Faced with a tough job market, many new lawyers are striking out on their own and opening solo practices soon after graduation, or choosing to freelance. From the class of 2010, 6 percent went into solo practice, twice the number of those in 2006, according to the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) in Washington, which tracks legal employment patterns.

Fewer firm jobs and a desire for autonomy may be drivers of this trend, and technology has made solo practice a viable career path for confident, tech-savvy lawyers. Software and web-based applications reduce or eliminate the need for administrative assistance, performing tasks from organizing files to billing clients. Online communities of other attorneys provide ready guidance and encouragement, making solo practice less solitary.

Thinking about freelancing or going solo? This bibliography and resource guide is a good place to start—but don’t forget to go out and talk to people too. Finding mentors and developing potential client relationships will be key to your success.


Foonberg, Jay G. How to Start and Build a Law Practice. ABA Law Student Division Section of Law Practice Management, 1991.


ABA General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division http://www.americanbar.org/groups/gpsolo.html

www.myshingle.com (Carolyn Elefant’s website for solo practitioners)

http://counsel.net/chatboards/solo/ (chat board for solo practitioners)

http://practice.findlaw.com/how-to-start-a-law-firm/ (free resources related to startup issues encountered by solo and small law firm practices)

http://www.italoconsulting.com/articles/solo.htm (article about going solo)

http://www.washlaw.edu/legalforms/index.html (legal forms)