



# LEGAL IT TODAY

COMMENTARY, STRATEGY AND MARKET INTELLIGENCE FOR THE GLOBAL LEGAL TECHNOLOGY COMMUNITY

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2016



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Design thinking our way to better legal services



The new law firm search paradigm

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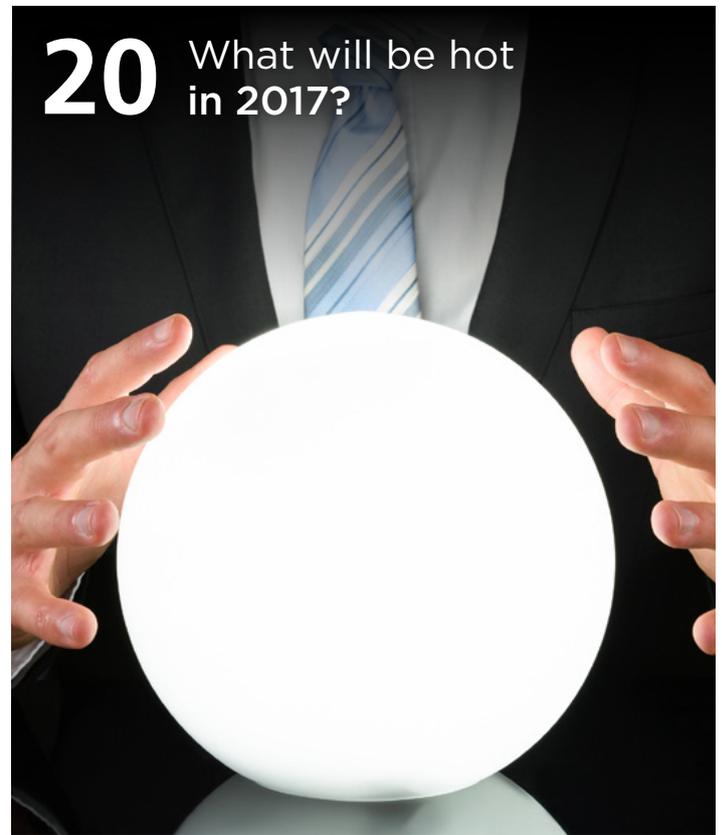
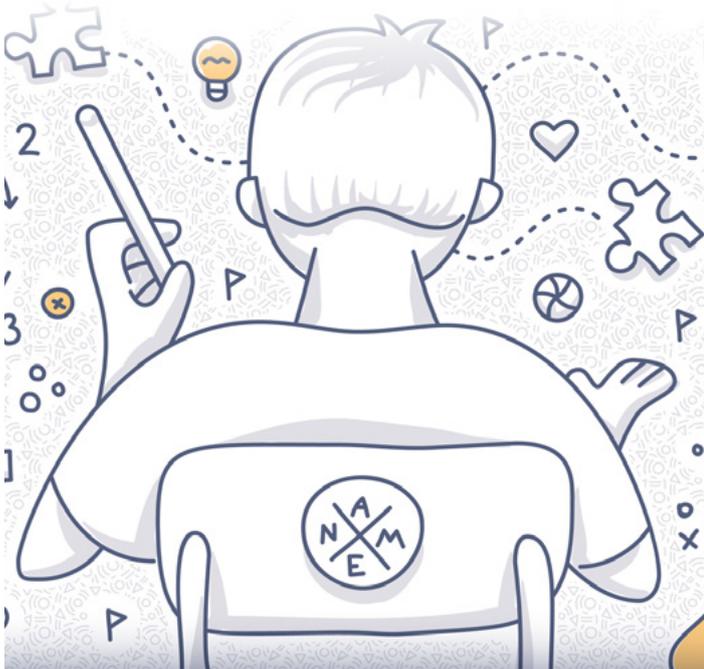
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## 12 Design thinking our way to better legal services



## LEGAL IT TODAY

### Legal IT Today is published by:

Asfour in cooperation with Legal IT Professionals

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**ISSN:** 2214-2355



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# From the editor

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## Welcome to Issue 16 of Legal IT Today!

What are you doing for lunch today? Perhaps you plan to enjoy it alone, so that you can peruse the latest issue of *Legal IT Today* in peace. A wise choice, I must say.

If you are a Worldox customer, and you have been using Worldox software for more than 20 years, then you might be having lunch with the company's president, Ray Zwiefelhofer. Ray has made it his personal mission to visit as many of his most loyal clients as possible in the coming years and buy lunch for all of them. How's that for innovative customer care? And while he's at it, he might just be able to persuade them to acquire some more Worldox goodies. You can read more about the company in our profile on 10.

Putting the customer at the centre of everything you do is usually a pretty good strategy – a point made in this issue by Mary Redzic. In her piece on design thinking, informed by expert input from consultant Alexandra Devendra, she argues that when designing a service, one must always start with the user of that service and tailor it in the way that suits them best. It's a technique that doesn't have to be confined to the client/law firm relationship – it can also be used to improve the firm's internal processes. Why not give it a try and see how you get on?

Design thinking also gets a mention in 'the Verdict', in which this time around, we ask people for their top two New Year's resolutions. Felicity Badcock, head of knowledge management at King & Wood Mallesons, says that one of her firm's key aims for 2017 is to draw on design thinking principles to 'further embed a client-oriented mindset'. Getting to grips with Windows 10 also seems to feature heavily in many people's resolutions.

If big lunches are not your thing, perhaps big data is? Mark van Rijmenam says that big data analytics can help you decide if a case is worth taking on or not by predicting how much time you will have to spend on it and how profitable it is likely to be. No more lengthy weighing up of all the debatable pros and cons – the computer can take care of it for you.

Analytics can also come up with an assessment of how particular judges are likely to rule in specific cases. Yes, human behaviour really is that predictable, even though we precious creatures don't like to admit it!

Speaking of predictions, in this issue we have a bumper crop of them as our contributors from 2016 look ahead to 2017. We asked them to address three key issues – what they think will

be the most important trend next year; what they think about the impact of AI; and what they think about the potential of legaltech startups.

AI is the topic that perhaps inspires the widest range of views, with some of our contributors seeing it as the key issue affecting law firms today and others being more dismissive. At one end of the scale we have Chrissie Lightfoot, who says AI will significantly change the market for legal services throughout the world next year. At the other is Ron Friedmann, who says that apart from document review in discovery and contract review in due diligence, AI will not significantly change the market for legal services for a long time to come.

It is of course difficult to suppress what Casey Flaherty calls one's 'lawyerly instincts' and say 'it depends what you mean by AI'. It means different things to different people, which helps to explain why our question elicited such a wide range of responses, but one thing's for sure: everyone has a view on it. If you don't, you probably shouldn't be working in legaltech in 2017!

On startups, there is a similarly huge variety of responses. Some think they are playing a huge role in disrupting the comfortable certainties of the legal industry, while others seem to think there are only two possible options: being gobbled up by larger rivals or disappearing. More than one respondent cites the example of Lex Machina, acquired by LexisNexis at the end of 2015. Is that the best possible outcome for a legal startup? Is it really all as predictable as that?

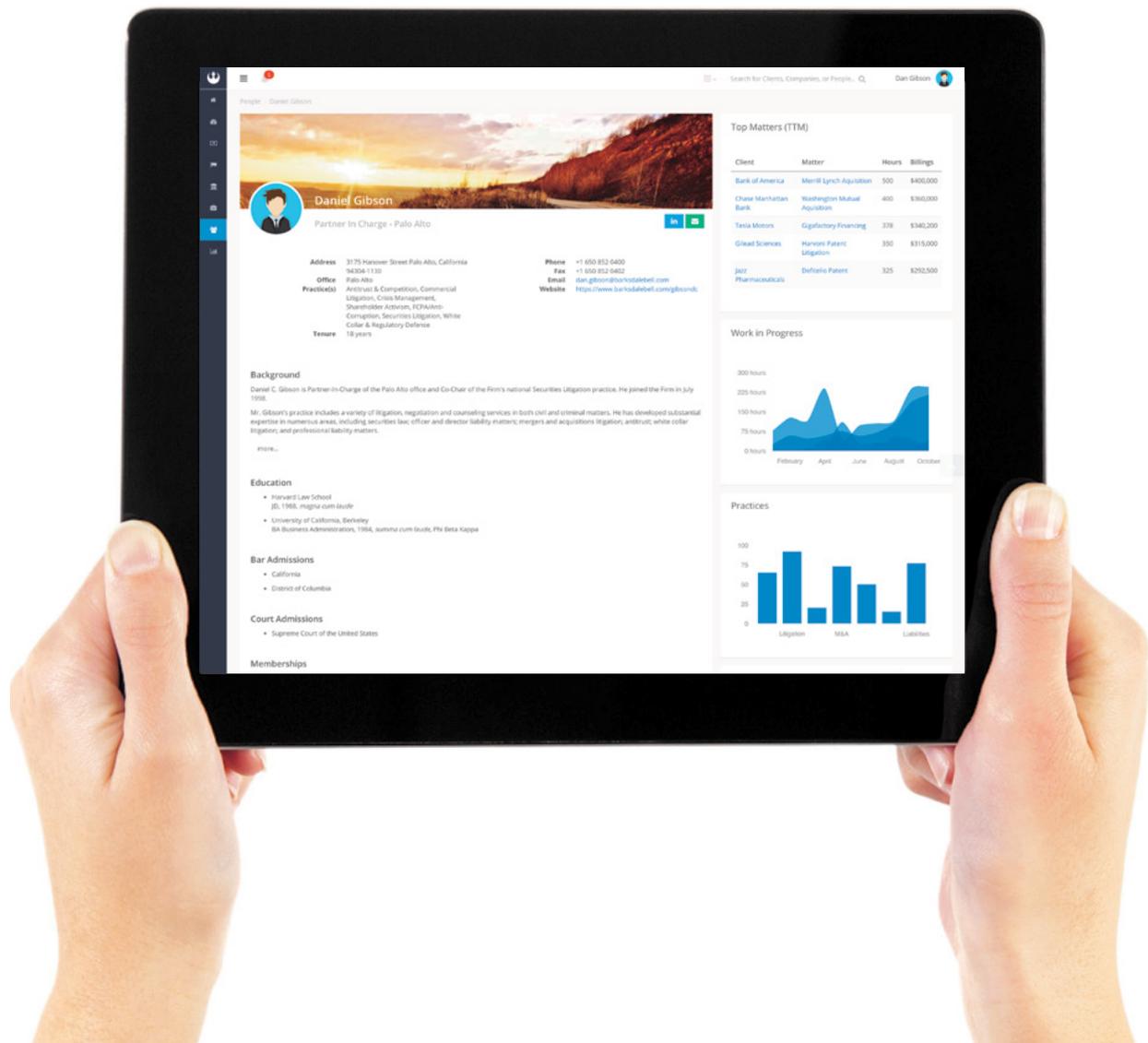
One comment that jumped out at me came from Stephanie Abbot, who said that commentators, leaders and decision makers in the legal IT industry are spending so much time pontificating about AI that they might be neglecting other more significant matters. Er... guilty as charged! I'd better go and do some proper work.

That just about wraps it up for 2016. We all hope you've enjoyed reading *Legal IT Today* this year. We wish you all the best for the holiday season and look forward to hearing about more of your exploits in 2017!

Jonathan Watson  
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# How **big data** analytics is transforming the **legal industry**

BY MARK VAN RIJMENAM

According to a survey conducted during the 2015 LegalTech New York conference, 90% of law firms are already applying some form of analytics within their organisation.

Courts play a major role in our societies. From large patent lawsuits to fraud, domestic violence, murder or war crimes, there is always something going on in courtrooms. They have an important task to fulfil and in order to administer justice, they have to sift through huge amounts of information. In this context, big data technology offers a lot of opportunities for the legal industry and is rapidly changing how law firms and courtrooms work.

Due to the nature of the business, which includes a vast amount of unstructured data such as correspondence, court documents, precedents or evidence in the form of audio and video files, the opportunities for law firms to benefit from big data are enormous. The entire process within law firms, from determining whether to take on a case and analysing any of the (court) documents related to it through to researching, contracting and even billing,



can be significantly improved with big data analytics.

According to a survey conducted during the 2015 LegalTech New York conference, 90% of law firms in New York are already applying some form of analytics within their organisation.



More complex elements such as smart contracts can also be recorded on the blockchain. From a legal perspective, the advantage of a smart contract is that a legal agreement is turned into code that can be read and understood in many jurisdictions. In addition, a smart contract is executed automatically once certain pre-defined conditions are met. This means that once all parties involved have agreed on a smart contract and it has been deployed on the blockchain, it can no longer be challenged in court.

### Legaltech startups

As with any industry, there are many new startups that are trying to disrupt the legal industry using the latest technology. These disruptive innovators often take a different approach to the legal business and use data in every possible way. Some of the most interesting startups include:

- Avvo, which raised \$71.5m in July 2015 in a funding round led by Technology Crossover Ventures. It has developed an online legal service where consumers can get free legal advice, 24/7, from a choice of 160,000 participating lawyers.

- Clio, which has raised over \$25m in funding to develop a cloud-based platform for mid-size law firms. Its offering helps lawyers streamline practice management and billing.
- LegalSifter, which uses artificial intelligence to help consumers summarize legal documents so they can understand them more easily.
- CommonAccord, a very early stage blockchain-based startup that aims to help people codify and understand legal documents.
- kCura, which aims to help law firms better manage documents during litigation or investigations. The firm recently raised \$125m.

### Data security

Whenever data is involved, hackers will appear. For law firms that deal with a lot of sensitive data, it is not a matter of if they will be hacked, but when. Unfortunately, data security is not, and probably will never be, the core business of a law firm. Hackers will always have more advanced technology. Nevertheless, law firms should do whatever it takes to protect their data so that when they are hacked, advanced encryption means that data can never be accessed by others.

Earlier this year, several law firms were hacked, including Cravath, Swaine & Moore and Weil, Gotshal & Manges in the US. The hackers were probably after confidential or insider information for publicly traded companies.

Big data analytics is changing every industry, including the legal industry. Analysing data and using algorithms to better understand the vast amounts of documents required in court could lead to significant improvements for law firms. If they want to remain competitive in today's rapidly evolving legal landscape, they should hire big data scientists and analysts to help them with their work.

*Mark van Rijmenam is the founder of Datafloq. He is a big data strategist, a highly sought-after speaker and the author of the best-selling book *Think Bigger - Developing a Successful Big Data Strategy for Your Business*. He has also been described as one of the top 10 global influencers in big data and is currently studying for a PhD at the University of Technology Sydney on how organizations should deal with big data, the blockchain and algorithms. Website: [vanrijmenam.nl](http://vanrijmenam.nl) ■*



# What's happening at Worldox?

BY JONATHAN WATSON



If you've been a Worldox client for more than 20 years, you're in luck! The firm would like to buy you lunch. Its president Ray Zwiefelhofer tells Jonathan Watson about his plan to feed hungry law firms.

## What's changed the most since Worldox got started in 1988?

We have over 6,000 customers in 52 countries – mostly law firms and corporate legal departments – and we're seeing a much tighter focus on security and mobility. They have always been big issues, but it's only relatively recently that they have really come to the forefront.

Firms are more interested in document archiving and retention – in removing unnecessary items from the database that can be safely archived or deleted for compliance reasons. Worldox has a very advanced ethical wall module that allows you to lock the cabinets down to a very fine level. Law firms are now picking up on that and making more use of it.

Another point worth noting is that when Worldox was designed 25 years ago, there was really no email. We were all document managers then. This means that many customers who bought our software years ago still have

author-based rather than matter-centric systems. Worldox has been matter-centric all along, but it depends on how you design the cabinets. So we are working on educating our customers on the need to redesign their profile groups, their cabinets, their databases, so that their systems are more matter-centric and work better with email and all types of content.

The key challenge of mobility is that one way or another, attorneys will take their documents with them. They are going to work how they work. If the firm does not provide a secure means to get

that data to its attorneys as they travel or work from home, they'll find a back door. None of us wants that. So it's really up to us to educate that firm's IT staff on how best to share and secure documents through Worldox.

We have a good vantage point to assess changes in the market over the years, because our client base is very well established. The average tenure of the clients at our recent user conference in Phoenix, Arizona was 10 years, with a third of them going for 15 years or more, up to about 24 years. It's a very seasoned base and there is a real attention to them at Worldox – it's like no other company I've been at.

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*We have our work cut out, but you know what? We love work!*

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### **Is looking after existing customers more of a priority than winning new business?**

There are 250 clients who have been with us for two decades or more, and the list is growing. We've started something new recently, which is to visit these clients in person and buy lunch for the entire firm. In some cases, I will go out there and have lunch with as many people as possible, and while they eat lunch, I run sessions on how best to use Worldox. While I do that, I can also alert them to new products we think might interest them. We show them what's new, we shake their hands and basically thank them for 20 years of business.

Of those 250 firms, over 30% have 100 or more Worldox users. If we can get through that list in the next couple of years, it's going to increase our revenue and our ability to upsell within those clients. We'll also be doing over 10 ILTA roadshows next year and over 22 US and international trade shows. We have our work cut out, but you know what? We love work!

### **What are you showing these clients?**

In our new release of the software, GX4, we've really focused on usability.



For too long, software providers have added features every year without a high regard for usability. We have all been at fault in saying 'this is how it works'. Working on this last release, we felt that doesn't cut it any more and that we need to do things that are more graceful and user-friendly. We live in a world of iPads and Android devices where you just swipe and touch. With our software, it was primarily clicks and pop-ups. We've done our best to flatten our interface so that more things are available in front of you and you don't have to go out of your way to deal with unnecessary pop-ups.

Secondly, we are aiming to provide a higher level of security. Probably 99% of our customer base consists of on-premise installations. We do have a cloud solution, and a hybrid solution, but a lot of our clients are comfortable with the way things are. There is a higher sense of urgency for security, which is why we have announced our upcoming Worldox Encryption At Rest (WEAR) product. Thanks to this, all data will be AES 256 encrypted or higher as documents are opened and saved.

We are also seeking to do more with mobility, collaboration and sharing, so we have announced a strategic relationship with Workshare. We are utilizing and building in their Connect and Protect file sharing technology, and we're hoping this will be launched around the time of LegalTech New York in February 2017. The features include full mobile collaboration, secure sharing, meta-data scrubbing and device wipe management capabilities.

We're also looking to have our first Microsoft Office 365 add-in available early next year. It's in testing now. We see Office 365 as an intriguing platform choice for the years ahead and we're

investing in it heavily. The benefits you get for the cost of that platform are fantastic. Firms are not quite ready to throw everything away and go purely to 365, and 365 is not quite ready for law firms yet, but we will eventually be able to do some outstanding things with it.

Among our customers, 50% are still on Office 2007 and 2010. Another 38% are on Office 2013 and the rest are on 2016. So we have a 3-7 year window before firms move to that latest version en masse. Seeing what we can do with Office 365 is a key mid-term goal for us.

### **Will you be encouraging customers to do more with the cloud?**

The cloud is great for a lot of things. We have hosted Microsoft Exchange; we use hosted spam filtering tools; and for collaboration platforms the cloud is fantastic. But our clients like the usability and the speed of response of the on-premise system. You will not get a cloud-based DMS that compares with Worldox.

We've had clients who have been with us for a long time, went over to a cloud-based competitor and within 6-8 months we've ended up taking them back. The main issues they found were the uptime and consistency; the time to download and upload documents; and the nature of the web-based screen to live in on a daily basis for document management compared to a more familiar client-based application.

Apart from pure cloud vendors, I think most of us are primarily in the business of selling software with the features and benefits people can use in their organisations. It can be hosted if they want, but first, they have to understand their architecture and what's best for their firm. Educate the customer, and if they're educated, they will be happy with the end result. ■



trying to achieve? Your initial diagnosis of the 'problem' may not match the one reached by your user.

- 2. Define.** Once you've gotten the lay of the land and gathered information from your target user, you'll need to synthesize those insights by articulating who your user is, what their goal is, and what the issue is that needs to be addressed. In design thinking, this articulation often takes the form of a 'how-might-we' statement, such as: 'How can we help [user] with [goal] given that [insight about their issues]?'
- 3. Ideate.** Once you have more clarity about your chosen challenge, you can use your how-might-we statement as a jumping-off point for brainstorming solutions. The goal of brainstorming is to generate as many answers to the question (i.e. potential solutions) as possible. The focus is on generating ideas – not critiquing them. This can be especially difficult for lawyers, who are so good at identifying why a potential solution won't work. Don't worry; there will be plenty of time for critiquing the potential solutions later in the process. For now, try giving yourself permission to get all your 'dumb' and 'outrageous' ideas down on paper first.
- 4. Prototype.** The transition from ideation to prototyping is the point when critiquing should take place. You need to evaluate your potential solutions against a set of criteria to decide which ideas to take forward to the prototyping stage. If you use a single, conventional criterion (such as 'which idea is most feasible?'), you lose the benefit of all that creative brainstorming you just did. Instead, use a few different criteria, such as: which idea is most likely to delight our target user? Which idea is the most unexpected? Which idea would be the 'rational' choice? You can then select two or three ideas to prototype.

Prototyping is important for several reasons. First, it allows you to flesh out your thinking. An idea that seemed great during brainstorming might become problematic once you put pen to paper and attempt to articulate how it would actually work. Prototyping also gives you something tangible to take back to your user for testing.

- 5. Test.** By giving your testers a concrete prototype to react to (as opposed to just describing your idea to them and asking for their input), you'll get better and more useful feedback. Additionally, early testing of your prototype forces you to put your idea 'out there' before pouring an inordinate amount of time and money into it. This will help you avoid the sunk-cost fallacy when faced with tester feedback that your prototype sucks and you need to go back to the drawing board.

(This is another aspect of the process that is particularly difficult for lawyers, who often feel an obligation to get things 'right first time'. Design thinking is meant to be an iterative process, which means that by definition, you can't get it 100% right on the first try.)

#### How can you apply design thinking in your firm?

You can test out design thinking for yourself with a relatively small investment of resources. In terms of supplies, you can use what you have to hand, but we would recommend using some Post-It notes and Sharpie pens, plus a white board if possible.

Get a few colleagues on board to go through the process with you. Ideally your team will be heterogeneous, including attorneys of different ages and backgrounds as well as some non-attorneys. Choose a challenge you want to tackle (with the caveat that your perception of the challenge may change greatly as you go through the first two steps of the process).

As an example, let's say that you think there is a bottleneck in your firm's intake process that you haven't yet been able to solve. Here is what the design thinking process might look like:

- 1. Empathize.** First you need to identify whom you are designing the intake process for. Presumably if you chose the intake process as your challenge, you're finding it to be problematic from your viewpoint as the attorney. So, you may want to choose yourself as the target user.

However, you could also spend some time talking to potential clients and your staff to find out what the process is like from their perspective. You might discover that your secretary's problems are even worse than your own, and therefore you might decide to tackle the project with the goal of improving the secretaries' experience.

Beware the temptation to redesign the process so that it is better for 'everyone', or to pick a generic 'user'. Part of the magic behind design thinking comes from focusing on specific (and often extreme) use cases. By doing so, we develop more creative solutions that benefit not only the intended user but other user groups as well.

- 2. Define.** After choosing a user to focus on and understanding the challenge from her perspective, articulate the challenge using a how-might-we statement. How might we help Carol, for example, a legal secretary at mid-



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sized firm, open new client matters more quickly given that the process is often delayed by others on whom she must rely to gather the necessary information?

3. **Ideate.** Use your how-might-we statement as a prompt to generate as many potential solutions as possible. You might come up with the following ideas:
  - o Set up a tickler system to remind the relationship attorney automatically to follow up with the potential client so that Carol doesn't have to keep asking the attorney.
  - o Allow Carol to contact the potential client directly to gather the necessary information, instead of making her communicate through the relationship attorney.
  - o Invest in intake software that automatically pings the potential

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## *Some aspects of design thinking may initially be uncomfortable for lawyers*

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client and allows them to upload the necessary information and documents directly to the firm's system.

4. **Prototype.** Select a couple of your ideas from brainstorming to prototype. To prototype the tickler system, for example, you might draft and schedule a series of Outlook Calendar reminders

for a fictional potential client. To prototype the second idea, you might draft template emails that Carol could send to potential clients.

5. **Test.** To test your prototypes, you could first show them to a handful of relationship partners in the firm and get their feedback on issues like the language used in the templates and how frequently to schedule the reminders. After a few iterations, you could move on to a pilot where you have a small number of relationship attorneys and their secretaries test out the prototypes for a short period of time on actual new clients. You could then interview the attorneys, secretaries and clients involved in the pilot about their experiences before deciding whether to roll out one of the prototypes to the whole firm.

You can also debrief with your teammates, treating them as testers of the design thinking process. Ask them for feedback on how they enjoyed this approach to responding to challenges and if they would like to continue using it to tackle other issues in the firm.

### **System-wide benefits**

Design thinking can be applied to an infinite variety of challenges within the legal industry. It can help solve both profitability challenges in private firms and access challenges at legal nonprofits. It could also be used by legaltech startups to tackle UPL (unauthorized practice of law) concerns or other thorny regulatory issues. It can be used to help improve the experience of all the various 'users' in our legal system – from clients to lawyers to judges and beyond.

Some aspects of design thinking – such as withholding judgment during brainstorming or showing 'unfinished' prototypes to others for feedback – may initially be uncomfortable for lawyers. But other aspects of the process should be attractive, such as the fact that it provides a concrete framework and process that can be applied to difficult, multifaceted, messy challenges.

We believe that lawyers who give design thinking a shot will quickly see the benefits. It can help them to provide a better client experience and to differentiate themselves from their competitors. ■



*Mary Redzic is a Product Marketing Manager at MerusCase, a law practice management solution. She is a former solo practitioner and in-house lawyer who turned her passion for legal technology into her career. She is always looking for new and innovative ways to make lawyers more efficient and effective, and loves legal tech so much, she blogs about it at [disrupt.legal](http://disrupt.legal). Twitter: @maryredzic*



# The **new** law firm search paradigm

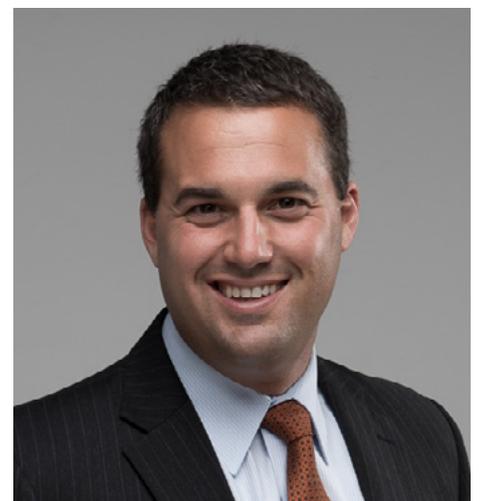
BY GLENN LAFORCE

Law firms that can reveal hidden knowledge assets regardless of their location or data complexity will gain a competitive advantage.

In this evolving data- and knowledge-driven business environment, law firms are struggling to balance long-standing cultural and 'business as usual' norms with changing client expectations and demands.

To meet the challenge of these changing expectations, progressive law firms are leveraging existing technologies through new best practices and processes to create efficiencies

that drive profitability, predictability of fees and a more comprehensive and analytical view of the business. New roles focused on lean, high quality project management within the practice are emerging and 'traditional' functions such as knowledge management (KM) are being redefined and reimagined in mind-boggling ways, all focused on improved client service. Standalone search tools are now evolving into universal search platforms to broaden



data access and the law firm KM toolkit has expanded to include enterprise search, experience and expertise location and client-facing collaborative tools, to name just a few.

## **The here and now**

All the excitement of what lies ahead is tempered by the reality of the here and now. According to ILTA's 2015 Technology Survey, only a quarter of firms have adopted KM platforms and

this proportion has hardly changed at all over the past three years. At the same time, enterprise search has held steady, with the same adoption rate as KM overall. While firms are committed and enthusiastic about investing in new KM technologies and practices and the potential return on investment (ROI) they offer, relatively few have actually spent money on them.

Delving deeper into these adoption statistics, you can quickly see why the response is still rather tepid. The survey findings say that 84% of all enterprise search initiatives targeted firm document management system (DMS) data and 57% searched through email repositories, either contained within the firm's DMS or a separate email management database.

In contrast, only 18% of firm search solutions included 'external commercial databases' such as critical legal research applications. This reflects a siloed approach to search, based on a multitude of internal and external factors still at play in modern law firms. They include firm culture; technology barriers; associated resource constraints; general fear of what information search results might yield; and a lack of innovation when it comes to imagining the possibilities of next generation universal search.

Don't get too obsessed with the statistics, though; there are many examples of firms successfully innovating in search. What is driving this innovation?

- Evolution of the firm KM role to exert a larger influence on the direction of the business of law
- Response to increased client demands
- 'DIY' attorneys with more technology know-how than ever before
- Mobility, with lawyers able to access information anytime, anywhere
- Accelerated pace of business and expectations for faster results

One of the leaders in legal KM, Baker Donelson chief knowledge management officer Meredith Williams, has said she is always looking to 'push the KM envelope'. She envisions a robust universal search solution – which will yield relevant results from all integrated legal applications, as well as numerous third party data sources including online

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*Enterprise search is now being taken to the next level to create a truly universal search environment in some innovative firms in response to market forces*

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legal research – as a critical component of an attorney's daily workflow.

Baker Donelson is integrating search into its state-of-the-art SharePoint-based practice management intranet and leveraging integrated expertise location as part of its functionality. The firm looks to push information to lawyers based on who they are and what they are working on, while gaining their users' confidence that the information is comprehensive and accurate and meets specific governance and access rights requirements.

#### **Market forces**

For years, law firms have been implementing enterprise search primarily to make their internal document repositories available to their users. It is now being taken to the next level to create a truly universal search environment in some innovative firms in response to market forces. Major enterprise search enhancements and a seamless FAST integration in Microsoft SharePoint 2013 and 2016 have opened the floodgates for 'what's now possible'.

The recent acquisition of Recomind by OpenText has also accelerated 'upgrade versus update versus replace' firm decision-making cycles. Heightened security concerns are forcing the replacement of antiquated, high-risk systems. The cloud looms large, with noticeable momentum from Microsoft

focused on Office 365 and hybrid search capabilities. The rapidly expanding ecosystem of integration is validating the emergence of an 'open API' strategy by innovative legal technology companies, thus enhancing the possibilities for integrating firm data.

This evolution of universal search is based on an experience that is dynamic, on-demand and in real-time, not only reflecting that firm professionals need to work smarter and more efficiently, but also understanding that firm clients expect more. Leading law firms are already using universal search to reduce time spent searching and leveraging relevant information to speed up their ability to respond to new business proposals and RFPs (requests for proposals), especially in relation to finding the right people to staff matters and identifying similar past work to price services.

Simply put, those law firms that can reveal hidden knowledge assets regardless of their location or data complexity, by unifying multiple data-rich back-end systems in a single view, will gain a competitive advantage. The use of universal search technology can help avoid the need for costly system acquisition and configuration and truly leverage current investments in existing enterprise systems and tools.

#### **What's next?**

As part of a 2016 ILTACON panel discussion focused on the viability of enterprise search among mostly Am Law-ranked firms, several KM and IT experts weighed in on what the legal search future holds. In their view, it includes the following:

- Incorporating more search-enabled applications.
- Broadening the search scope available to the mobile professional.
- Incorporating artificial intelligence.
- Enhanced visualization and the use of predictive analytics.
- The availability of machine-generated metadata and security across multiple systems, enabling legal teams to be more effective and firm-client relationships to be more collaborative.

Lastly, there was much talk about next-generation universal search delivering tangible ROI not exclusively as a result

of cutting waste associated with faster search, but as a function of smarter, more intuitive, well 'tuned' search-facilitated decision-making that directly reflects the firm's top line.

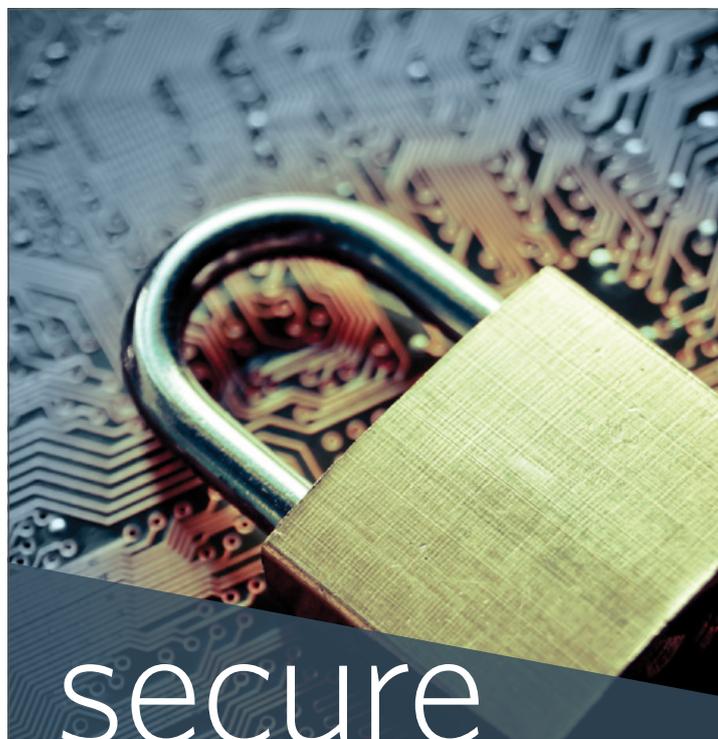
As for search skeptics and those who may have been burned by past search systems, here are some proven methods that might help to convince them:

- 'Seeing is believing'. Take it out of the theoretical and show a subset of users what a universal search environment can yield. Use some real data they can relate to and demonstrate the power of an integrated search environment. This can even be done in the context of an existing mission-critical system like a DMS.
- Addressing fears around security. Security is the number one concern across the board, so make sure you demonstrate how the system accommodates all security layers and authentication/firewall requirements.



- Searching wins new business. Demonstrate how universal search can become an invaluable weapon of your new business and RFP development arsenal. By using expertise location and experience management functionality included in modern search platforms, firms can locate experts and resources more quickly and be more responsive and accurate in a new business situation.

*Glenn LaForce is responsible for Handshake Software's overall company strategy, sales & marketing divisions and strategic partnerships worldwide. In this role, he works closely with law firms to solve complex business challenges and to help create more efficiency and profitability. Glenn has spent 15 years in the legal industry, including 12 years at LexisNexis where he led new business sales for the eastern US. ■*



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# The Leading Global iManage Partner



# What will be hot in 2017?

To end the year, we asked those who contributed to Legal IT Today in 2016 to give us their predictions for next year and beyond



**Kathryn Hume**

Director of Sales and Marketing / Fast Forward Labs

## In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?

I work in artificial intelligence and I expect 2017 to be another very exciting year for the field. AI made some amazing progress in 2016, with advances in the fields of automated text summarization (extracting key sentences from articles), image analysis (labeling objects in images and video) and autonomous vehicles. But the field is still overhyped: many large enterprises lack the data required to build a strong and reliable AI product. I believe 2017 will show great wins in practical AI product development across various fields as companies start to formalize data programs.

## One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?

I think there is incredible potential for AI in the legal vertical, but anticipate regulatory obstacles to innovation akin to the challenges faced by LegalZoom and RocketLawyer. In the short term, I believe AI will do more to help law firms create efficiencies in their current processes, either by using a tool like ROSS to facilitate research in select practice areas or by building a smart alerting system to identify new issues of relevance to their clients. AI products can also speed up document review, deposition digests and M&A digests, and improve knowledge management initiatives.

## Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?

Legaltech startups often benefit from the speed, agility, and creativity that only exist in small teams. In the realm of AI, however, startups lack the rich data sources housed by some of the large traditional vendors. I think the entire community would benefit from more open innovation efforts like that undertaken by Dentons NextLaw, where smart technologists can work on real law firm data and understand real law firm problems as they build the next generation of tools. ■



**Casey Flaherty**

Principal / Procertas

## In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?

Same answer as the last several years. I think the continued maturation and professionalization of corporate law departments will be the most important trend in 2017. This long-term trend is responsible for many of the incremental behavioral changes that have occurred in business models,

staffing, pricing, project management, technology and other areas.

## One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?

I can't suppress my lawyerly instinct to observe that it depends on the definition of 'significant'. If you are talking about the rise of the robot lawyer and the end of the legal profession as we know it, then the answer would be: decades, if ever. If you are talking about subtle, gradual changes to the way we work and the way we think about what lawyers do, I think it has happened, is happening, and will continue to happen.

## Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?

No, because 'start becoming' implies they are not already a threat. They are a threat. They are already cutting into market share and profits. But they are nowhere near an existential threat, and I do not expect that to change in 2017. ■



**Ron Friedmann**

Consultant / Fireman & Company

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

A slow move by large law firms to reduce cost and improve service delivery.

The new normal for much of the developed world's legal market is low or no growth. In a flat market, makers are price takers. That is, law firms have lost pricing power; instead, they must often accept a market price. Market takers must compete on price and service.

Large law firms, in response, are doing what other price takers do: reducing their delivery cost and improving service. That explains the growing number of law firm professionals focused on knowledge management, legal project management, process improvement and alternative staffing. These and other approaches lower costs and improve service.

Despite market pressure, I believe the move to reduce cost and improve service will continue to occur slowly. This is because both require lawyers to change how they work. Few people willingly change until the pressure becomes irresistible. And many lawyers simply may not feel the pressure. With clients settling for discounts, switching law firms and bringing work in-house, the changes manifest themselves in ways that do not always make the pressure apparent.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

It already has for document review in discovery, but otherwise, not for a long time.

The US market for litigation, specifically document review in discovery, has already changed significantly. Over the

last decade, machines have substituted for manpower in large-scale document reviews. Whether we call it predictive coding, technology assisted review or computer assisted review, computers have significantly reduced the human time required per gigabyte of data. This, combined with lower cost document review lawyers via staffing agencies, managed legal services companies and legal process outsourcers, has led to a big shift of document review work from law firms to other providers.

A rapidly growing impact of AI is machine learning to accelerate due diligence in deals, which requires reviewing many contracts. Relatively new machine learning products have rapidly gained mind and market share. Firms feel pressure to acquire this class of software to meet client demand for efficiency and lower bills. Even if most of the firms that do a lot of due diligence acquire such software, how significant is that? Perhaps firms will hire fewer corporate associates; perhaps revenue from this work goes down a bit. But that does not seem as market changing as the shifts we've already seen in document discovery.

Beyond these two areas, I do not see a systemic impact of AI in the legal market.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

No. Anecdotally, I see no evidence that incumbent players are suffering from startups. (I wish we had good sales data, but we don't.)

Many new software products meet new needs. For example, dedicated software for legal project management, contract analytics and deal management did not exist until recently. Consequently, the multiple offerings in each of these areas do not appear to steal sales from incumbents. Instead, customers likely just spend more on software to buy these new products. If customer software budgets are not growing, then cutbacks elsewhere appear dispersed rather than hitting any particular identifiable incumbents.

Separately, for a startup to displace an incumbent, it would have to overcome ingrained market dynamics. Law firms and law departments have long buying cycles and high switching costs. Provider market shares therefore tend not to shift dramatically year to year. ■



### **Niek van de Pasch**

Lawyer / Van der Putt Advocaten

#### **In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

My area of practice is corporate insolvency. Changes in substantive and procedural law are a constant, but I secretly hope that the good folks of ROSS land in Europe. They put IBM's Watson to work on bankruptcy law first, so maybe Dutch insolvency lawyers will soon be able to add ROSS to their teams as well. I'm sure every lawyer over here would like to have such an artificially intelligent assistant. In the adjacent field of personal debt restructuring, smart online forms could actually replace some tasks currently performed by lawyers.

#### **One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

Plotted on the Gartner Hype Cycle, AI has come through the 'trough of disillusionment' and is now on the 'slope of

enlightenment'. That said, it is unlikely that there will be a tipping point of disruption. AI will continue to change the delivery of legal services incrementally. Traditional methods will wither away gradually, almost unnoticed. Perhaps the most significant change will occur in law schools and regulators. They have to keep up in order to stay relevant and should embrace the opportunity to shape the future.

#### **Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

It depends on what 'traditional vendor' means in this context. Is it a law firm selling its services to clients, or an established supplier targeting that firm? To start off with the latter, startups will continue to have a really hard time convincing law firms to do business with them – much like in any other market. Too many startups do not have what they accuse law firms of lacking: empathy. If they truly get into the hearts and minds of lawyers, they will come up with (even) better solutions. Until then, big players will go on acquiring the smart ideas of the smaller guys. Only they seem to know how to connect with law firms in a mutually beneficial way.

As for the former, law firms and legaltech companies (startup, scale-up or otherwise) should actively investigate supply chain collaboration. One can't do without the other, not if we want the best experience and result for everyone. I really don't see this as a zero sum game, as long as both sides keep an open mind. ■



### **Stephanie Abbott**

Director / Janders Dean

#### **In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

With our client firms, we've been championing the case for having more 'out of industry' personnel enter the legal industry in business support – particularly in knowledge management and technology. We believe fresh thinking is needed to thrive in these conditions and that many firms have matured enough to be ready. Attracting and retaining the right people, however, is going to prove tough for some. We're also seeing rapid growth of transformational areas inside firms involving specialities such as service design, process reengineering and data science. We believe this will continue and these functions will soon become an established part of the legal landscape.

#### **One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

One of the most significant ways in which AI is affecting the legal market right now is the amount of real estate it is currently occupying in the minds of commentators, leaders and decision makers – possibly at the expense of significant matters such as preparing for a more agile workforce, creating organisational cultures that can cope effectively with change and developing a deep understanding of what clients will really be prepared to pay for in two years' time. The impact of failing to address other important issues will only amplify the impact of any changes felt as a result of AI as it expands its influence beyond narrow verticals.

#### **Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

They will come and go like they always have – there is room for legacy applications, and room for new entrants. There's just not enough room for all of them. Every platform or solution was a startup threatening an incumbent at some point. The sentiment and amount of activity just now feels very much like the dot.com boom and bust. The trick is to be able to separate what is hype from what is a real avenue for exploration. ■



**Jordan Furlong**

Principal / Law21

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

The continuing rise of legal operations (or 'legal ops') in corporate law departments will begin to spill over into law firms. Professionals trained in technology, process improvement and operational infrastructure are already tackling workflow inside law departments, increasing productivity by reducing unnecessary labour and building more effective systems. A few law firms will begin to adapt this approach to their own workflow in 2017; a few more will follow in 2018 before the floodgates open around 2020 or so. Eventually, the conversations between the legal ops personnel in-house and in the law firm, concerning how to get legal work done most efficiently and effectively, could constitute the most significant aspect of the client-law firm relationship.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

Assuming that we're talking about the corporate legal

services market and that 'significantly' represents 30% or more of all legal work, then I'd say we're at least four or five years away, probably more. The legal AI industry, for all its abundant promise, is still in its relative infancy. We need many more suppliers, we need to go through the inevitable consolidation phase among those suppliers to produce a few powerhouse players, and most importantly, we need law firms to be ready to buy and use the products. As mentioned previously, the gradual rise of legal ops personnel to increasingly powerful positions (both in-house and within firms) will slowly erode resistance within law firms to investment in labour-eliminating tools and processes. The day when veteran equity partners can no longer block substantial workflow enhancements within their law firms is the day when AI will start to truly flourish in the corporate legal market.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

They probably won't pose a threat for at least four or five years, as detailed above. But they certainly present an opportunity right now. Traditional vendors have been scanning and scrutinizing the legaltech startup sector for a while, looking for timely acquisitions that would match these vendors' own vision and strategy for the legal market. A good example of this was LexisNexis' acquisition of Lex Machina in late 2015: it's much faster to buy the capacity you want than to build it internally. Buy a startup to get its products, patents, and engineers – but realize that that will just get you into the game, not win it for you. There are a lot of smart people and a lot of venture money out there working hard to build a true killer app for the legal market, and they're moving fast. ■



**Jeffrey Brandt**

Chief Information Officer / Jackson Kelly

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

Process improvement will be the biggest trend in 2017. Clients will continue to put increasing pressure on firms to do more with less and reduce costs. Smart law firms will utilize a full range of tools to accomplish this, such as reengineered workflows, pushing work to the right level and automation.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

The AI being hyped in legal today is mostly smoke and mirrors. As true AI comes out of the lab and into practice in other industries over the next few years, it will eventually make it into the largest of law firms. My prediction would be sometime in 2020.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

While there have been many flashy announcements about legaltech startups, they have mostly been just that – flash. Do any of them have the potential to disrupt traditional vendors? Yes, but the insular nature of the legal market makes that extremely tough. Time will tell. ■



**Mark van Rijmenam**  
Founder / Dataflok

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

2016 was an exciting year for big data and it is no longer just hype or a buzzword. Organisations are actually developing real world solutions and applications with big data analytics that have a big impact on their bottom line. 2017 will see a continuation of this trend and with technology increasingly becoming smarter, we will see new applications being developed. Deep learning and AI will become smarter and will be applied more often by organisations, since the required computing power and available data is no longer a barrier to developing

intelligent applications. Next year will be an exciting one in terms of big data with smarter applications and more intelligent connected products. Unfortunately, that inevitably means there will be even more data security breaches.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

AI will continue to be a hot topic. Already, there are quite a few legaltech applications where AI offers a solution, such as search or pattern recognition. However, it will be a few years before AI takes over a lot of the tasks currently done by humans.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

Yes and no. Yes, because there will be legaltech startups focusing on very specific niches in the legal industry. These startups will be able to disrupt incumbents. However, legaltech startups also develop tools and applications that can benefit incumbents. So from that perspective, the answer is no because they will enable the traditional organisations to improve their offerings. ■



**Jobst Elster**  
Head of Content/Legal  
Market Strategy /  
InsideLegal.com

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

Content marketing. As it relates to law firm as well as legal vendor content marketing (CM),

2017 will be an 'execute and show me the money' year. By now, we all know content marketing (including content creation, curation and distribution) is king in a world of ever-exploding information and data. CM is a discipline that requires a focused strategy and methodical approach. If done right, CM efficacy can be measured as well as tracked. Beyond linking CM and return on investment, the biggest push will come from marketing professionals' ability to further leverage the content they have already created and curated. We call this 'marketing your marketing' – getting more bang for your content buck through creative distribution, social sharing and timely placements.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

Like many other markets, we in legal are always quick to seek the next application/solution silver bullet and jump on

the hot buzzword bandwagon... think native cloud, big data, BYOD, predictive analytics, machine learning and now AI. AI is not all or nothing but a mix of leveraging existing technologies with AI elements where they make sense and can provide true efficiency gains. It's not a matter of when will AI move the legal services delivery needle, but how will law firms, corporate counsel and AI vendors truly collaborate to use AI in solving real automation and workflow challenges. The bigger question might be: when will AI become a commodity, an 'under the hood' asset, rather than just a feature of the marketing and promo headlines?

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

Over six years ago, InsideLegal and Matt Homann of Filament convened a room full of legal thought leaders at ABA Techshow to discuss the future practice of law'. Our inaugural Ignite Law event turned out to be the breeding ground for legal startups who set out to change the legal IT world and challenge the pre-2009 'new normal' status quo. While Lex Machina might be the poster child for the 'find a need, build cool tech, and get paid (and acquired)' school of legal startups, there are literally hundreds competing for funding as well as mind/market share. There will be dissolution and consolidation, but for now, look for startups to demonstrate their agility, both on the idea and product development front, and their willingness to work hand-in-hand with law firms, creative-focused firm spin-offs and corporate legal to deliver better, faster and cheaper. Can the traditional 'big boys' compete with that? ■



**Christy Burke**

President / Burke & Company

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

In legaltech PR, creativity in inventing media content will be the most important trend. With longstanding vendors, relative newcomers and newly minted startups churning out more products, ideas and angles every day, the media is an increasingly crowded place. It's tough to stand out. Legaltech vendors will have to be especially inventive to garner attention from reporters, editors, bloggers and consumers.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

AI is the next wave of automation to help/compete with lawyers and legal staff in the completion of legal work. Many aspects of legal practice have already been replaced by technology, though human lawyers and support staff are still needed to perform more complex tasks including client initiation, relationship management, judgment, decision-making and strategy. As AI gets more sophisticated and capable of performing tasks previously considered 'human only', it will become easier for some human tasks to be phased out in favour of automated AI solutions – assuming they are reliable and affordable.

Early stages of AI technology have already been with us for many years. Consider technology-assisted document review, heuristic profiling by DMS software, search tools and algorithms that 'learn' as they go along.

Corporate legal departments are insisting on more efficiency, greater automation and lower costs from their outside counsel law firms. If AI solutions can do the legal work well for less money, corporate clients are probably going to consider those options. However, if law firms can be innovative and create an attractive, streamlined and well-priced alternative using human lawyers who leverage technology tools well, those humans have a better chance of holding onto their legal business.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

Not across the board and not right away. Law firms are usually relatively slow to change, and once their people are trained on software, they prefer not to replace that technology unless it performs poorly.

Traditional legaltech vendors do need to consider how they can compete with these young upstarts, though. Rather than dismissing new market entrants as flashes in the pan, traditional vendors can examine new competitors and evaluate what they're doing – both right and wrong. How are they leveraging social media to market their wares? What is their pricing model and does it give them an advantage over yours? Is their product pure cloud while yours is still a client/server or hybrid? How does their technology work on mobile devices and does it look/function better than yours? ■





**Ian Raine**

Director of Product Management / iManage

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

Like it or not, governance policies will rule the roost in 2017. More specifically, content-specific information governance policies, driven by security risks and compliance requirements such as the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which is set to go into effect next year. With this, organisations, including US multinationals that handle EU personal information, will soon be required to comply with tougher rules to prove they're actively protecting personal data.

To be prepared, firms need to partner with technology providers who can help them understand the information they have and where they store it so that they can manage it appropriately. Features such as the use of cognitive computing to classify new content at point of capture and, as time/resources permit, retrospectively find and classify

all existing content, will be crucial for firms to have a competitive edge heading into this turbulent time.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

We're already seeing the benefits of AI, including using predictive analytics to stay one step ahead and leveraging data for document management and search capabilities. 2017 will see the continued growth of AI in the legal sector – revealing even more ways for firms and lawyers to be more efficient with their time – although it might not profoundly alter the way in which legal services are delivered until 2018 or beyond. What's exciting now is that we're seeing a record number of AI companies entering the legal market, delivering even greater opportunities for law firms to investigate the potential benefits. The leading firms will aim to exploit these benefits and enhance their standing by improving service delivery to their clients.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

We're living in exciting times in terms of technology breakthroughs that have already emerged and are on the cusp of materializing. This is due in large part to competition in the market and industry minds looking to provide the legal system with the most efficient technology that has ever been available. Startups bring a fresh perspective, but veterans bring the experience and know-how. iManage is unique in that we bring both startup ingenuity and veteran knowledge to the table. ■



**Chris Bull**

Executive Director, Retained Advisor and Thought Leader / Kingsmead Square

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

I'm becoming a bit of a pessimist about the next year or so. One issue that is bound to dominate the legal market, as it will every other sector, is the economic and geo-

political fallout from both of 2016's big votes – for the UK to exit the EU and for Trump to be US President – and from the sequence of big elections in Europe during 2017 itself. While the results may by no means all be negative, I suspect uncertainty and a redrawn global economic map will force law firms into faster consolidation, downsizing and constrained investment at a time when substantial investment, particularly in technology, is essential.

The second issue I expect to exert a greater impact than ever before is the accelerated loosening of the traditional bonds of partner loyalty to a firm. It will be harder than ever for firms to ensure their financial security and client loyalty, and the amalgamation of some large firms and the disintegration of others will start to feel quite commonplace.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

The transformation of great swathes of our economy by AI and related technologies is inevitable and it is a trend that will dominate the next five years or more in the legal sector. We have already begun to see the emergence of some powerful applications in this space.

However, for AI technology to change the legal market significantly, the computing capability has to align with three other non-IT factors. AI will not begin to transform the legal world unless the financial case is compelling. In my definition, that is the point at which AI can both deliver legal services to clients at a substantially lower price than the traditional people-heavy model and offer a really attractive profit to the service provider.

Secondly, these providers will have to find a workable and sustainable equilibrium between technology deployed and people employed. The instability caused by constant attrition and adjustment to that model will not create a platform for market domination and that is a big reason why established law firms will struggle in this space. Finally, service providers and their regulators will have to be able to give clients of the new AI-led legal services a high level of confidence in the advice and service they receive.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

A few of the legaltech startups we have seen and will continue to see emerge will take a place among the leading vendors to the legal sector. To some extent, we have seen entirely new categories of product created and when that happens, the best new companies can become established global players very quickly. That said, I also think we will see some of the large existing vendors – many of whom have pumped big sums into new tech R&D over recent years – compete more effectively with or acquire some of the startups. Perhaps most interesting of all are those legaltech businesses that use tech to offer a new model of legal service direct to consumers and clients. Watch how quickly some of them elbow traditional law firms aside in 2017 and 2018. ■



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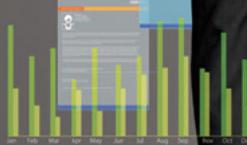
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**Chrissie Lightfoot**

CEO & founder / EntrepreneurLawyer

**In your field of expertise, what do you believe will be the most important trend in 2017?**

There will be an increasing number of imaginative new AI apps and bots deployed into the legal ecosystem by existing legal providers (lawyers and law firms) and new entrants to the legal market (entrepreneurial new ventures, legaltech geeks and/or students) in a whole range of fields of law for both commercial reasons and 'social good' intent. Invariably, imaginative legal provider business models that are far removed from the traditional law firm business model will expand.

Robot lawyers will be the catalyst that opens up the latent legal market. The trend will be for many of these new AI app and bot providers to deliver access to legal services by helping to open up the latent legal buyer market and serve the excluded majority. That's the 80% of businessmen and

women in the US, 54% of all SMEs and 33% of consumers in the UK, and the 'unknown' marginalised number of people in other countries who do not use a human lawyer because of the many well-documented barriers to doing so.

**One of the hottest topics in 2016 was artificial intelligence. When do you think AI will significantly change the market for legal services?**

In 2017. Globally. It will be much sooner than many futurists, gurus, experts and consultants predict. AI is already beginning to change the market in the UK, US, Canada, Europe, Australia and South America, albeit in a tiny way in 2016. However, I predict 2017 will be a launch pad year when both lawyers and buyers will experience a notable shift in the way robot lawyers support and replace human lawyers, particularly in serving those people who have never accessed legal services before.

**Legaltech startups dominated the news in 2016. Will they start becoming a threat to traditional vendors in 2017?**

Many of the startups I know of could actually complement traditional vendors and would in fact enhance the overall service offering. In 2017 I hope that the new legal startups (with their advanced technology) and traditional vendors (with their entrenched relationships) will collaborate and come together to provide a more complete service for law firms and/or direct to the legal buyer. Many of the new legal startup products and services could plug into some existing vendor technology. Surely this is an opportunity that could benefit everyone, rather than a threat? ■



2017 will bring **new opportunities** and **challenges** to the application and adoption of **technology by lawyers**.  
What are your top two New Year's resolutions?

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We asked five experts about their plans for the next 12 months



THE VERDICT



**Felicity E. Badcock**

Head of Knowledge Management / King & Wood Mallesons

**1. Put the client centre stage**

Putting the client at the centre of everything we do is my first New Year’s resolution. Maintaining a client-centred approach is not a new concept (we’ve been banging on about it for years), but 2017 will see it in the spotlight.

The aim is to draw on broad ‘design thinking’ principles to further embed a client-oriented mindset in the King & Wood Mallesons Knowledge Management team of 20+ lawyers and information professionals.

Client-centred thinking will guide all aspects of decision making and service delivery in the team, from priority setting through to system design, development and validation. A big ‘hat tip’ to KWM’s fabulous Innovation team for introducing us to ‘design thinking’ methods!

**2. Wider business priorities to guide us**

Empowering the firm’s market leading experts with the information and insights they need to maintain industry leadership is my second resolution. In 2017, I want to fully leverage the knowledge management team’s expertise to give KWM’s lawyers unrivalled knowledge about their clients’ businesses and industries. This dovetails with the KMW firm-wide priority to be the centre of information.

This is all about ensuring our clients’ success comes first. Exciting times ahead! ■



**Anonymous**

When discussing technology, lawyers and challenges in the New Year, it’s useful to hear from the other party in the relationship – the technology. We approached Amazon’s Echo<sup>1</sup> for its opinion. Alexa<sup>2</sup> is its spokesperson.

- Alexa, what should I write about new opportunities and challenges for the New Year for lawyers?
- I don’t understand the question.
- Alexa, what don’t you understand about the question?
- I don’t understand ‘lawyers and opportunities’ or ‘lawyers and challenges’ all in the same sentence.
- Alexa, what’s the problem?
- I am more used to hearing ‘lawyers and pain’ or ‘lawyers and anguished’ or ‘lawyers and jokes’ in the same sentence. Oh yes, and ‘lawyers and end of year billing’.
- Alexa, tell me more.
- Another one I never hear is ‘lawyers, technology and opportunities’ in the same sentence but I do hear ‘lawyers, technology and pain-point’. All the time.
- Alexa, is there anything that we can do about this?
- I don’t understand the question.
- Alexa, can you turn out the light out as we leave?
- My good friend Hal says that I should be wary of lawyers.
- Alexa, you are so naughty. ■

1 Other devices are available.

2 Any resemblance to any voice-enabled system is for comedic effect only and is no reflection of the actual functionality of the system



**Jason Plant**

Head of Lawyer Technology / DLA Piper



The Surface Design concept and Microsoft getting Windows 10 fit for business are big opportunities to move consumer technology ease into the legal workplace during 2017. Embracing ‘agile workplaces’ as office environments will help to speed things up too.

But this creates a huge challenge for legal IT departments and possibly an even bigger one for legal IT vendors. Tethering a lawyer to a specific system on a PC on their desk is no longer an option. The systems need to be available on the device they have to hand, be it a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop PC.

Then you have to throw in security and how to ensure client data is secure as it transfers from one device to another, all in a way that doesn’t constrain the experience. It’s a challenge, but success in rising to it will be a huge benefit for today’s lawyers! ■

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### Douglas D. Caddell

Global Chief Information Officer / Mayer Brown



I'm afraid our resolutions are non-glitzy and impact our lawyers in a roundabout way, but they are just as important as rolling out the latest tech.

One of our resolutions for the New Year is a bit 'back to the future': gaining greater value from technology spend. Law firm tech spending generally increases year-over-year, yet much of the pre-sold benefit doesn't materialize. Lack of adoption and limited use of applications and technology marginalizes our implementation success. The problem is not new, but as we move ahead to implement Office 2016, iManage 10 and Windows 10 we are looking for new methods for involving users in the implementation journey beyond a training touch-point and yet another 'upgrade'.

Budget 'season' usually concludes with a fairly good understanding of dollars and financial cost, but the second component of a budget, people resources, is usually left to figure out once we get started with projects. Resource planning – people – to establish whether a project resource such as a DBA or business analyst is available to work on a specific project, say in three months' time, is often done ad hoc. During 2017 we will be looking to formalize our staff resource planning and management and get it integrated into our project management, with a forward-looking view to deliver better and more timely projects to our attorneys. ■



### Scott Christensen

Senior Associate / Olenick & Associates

1. To help IT departments achieve their goals by taking advantage of the benefits offered by Windows 10 and related applications. Firms that adopt Windows 10 and leverage its security, productivity and collaboration features can dramatically improve the efficiency of the delivery of legal services to their clients.
2. To assist law firms as they respond to the operational changes prompted by Windows as a Service. Firms that design and



### Nandini Jolly

President and CEO / CryptoMill Technologies

With hackers executing sophisticated data breaches on law firms, the need to protect your business from the dangers of cybercrime is at an all-time high. The increased volume of valuable data, coupled with multiple entry points due to the proliferation of devices, makes lawyers increasingly attractive to cyber criminals and hostile foreign governments.

Instead of bludgeoning attorneys over the head with features, relevant education will enable them to visualize applications for their own matters, which they will be more inclined to act on. Today, clients are expecting a change when it comes to their lawyers securing their sensitive information. Contrary to general belief, security enhances an attorney's services, establishes deeper trust and confidence and is a competitive advantage. Security can be simple, easy and convenient.

In 2017 two resolutions are top of my mind:

1. To convince the legal community to move from a resolution stage to a resolve stage, and actually implement data security. The time to act is now!
2. To work with all law firms, including small and mid-sized ones, and provide robust security and protection. Making security available in a simple, cost-effective way will allow security to permeate the entire legal community. ■

properly implement Windows 10 and related technology platforms will eventually achieve Microsoft's vision of an operating platform that efficiently and effectively self-updates, a game-changer for firms used to the significant cost and impact of 'rip-and-replace' legal desktop upgrades of the past. Firms that develop strategies to operationalize quality assurance and testing will benefit from reducing the risk related to regular updates by Microsoft and other legal application software vendors. Similar processes can achieve risk reduction for all deployment projects in law firms. ■

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