# Integrating AI with traditional legal technology offers balanced path to innovation



Artificial intelligence (AI) is making significant waves in the legal sector, emerging as a powerful tool for tasks such as drafting contracts and predicting case outcomes. However, Nigel Williams, product director at Legal Futures Associate LexisNexis Enterprise Solutions, emphasises that while AI's promise is considerable, the technology is still evolving and must be integrated thoughtfully alongside existing legal technologies rather than replacing them outright.

Williams highlights the importance of established legal technology systems, such as case management and practice management platforms, which remain fundamental to the effective running of legal practices. These systems offer a centralised approach for managing all facets of legal cases, from document production and consistency checks to enhancing communication with clients. Their strengths lie in balancing automation with human input, enabling law firms to handle cases efficiently, reduce risk, and generate valuable data insights. Importantly, these systems operate within predictable cost and effort parameters and are relatively straightforward to implement compared with emerging AI solutions.

“Without the backbone solutions to help realise efficiencies and enhance productivity through the likes of data management and automation, how can the true potential of AI be realised?” Williams asks, underscoring that tried-and-tested legal technology forms the operational foundation needed for AI’s success. He further explains that firms aiming to harness AI’s capabilities must carefully manage the quality of data fed into AI models. Case and matter management solutions play a critical role in normalising data and integrating it with AI tools, allowing firms to enhance existing infrastructure without extensive overhauls.

Although the legal industry has witnessed rapid advances in AI-driven tools that expedite legal research and improve efficiency, Williams offers a tempered perspective regarding AI’s transformative potential. He compares the current AI enthusiasm with the early predictions following the 2007 Legal Services Act, which introduced new market entrants and alternative models for legal service delivery but ultimately resulted in incremental rather than revolutionary change within firms.

Williams points out that AI is an extraordinary technological breakthrough but equates it more to a sophisticated assistant rather than a “magic wand.” Its adoption necessitates deliberate planning and comprehension to fully unlock its benefits. Striking the right balance between innovation and tried-and-tested systems is key. Most AI tools today focus on specific tasks such as document creation or analysis, enhancing the legal process at a precise, document-centric level. Meanwhile, established systems like case management efficiently streamline predictable routines and workflows, ensuring service consistency and improving client experience.

In this balanced framework, more experienced legal professionals are freed to concentrate on complex, non-standard matters while AI manages exceptions and specialised support tasks. Williams envisions a "fast-developing partnership" where AI, traditional legal technology, and human expertise collaborate to enhance legal service quality and business growth.

Williams urges legal firms to adopt a comprehensive view of technology, valuing both the enduring backbone systems that sustain everyday operations and the exciting new AI innovations shaping the future. He likens AI to a brilliant soloist within the broader “orchestra” of established technology that keeps legal businesses running smoothly. Success in technological leadership, he stresses, comes from understanding and integrating the full spectrum of technological tools—from optimised operational systems to emergent AI capabilities.

In summary, while AI is set to play a transformative role in the legal sector, it does so best when embraced as part of a balanced, integrated technology strategy that honours the proven value of existing legal operational systems. The integration of AI alongside reliable, traditional technologies and human expertise offers firms the greatest opportunities for efficiency, innovation, and growth in an evolving legal landscape.

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

## Bibliography

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