

A Tech-Buying Guide for Law Firms

Part 3

Making tech champions of stakeholders at every level

As Covid accelerates the need for digital adoption, what do law firms need to know about technology and how can it improve their client experience, operations, efficiency and their level of compliance?

In this third instalment of this four-part series, we look at the best mindset for a successful digital transformation and share some tips for getting your key stakeholder groups on board.

Getting stakeholders bought in can be the difference between a successful digital transformation and a project that never gets off the ground. In fact, often the biggest challenge is not the processes of choosing and implementing the right technology – it's getting everyone across your organisation to use it!

From the senior leadership team, to fee earners, to your clients, any digital transformation project involves multiple stakeholders, each of whom will have different objectives and perspectives when it comes to tech. Whatever your role within an organisation, introducing new tech will almost always involve both upward and downward management, with buy-in needed from all the core players.



Starting on the right track

[In part two of this series](#), we explained that digital transformation should start with identifying the problem(s) you are trying to solve, as well as doing an audit of your existing technology.

As part of this process, identify who needs to be involved at this initial stage and bring them on board to feed into your objectives. Having early feedback from relevant parties will make it much easier down the line, as these are the people who will act as internal tech champions, advocating for your work when it comes to the implementation stage.



Getting management on board

No big company decisions can be made without the input of senior leaders, and introducing new tech is no exception.

Whether you are speaking to a Managing Partner, an Operations Director or a Head of Compliance, the most important thing is to understand their concerns, anticipate any blockers and maintain a trail of your decisions so that you can talk clearly through your thought process.

Managing Partners, CEOs and CFOs will be focused on overall firm profitability, so make sure that you emphasise the role of a tech provider as a revenue-generating partner! The best legal tech will have clear business development benefits, allowing you to expand your reach and take on clients further afield, as well as providing data that can help with strategic planning. Finally, by opting for a tech provider with flexible pricing and contracts, you can put senior leadership at ease.

Operations Directors and Practice Directors are looking to increase efficiency, productivity and file opening times. Get them involved in trialling different solutions so they understand how the software will work in practice to make existing processes more efficient, as well as reducing your overheads by freeing up fee earners' time.

Heads of Compliance have to consider all the ways in which technology can help the firm to adhere to standards and regulations. They will want to feel reassured that any new tech will replicate your firm's risk-based approach, act as a single source of truth and improve existing customer due diligence processes.

Getting buy-in from fee earners

Once you have chosen your new tech provider and have management on board, it's time to start rolling out the software throughout the firm. Here are a few tips to get the fee earners and support staff as excited about this new tech as you are!

Reassure them that they won't have to change their entire ways of working. The tech isn't here to replace them or to upend their well-honed routines, but simply to make their days a little easier by digitising their existing processes.

Avoid trialling the tech on a handful of team members as this can cause blockers if one of them struggles to adapt. Instead, make a concerted effort to introduce the new software in as coherent a way as possible, making sure that everyone understands the reasoning behind the digital transformation. If you want to trial the process, start with one department so that you can gather feedback from a good cross-section of your team and further improve the process.

Choose a tech provider that offers ongoing training at no extra cost, so that you can support any team members who need a bit of additional help getting to grips with the new software.

Maintain strong internal communication and let people know that their voices will be heard. Even if you ultimately decide not to act on their feedback, make it clear what you have decided and why.



Collaborating with clients

While your clients won't have the final say in your business decisions, they should be at the heart of your thinking when it comes to digital transformation. Ensure that you understand your current (and prospective) clients well enough to incorporate their needs into your overall tech implementation plan.

This may include emphasising the core benefits for them, such as creating a faster and more secure end-to-end experience. As the legal industry adapts to being remote-first, it is vital that your clients can do everything from signing contracts to ID checks from the comfort of their own home, matching the slick, digital service they are used to from other industries.

All firms' departments may have different demographics of clients, so make it clear that you have alternative methods of communication available to them should they need.

Building a tech-first culture

The right company culture is crucial to digital transformation – as is a healthy dose of inspiration. Get your fellow team members on board with the new vision you are striving for and they will help you to stay focused and deliver against your original objectives.

Recognise that everyone is different: some people will be enthusiastic and others may resist at first. That's normal! By maintaining a flexible and collaborative mindset, and with the support of your internal 'tech ambassadors', you will be able to push through any doubts and prove the value of the right digital tools.



In the final part of this series, we'll look at the macro and micro implications of **not** investing in legal tech.

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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