Establishing outside counsel guidelines can help corporate legal departments improve law firm billing practices. Here are five steps to setting billing expectations with your law firms that will improve compliance and drive significant potential cost savings for your organization.

**Five Steps to Creating Effective Outside Billing Guidelines**

1. **Write your guidelines in clear, easy-to-understand language**
   - Move on from legalese. Write your guidelines in clear, easy-to-understand language.
   - Focus on what’s most important. Focus on building guidelines that clearly outline processes and identify your expectations, such as how many staff can be assigned to matters or what activities require approval. These types of parameters can significantly impact your bottom line.
   - Don’t sweat the small stuff. Don’t waste time fretting over insignificant details. Instead, focus on building guidelines that clearly outline processes and identify your expectations.
   - Get your guidelines to the right people. Focus on billing managers and coordinators, account managers, and legal project managers. Get an e-signature that proves the guidelines were received.
   - Enforce your guidelines. Practice continuous monitoring and enforcement to ensure law firms are adhering to your guidelines. Make guideline compliance a topic you cover with your firms on a routine basis, and use technologies like AI-assisted legal bill review and legal spend and matter management platforms to keep your outside counsel management program on track.

Wolters Kluwer’s ELM Solutions is the market-leading global provider of enterprise legal spend and matter management, contract lifecycle management, and legal analytics solutions. We provide a comprehensive suite of tools that address the growing needs of corporate legal operations departments to increase operational efficiency and reduce costs. Corporate legal and insurance claims departments trust our innovative technology and end-to-end customer experience to drive world-class business outcomes. Our award-winning products include Passport®, the highest-rated ELM solution in the latest Hyperion MarketView™ Legal Market Intelligence Report; TyMetrix® 360°, the industry’s leading SaaS-based e-billing and matter management solution; CLM Matrix, named a “Strong Performer” in the 2019 Q1 CLM Forrester Wave report; and the LegalVIEW® portfolio of legal analytics solutions based upon the industry’s largest and most comprehensive legal spend database, with more than $140 billion in invoices.