Implementing Legal Tech: A Roadmap for Legal Teams

The legal profession is transforming. In-house legal departments deal with the overwhelming volume of data — documents, spreadsheets, and visuals. Organizations store this documentation across locations: public and private networks, shared drives, and even in email threads. Managing all this information is a formidable task.

This is precisely where legal tech can assist, offering solutions tailored to complex file management. Current tools can revolutionize data handling, document drafting, reviewing, and planning. Some of the benefits include:

- Higher employee productivity through automation and collaboration
- Lower operational costs due to reduced manual oversight
- Enhanced decision-making with robust data analytics tools
- Higher client satisfaction rates because of better user experience
- Simplified workflow and work delegation and less employee stress

However, innovation is a demanding and resource-intensive task. Seemingly beneficial tech advancements can introduce difficulties or incite backlash if improperly implemented.

At ContractWorks, we have established ourselves as a leading [contract lifecycle management platform](#). We partnered with companies across industries — from banking and software to agriculture and real estate. Our experts understand the hurdles companies can anticipate and have the tools to overcome them.

While transformation is always challenging, this guide can help companies navigate the landscape of legal tech and select the right software. With our help, in-house legal departments can use the latest tools to do their job faster, safer, and smarter.

Explore [The State of Legal Tech in 2023 — Challenges and Benefits](#) for insights into digitalization benefits, or jump to [Legal Tech Implementation Roadmap: Checklist and Guide](#) for actionable tips.

The State of Legal Tech in 2023 — Challenges and Benefits

The rise of AI-powered analytics and the shift to remote work forced many organizations to accelerate innovation. Legal organizations, in particular, are looking to streamline operations and minimize costs — something that can be done by embracing technology.

While monitoring the technological trends in legal tech, we identified the following trends:

- **The legal tech market is growing.** The global legal tech market, valued at [$28 billion in 2022](#), is projected to [reach a $69.7 billion market value by 2023](#).

- **Companies seek cost relief in legal tech.** According to Gartner's 2023 Legal Technology report, [over 63% of surveyed legal leaders](#) plan to accelerate tech investments to reduce their expenses amid high inflation rates.
- **AI technologies will be widely used for legal work.** The Thomson Reuters Institute 2023 survey shows that [51% of lawyers believe in the industry-wide adoption of generative AI](#) for legal work.

How Has Technology Changed the Legal Profession?

Legal tech is reshaping legal services in many ways. Here are the key areas of improvement.

Legal tech automates research

Digitalization has accelerated research for legal departments. Data analytics and eDiscovery software help find, sort, and review documents. Additionally, natural language processing (NLP) can quickly summarize large texts. This allows companies to delegate research to tech tools so that legal professionals can prioritize high-value work.

Technology streamlines information management

Centralized platforms automate document management, drafting, and scheduling. This greatly improves cross-department collaboration and boosts document security. Meanwhile, NLP can help translate laws and contracts into multiple languages.

AI enhances compliance measures

AI-powered software assists organizations with regulatory requirements, organizational policies, and data privacy standards. Compliance tools also let companies automate checks on contracts for different jurisdictions.

Legal tech enables risk forecasting

Legal tech can sift through historical data to discern patterns in legal decisions. These capabilities help attorneys anticipate potential litigation issues, non-compliance, or business risks to mitigate them proactively.

Broadened communication channels for clients

Online platforms open new ways of communication for clients and lawyers. Clients can instantly receive basic legal advice with generative AI and large language models (LLM). Meanwhile, attorneys can seek advice from expert and academic communities.

Technology improves quality and efficiency

Law departments can improve the quality of contracts by having AI ensure consistency, accuracy, and compliance. What's more, organizations can save costs and time on research, contract management, and drafting. According to Gartner, these technologies will help [automate half of the legal work](#) and replace 20% of staff by 2024.

Top 8 Reasons Why Legal Professionals Embrace Technology

The potential applications for legal tech range from document management to improved research and automated drafting. Below are just some of the widespread use cases.

1. Effective contract management

Legal tech streamlines data transfer, storage, sharing, and collaboration. In addition, advanced security software (such as role-based access control and authorization mechanisms) ensures that only authorized personnel can access sensitive information.

2. Fast information discovery

Robust platforms help attorneys quickly find relevant laws, statutes, and judicial practice. Additionally, generative AI and LLM are used to sift through large volumes of documents and build persuasive rhetorical arguments.

3. Improved contract lifecycle management

Automating routine tasks with Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) software [can reduce up to 90% of mistakes](#). Organizations can also accelerate contract creation with built-in templates, approval workflows, tracking capabilities, task management tools, and customizable due-date alerts.

4. Accurate performance evaluation

Modern legal tech solutions offer customizable reporting capabilities. Organizations can benchmark their performance against preferable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to find cost-saving opportunities or areas for improvement.

5. Automated dispute resolution

Data analytics and generative AI enable resolving disputes outside the traditional courtrooms. For example, automated Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platforms handle various business-consumer and landlord-tenant disputes and other small claims.

6. Fast document drafting

Over 82% of lawyers surveyed by Thomson Reuters Institute in 2023 believe that generative AI is applicable to legal work. Attorneys actively use LLM to draft and review documents for errors and inconsistencies.

Figure 1: **Attitudes towards ChatGPT and Generative AI for legal work**

Can ChatGPT/generative AI be applied to legal work?

82% YES

10%
7%
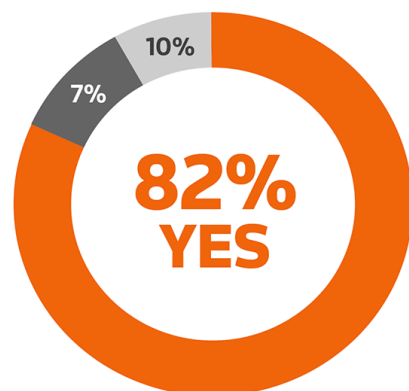
Should ChatGPT/generative AI be applied to legal work ?

51% YES

25%
24%

Yes
No
Don't know
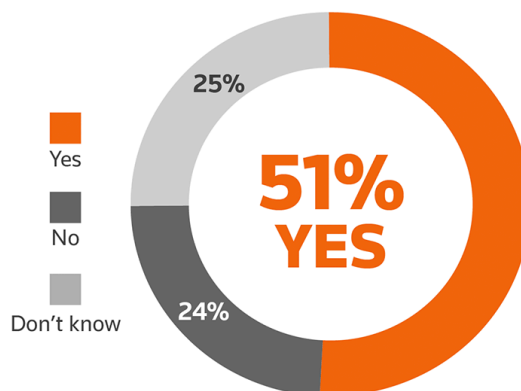
Source: Thomson Reuters 2023

7. Better customer experience

Advanced legal tech can mitigate document errors, provide remote legal services, and offer self-help tools. All of this improves client experience and, as a result, boosts business performance.

8. Higher employee satisfaction

Intuitive software allows organizations to delegate low-effort, time-consuming activities to non-lawyer staff. By incorporating automation tools, companies can ease the burden on their employees, making it easier to retain top experts.

The use of generative AI in legal divisions is still in its infancy. But it is already clear that it can potentially transform the legal profession against any challenges.

Legal Tech Implementation Challenges and Solutions

Given how quickly the technology evolves, many concerns arise regarding its implementation and use in the legal industry. Let's explore potential challenges and solutions in more detail.

Challenge	Solution
Keeping up with technological advancements requires continuous monitoring and significant upfront investment.	Companies should gradually experiment with AI solutions to prioritize the most valuable ones. They should also incorporate regular training to prepare their lawyers and non-legal staff.

Interoperability issues may prevent companies from integrating new legal technology into existing systems.	Develop a detailed integration plan that outlines steps for data migration and application refactoring. Companies should test how third-party software interacts with their in-house tools applications.
Security and privacy risks rise due to the increasing use of online communications and storage of sensitive client information.	Companies should implement a strict zero-trust policy, role-based access control, and proactive threat detection tools. They should also minimize data collection and regularly delete unnecessary information.
AI can produce biased outcomes, leading to inaccurate legal guidance and detrimental consequences.	Data scientists must ensure the ML and LLM models are trained on accurate, unbiased datasets.
The scarcity of quality legal data can complicate the training of ML and LLMs for legal tech.	Data preprocessing helps ensure a high standard of training data. Companies can use augmentation to improve data quality or data synthesis to create artificial data that mimics the real one.
Lawyers may be reluctant to adopt the technology due to complications and concerns about poor quality.	Explain the need for implementing the legal tech, focusing on its productivity benefits and ability to delegate non-essential tasks to other teams.
Lack of explainability and high confidence when delivering wrong answers creates ethical problems.	Organizations should implement glass-box (explainable) AI models that make it easier to understand how and why the system reached certain conclusions.
Compliance with different regional laws may complicate legal tech adoption.	Seek proven solutions with built-in compliance features. Consult with the experts before the implementation phase.
Trust issues may arise if the AI uses confidential information without explicit consent.	All organizations must notify individuals and companies whose information they use. A written agreement must specify what information will be used and for what purpose.
Machine learning software requires significant resources for processing power and continuous training.	Train the model less frequently at selected intervals and avoid using resource-intensive models for queries that cover rapidly evolving topics.
Difficulties in quantifying return on investment (ROI) can delay implementation of the new technology.	Define clear success metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) highlight the impact of the legal tech. Be sure to gather both quantitative and qualitative feedback from users.
Legal tech takes a long time to pay off,	Use efficient implementation models and

with the average team taking [approximately 2.4 years to recoup the initial investment](#).	prioritize solutions that deliver near-term benefits. For example, the average time to value for ContractWorks is only 95 days.

The following section delves into planning, resource allocation, and onboarding strategies for successful software implementation. *We also encourage you to further explore our [legal software solutions](#) or [try a product demo](#).*

Legal Tech Implementation Roadmap: Checklist and Guide

Digital transformation requires a strategic approach, or organizations risk overspending or overcomplicating their workflow. This roadmap outlines specific steps and considerations for successful integration.

We like to use the People-Process-Technology (PPT) framework. This approach ensures that companies spend their team resources wisely, get things done efficiently, and use the right tools for the job.

People

The "People" component involves understanding the needs, roles, and skills of the people in the organization.

1. Discovery stage

Companies must understand the needs and problems of employees and customers. Questions from the following checklist can streamline the discovery process and clarify objectives:

- **Current solutions.** How does the legal team currently manage business-critical processes (document management, drafting, research, etc.)?
- **Key problems.** What issue do I aim to solve with the implementation of new technology?
- **Clear objectives.** What can I do to make these processes more efficient? Do I want to solve all the core pains or build a foundation to introduce software gradually?
- **Company-wide benefits.** How will this implementation benefit the company as a whole (clients, lawyers, and non-legal departments)?
- **Management support.** How do I ensure senior management and stakeholders support my initiative?

Companies can create technical documentation based on the answers to these key questions.

2. Team requirements gathering

A technical requirements document serves as a guide when evaluating software solutions. These considerations from the team can help make a document more detailed:

- **Key pain for every department.** Understanding the specific challenges that each department faces is crucial for identifying the right technological solution.
- **Supported devices.** The technology must be compatible with various devices to enable flexible and remote work.
- **In-house tech or third-party solution.** Depending on the technical capabilities, it might be beneficial to consider using a third-party solution with dedicated support.
- **Skill requirements to use the technology.** The software should require minimal technical skills as it is the non-tech employees who will use it.
- **Need to train (or re-skill) the in-house team.** This can involve teaching employees how to use e-discovery tools or run virtual courtroom proceedings.

It is important to prioritize needs over wants when selecting the software.

3. Outlining stakeholder roles

Once goals and requirements are clear, companies can outline stakeholder roles.

- Identify key personnel to lead the project and those to support the tech implementation
- Understand the impact of new technology on all teams (for example, an e-billing system for the accounting team can affect IT, legal, and HR departments)
- Consult with teams that have done similar projects to learn from their experience
- Prioritize stakeholder needs based on their importance and feasibility
- Define project constraints to avoid broadening the scope
- Communicate the plan to all stakeholders to ensure everyone is on the same page

The next important part is to have your senior management and employees onboard with the new initiative.

4. Preparing for transformative changes

Organizational change can trigger resistance due to productivity concerns, lack of understanding, need for retraining, or fear of losing work. Here are common objections to change and strategies for overcoming them:

Objection #1: Transitioning to new technology is time-consuming and threatens work quality.

- Swift adaptation to remote work during the pandemic proves that change is feasible.
- Technical issues can be handled by a professional legal tech team to ensure a smooth transition.

Objection #2: Our manual contract workflow is already efficient, and extra effort is not necessary

- Updating workflows with legal software can enhance work quality, save time, and foster innovation crucial for competitive advantage.
- Customizable tools can automate even the most complex document scenarios, allowing managers to delegate contracting to other departments.
- The change can be brought gradually to give the team time to adapt without disrupting the core processes.

- Prior to implementation, software solutions are evaluated based on their privacy practices and the security standards they support.
- To comply with security regulations, the company will inform clients about the data it collects, how it is stored, and how it can be used.

Objection #4: The technology will raise our costs

- The company will prioritize legal tech that enhances productivity and provides the highest ROI.
- To show the benefits of the implementation, calculate the cost of routine tasks that can be automated with the legal tech *(e.g. take the average attorney hourly fee and multiply it by the time spent on routine to calculate annual expenses)*.
- Emphasize that legal tech reduces the cost of inaction: automation reduces human error and cuts down the workload for low-value tasks, compliance tools prevent regulatory fines, and data analytics improves the quality of service to help retain clients.

Objection #5: It may harm our relationships with clients.

- Clients are often quicker to adopt technological advances: they may even choose competitors that offer faster turnaround legal services.
- In fact, many customers prefer remote consultations to in-person visits when given the opportunity.

5. Training and support

Continuous training can further bridge the gap between lawyers and technology initiatives. Here are some tips to facilitate the adoption:

- Opt for software vendors that provide 24/7 support in case employees need guidance.
- In-house onboarding specialists can establish and align communication channels between teams.
- Organize regular on-site training sessions to help the workforce get acquainted with the tools.
- Regular feedback, especially early on, helps identify employees needing attention or training.
- If the software lacks built-in guides, companies can create concise (up to five minutes long) video tutorials on essential features.
- Integrating the new tech with internal databases and document management tools will help the staff embrace the new technology.
- Choose vendors that offer a trial period as a proof of concept for your team to determine if the software works before committing to a full subscription.

Process

The "Process" is about adapting existing operations and policies to improve cost efficiency and productivity.

1. Internal process assessment

Organizations should formulate goals, identify inefficiencies, and assess risks. The following questions can streamline this process:

- **Identify possible solutions.** What kind of technology can solve this problem the most efficiently? How does it impact the current workflow?
- **Assess potential risks.** What challenges may arise during the implementation? Are there any foreseeable barriers to implementation? How can I prepare for them?
- **Establish a timeline.** What is the expected timeframe for technology implementation?
- **Calculate ROI.** What is the expected return on investment and the payback period for this technological implementation?

2. Allocating resources

Careful calculation helps ensure that companies have enough money and time to enhance their processes. Here's what companies can do at this stage.

- Consider internal (salaries, resources) and external (technology costs) expenses
- Plan for training and support costs for a smooth transition
- Monitor the project expenses to ensure the implementation remains within the budget
- Adjust timelines considering holidays and busy periods, and allow ample time for quality assurance
- Anticipate the need for additional resources as more departments become involved
- Use project management tools to track progress, manage tasks, and maintain documentation
- Regularly review the project plan to reflect changes and new information
- Create mitigation strategies for contingencies and unforeseen issues
- Choose software that can be deployed across the enterprise (as opposed to department-specific solutions) for better interoperability and cost efficiency.

It's vital to understand if the transformation benefits the company. Metrics can help with that.

3. Determining success metrics

Companies should develop success metrics (KPIs) to evaluate the success of technology implementation. There are no definitive or exhaustive lists. However, the metrics suggested below can help determine whether the technology works efficiently:

- **Vendor team response time.** How long does it take for a vendor team to provide a first response and solve the issue? How easy is it for team members to find documents?
- **Team sentiment score.** What is the software usage sentiment score? Does it decrease over time? Are there significant problems? *(Problems can be rated from 1 to 10 for easier understanding)*.
- **Frequency of updates.** How often are updates made? Does the software keep up with market developments?

- **Contract-related risk score.** What risks threaten contract performance? What is the software's role in these risks? How often do tech-related issues occur, and what threat do they pose?
- **Contract lifecycle efficiency.** What are the stages of contract lifecycle management? How long do contracts pass through each of these stages?
- **Time-saving metrics.** Did the percentage of renewed contracts increase after deploying legal tech? How much time is saved on different processes? Does software cause any delays?

Technology

The "Technology" aspect means using appropriate software, platforms, and tools to enhance the productivity of the legal department.

1. Software requirements gathering

Technical documentation guides the whole development. In addition to team feedback, companies need to consider the following:

- **The core functionality of the software.** These capabilities can include smart search, collaboration tools, risk assessment, and data analytics.
- **Extra features that can drive more outcomes.** Additional functionality like remote conferencing, real-time notifications, and customizable workflows can increase employee productivity.
- **Superfluous functions.** It is best to avoid unnecessary features that could complicate the user experience for clients and employees.
- **Existing processes the technology must integrate with.** This includes established legal research processes, contract management solutions, and document drafting tools.
- **Hosting type.** Depending on the company's resources and requirements, they can consider cloud-based, on-premise, or hybrid hosting.
- **Scalability requirements.** The legal tech solution should grow with the customer base and the in-house team.
- **Operational performance.** Assess the CPU and memory needs of the software. Companies can also request a demo to understand their resource efficiency.
- **Cybersecurity mechanisms.** Using military-grade encryption protocols and authorization mechanisms is crucial to prevent data breaches. Companies should [opt for SOC-2-certified vendors](#) who prioritize security.
- **User-friendliness and intuitiveness.** Ensure that the software is conveniently designed and easy to use for the legal team and non-legal teams.
- **Ease of technology upgrade.** The technology should be easy to modify and allow integrations with other platforms, tools, and features.

Some business goals require more than one technology. The subsequent section will explore how to navigate implementation in such cases.

2. Prioritizing technology implementation

Determining the order of implementation can be challenging. However, following these models can streamline the process depending on the company's key objectives.

The Big Three model

The Big Three implementation model focuses on organizational changes through people, processes, and technology. It suggests prioritizing the following software:

- **E-billing.** Features like paperless invoicing, spend analysis, and payment modeling improve transparency and speed up accounting.
- **Contract management.** This software automates contract generation, document review, and other needless bureaucracy.
- **Legal research.** Internal legal departments can gain a competitive advantage with tools that accelerate analysis and allow it to be delegated to non-legal staff.

Legal Technology framework

This framework divides legal software solutions into three groups:

- **Enabler technologies** that enhance digitalization. These can include solutions exclusive to legal organizations, as well as cloud-based storage and security tools.
- **Support-process solutions** that improve case management and back-office work. They include accounting, HR management, and business intelligence software.
- **Substantive law solutions** that support daily tasks. Examples include automatic document drafting, reporting, and contract lifecycle management.

Project Management framework

Companies can consider tech solutions depending on specific project management tasks.

- **Plan:** Tools for assigning responsibilities, managing access rights, scheduling, and tracking deadlines.
- **Prepare:** Document processing, template creation, legal research software, and generative AI for drafting.
- **Implement:** Contract management systems that centralize file storage, organize contract lifecycle flow, and accelerate the negotiation process.
- **Analyze:** Solutions for data analysis, performance monitoring, and progress reporting.

The final step outlines the most economical way to implement or develop legal software.

3. MVP-first development

Instead of integrating complex platforms, companies can launch a minimum viable product (MVP) — a basic version of a product with essential functionality only.

- **Choose features wisely.** Focus on those that directly address the problem statement. It is important not to overburden an MVP with secondary functionality that provides no significant impact.
- **Design a user-friendly interface.** Prioritize simplicity and usability to encourage adoption. It is advisable to use low- or no-code tools and Backend as a Service platforms to accelerate the design stage.
- **Promote the product before launch.** This helps find users for the initial tests to gauge how useful and user-friendly the product is.

- **Test with select user groups.** Choose a small group of end-users to test the MVP and gather feedback. These could be clients, attorneys, and non-legal staff.
- **Establish a feedback loop.** Forums, private chats, and regular surveys will provide qualitative and quantitative data from early adopters.

With minimal cost, MVP helps verify the technology's effectiveness, identify improvement areas, and benchmark user adoption rates. If the implementation is successful, an organization can confidently add more functionality and improve based on feedback.

Case Studies

There is no doubt about the value of automation in the legal domain. Below are a few examples of how the ContractWorks CLM has empowered companies to enhance their productivity within weeks.

Reed.co.uk

Company sector and size: Careers marketplace, 3k employees across 350 business units
Document types: Online recruitment (vendor agreements, CVs, interviews, contracts, etc.)

One of the UK's largest career marketplaces, Reed.co.uk, has over 11 million job seekers per month. Initially, they manually tracked all their contract portfolios via Google Drive. This approach was inefficient, could not support business growth, and put the company at risk of missing important documents or events.

In four weeks, we implemented a centralized platform that transformed how the company managed its documents. Document tagging and notifications help capture critical contract details and inform stakeholders of upcoming renewal and termination dates. In addition, comprehensive reporting provides a clear view of contract exposure, supplier commitments, and spending levels.

This continuous access to contract and legal information, as well as awareness of upcoming negotiation windows, contributed to successful contract renewals.

Key gains:
- 87% of contracts renewed at a lower cost than the previous year
- Over $127,000 saved in the first year

BNP Paribas

Company sector and size: Financial sector, 10k employees
Document types: Procurement-related MSAs and supply agreements

BNP PARIBAS is a prominent international banking conglomerate that operates across 77 countries. The company wanted to automate as much work as possible to enhance its procurement-related document drafting.

Our CLM software and automation tools reduced the time it took to draft commercial procurement contracts and lease, supply, and construction agreements. As a result, the contract drafting process could be delegated to non-legal teams.

Key gains:

- 90% faster document drafting process (from 30 down to 3.15 minutes)
- Reduced human error in documents to under 1%
- Over $922,500 saved annually (10,250 lawyer's working hours)

Summary

Today's legal tech can optimize processes and reduce costs while improving the user experience. Still, many departments are reluctant to adopt new software due to reliance on conventional practices and fear of change. Meanwhile, other companies innovate without a clear plan, resulting in unsuccessful transformations and unforeseen costs.

The choice of the technology vendor is particularly critical. ContractWorks offers scalable solutions for contract lifecycle and document management. The company also provides proven methods for gathering and storing data and drafting error-free documents, as well as 24/7 customer support to help employees adapt to changes.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you are looking for a reliable vendor. You can book a no-obligation call or try our demo to explore the platform.