

5 predictions for the use of AI in the legal profession

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Artificial intelligence (AI) has boomed over the last 2 years. A google search of AI tools reveals some 1.8 billion results. This reflects the extensive global interest in AI. The AI industry has also experienced significant growth with the global market size valued at \$200 billion¹.

This shows that AI is set to impact a large number of the sectors in the economy. This article will consider 5 predictions in relation to the legal profession²

1. Automated Legal Research

Artificial Intelligence (AI) will revolutionise legal research by providing instantaneous access to comprehensive databases of case law, legislation, legal precedents, and scholarly articles. Leveraging the power of generative AI, these tools will not only retrieve relevant information but also analyse the legal context to identify the most pertinent arguments, patterns, and precedents that align with a specific case or query.

By streamlining the traditionally time-intensive research process, AI will allow legal professionals to allocate their resources more effectively, focusing on strategy and case development³. Additionally, AI-driven platforms will offer predictive insights by analysing historical legal decisions, aiding lawyers in evaluating the likelihood of various legal outcomes. This enhanced efficiency and precision will significantly reduce costs for clients and democratize access to high-quality legal services, particularly benefiting small firms and individuals with limited resources. However, the adoption of such tools will require careful oversight to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and ethical application of AI-generated insights within the legal framework. This then raises issues for the future of Paralegals.

2. Contract Analysis and Drafting

AI-powered platforms are transforming the way contracts are drafted, reviewed, and analysed, delivering greater accuracy and efficiency compared to traditional methods. By leveraging advanced technologies such as natural language processing and machine learning, these tools can quickly identify risks, inconsistencies, and potential loopholes within contract language. They ensure compliance with legal standards, enhance consistency across documents, and reduce the likelihood of errors, providing a streamlined approach to contract management⁴.

With routine tasks automated, legal teams can focus on high-value activities like strategic negotiations and decision-making. These platforms not only save time but also provide data-driven insights, enabling organizations to uncover trends and optimize contract performance. By shifting the workload from manual review to intelligent automation, AI-powered platforms empower legal professionals to operate more strategically, delivering greater value to their organisations.

3. Impact on Paralegals⁵

AI will impact the role and responsibilities of paralegals and other support staff. There are some significant advantages as well as challenges with AI tools. These are -

- AI can rapidly analyse extensive legal documents, accelerate legal research, and assist in drafting and managing contracts. These capabilities drastically reduce the time and costs associated with routine tasks.
- By automating repetitive tasks and streamlining legal research and document review, AI enables paralegals to focus on more complex and strategic responsibilities. Paralegals, often burdened with tight deadlines and high workloads, greatly benefit from this support.
- AI's ability to process and analyse large datasets minimises human error, delivering greater precision and reliability in legal documentation and research.

The Challenges of the AI are -

- While AI excels at data processing, it often struggles to grasp complex legal concepts and nuances, which can lead to inaccuracies or misinterpretation of legal information. Paralegals bring critical human insight and judgment that AI cannot replicate.
- AI use raises significant ethical concerns, including privacy, data protection, and transparency. Safeguarding client confidentiality and ensuring compliance with ethical standards remain areas where human oversight is indispensable.
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- AI systems have been criticised for inherent biases. For instance, some AI tools associate certain professions with specific genders⁶, which may lead to discriminatory outcomes if not carefully managed. Paralegals' ability to navigate and counter such biases is crucial.
- Legal representation often involves emotional and complex matters that require empathy, personal interaction, and tailored advice. AI lacks the human touch that helps clients.

4. Evolution of ethical and regulatory frameworks.

As AI tools become more prevalent, they raise complex ethical issues, such as algorithmic bias, lack of transparency (black-box AI), and accountability for AI-driven decisions.

Legal professionals must adapt by navigating these challenges, ensuring compliance with emerging regulations on AI use, and advocating for fair and ethical AI practices. This evolution is also pushing the profession to develop new competencies, such as understanding AI systems and advising clients on legal issues related to their implementation and governance.

5. Increased accessibility to legal services through AI-powered tools and platforms.

AI is enabling the development of virtual legal assistants and chatbots that can provide basic legal advice, draft simple legal documents, or guide users through legal processes at a fraction of the cost of traditional legal services⁷. In fact there are a number of memes and reddit threads about the use of AI instead of using a lawyer. Using AI to draft contracts and the like.

This democratisation of legal services makes them more accessible to individuals and small businesses who might not have been able to afford a lawyer otherwise. However, this also raises concerns about the quality of advice provided by AI tools⁸, the potential for misuse, and the regulatory challenges of ensuring accountability and ethical standards in automated legal advice.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the legal profession is anticipated to significantly transform traditional legal practices, streamlining processes and enhancing accuracy, efficiency, and client-centric service delivery. AI's capacity to automate repetitive tasks, such as legal research, contract analysis, and document review, promises to reduce operational costs and expedite procedural outcomes, providing a more responsive legal framework. However, the widespread adoption of AI in legal settings introduces complex ethical and legal considerations that demand meticulous oversight and compliance with established regulatory frameworks.

As these technologies evolve, practitioners must engage with interdisciplinary expertise to navigate the intersection of technology and the law responsibly. Regulatory bodies and stakeholders must collaboratively establish robust governance structures to mitigate risks while enabling the transformative potential of AI. Ultimately, the careful integration of AI into legal practice has the capacity to advance the rule of law while maintaining ethical and equitable access to justice.

References

¹ [Artificial intelligence \(AI\) worldwide - statistics & facts | Statista](#)

² [Gen AI won't replace legal professionals but it has transformative potential - SmartCompany](#)

³ [The Power of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Research](#)

⁴ [10 Best AI Tools for Contract Review](#)

⁵ [Will AI replace paralegals? Let's separate fact from fiction](#)

⁶ [Research shows AI is often biased. Here's how to make algorithms work for all of us | World Economic Forum](#)

⁷ [Will AI replace lawyers? What to expect in 2024](#)

⁸ [V86b1hpz9d-B34-WBNR-16x9-203s-YT-Charlotte-didyouknowthatamazon-Multi transition-July2024 Ad 2--OG](#)

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