability of a suitable template not being available in SmartDraw's many libraries is minimal.	A bit more costly than Microsoft Visio or iGrafx FlowCharter, but also tailored specifically to law with extensive templates.
	<b>Verdict</b> ★★★★ = Best ★ = Worst	★★★★ A treasure trove of tools and techniques. No matter what the practice area, SmartDraw's convenient and easy-to-use reservoir of drawing templates and editing capabilities are without equal.	★★★★ A powerful illustration tool that can be used to create a picture for almost any legal scenario.

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under: "Edit," "Shapes," "Lines," "Text," "Arrange" and "Tools."

The drawing toolbar consists primarily of four line-drawing tools: "Straight Lines," "Arcs," "Segmented Lines" and "Automatic Connector Lines." "Straight Lines," in conventional fashion, constitute the shortest path for interconnecting points on each of two successive objects. When the "Straight Line" feature is invoked, lines can be drawn at virtually any angle. SmartDraw Legal Solution has a built-in bias designed to help draw a horizontal or vertical line.

Accordingly, when a straight line is drawn at an angle close to 180 degrees, the program automatically snaps the line into a horizontal position. Similarly, if a straight line is drawn at an angle close to zero degrees, SmartDraw automatically snaps the line into a vertical position. You can change the angle of the line easily by invoking the "Rotate" command, which you can find under the "Arrange" menu or by right-clicking.

The "Arc" tool interconnects any two points on each of two objects using the arc of a circle. The configuration or angle of a particular arc easily is altered by dragging and manipulating the position of the arc's handles. The "Segmented Line" tool interconnects two

objects by attaching each of its line segments perpendicularly to each object. Therefore, a segmented line is configured with a 90 degree bend. SmartDraw Legal Solution automatically performs segment-line attachment as long as the "Allow Lines to Link" feature is activated under the "Arrange" menu.

The "Freeform Pen" tool is an interesting example of the fast-and-furious ability to make changes using SmartDraw's



A basic crime scene template in SmartDraw.

built-in strictures. The "Freeform Drawing" tool gives you complete control over a drawing object's size and shape. To add a rectangle to the Drawing Workspace, click on the "Rectangle" toolbar button and move the mouse pointer, which now looks like a pencil cursor. Then, click and drag the pencil cursor to form the intended rectangular shape. The same methodology is used to form any other shape, and to place lines and graphical symbols stored within

the Symbols Libraries. To draw a symmetrical shape, press the "Control" key simultaneously while drawing the shape. To draw a square, click the "Rectangle" button and form the shape while pressing the "Control" key. Similarly, a circle is formed by using the "Ellipse" button while pressing the "Control" key.

## The Learning Curve

SmartDraw Legal Solution probably is the easiest drawing application I have used. After delving into the myriad features available, I was married to the program for creating virtually every visual presentation applicable to my law practice. Help immediately is available through its pop-up "Hints" window, its enthusiastic and friendly Wizard and its online tutorials. The diversity of legal solutions that are expeditiously provided through the program can alter your attitude about how to effectively communicate with your clients, the judge and jury, and parties and their counsel during settlement conferences.

## Last Draw

SmartDraw Legal Solution's many templates, drawing tools, symbols and icons enable you to invoke, for each law practice scenario, appropriate templates and associated drawing tools, symbols and icons to expeditiously create a customized and professional visual aid. .loc

## Havens Review

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element into or out of an illustration. The same comments apply to modifying text or other aspects of a particular template. The major difference is the program greatly assists you by snapping objects into place, which is very different from a presentation program. SmartDraw Legal Solution also auto-adjusts spacing and other aspects that can be very cumbersome in a traditional presentation program, especially when using a template.

In terms of adaptability, I should note that SmartDraw integrates well with Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel and more. The SmartDraw Web site includes helpful information on its integration capabilities. In addition, SmartDraw can convert drawings made in Microsoft Visio, Corel iGrafx Flow-Charter and other applications.

## The Learning Curve

As previously mentioned, there is basically no learning curve when you begin using SmartDraw. However,

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some users will appreciate the helpful user's guide and the excellent tutorials, all of which are available online on the SmartDraw Web site. In addition, you can view all of the available templates mentioned earlier on the company's Web site. Finally, if there is something you just don't understand, SmartDraw offers a Knowledge Base and free, unlimited e-mail and telephone-based technical support.

Why should you simply rely on this review of SmartDraw Legal Solution? You can download a free, fully functional trial version of the program from the company's Web site and judge for yourself.

## Last Draw

SmartDraw Legal Solution offers an important highly valuable addition to any lawyer's arsenal of software applications by providing an easy way to illustrate legal information for clients, jurors, the court or anyone else. Unlike some other presentation software programs, SmartDraw Legal Solution allows easy adaptation of its extensive legal templates, including easy formatting and snapping of objects, pictures and more. The program is easy to learn and use, and provides an array of support options, including free e-mail and telephone-based support for all users. .loc