



[News You Can Use: Consumer Reports Reviews Legal Software Products](#)

By Stephen Fairley

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Consumer Reports doesn't really like legal software products, and that can be good news you can use in your law firm marketing efforts.

Earlier this week, *Consumer Reports* issued a [caution](#) to consumers based on an [analysis by the Consumer Reports Money Adviser](#) of the three most popular products – LegalZoom, Rocket Lawyer and Quicken WillMaker Plus – for creating wills. They created three different profiles: a father of a simple nuclear family, a widow with grown children and a live-in boyfriend, and a twice-married father of five.



Consumer Reports found that while these software programs were “better than nothing,” they had real problems, including:

Outdated information – two of the three used federal estate tax limits that were outdated for 2011.

Insufficient customization – little detail on state estate laws available.

Not enough flexibility – testers were unable to distribute property the way they wanted to.

Too much flexibility – contain features that could lead you to add clauses that may contradict other parts of your will.

Incomplete – no options for a special needs trust, only one provided information on registered domestic partnerships and pet trusts. None touched on digital assets.

No advice – no explanation for how to structure trusts to reduce estate tax liability.

Consumer Reports recommends that consumers only use these software products to “take a practice run” and prepare inventory lists and instructions for executors and beneficiaries. Then, they say, call an attorney.

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Stephen is the CEO of The Rainmaker Institute, the nation's largest law firm marketing company specializing in lead conversion for small law firms and solo practitioners. Over 7,000 attorneys nationwide have benefited from learning and implementing the proven marketing and lead conversion strategies taught by The Rainmaker Institute, LLC.

He works exclusively with attorneys and partners at small and solo law firms to find new clients fast using online and offline legal marketing strategies and to convert more prospects into paying clients using automated marketing and by fixing their follow up systems.

Stephen is a nationally recognized law firm marketing expert and the international best-selling author of 12 books and 7 audio and video training programs.

He is a Registered Corporate Coach (RCC) through the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches, has a Master's degree in Counseling and a second Master's in Clinical Psychology. Stephen's doctoral training is from Wheaton College (IL) in Clinical Psychology and he practiced as a therapist for several years in Virginia and Chicago. After leaving the field of clinical psychology Stephen founded and ran two technology companies, one in the restaurant industry and another in the health sciences field prior to launching Today's Leadership Coaching, LLC, a Chicago-based professional business coaching and consulting firm.

The Rainmaker Institute, LLC grew directly out of his experiences first speaking to, then coaching, consulting with, and training attorneys. Since that first event at the State Bar of Wisconsin, Stephen has worked with over 7,000 attorneys from virtually every state in the country and almost every practice area.

Stephen's work has been noted and quoted in the *American Bar Association's Journal*, *Entrepreneur, Inc.*, *Fortune Small Business*, *Harvard Management Update*, *Business Advisor*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, and on the front covers of *AdvantEdge* and *Choice* magazines. He is a member of the prestigious National Speaker's Association and his Rainmaker seminars are sponsored several times every year by some of the largest state and local bar associations in the country.

On a personal note, Stephen loves to travel and has been to 28 countries, has taken 12 cruises (all over the Caribbean and recently to Alaska), he enjoys boating, fishing and his two Bichon Frise dogs, is married to his college sweetheart, Ruth, and loves living in the desert just outside of Phoenix, Arizona.

For more information or to purchase one of Stephen's [law firm marketing products click here](#).

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