

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: THE CLIENT PERSPECTIVE

Global
Legal Briefings

For law firms, investing in AI technologies seems an obvious strategy. But the technology is a means to an end. Clients won't pay for AI investments but they do want their legal providers to take a lead in offering progressive services and solutions to recast the value gleaned from their relationships.

AI technologies, especially machine learning and natural-language processing, are already impacting the legal sector. Whilst nobody claims that AI will replace the role of lawyers any time soon, a 2016 report¹ by The Boston Consulting Group predicts that technological solutions could perform up to 50% of the tasks currently carried out by junior lawyers. Just as other industries have been disrupted by digitalisation and smart technology, the business model of a law firm suggests that, combined with a fragmented industry and pressures on legal process management, AI will have a large effect on future legal practice.

However, the argument is not necessarily so straightforward. Law firms themselves need to ask why their clients would want them to begin offering legal services supported by a suite of AI tools. They need to take charge of creating the right mix of human and machine capabilities to re-cast future relationships that benefit both provider and client.

What is the client perspective?

Our research suggests that clients have strong and varied views on why their private practice firms need to respond to new and potentially disruptive technologies. We have grouped these views into three distinct areas:

1. **Recast the relationship dynamic:** Clients believe that AI tools will lead to greater efficiency and challenge revenue models but also – and more importantly – drive an enhanced engagement. Clients want their law firms to move beyond traditional transactional lead delivery to a new, more collaborative relationship model.
2. **Embrace new business models:** Clients want to know that their legal provider is making the best decisions around innovation, combining new technologies with new ways of working, including collaborating with third parties and challenging existing processes.
3. **Reshape the talent pool:** Clients expect that their legal provider can still deliver top human talent as well as take advantage of technology.

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KEY CONTACTS

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



MARK RIGOTTI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER AND
PARTNER, LONDON
+44 20 7466 2681
mark.rigotti@hsf.com

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