

# A LAWYER'S GUIDE TO TRANSFORMATION

MAKING LEGAL TECHNOLOGY  
WORK FOR YOU.

Transform & Thrive



# WHAT'S INSIDE...

Wherever you are on the road to transformation, the path to success can seem complex and daunting. On top of the immense pressures of litigation, the strategic deployment of useful technology can feel like a distant luxury.

This guide provides you with a toolkit of key tips, benefits, and case studies that will help you and your legal practice transform and thrive.

**This guide will help you to:**

- Make your firm more efficient;
- Attract and delight clients;
- Identify and develop standout skills; and
- Transform your practice to thrive.

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# INTRO

## MAKING LEGAL TECHNOLOGY WORK FOR YOU.

### CHAPTER 1

### The future of legal practice is powered by intuitive, lawyer-driven technology.

In the new legal landscape, the status quo is shifting fast. Competition is intensifying and clients are clamouring for greater value. However, when people and technology work effectively together, law firms can tackle these challenges head-on, transforming themselves into data-driven, customer-centric business partners to their clients, resulting in both financial and reputational growth.

With this backdrop in mind, many practices are enthusiastically embracing technology in order to drive up business performance. Indeed, a Thompson Reuters and Georgetown Law report concluded that the law firms most open to change — i.e. blending new technology with existing legal practice — would be the ones who would “undoubtedly emerge as the market leaders.”

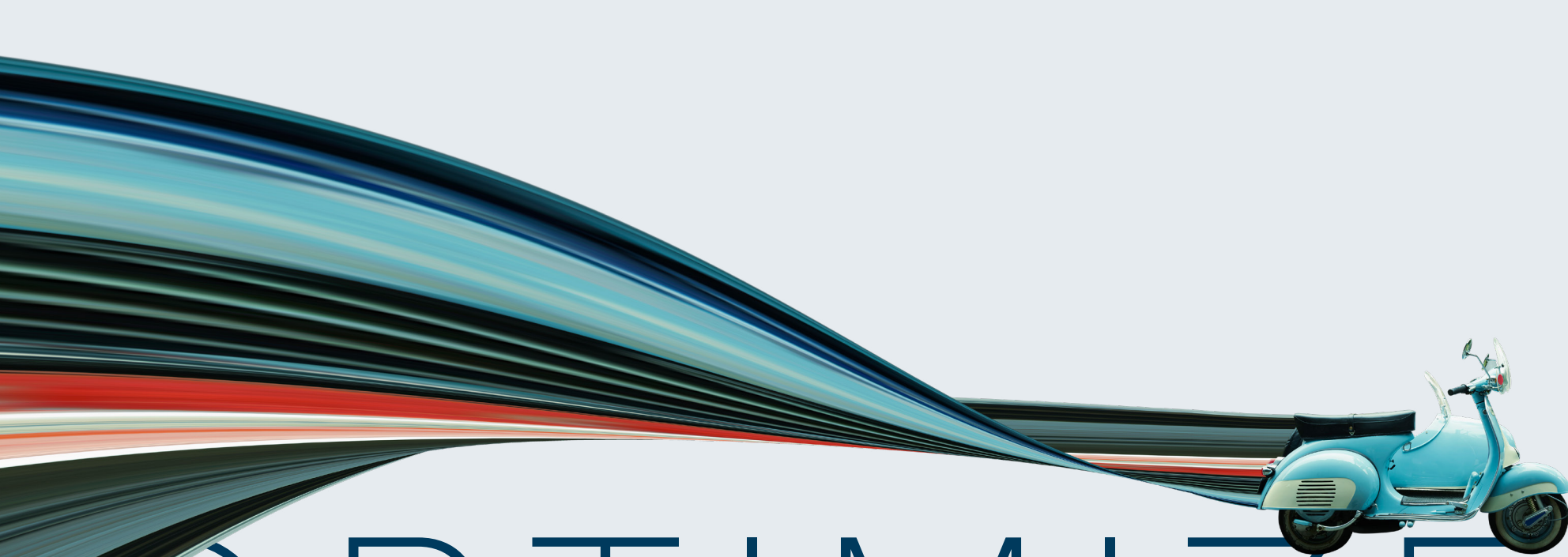
Failing to embrace the smart use of data and technology could result in the loss of your competitive advantage, both in terms of attracting and retaining clients and top talent. A **Forbes** article noted that digitally mature organizations — those that embrace the impact of legal technology on their workflow and invest in the training to maximize their returns and empower their workforce — have an advantage over digitally immature organizations in terms of performance, profitability, scalability, and client loyalty. Client satisfaction is the end goal,

allowing law firms to develop a healthy ongoing book of business. Therefore, law firms must transform to better deliver on customer needs and thus, thrive and flourish.

Despite this powerful case for technology-driven change, transformation initiatives often underperform against expectations. **Gartner** believes that more than half of legal transformation projects do not meet expectations. It also states that 54% of legal leaders ranked digital transformation as a top priority, but only 16% felt confident they could deliver a cohesive digitization plan.

The good news is that this need not be the case for your firm. Follow some, or all, of the tips in this guide to take advantage of DISCO’s insight into how successful law firms have leveraged technology to transform and thrive.





# OPTIMIZE & STREAMLINE

AUTOMATE ROUTINE PROCESSES TO  
IMPROVE SPEED AND INCREASE ACCURACY.

CHAPTER 2

In the new legal landscape, a law firm must be efficient. Its processes must be documented, precise, and consistent. Firms must also be flexible and inherently adaptive. Why? Because in the presence of disruptive forces – changing regulatory environments, evolving client expectations, exponential data growth, and, most importantly, new technology – success is about understanding where you can transform to thrive.

We at DISCO know that clients are often the catalysts of transformation for law firms. They demand greater value for their money and faster times to outcome, which creates the impetus to review efficiencies and processes. We also know that successful law firms can leverage technology to anticipate the needs of their clients.

So, understanding how to transform and evolve processes using technology is central to a client-centric law firm’s success. To effectively deploy technology, it’s also critical to understand your processes. Ask yourself: what are your most manual, time-consuming or routine activities — especially those that directly impact client outcomes? For example, could there be a more efficient way to perform traditional document reviews that would save time, reduce costs, and provide greater transparency to your clients?

**MYTH:** Humans are better at reviewing documents than Technology Assisted Review (TAR).

**FACT:** People are reluctant to trust technology to do a better job than humans when it comes to

reviewing documents tied to litigation, despite studies proving otherwise. A 1985 study by **David C. Blair and M.E. Maron** found that TAR software outperformed human review in accurately identifying responsive documents. Attorney-supervised paralegals believed they had found at least 75% of relevant documents, using search terms and iterative search, but had actually only found 20% while TAR identified 75% of the responsive documents. This demonstrates that while the perception that humans are better at reviewing documents than technology persists, it’s not proved to be true. As TAR is adopted into practice and continues to prove its accuracy, people are likely to put more trust in it as a reliable tool.

Therefore, with the explosion of data and increased frequency of matters that contain millions of documents, technologies that create efficiencies in the ediscovery process are the only way to keep costs within an agreed budget and projects tracking to tight schedules, while also improving accuracy.

## THE BENEFITS OF TRANSFORMING RELEVANT AND ROUTINE PROCESSES:

- 1 Outpace the competition**  
When you move faster than the competition, you can outperform them.
- 2 Focus on case strategy**  
Greater efficiency during discovery means more time spent on strategic, high-value work to the benefit of the case and the client.
- 3 Greater employee satisfaction**  
Automate and optimize tasks that talented lawyers don’t need to do.
- 4 Improved firm reputation**  
Become the efficient, cost-effective, and value-generating powerhouse your clients need.

### The evolution of legal process

Data-driven legal processes don’t have to be a dreaded rite of passage. In an ever-changing, demanding, and competitive market, clients and top talent prioritize those firms who understand how to deploy technology efficiently, and prioritize the skills required to be a trusted business advisor and world-class employer.

“The main driving force behind the adoption of legaltech by law firms has been the promise of higher profits through automation of routine tasks, and the resulting efficiency gains.”

Legaltech in 2021: an evolving landscape, Alex Heshmaty, The Law Society

## HOW TO TRANSFORM YOUR PROCESSES IN

# 3 EASY STEPS

1

### Establish a transformation task force

This task force should audit how work is currently being undertaken and keep senior managers and innovators up to speed on market trends. By undertaking this work, you can achieve the following: discover which tasks are taking up the most amount of time; use technology to analyze and report on improvements; and identify and prioritize the processes that are ripe for transformation. Digitally mature organizations hire knowledge and innovation specialists to continually improve process efficiencies and introduce smarter, more profitable ways to work. If you're looking to turn challenge into opportunity, think about implementing cloud-based legal technology to help drive your team's ability to collaborate at speed and be more agile in response to client needs.

2

### Streamline processes and automate tasks

Are traditional processes serving you well today or will they undermine your productivity and customer focus in the future? Identify where you can collapse multiple processes and automate time-consuming tasks. A systematic and intentional approach to implementing the changes that result from process audit will yield a larger impact, as the outcomes are more likely to stick.

3

### Optimize the processes that remain

Make full use of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). As well as automating tasks, AI can learn on the job, creating an upward spiral of productivity, efficiency, and optimization. Clients will enjoy better outcomes and lower costs, and your firm will enjoy a reputation boost. Your teams will appreciate doing less rote work – something that is especially important at a time where Gartner reports that 54% of legal professionals are exhausted.

### Aiming for Amazing

What does great look like?

“

Some of our clients are very tech-savvy; they understand the tech is out there, as well as the underlying AI, they expect us to be at forefront of this and using the latest technology.

”

Stephen Ross, Partner and Head of  
Global Fraud Team, Withers LLP

“

Anyone can do this. Start small by simply looking for opportunities in business problems that the organization is facing and find those opportunities to shine.

”

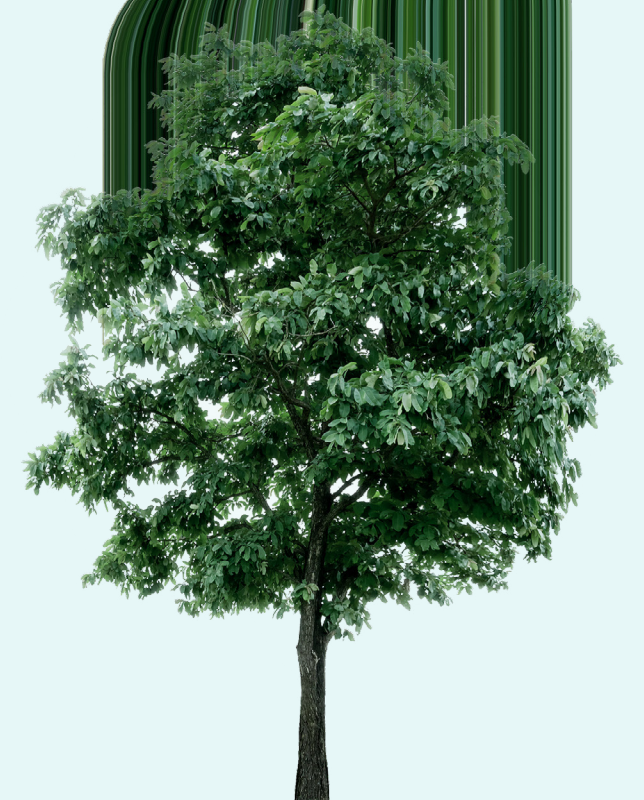
Meredith Williams-Range,  
Chief Knowledge and Client Value  
Officer, Shearman & Sterling



# NURTURE & DEVELOP

FOCUS ON WHAT MAKES YOU AND YOUR  
EMPLOYEES FANTASTIC. CLIENTS WILL THANK YOU.

CHAPTER 3



Lawyers are fastidious in their approach to their work. Legal careers involve a high level of judgment that no machine could ever perform. While legal technology could never replace the judgment and skills of seasoned legal professionals, it can play a key role in making them more efficient. With intuitive access to data and insights, and tech-driven processes freeing them from basic and time-consuming tasks, partners, associates, and paralegals can tap into technology as a value-driver within their decision-making process. This will create more, not less, of an opportunity to showcase their skills while removing administrative distractions.

To truly thrive, law firms will need to create a recruitment strategy that focuses on attracting a multidisciplinary team with an understanding of data and technology use cases. Practitioners who can act as technology ‘champions’ within a firm—who can act as super-users and thought leaders—will help embed transformation at the heart of the business and help attract new business. The efficient application of technology, and the ability for legal professionals to become proficient users quickly, is a differentiating factor for firms in a talent market where technical skills carry more weight everyday.

Of course, developing skills shouldn’t fall primarily on the shoulders of lawyers—technology providers should be taking the lead. Suppliers must make their solutions intuitive to a wide range of users and provide ample training resources to ensure their users are set up for success. When it comes to seeking out those solutions, look for providers that share your mindset and are able to operate as a trusted technological partner rather than merely a vendor.



23%

of work done by lawyers can be automated with existing technology - McKinsey estimates.

#### The evolution of legal skills

Those skills which legal professionals have trained in specifically, such as legal strategy and negotiation, are the skills that create and grow value in a law firm. Firms should seek to maximize their legal skill set — and the time spent using it — to become a trusted advisor to clients.

### Aiming for Amazing

What does great look like?

“

For us, it is very important that we have the best legal technology to make sure we attract the best talent and ensure we have it available for the younger generation joining the firm.

”

Jan Smitt, Innovation Manager,  
Slaughter & May.

## THE BENEFITS OF IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT SKILLS TO NURTURE AND DEVELOP:

1

### Improved attractiveness to potential recruits

Today's crop of young lawyers has the world at its feet. To compete for talent in a world where geography is no longer a determining factor, demonstrating a path of tech and data-driven career development will give law firms an all-important standout. A recent **IBA research report** states that 40% of young lawyers believe AI and legal technology to be critical to the future of their profession.

Technology's power to automate and alleviate the burden of time-consuming tasks may help to attract and retain young lawyers in particular, especially when you consider that the same research indicates that 62% of them cite poor work-life balance as the main factor of concern for their future in the profession.

2

### A growing reputation as forward thinking

The National Law Review finds that: "Law firms can attract [young] lawyers by creating a positive, engaging culture that's up to date on current trends and innovations in the industry and focused on supporting the goals of associates. Because of this, one of the most important moves a firm can make is adopting technology and innovating their practice." Technology is therefore key to creating a point of distinction.

3

### Greater focus on building business-level relationships and strategy

AI and automation technologies remove the laborious nature of time-consuming tasks and support quicker and better decision-making. Therefore, your team can focus on strategy, business development, developing knowledge-based unique selling points for themselves, and undertaking work that will take them to the next level.



HOW TO UP-LEVEL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS IN

# 4 KEY STEPS

1

Create a culture of continuous improvement

Create ongoing learning programs, driven by innovation leaders and technologists, and reward your people for their continued participation.

2

Explore alternative billing models

Investing in and incentivising your people to acquire skills that will improve efficiency is invaluable, but it must be accompanied by new ways to measure individual and team performance. Remaining tied to the traditional billable hours model may end up becoming a one-dimensional way to make decisions about compensation and career advancement. You may find they simply need a few minor tweaks, or they may need a radical overhaul to better reflect your practice’s new processes and attitude to skills acquisition.

3

Invest in simplicity

While technology is a powerful force for growth in practices, it can equally be an irritation to many. McKinsey research showed that in more than three-quarters of organizations, CEOs and boards struggle to be clear about the complexities of technology and the tech implications of business decisions. Therefore, consider Investing in fewer tools that do more to accelerate adoption of and proficiency in them.

4

Think ‘lawyer-intuitive’

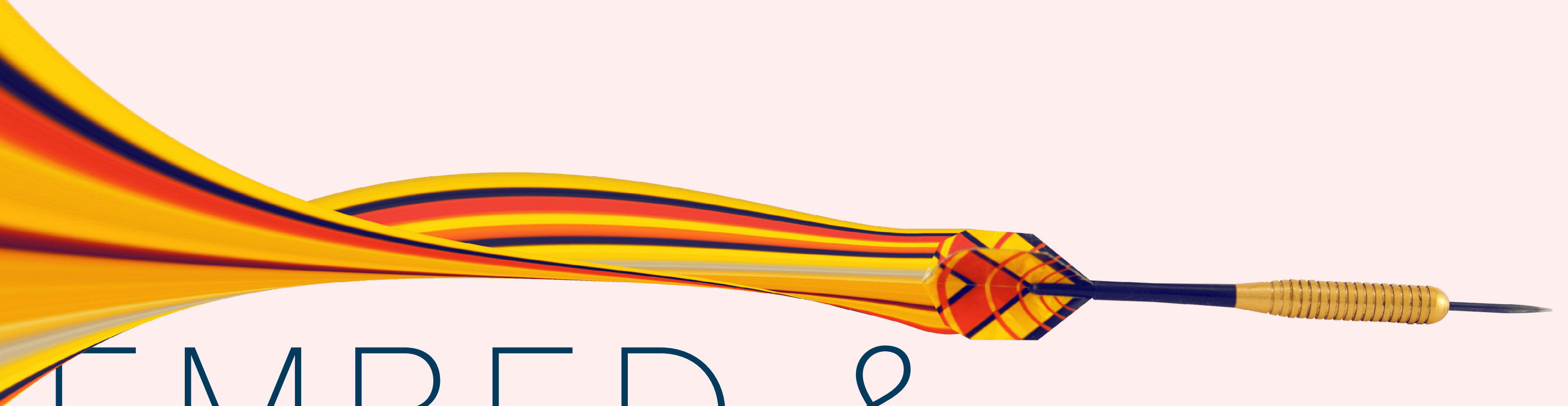
Find technology that best complements the way your lawyers work. Ask what their specific pain points are in their workflow, then find which tools on the market alleviate these best to free your teams up for more engaging, strategic work.

“

Talent strategy will require law firms and legal departments to not just have technical legal experts, but create multidisciplinary teams, bringing in tech and data experts, also finding global partners whose focus is identifying internal and external opportunities in the green space.

”

Future Worlds 2050, images of the future worlds facing the legal profession 2020-2030, The Law Society



# EMBED & IMPROVE

CHANGE THE GAME.  
MAKE TECHNOLOGY WORK FOR YOU.

CHAPTER 4

Law firms are institutions built on knowledge and reputation. Without the former, you never achieve the latter, as expertise is the cornerstone of legal success.

But knowledge extends far beyond the combined wisdom of your lawyers; it encompasses all the case data and insights that have been garnered since your firm’s inception. The ability to tap into this data is something that only forward-thinking practices have been able to achieve. Why? Because their ability to evolve their thinking about the role of technology within their practices has led them to embrace advanced technologies such as AI and ML and their inherent transformational potential.

Whether it’s litigation, arbitration, or work in a particular practice group, your firm will be able to get a head start on document review and start identifying relevant documents faster and with higher accuracy when it adopts advanced legal technology. This not only opens the door to the rich data insights and analytics from previous cases, but it also ensures that you maintain your competitive advantage in a challenging market.

## THE BENEFITS OF USING DATA-DRIVEN PRODUCTS TO POWER YOUR PRACTICE:

### 1 **Becoming an insight-led powerhouse**

The variety and volume of data that legal practices handle continue to grow at a considerable rate. Within that data lie the answers to winning cases, but tackling such vast quantities as part of a value-generating workflow is a huge challenge. Therefore, one of the first tasks of digital transformation must be the creation of a modern data management strategy, consisting of data collection and preparation, data governance, and finally, the use of data analytics.

### 2 **Intensifying customer focus for longer-lasting client relationships**

The role of the law firm is in the throes of change, moving away from reactive casework to proactive strategy creation. Technology gives attorneys time back to spend on honing their business skills and on developing a deeper understanding of their clients’ markets and objectives. It also makes collaboration far easier. This all supports greater client focus and the development of deeper and longer-lasting client relationships.

### 3 **Increasing trust and professional reputations**

Being able to deliver quality results at a reasonable cost opens the door to obtaining a larger portion of your clients’ overall work. Law firms can accomplish this by leveraging technology to create efficient playbooks that will benefit each client.

#### The evolution of legal practice

When it comes to processing tasks, analyzing raw data, and spotting trends, AI-powered technology can surpass the intelligence of humans. However, that does not mean that lawyers can ever be replaced by 1s and 0s, rather that human judgment can be supplemented by AI and ML to create legal powerhouses.



# THE BENEFITS OF USING DATA-DRIVEN PRODUCTS TO POWER YOUR PRACTICE:

## 4 Developing the partners of the future

High-profile cases are not only advantageous for your firm’s reputation, they can also be powerful learning experiences. Productivity technologies can free up more senior attorneys to get involved earlier in cases and provide extra guidance to junior team members.

## 5 Improving investment forecasting

The best legal technology works on a flat-rate per-case pricing model – eliminating costing surprises and allowing for predictability and better budget planning for your firm.

## 6 Enabling greater profitability per lawyer

When your lawyers have all the high-level insights they need to win their cases, faster, they stand a better chance of obtaining positive outcomes for clients. Not to mention that with fewer time-consuming tasks in their way, lawyers perform work for and bill more clients per hour to drive an improved bottom line.

“

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, it is the one that is the most adaptable to change.

Charles Darwin

”

## Aiming for Amazing

What does great look like?

“

Great is when your law firm stays on the cutting-edge of new legal marketing and technology and invests in its people to create a durable, forward-thinking and sociable culture.

”

Seth Price, Managing Partner at Price Benowitz and CEO of BluShark



## HOW TO TRANSFORM YOUR PRACTICE USING TECHNOLOGY IN

# 4 STEPS

1

### Find your place in the new legal landscape

As the legal sector continues to evolve, it's vital that your organization re-establishes its 'Why?' Why is it in business and what kind of organization does it want to be in future? This 'Why?' will begin to inform your technological investment plans.

2

### Recognize the shift towards lawyers as trusted advisors

With technology able to remove much of the administrative burden from legal processes, lawyers will be able to increase the time spent face-to-face with clients, allowing your firm to demonstrate its central value as a significantly better trusted advisor than your competitors. By adapting your business model and client delivery methods through the use of technology, you will find yourself winning more business and developing deeper, longer-lasting client relationships. Remember that your corporate clients will be ruthless in their evaluation of your firm's value as they also come under pressure to control costs.

3

### Actively embrace transformation

According to a **report** by Georgetown Law and Thomson Reuters Institute, the legal sector has reached a tipping point where change is flooding in. This change has been catalyzed in part by the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, but more importantly by customers demanding more for less. Consequently, we recommend creating work programs for transformation that span the organization. Begin with key processes, such as ediscovery, and roll out the data management and analytics knowledge gained here across the wider organization.

4

### Make cultural change and continuous learning part of the fabric of your firm

Stanford economist and digital transformation expert Erik Brynjolfsson believes that technology is 20 years ahead of humans' ability to use it optimally. He theorizes that the real hurdle is cultural, a notion that aligns with an HBR article that argues that leaders must "show [employees] what's in it for them — how this will enrich their jobs and allow them to connect to the organization's purpose."

Therefore, as AI comes to the fore to automate rote activities, prepare your lawyers for a change in their job functions. New opportunities will arise for them in the areas of data analytics, strategy, and technological expertise within the law firm—all of which serve to deliver better and more valuable outcomes for clients. Change has come in the legal profession before—for instance, when the law library was replaced by online legal research—and is nothing to fear.

# TRANSFORM & THRIVE

ASK WHAT TECHNOLOGY CAN DO FOR YOU AND  
YOUR LAW FIRM TODAY, AND NEVER STOP ASKING.

CHAPTER 5





An article from **Legal IT Insider**, states that “firms typically spend months, even years, planning a major change in one of their processes. They spend a long time deciding which tools to select, and even longer trying to engrain those tools in their work processes.”

The key is to avoid excessive procrastination and take decisive action. To this point, Isabel Parker, executive director at the Digital Legal Exchange, believes that “strategy should evolve, allowing an organization to pivot in response to unforeseen events, and an overarching plan is essential. Like a complex jigsaw with many pieces, it is easier and quicker to complete if you plan how to put the pieces together (start with the corners, build the edges) rather than picking up random pieces and discarding them if they don’t fit.”

**Data and technology-driven transformation is already being adopted, utilized, and embedded in the corporate legal sector. In fact, research from Gartner predicts that by 2025, legal departments will:**

- Increase their spending on technology threefold
- Replace 20% of generalist lawyers with non-lawyer staff
- Have automated 50% of legal work related to major corporate transactions

If the corporate legal sector is embracing this level of transformation, then law firms will experience a follow-on effect. Routine tasks will likely be insourced, leaving some of your revenue streams vulnerable to decline.

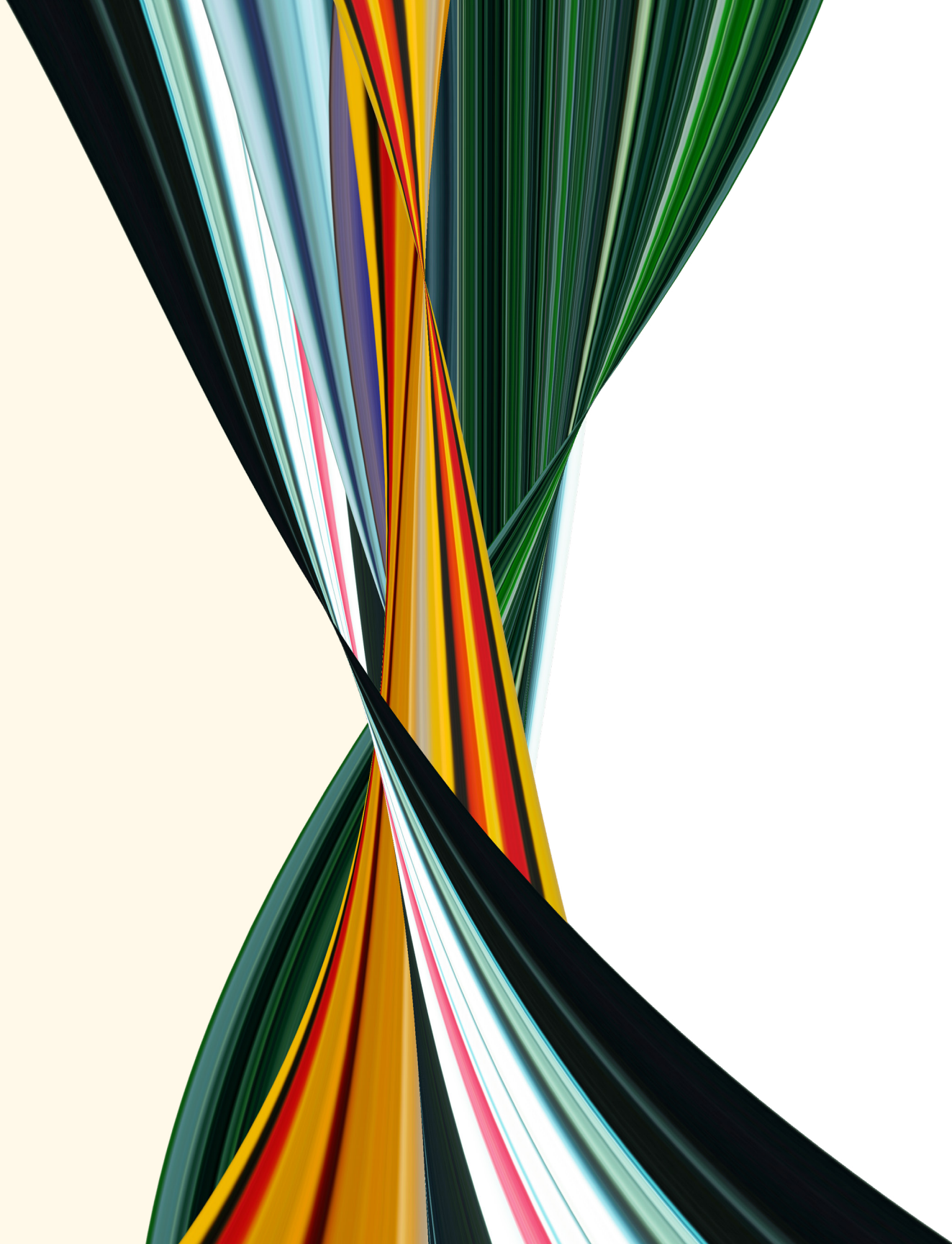
This change is happening, in part, because corporate legal teams are under pressure to keep costs down and to become more integrated into their wider organisations, shifting from reactive overseers to proactive business advisors. As digitally transformed entities, they will only retain outside counsel that can demonstrate faster speed to outcome, greater depth of insight, better risk management, transparent costs, and far more strategic value – all of which will be achieved by those law firms who can embrace the benefits of technology to supplement their roles. Corporate clients will want to see data-driven decision-making, clear provenance for analytics, and will continue to demand innovation and differentiation through the use of advanced technologies such as AI and ML.

Successful transformation involves so much more than the digitalization of paper-based processes, though that’s a great place to begin. Success demands the bringing together of people, processes, and technology cohesively. That needn’t be daunting — look to the leading lights in your industry, those who have successfully deployed technology to work with their firm, to grow business, attract talent, and expand on their market share.

**Back to basics**

“Digital transformation worked for... organizations because their leaders went back to the fundamentals: they focused on changing the mindset of its members as well as the organizational culture and processes before they decided what digital tools to use and how to use them. What the members envisioned to be the future of the organization drove the technology, not the other way around.

**Digital Transformation is not about Technology, Tabrizi et al.**



## DISCO: WORLD-CLASS ENGINEERING WITH A DEEP LOVE AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW.

DISCO technology and services can help law firms improve processes, develop and nurture employees, and increase the time they have to spend on case strategy. Our solutions are built by lawyers and realized by software experts with a deep understanding of modern and future legal practice.

Transformation doesn't have to be complex, and innovation doesn't have to be out of reach.

We understand the partnership between legal practice and legal technology and can't wait to help you thrive in the years ahead!

“

Lawyers are not looking to simply buy technology for technology's sake. They are looking for complete solutions that address their critical business challenges. At DISCO, we've created products that deliver results – faster speed to evidence, reduced costs, automation of tasks that don't require human legal judgment – while delivering product experiences that feel 'magical'. For law firms that want to thrive, transformation begins with the adoption of technology that delivers better outcomes.

”

Kiwi Camara | CEO | DISCO



# TIME FOR CHANGE?

## DEEP DIVE

Download our Key Considerations Guide to learn how you can successfully transform your law firm.

## GET IN TOUCH

See how we can help to make technology work for you.