



10 LEGAL TECH TRENDS FOR 2022 AND BEYOND

with Comments from Across the Industry

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The role of technology in a law firm is to expedite workflows, accelerate growth, and increase the value of the services delivered to clients. When used strategically, technology can also free teams from mundane tasks and enable them to apply their expertise to more interesting, higher-value work. As a result, law firms become more efficient, innovative, competitive, and profitable.



We've all been reminded over the last few years that change is ongoing and inevitable. The legal industry pivoted to accommodate immediate needs brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many firms embracing new technologies and reinventing strategic approaches. But what's next? What technology trends should law firms expect this year and beyond?

This report covers **10 legal tech trends that have the potential to drive meaningful outcomes**. Read on to discover each trend, how your team can mobilize to benefit from them, and what **thought leaders from across the industry** have to say.

1. HYPERAUTOMATION WILL DRIVE WORKFLOWS

Law firms are increasingly concerned about how managing administrative tasks is impacting their ability to practice law and deliver on the demand to do more with less. Future-thinking firms are identifying repetitive, manual processes and applying automation to improve their workflows so lawyers can spend more time on client development and billable client work and staff can focus on more strategic value adds to the firm.

Hyperautomation involves the use of multiple technologies to accelerate automation across the organization. It's distinguished from basic automation in that it's data-driven and uses machine learning and other advanced technologies to identify and implement opportunities to improve efficiency.¹

Hyperautomation involves the use and integration of multiple technologies to accelerate automation across the organization.

Why Hyperautomation?

Gartner, Deloitte², and other technology think tanks have all named hyperautomation on their lists of trending technologies, and for good reason. Investment in hyperautomation has significant payoff because it dramatically

reduces errors and improves quality while freeing team members with valuable expertise to focus on more consequential work. Gartner specifically states, “Increased focuses on growth, digitalization and operational excellence have highlighted a need for better, more widespread automation. Hyperautomation is a business-driven approach to identify, vet and automate as many business and IT processes as possible.”³ At scale, automation has the power to transform workflows and vastly improve the way work is accomplished.

How to Harness the Trend

Most organizations have pieced together systems and processes over time, resulting in a mishmash of inefficiency and numerous potential failure points. If this is the case for your firm, consider looking for opportunities for automation and creating a standard approach that’s consistent across the organization. Include systems, processes, applications, workflows, and the people doing the work in your evaluation. For quick wins, look at implementing low/no code tools to improve document automation and approval processes for greater efficiency and higher quality.

The key here is to strike a balance with best-in-class platforms that integrate seamlessly with one another. Look for technologies that provide an easy-to-use interface with the features you need to perform your desired automations. While finding everything you need in one platform is ideal, for more complex applications you might need to consider multiple integrated solutions. For example, leveraging tools like Microsoft’s Power Automate to extend the functionality of your individual platform’s APIs can net powerful solutions to day-to-day problems. Platforms that openly share their APIs should jump to the top of the list.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Mike Lucas, *Chief Information Officer at Wilson Sonsini*

“Hyperautomation lends itself to continual improvement, which builds competitive advantage as the system becomes better at gathering, analyzing, placing, and predicting results. Well-functioning systems have the capacity to streamline workflows initially thought to be too complex for automation — and, at scale, to **revolutionize how decision makers use and apply their firm’s (and their client’s) data**. As successful projects compound, firms will continue to invest resources to meet a growing demand for efficiency and quality of work. In the law firm context, **successful hyperautomation strategies require a holistic approach to account for the impact on costs, pricing, and profit**. The efficiencies gained through hyperautomation can significantly reduce the time spent on client-related work. Unless the reduction in time and therefore cost is built into the pricing structure, a law firm might not effectively realize potential cost savings. Alternative fee arrangements, such as fixed fees or efficiency bonuses, may be best suited to supporting hyperautomation and the improvements it brings to the delivery of client services.

Still in its early phases, hyperautomation is not widely understood. Some people overestimate the technology and think that automation can replicate what they believe are routine tasks, yet those tasks turn out to be more complex when

automation is applied. For example, automation does not account well for any kind of ambiguity in the process. Unless that ambiguity is anticipated, exactly, the automation may produce undesired results. On the other hand, people can underestimate the power of hyperautomation and not readily accept the technology as a trusted source for work otherwise done by experienced analysts. **As organizations identify ideal candidates for the application of hyperautomation, they'll discover opportunities to replicate that mechanism across other areas of the business.** The end result of each hyperautomation project is a dashboard, report, or workflow that significantly reduces time spent collecting and analyzing data, allowing people to spend time on higher-value work."



Mike Ferrara, Senior Manager at Deloitte Legal Business Services

"Automation goes hand in hand with digital transformation, but we're seeing an overwhelming number of organizations that have **accelerated digital initiatives without a well-articulated strategic vision or progress beyond investments in point solutions.** Platforms, capabilities, and initiatives often involve multiple digital and physical technologies securely working together. A significant challenge in achieving hyperautomation is connecting systems together so you have all the data points needed, so consider solutions that already work with the tools your people use. As your technologies combine, they become greater than the sum of their parts to bring new capabilities and increased value.

Another important aspect of this conversation is the human element. When implementing something that is truly transformative, it requires support from an executive sponsor and involvement across business units. Change leaders need to **have tech-adjacent and tech-agnostic conversations that transcend any individual technology and go to the heart of processes and culture,** and how people work and interact. We must also prepare for and build into our plans how workers hired to perform tasks that are being automated will be reskilled and enabled to successfully transition into roles that focus on analysis and critical thinking."

2. INTEREST IN PLATFORMIZATION WILL GROW

Platformization isn't new, but more organizations are realizing the efficiency gains they can achieve with it, so it's attracting increased attention. Platformization, as it applies to content management, refers to a single core technology platform serving as the backbone of the management system, with built-in tools for your end users' major day-to-day workflows. Apps and integrations can certainly extend the capabilities of the platform, but relying on this central platform as a foundation creates a seamless user experience and ensures teams can find and do what they need in the moment of need.



Why Platformization?

Platformization creates a secure single system of record with governed access that acts as an authoritative repository of information — a hub for all content, documents, emails, and other information that is managed by the firm, both internally and externally. Platformization ensures that all applications share a common search engine and organizational structure that enables collaborators to easily (and securely) work together on any device, anywhere. The ultimate benefit of platformization is its ability to improve efficiency. According to a Bloomberg Law report, 61% of law firms and 70% of in-house legal teams identify improved efficiency as the primary driver of their technology implementations.⁴

Relying on a central platform as a foundation creates a seamless user experience and ensures teams can find and do what they need in the moment of need.

Alvin Tedjamulia, co-founder and Chief Technology Officer at NetDocuments says, “platformization ensures innovation, reliability, performance, uptime, and defensibility of security. This translates into a commonality of experience for all users across applications, which leads to higher adoption rates.” After all, having great technology is only half the battle. Adoption is critical. People must be able to use it effectively to realize the full benefit.

How to Harness the Trend

Start by creating a list of all the systems and applications you currently use for information management and what functions each system supports. Next, identify all the capabilities you need to optimally manage your workflows. These might include document and email management, optical character recognition, data loss prevention, real-time messaging, task management, secure external sharing, electronic signature, enterprise search, and collaborative capabilities, for example. Finally, look for a content management platform with the capabilities you identified that can replace as many of the separate systems and applications that you’re currently running independently.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Judi Flournoy, *Chief Information Officer at Kelley Drye & Warren LLP*

“It almost feels like a game of Pacman with all the acquisitions we’re seeing, which leads me to believe that technology vendors have this very idea on their strategic roadmaps. We’ve also seen multiple platform providers receive significant financial investments, so they’re being enabled to develop sophisticated solutions. However, this doesn’t mean platformization is an inevitability. It depends on the organization, their culture, and

how they want to approach different technologies. **Platformization is beneficial when the applications your business uses can all integrate seamlessly**, but it might not make sense if you need a single product best supported by a one-off application.

As many tech vendors consolidate and move toward platformization, it remains to be seen how this will affect cost and the service experience. **Will they be as eager to negotiate if they're not going up against the competition for our business?** And with acquisitions come the challenges of retaining subject-matter experts and knowledge during the transition and then actually bringing to market the vision for the new product or service. What smart vendors are doing is taking customers (and the industry) on the journey with them, explaining the reasons behind strategic business moves and how they will ultimately benefit the legal profession. For law firms and corporate legal operations, **evaluating platformization — or anything that causes us to rethink and reimagine the status quo and how we work — is a good thing.**"

3. ORGANIZATIONS WILL REQUIRE CLOUD-NATIVE SOLUTIONS

While many organizations will continue to use a hybrid-cloud system, those who want to position themselves ideally for the future are seeking cloud-native solutions. ILTA's 2021 Technology Survey revealed that 65% of firms are either already in the cloud or choosing cloud-native solutions with every upgrade.⁵ Cloud-native solutions take optimal advantage of the cloud's elasticity and scalability and reduce dependency on infrastructure while providing work from anywhere capabilities.

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Why Cloud-Native Solutions?

Organizations are moving to the cloud to benefit from its many capabilities, including its ability to effortlessly connect remote workers, its cost-effective delivery of near-unlimited storage and computing power, and its native security benefits. The cloud efficiently supports platformization and hyperautomation at scale and supplies the computing resources necessary for workflow automation and machine learning. In fact, many of the trends explored in this report rely heavily on the cloud.

How to Harness the Trend

Seek out cloud-native solutions when making IT investments and be sure that the solutions you choose seamlessly integrate with one another, have flexible and affordable storage, and provide robust computing power to support advanced technologies now and in the future. Look for technology partners that have deep expertise in cloud solutions to best leverage its extensive capabilities and efficiency gains.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Durgesh Sharma, Chief Information Officer at Littler Mendelson P.C.

"This isn't about organizations requiring the use of cloud-native solutions — of course, anyone building from scratch at this point is developing natively — it's that **cloud-native solutions are winning the race to meet the immediate demands of consumers**, including true scalability, seamless integration opportunities, compliance with data sovereignty laws and other local regulations, and the ability to bring solutions to market quickly. On-prem technology vendors that are supporting their current products and simultaneously trying to build a cloud solution are naturally going to lag behind, and the user experience could suffer because the vendor's resources are stretched too thinly.

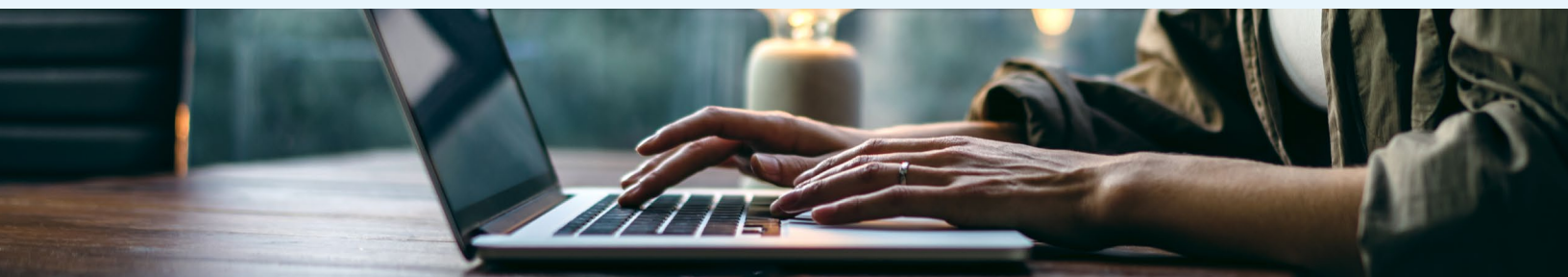
But even cloud-native solutions come with challenges, especially if they're not designed to meet the unique needs of law firms and legal professionals. Compliance, for example, is still nascent and can be an obstacle. **I see a need for transparency into intelligent data across a platform — not only how my organization is using the tool, but how all of the solution's users are engaging with it.** If I make a significant investment of money, time, and people in a technology, I want to know who my high adopters are, frequently used features and functions by persona and geography, how our usage compares to other organizations similar to ours — anything that can help me with adoption, productivity, and innovation. One other thing to keep in mind is that you can buy a cloud-native solution, but then you need to have the right people and skills baked into your plans to connect it to your other systems."



Warrick McLean, Chief Executive Officer at Coleman Greig Lawyers

"The iPhone has been around since 2007, which means professionals working in our organizations have literally had a smartphone their entire lives. It's intuitive, easy to use — naturally all technology is like that, right? And then they enter a law firm and don't understand why our systems can't do this or won't allow that. We're in the midst of a pivotal period in which law firms need to realize: Every business is a technology business. And legacy on-prem systems will stick out as clunky and inefficient to today's young professionals. **The longer it takes for your organization to implement modern, easily accessible tools that enable a collaborative culture, the more talent you stand to lose and the more your service delivery to clients could suffer.**

Once you decide to embark on a digital transformation of your essential technologies, it makes sense to go with best-in-breed, cloud-native solutions. The benefits are numerous, including the potential to seamlessly integrate with other tools, flexibility to work from anywhere, and inherent security. But these are significant projects that might take some law firms and legal teams two to three, up to seven or eight, years from initial idea to fruition. It's a lot of work, so **I recommend developing a strategy for your ideal technology experience and then chunk it down into smaller, more palatable projects.** If you want to be around in the future, you need to invest in these types of solutions."



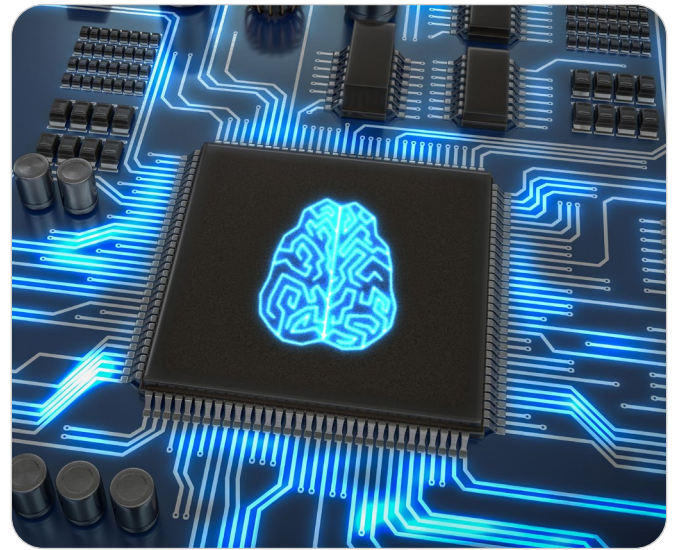
4. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MACHINE LEARNING CAPABILITIES WILL IMPROVE

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) have promised more than they have been able to deliver to date. But this is changing as use cases and technical capabilities evolve. Mature AI and ML are driving data analytics via predictive modeling, entity extraction, and natural language processing to spot anomalies, predict future outcomes, and identify potential solutions.⁶

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Why AI and ML?

As more organizations apply these technologies, what is at first a competitive advantage will become table stakes. Thompson Reuters makes this bold prediction: “Within the next few years, we will find ourselves on the cusp of a revolution in the practice of law led by the adoption of artificial intelligence — in particular, by in-house lawyers. Much like email changed the way we do business every day, AI will become ubiquitous — an indispensable assistant to practically every lawyer. Those that do not adopt and embrace the change will get left behind. Those that do will ultimately find themselves freed up to do the two things there always seems to be too little time for: thinking and advising.”⁷



After years of availability, but mistrust by lawyers, AI is now routinely being used to identify privileged documents in massive document volumes and provide analyses to inform litigation strategies. Organizations are also looking for AI and ML to automate and accelerate the workflows that are at the heart of their business processes — project management, communication, knowledge management, and collaboration.

How to Harness the Trend

AI and ML allow organizations to support and even automate many processes. To get the most out of these technologies, companies must have the architecture in place to support them, high-quality data to feed them, and the user experience to incorporate them into daily workflows.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Thom Wisinski, Chief Knowledge Officer at Haynes and Boone, LLP

“Right now there are two worlds when it comes to artificial intelligence and machine learning: non-legal and legal. Inventors and futurists like Ray Kurzweil, Peter Diamandis, and Elon Musk in non-legal industries are moving AI and ML forward by leaps and bounds and doing things with tech that people can’t even imagine.

Tesla vehicles have built-in AI that is constantly monitoring things like traffic conditions and new roadways, ultimately laying the groundwork for self-driving cars for the masses. **AI and ML use cases are growing exponentially right in front of our eyes without us even knowing it** — ML was used in shortening the development of the Coronavirus vaccine. However, within legal, some use AI and ML to simplify document reviews and for other commoditized work, but most are still trying to figure out the best ways to utilize this powerful tech within our service models and to the best advantage of both the organization and its customers.

These worlds will inevitably collide, with the legal industry adopting more AI and ML to provide enhanced service options and compete with the efficiencies we’ve witnessed in other industries. Legal professionals also need to move past the fear of machines replacing their valuable services because **the secret component to successful AI and ML is that people need to intervene to improve the machine’s results and outputs.** This is where the push for STEM education is going to pay dividends: You need smart people to create the machines and to figure out what to do with them. As these solutions are developed, legal professionals must be able to clearly communicate to their clients how the technology is being used and potential benefits.”



Mike Haven, Head of Legal Operations at Intel and President of CLOC

“Legal departments are notorious for accumulating many point-to-point solutions that are often redundant, underutilized, and not connected to related workflows. The market has found a way to improve efficiency in these environments through automation solutions that allow users to connect the dots and remove

from the plates of legal professionals painful, manual, routine tasks that are more quickly and effectively accomplished by a machine. **With no-code or low-code automation solutions, legal departments can automate processes and workflows on their own,** even without IT involvement, and connect systems that otherwise cannot speak to each other. The professionals who generally manage these manual tasks can then be retrained and redeployed to functions that require human judgment. And the improved processes can be measured — in terms of cycle time, resource time, and cost, for example — and benchmarked against the manual processes of yesterday to demonstrate dramatic efficiency gains and savings.

As the market develops better platform solutions, legal will have a “one stop shop” technology of sorts — like Finance, HR and Sales organizations already have — that contains built-in automation across key foundational technologies such as

e-billing, matter management, information, document, contract, and compliance solutions. **When we layer sophisticated machine learning applications on top of platforms, we'll witness the next evolution in legal operations.** Legal organizations interested in bolstering their automation functionality do not need to reinvent the wheel — help is out there. The best place to go to learn from and connect with peers who are further down the road is CLOC — the Corporate Legal Operations Consortium — which is the home of all things Legal Ops. Our community is happy and eager to share our learnings and best practices for automating processes and workflows to help teams work more efficiently at scale.

5. PRIVACY REGULATIONS WILL EXPAND

Gartner predicts that by the end of 2023, modern privacy laws will cover the personal information of 75% of the world's population.⁸ We expect that more state legislatures will enact privacy laws akin to The California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA). Eventually, we might see a federal privacy law similar to the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In anticipation of these expanding regulations, organizations are implementing fully homomorphic encryption (FHE), privacy-enhancing computation (PEC), and differential privacy approaches to support data sharing while preserving privacy.

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Why Privacy Regulations?

These regulations are being driven by individuals' demands related to their personal privacy, autonomy, and data privacy. Even without legal requirements around privacy, consumers will require their data privacy from the businesses with which they engage. Organizations that prioritize privacy will win the loyalty of their customers.



How to Harness the Trend

Begin to proactively align your systems and processes with CCPA and GDPR. Consider investments in applicable technology and techniques, including robust authentication, data loss-prevention, ethical walls, encryption, and geo-aware storage to ensure data privacy in your data analytics and business intelligence initiatives. Additionally, invest in educating your teams around what privacy regulations mean relative to your specific business requirements and adjust workflows to ensure compliance.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



David Clark, IT Director at Utah State Bar

"The UK, Europe, and Canada created data privacy rules that many organizations have struggled to adhere to, significantly extending what's required of businesses that deal with personal data. In the US, state governments are taking on that work, with about 20 states that have stringent data privacy legislation that's either currently active or created and legislated, but not yet enacted. Similar to when the General Data Protection Regulation came out, **businesses will get a few years to make adjustments to comply with newly released standards.** For US states choosing not to develop their own legislation, they need to consider whether federal standards set by entities like the Federal Trade Commission and Federal Communications Commission are enough to protect their constituents. I anticipate regulations around the world will continue to get more onerous and difficult to navigate.

As governments implement more regulations, we'll continue to see businesses relocate operations, expand their data center footprint, and do whatever else it takes to be in compliance and still be profitable. This begs the question: **Do stringent regulations make a state or country less competitive?** It remains to be seen. One other consideration when it comes to data privacy is education. Technology keeps changing and consumers need to be more aware of the things they should do to keep their personal data private."

6. SECURE DATA SHARING WILL BECOME TABLE STAKES

Thanks to the privacy-preserving and collaboration technologies mentioned above, organizations can now effectively share encrypted data while maintaining compliance. This capability allows firms to securely share data both within their organization and with stakeholders, such as clients, expert witnesses, courts, etc.

Organizations can now effectively share encrypted data and perform computations on it while maintaining compliance.

Why Secure Data Sharing?

Secure data sharing allows law firms to collaborate effectively while maintaining compliance. Clients' demands for data security are also increasing. Too often, firms open themselves up to unnecessary risk around privacy and security, because they are responsible for not only their own data, but also their clients' very sensitive and highly regulated data. Protecting company data and secrets is table stakes for in-house counsel, and law firms are following suit. Also, the IT landscape has changed in that there is no longer a physical office network perimeter that can be used as a high-level security barrier. Secure data sharing will continue to gain importance as privacy regulations expand.

How to Harness the Trend

Be sure that your systems and SaaS applications enable secure data sharing without interfering with people getting their work done efficiently. Ensuring your end users understand the “why” and “how” of safe sharing will aid in their compliance. Having effective policies and training in place can help. Another benefit of platformization is that you have fewer systems and applications to monitor for data security.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



David Craig, Managing Director at HBR Consulting

“To better understand this trend as it applies to law firms, we need, first, to appreciate the data privacy and data protections requirements their clients in regulated industries (financial services, healthcare, government) are required to uphold and the process they must follow to comply with those regulations.

Without a corollary and consistent regulatory framework, the challenge for law firms in the event of the exposure of sensitive or protected client data is to demonstrate reasonable and defensible information governance practices that will hold up under the sunlight of inquiry or audit. It’s up to the law firm to determine what is reasonable and defensible, based on its own risk assessment. So **when outside counsel guidelines dictate onerous data privacy and data protection requirements, they are seeking alignment to the standards to which they are held.**

Back when we worked with paper records, information governance was a back-office and records management issue. With the shift to electronic records, legal technologists have done an excellent job of focusing on cybersecurity, protecting the perimeter, and keeping people out. In the current landscape, there is an increased awareness of the reputational risks associated with data privacy and protection practices. General Counsel and Managing Partners are acutely aware of these issues, and there is a compelling driver to avoid the exposure, inadvertently or otherwise, of sensitive client information. **The next evolution is to have the right tools, policies, and, most importantly, practices that enable a culture of information governance that is part of the way business is done.** How do you implement controls in a way that don’t take away from the knowledge sharing and collaborative culture of the firm? It’s important to lean into how lawyers work and develop effective policies that can be audited and tracked. Policies that set expectations of behavior that are impossible to follow or enforce are more risky than having no policies at all.”

7. CYBERSECURITY MESH AND OTHER APPROACHES WILL HELP ADDRESS REMOTE WORK VULNERABILITIES

Today’s law firms are using a variety of technologies in both public and private clouds, and remote workers are expanding the traditional security perimeter. As a result, organizations need an ever-evolving security framework to account for the new world of remote work. Cybersecurity mesh is one approach. Gartner predicts that by 2024, organizations adopting a cybersecurity mesh architecture will reduce the financial impact of security incidents by an average of 90%.⁹ Other approaches include extending multifactor authentication to include internal accounts, document level encryption, and setting IP address restrictions.

Organizations need an ever-evolving security framework to account for the new world of remote cloud-based work.

Why Cybersecurity Mesh?

Cybersecurity mesh is a broad framework that is identity-based rather than location-based and is focused on protecting individuals and their devices rather than an entire network as a whole.¹⁰ It may be a more holistic solution since it covers identities outside the traditional security perimeter (e.g., remote employees or contractors who need temporary access). It also moves control points closer to the assets they're intended to protect.

How to Harness the Trend

Since enterprise data is no longer limited to an on-premises network, all connections should be considered unreliable until verified. A cybersecurity mesh is one approach to secure all data and systems, no matter where they're located and who is accessing them. Whether or not you implement a cybersecurity mesh, ensure that your platform and application providers have robust security and governance features that provide protection on any device from anywhere. Familiarize yourself with different security certifications and what capabilities each specific certification tests.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Jeffrey Brandt, Chief Information Officer at Jackson Kelly PLLC

"It's been almost a decade since law firms were dubbed 'the soft underbelly of American cybersecurity' and seen as the 'smarter' way for cyber criminals to gain access to not just one but multiple companies' sensitive financial and intellectual assets. That sentiment and the pervasive spread of cyberattacks across all industries brought about a change in approach to prevent malicious attempts from getting in and gaining access to a firm's systems and data. Now that all businesses have had to adjust to providing work from home solutions and we're seeing a significant shift to cloud-based tools, **many organizations are having to rethink their approach to security.** When you start dealing with a multi-cloud scenario — say your Microsoft Office cloud, Azure cloud, and NetDocuments cloud, for starters — and firewalls, anti-malware, redirect web tools, etc., cybersecurity mesh can be a good approach to having a flexible architecture that encompasses everything, so you no longer need to worry about separate components. The next evolution should be sophisticated information rights management, so we no longer have to worry about the perimeter — the security envelope travels with the data.

Another aspect of remote working vulnerabilities we need to consider is physical security and the precautions being taken at someone's 'home' office. Are documents being printed or placed on surfaces visible by non-authorized individuals? **In the office, we have policies against Alexa and Google devices because they could be turned into microphones. Do we take similar precautions for those working at home?** Should we be concerned about home firewalls, internet connections, and other aspects of the home office? Similar to when we went through the shift to BYOD, organizations will need to find a way to balance what's controlled by the organization versus the individual in regards to home office setups."

8. CYBERSECURITY TEAMS WILL EVOLVE INTO CYBER RESILIENCE TEAMS

A Law.com survey found that roughly 60% of in-house counsel said corporate risks are increasing, especially in information security.¹¹ Beyond malicious attacks, such as ransomware and malware, employees may inadvertently expose data to parties who shouldn't have access to it. In a law firm, data is central to the organization's ability to do business, so they must be prepared to recover mission-critical operations after an attack.

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Why Cyber Resilience?

For most organizations, the question isn't if they will face an attack, but rather when. A 2021 American Bar Association report revealed that 25% of respondents reported that their firms had experienced a data breach,¹² although other sources like Statista share numbers as high as 68%. Organizations are now focusing not only on defending against attacks but also on their ability to recover after a disruption.¹³ Today's leaders must be able to anticipate future threats, withstand attacks, and recover from them, as well as adapt to whatever challenges lie ahead.



How to Harness the Trend

First, evaluate how prepared your organization is to counter disruptions of all types, but specifically those related to cyberattacks. Second, consider how quickly you could recover mission-critical functions after an attack. Third, identify what you need in order to recover more quickly. For example, you might implement rollback capability for documents that have been part of a ransom attack on a local machine. If a machine gets hit, this capability reverts them to a version prior to the attack and resyncs them to the user's machine. Finally, and most importantly, test those solutions regularly to ensure they are functioning the way you anticipate them to.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Andrew Payne, *Director at Verlata Consulting*

"Law firms have been long aware of the damages caused by a data breach (namely reputational and financial), and this was brought to light again in 2018 with the GDPR. **Increasingly stringent regulations, the uptick in malicious cyberattacks, and the inadvertent mishandling of data have significantly raised awareness across law firm leadership**, which has led many firms to take a proactive approach to cybersecurity."

Creating data loss prevention classifications/policies that control not only access but also *actions* is now seen as fundamental, especially when policies can span platforms. **Protecting client data from trusted insiders appears to be the most recent threat.** Recovering from a breach can prove to be very difficult — law firms and legal teams need to have plans in place for when these instances occur. However, preventing the breach in the first place with the proper technologies, policies, and awareness campaigns is the easier route and provides much greater resilience."

9. ACCESSIBILITY WILL GAIN MORE ATTENTION

People with disabilities make up 15% of the global population, which is not an insignificant percentage.¹⁴ Yet a 2021 report by the Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University revealed that 98.1% of website homepages had detectable Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) failures.¹⁵ This discrepancy represents an opportunity for leaders who are willing to be first movers in making their law firms more inclusive.

A valuable opportunity exists for leaders who are willing to be first movers in making their law firms more inclusive.

Why Accessibility?

While there's a growing awareness of accessibility as a civil right, there's also a financial incentive to prioritize inclusion. A 2016 report by Nielsen found that consumers with disabilities, along with their families, friends, and associates, make up a trillion-dollar market segment.¹⁶ Companies are taking notice, as evidenced by the rise in inclusive technology featured at the Consumer Technology Association's famous CES convention in 2021.¹⁷

How to Harness the Trend

As a first step, take measures to ensure your website is in compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.¹⁸ Then, evaluate the rest of your technology resources for inclusivity.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Paul Unger, Partner at Affinity Consulting Group

“Legal professionals are aware that accessibility is an area for improvement, but I get the sense that most don’t know where to start or what to address. Of course, organizations with a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities were ahead of the curve before the shift to remote working arrangements, but **this sudden new way of working brought to light the need to consider how individuals with disabilities access technologies and perform work.**”

Enhancing accessibility improves the overall user experience and **could be a differentiator in recruiting talent and enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities.** Notwithstanding legal requirements, organizations that ignore this issue are simply missing out on engaging with incredibly talented and dedicated individuals.”

10. TECHNOLOGY WILL BE USED TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

No one can miss the news that workers are leaving their jobs in record numbers.¹⁹ While there are complex reasons for this dramatic migration, what’s obvious is that many people aren’t happy with their existing employment. As a result, organizations are prioritizing employee satisfaction, and one of the primary factors influencing employee satisfaction is the option of flexible work.²⁰ With these drivers in mind, we predict we will see a rise in technology being used in an effort to retain talent.

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Why Technology for Employee Satisfaction?

Employees are seeking more than flexible schedules. They want the ability to work from remote locations. To accomplish this goal effectively, they need technology that facilitates remote working, keeping them fully connected to their colleagues and the documents and data they need to do their work.

How to Harness the Trend

Seek out cloud-native tools that optimize the remote work experience. Look for features including video meetings, real-time chat, seamless mobile document and email management, etc. Review common workflows and collaboration tools and how easily tasks can be accomplished on mobile devices or from remote workspaces.

Honorable Mention: The Great Resignation

In addition to employers using technology to improve employee satisfaction, we also expect to see a trend of more intentional offboarding to gain insight into the causes of turnover and tighter access controls to prevent data exfiltration. The security impact of the Great Resignation is significant. It's common for employees to share documents with their personal email addresses and devices to make remote work easier, creating security vulnerabilities, and new job announcements make it easy for malicious actors to target new employees with phishing schemes. Mobile data and device management will be a critical part of this process.

What Thought Leaders Are Saying



Luke Schnobelen, *Director of Professional Development at Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.*

"In a hybrid work environment, technology won't only be used to improve employee satisfaction, it will enable employee well-being. **Someone who experiences ineffective business technologies can become discouraged, disconnected, and ultimately disengaged.** Leaders need to keep a fresh pulse on how their people are doing and encourage the automation of administrative tasks that could free up time for more meaningful work, upskilling, and building better business relationships. Collaboration tools that meet people where they work will bring more conversations out of email, which is a great thing, but we need to ensure everything seamlessly remains part of the client matter.

I'm also seeing endless potential to introduce technologies that will help find, grow, and retain top talent from around the world. This tech will eventually become baked into an organization's culture. People are adopting technologies quicker than ever, but we need to be diligent about educating them about what tools are available and how they're customized and communicate that in a variety of ways to ensure we create tech champions and encourage adoption. **The 'Great Resignation' is presenting new opportunities to get creative with how technology supports an individual's success.** All these factors lead me to believe tech will play a significant role in the future of employee satisfaction."



Joy Heath Rush, *Chief Executive Officer at International Legal Technology Association*

"One of my favorite urban myths is that lawyers don't like technology. They love it! What they hate is complexity, so we're seeing **user experience sometimes trumps features and functionality.** People are very interested in solutions they can adopt quickly, and the pandemic significantly accelerated this trend as we experienced that doing things fast could still align with doing things well. We're also witnessing an unprecedented consolidation in the legal technologies space, which brings with it a compelling value proposition: if more applications can live under a vendor's umbrella of services and with better integrations (fewer apps and fewer clicks), that speaks to the centrality of user experience.

This all ties to the recent war for talent that has organizations struggling to staff open positions, people opting for flexible working arrangements and other components of company culture, and salaries on the rise. Secondary markets have been most impacted by the idea that you don't need to work in the market in which you live to contribute materially. But it can't just be about higher salaries and working from home. **To attract and retain top talent, we must make the employee experience better, make it easier to do work, provide professional development and mentorship opportunities, and otherwise differentiate our business from others — all of which can be enabled by technology.** When we do this, we'll see our in-person workplace become a very purposeful destination and employees who are loyal and happy."

Use Today's Technology to Empower Your Team to *Work Inspired*™

As Wolters Kluwer notes, firms that are technology leaders continue to outperform others, and investing in the right technology is key to higher performance.²¹ Today's technology has the potential to make law firms more competitive, profitable, and secure while also improving the satisfaction of their teams who are driven to apply their expertise in meaningful ways. Ultimately, the value of technology is seen when it enables teams to focus on results. As we watch these trends become more prevalent in 2022 and beyond, we look forward to the emergence of more effective organizations and happier, more efficient teams.

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