

Once you've answered these questions, consider your clients: what do they want from you? Better communication about their ongoing matters? An easier onboarding process? The ability to pay via digital wallets? Organise conversations with your closest clients and ask what would make their lives easier.

Finally, look at your existing technology. Is what you already have working well and being used consistently? If not, is there anything you can do to improve it? Only start looking at new tech solutions when (or if!) you identify a clear need to do so. **Remember that tech is an enabler, not an objective in and of itself.**



What does a successful digital transformation look like?

The most successful digital transformations start with a clear problem that you want to solve and a roadmap to help you get there. Here are a few more things to bear in mind as you get started:

Get the basics right: while it's easy to get swept up in all the latest tools and buzzwords, digital transformation doesn't necessarily mean replacing all of your existing processes with technology! It's about finding the best solution for your problem, rather than choosing over-complicated software and trying to redesign firm processes to make it successful.

Bring all your stakeholders on board: make sure that you have considered the needs of your internal and external stakeholders, from different team members to clients, and that they understand how this new approach will benefit them.

Build a partnership: once you have chosen the right software for you, ensure you are collaborating closely with the relevant tech company to create the most effective outcomes.

Be future-focused: when putting your roadmap together, think about your short, medium and long-term goals. Where do I want my firm to be in three years time? How about five, or even ten? This mindset will help you to choose solutions that will stay relevant and set you on a growth trajectory.

What tech do I need?

How do you decide what tech is the right fit for your firm? While it might be tempting to throw everything at the problem and see what sticks, there are smarter ways forward.

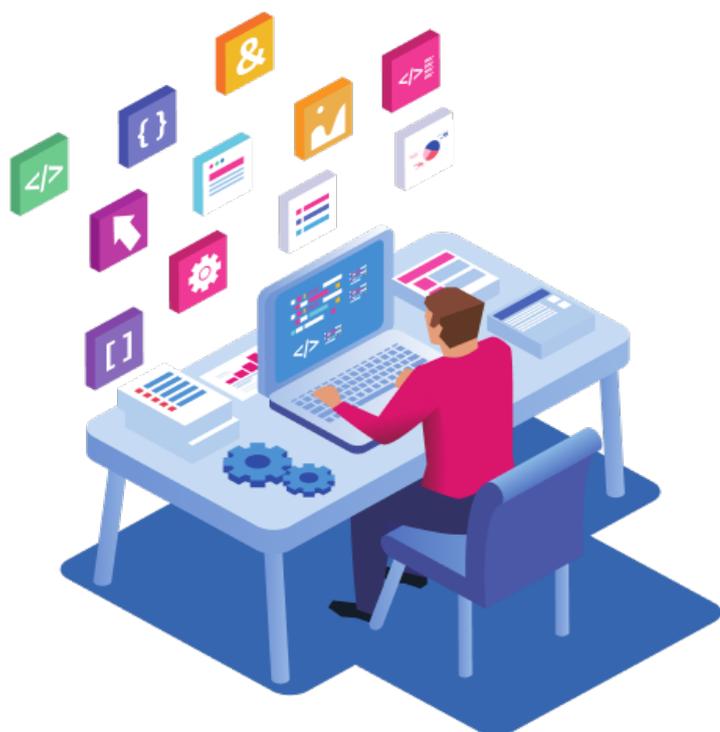
Firstly, make sure you get the right input early on. Speak to everyone who this process will impact, from the lawyers who will be using the tech, to support staff, to management teams.

As well as getting their feedback, talk to them about why the migration is happening and how it will ultimately make their jobs easier, as this will make them well placed to champion the tech during the rollout.

Secondly, choose tech that is designed specifically for law firms. By working with a company that understands the pain points of firms and the regulations affecting them, you will guarantee a smoother integration process and better results.

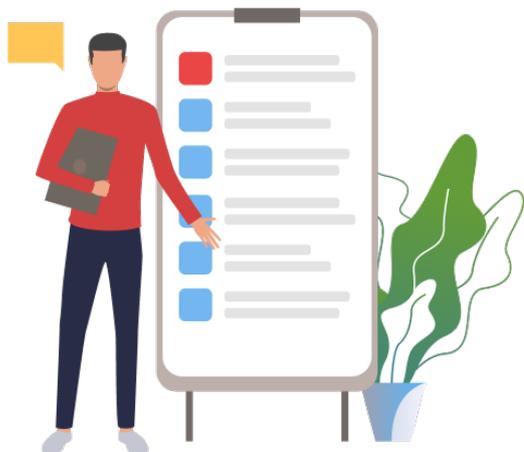
What's more, these companies will have a deep understanding of best practices from working with firms across the market and can help you to set goals to measure your progress.

Make sure you look for tech companies with a user-centric design to make it as slick and professional as possible, and ask for a tailored demo before you commit.



Also, keep an eye out for pricing flexibility: remember that the industry, the regulators and the tech are all evolving rapidly, and being tied into multi-year contracts with a slow-moving provider may hinder your success down the line.

Lastly, if you are going to use different tech for different challenges, check that the software works together smoothly. Otherwise, look at providers which offer a single solution for every step of the onboarding process.



What should my first steps be?

Identified your core challenge(s) and ready to get cracking? Great! The next step is doing your research to see what's out there.

This could include joining some legal tech events and webinars, seeking advice from legal networks like Law Net, Law South and the UK Legal Tech Association, contacting people via LinkedIn, requesting product tours and consulting with legal tech experts.

Alongside your research period, start building your internal team of tech champions. Who will use it day-to-day? Who will be the point of contact for the software company? Who will advocate for the tech in-house and help to train late adopters? Get these people on board from the start to support you throughout the process.

Once you have your team in place and a shortlist of solutions that seem to suit, the next step is being walked through the products themselves. Ask things like: how flexible is this product to meet your needs? How transparent is the pricing (are there any hidden add-ons)? Do you get a dedicated customer success manager? Are you tying yourself into a three-year contract or is it more flexible? Their responses will help you to identify the best possible tech solution for your specific challenges.

Once you have selected your new software, lean on the expertise of the tech provider to develop a considered launch plan and a consistent compliance process. The best providers will work in partnership with you for as long as you need them.

Stay tuned for part three of this series, where we'll be discussing how you can bring all the relevant stakeholders along for your digital transformation journey.

About the author



Lauren Watson is Head of Legal Partnerships at Legl, the end-to-end client onboarding and firm-wide insight solution helping law firms succeed in a digital-first world.

She works with law firms across the UK from high-street practices to top 100 multinational law firms and is an expert on LegalTech for client due diligence, remote onboarding and online payments.

Lauren is passionate about how technology can improve access to legal services and help law firms to operate effectively and compliantly.

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