# Law firms urged to adopt generative AI to meet client expectations and boost efficiency



The adoption of generative AI (GenAI) technology is advancing rapidly within the legal profession, with law firms increasingly recognising both the challenges and substantial opportunities presented by this innovation. According to experts from Thomson Reuters, who recently discussed the evolving landscape in a webinar, legal professionals must balance cautious adoption with proactive engagement to meet client expectations and enhance efficiency.

Zach Warren, Joanna Nagy, and Bill Josten from Thomson Reuters provided insights into how law firms can strategically embrace GenAI to position themselves for sustained success amid rising client demand for innovation. Warren noted that while only around 17% of legal professionals prefer to be early adopters of new technology, nearly half of corporate executives (C-suites) desire firms that lead on innovation. This discrepancy creates risks, as clients looking for cutting-edge solutions may switch to more technologically advanced providers.

Data from Thomson Reuters’ 2025 Generative AI in Professional Services Report shows the legal sector leading in GenAI uptake, with 28% of law firms and 23% of corporate legal departments reportedly adopting the technology. Despite this, only 20% of legal professionals are currently aware of their organisation’s efforts to measure the return on investment (ROI) of GenAI. This highlights a knowledge gap about practical use and benefits, indicating the urgency for the legal sector to evaluate and implement AI tools thoughtfully.

Joanna Nagy, Global Client Director at Thomson Reuters, emphasised the importance of client communication around AI use: “You cannot wait for your clients to ask you to be innovative, because if they’re asking you to be innovative, they’re asking you that as they’re walking out the door.” Nagy stressed that even firms not yet ready to integrate AI must understand the technology and clearly explain their stance to clients to maintain trust.

Concerns about GenAI’s accuracy and the risk of overreliance remain, but Warren pointed out these worries are diminishing as lawyers gain experience and awareness of how AI serves as a complement, not a replacement, for professional expertise. “The best results are going to come from the combination of lawyers plus technology, and that’s what’s important to focus on,” he said. For effective deployment, firms should involve knowledge management teams, leadership, and end users—particularly younger attorneys comfortable with new tools—in evaluating AI options.

Critical considerations when selecting GenAI solutions include ensuring the tool is professional-grade, supported by a solid platform, trained on trusted data sets rather than broad unvetted sources, and developed with input from AI specialists and practising lawyers.

The efficiencies introduced by GenAI offer significant advantages, especially in improving client service and firm profitability. Bill Josten highlighted the example of deposition summaries: while traditionally a paralegal might spend ten hours preparing one, GenAI can reduce this to seconds with only 30 minutes of review. “If the hours of producing something like a deposition summary have been reduced by 95%, that doesn’t mean that the value of the output to the client has been reduced by 95%,” he said. Faster delivery enhances responsiveness, providing a competitive edge.

Nagy described this shift as an opportunity for firms to practise consultative selling, proactively demonstrating to clients how AI enhances service delivery and creates additional value. Firms further along in AI adoption have already begun these discussions and seen positive outcomes.

With many law firms dependent on billable hours, there is understandable apprehension about the financial impact of AI-driven efficiencies. Nagy recommended a strategic approach that focuses initially on applying AI to non-billable tasks, such as reviewing associates’ work or onboarding processes. This helps reduce write-downs or write-offs and builds confidence that AI implementation will not undercut profitability. It allows law firms to harness the benefits of AI while managing risks to their business models.

Looking ahead, Thomson Reuters data indicates early AI adopters are reaping significant rewards in operational efficiency and client retention. However, those yet to embrace GenAI are urged to begin exploring available solutions and assess their suitability with care. “You have to vet what solutions provide things for you in a way that makes you comfortable. Start there,” encouraged Josten.

The Thomson Reuters team’s perspectives underscore that generative AI is reshaping the legal profession and that deliberate, well-informed adoption can create win-win scenarios for law firms and their clients. The full 2025 Generative AI in Professional Services Report and a webinar titled "Navigating the future: The impact of GenAI on the legal profession" are available for those seeking a deeper understanding of these developments.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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