

Legal

# INNOVATION & TECH FEST

LEGAL INNOVATION & TECH FEST

# Community Snapshot

The biggest challenges,  
concerns and topics of interest  
to law-firms & in-house legal  
teams!

6-7 NOVEMBER 2023 | THE MASLOW, SANDTON

# INTRODUCTION

Eventful People has specialised in developing and nurturing communities of common interest for business and IT professionals for over a decade in South Africa. The Legal Innovation & Tech Fest will be taking place for the 6th year in November. The Conference is a celebration of the talent, technology, and ideas that are transforming law-firms & in-house legal teams.

This snapshot is a summary of the discussion points that are most pressing to those working in law-firms and in-house legal teams in South Africa. The themes identified in this research will form the foundation of the agenda for the Legal Innovation & Tech Conference, taking place in November 2023.

## THE EVENTFUL RESEARCH PROCESS

Each year, Eventful People embarks on a unique research project. Our extensive research for the Legal Innovation & Tech Fest conference in 2023 involved engaging with 80+ leaders in law firms and in-house legal teams from various sectors and from 60 leading organizations. These interactions took the form of roundtable discussions, providing us with valuable insights and perspectives directly from key players in the field.

By convening these roundtable sessions, we were able to foster open dialogue and exchange ideas with industry leaders, gaining a deep understanding of the challenges, innovations, and emerging trends in law and technology. The input and expertise shared during these discussions have played a crucial role in shaping the agenda for the conference, ensuring that it addresses the most relevant and pressing topics faced by the legal community. Our commitment to collaborative research, involving industry leaders and organizations, has allowed us to deliver a conference that is both comprehensive and impactful. We look forward to bringing together a diverse and influential group of professionals, including C-suite executives, partners, legal solution leads, chief legal advisors and technology experts, and entrepreneurs, to explore and showcase groundbreaking legal solutions that drive organizational growth and success in the digital age.



**01** Months of in-depth research

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**02** Hot Topics defined by round table discussions

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**03** Most pressing topics chosen for community snapshot

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**04** Agenda curated using Hot Topics as a blueprint

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# EMBRACING INNOVATION & NAVIGATING THE LEGAL TECH LANDSCAPE

Despite being known for following processes developed decades ago, the legal sector is not immune to innovation. Embracing innovation, in the people, process, and technology context, is crucial for law firms and legal professionals to remain competitive, improve efficiencies, and deliver better services to clients. The legal industry has been undergoing significant changes driven by advancements in technology and, indeed, technology is a catalyst for legal delivery transformation and a foundational element for new delivery models, but a tech tool alone will not disrupt the industry. Thus, innovation requires more than simply implementing new technology solutions; it also requires a deeper look at processes. Staying abreast of technology developments and understanding the use cases of the technology available is essential.

## Key Focus Areas:

- Environmental Social Governance in the legal sector - how lawyers should equip themselves and innovate in this space to remain relevant.
- Embracing legal design innovation in legal information, workflows, and services.
- Addressing value creation and cost reduction as a driver for innovation.
- Technical innovation versus process innovation and how to ensure attention is given to both.
- Overcoming innovation stumbling blocks in the corporate and law firm environment.
- Understanding the pros and cons of automating basic administrative work.
- Embracing a paperless future.
- Understanding the legal tech solutions on the market, and which solutions might aid your organization to be more innovative and efficient.
- Blockchain and Smart Contracts

# ATTRACTING, TRAINING & RETAINING FUTURE-FIT LEGAL TALENT

Attracting, training, and retaining future-fit legal talent is crucial for the long-term success of any legal team or law firm. As the legal industry evolves and faces new challenges, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that the talent within the organization is equipped with the necessary skills and mindset to adapt and thrive in the changing landscape. Someone entering the legal profession in the years to come will require a very different set of skills than a young lawyer in the preceding decades. Legal professionals, young and old, are being pushed to rethink the way they do things and to evolve their skillset to simply keep up with the pace and expectations of our society. It is widely agreed that the successful lawyer of the future will be required to be not only highly proficient in the law but also embrace all things digital and lean heavily on data. To attract and retain such talent, leaders in the legal section should prioritize ensuring that employee experience is a central feature of their organization.

## Key Focus Areas:

- How to prepare for and embrace the workforce of the future.
- What skills do businesses require to ensure future resilience and relevance?
- Is your older workforce trained to adapt to the different needs and expectations of clients who are next-gen?
- How can we ensure that educational institutions, local legal authorities, and business are encouraging and not hindering the next generation of legal professionals?
- How can your firm or company attract, retain, and manage a workforce that will withstand the test of time and thrive in the era of digital disruption?
- The impact of hybrid and remote working in the legal sector
- New legal careers: data technologists, legal data analyst & legal marketers.
- Legal process outsourcing and the impact thereof.
- Diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.
- Innovation as a mechanism to attract and retain talent.



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & MACHINE LEARNING IN LAW

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine learning (ML), although not new concepts, are increasingly being adopted in the legal profession, offering numerous benefits and opportunities to streamline processes, improve efficiency, and enhance decision-making, ultimately affording legal professionals with the opportunity to improve their client experience if utilized optimally. However, despite the infinite possibilities that AI and ML technology make way for, these concepts are by no means a one-size-fits-all silver bullet, and there are several challenges associated with their implementation and ongoing success in the legal environment.

## Key Focus Areas:

- Realizing tangible value from AI and ML in the legal profession.
- Examples of how AI and ML can effectively be utilized in law.
- Addressing the impact, or perceived impact, of AI on jobs of legal professionals.
- Unpacking the legal AI and ML tools and technologies in the market, and the pros and cons for your organization.
- Governance, guidelines, policies, and the responsible use of AI.
- Overcoming data quality and bias concerns with the use of AI and ML
- Security and privacy risks associated with the use of AI technology.
- Change management and building acceptance and trust in AI technology, for clients and employees.

# CHANGE MANAGEMENT, USER ADOPTION & STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

The legal profession is built on deeply entrenched methodologies and processes. Future-proofing the business of law requires a structured and managed process of change. It is imperative to have buy-in both from the leadership and workforce to ensure that there is adoption and sustained compliance. There needs to be a change management strategy in place with a clear vision of the transformational journey. Technology is not a solution, merely a tool to enable change. Without transforming the processes and changing the mindsets and skills of the people, technology will not yield the intended results.

## Key Focus Areas:

- How to get business to buy in to legal investing in Tech.
- Tips and tricks for developing an effective change management strategy.
- Addressing the concerns of job security for legal professionals as technology becomes more widely used to fulfill roles previously fulfilled by people.
- Technology Implementation approaches and best practice in the legal profession.
- Building a culture of open communication and trust in the business.
- Keeping the user and client experience at the heart of change management.
- Embracing Design Thinking and other collaboration techniques.

# EVOLVING OPERATING MODELS, PRICING STRUCTURES & THE CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Evolving legal operating models, pricing structures, and the overall client experience are essential aspects of adapting to the ever-changing legal industry and meeting the needs of clients. Age-old legal operating models have been put into question as a result of the digital revolution. Historically, clients have not had high expectations when it comes to their legal representatives demonstrating advanced digital capabilities. This is changing, and the legal profession needs to keep up with the experience that clients have come to expect. Operating models are going to need to continually evolve to keep up with the requirements for customization, quick response times, accessibility, and overall value-add. Value-based pricing (VBP) is beginning to revolutionize the legal services industry by transitioning legal engagements from the traditional hourly fees model to a new value-based approach. VBP, when structured correctly, significantly reduces total legal spend, increases budget predictability, promotes law firm risk sharing, and improves the productivity of corporate legal departments.

## Key Focus Areas:

- Embracing legal design innovation in legal information, workflows, and services.
- Insight into legal operating models of the future.
- How can traditional lawyers be convinced to make client experience more of a priority?
- How can data be used to measure the client experience?
- Technology available to aid the overall customer experience.
- Understanding agility in the legal context.
- Abandoning the billable hour in favor of alternative fee arrangements.
- How pricing structures can affect innovation and ultimately value.
- The role and future of Alternative Legal Service providers.

## LEGAL DATA, ANALYTICS & VISUALIZATION

Legal data, analytics, and visualization are transforming the legal industry by leveraging technology and data-driven insights to enhance decision-making, improve efficiency, and provide more valuable services to clients. Client expectations have changed, and data is being increasingly used to justify conversations about cost-effective services and delivery methods. How can we use this data-rich world as an opportunity for legal professionals to demonstrate their value to clients? To succeed, we need to get better at collecting the right data and understanding how to use it in delivering legal services.

## Key Focus Areas:

- Identifying the best platforms and tools to manage data.
- Effectively using data to demonstrate ROI on legal technology.
- Understanding the metrics to measure ROI for technology investments.
- Using data to understand clients better to service them more effectively.
- Focusing on data for performance tracking and profitability.
- Data management best practice and governance in the legal context.
- Optimising legal data visualisation to make information more palatable to clients and legal professionals.



## DATA PRIVACY, SECURITY & ETHICS

Much like many other industries with valuable data, the legal sector is falling victim to cyber-attacks at an alarming rate. The number of technology applications specifically designed for the legal sector has grown significantly in recent years, with legal startups springing up in every corner of the world. The development and application of technology in the legal sector challenge existing regulatory models and raise questions about the scope, objectives, and form that regulation in the sector should take. There are a whole host of fascinating ethical questions around technology, and unlike their effects in medicine or science, guidelines for the ethical use of technology in the legal sector are considerably less developed.

### Key Focus Areas:

- Data protection – everything you should be considering before implementing technology solutions to replace an existing process.
- Cloud regulation and ethics in South Africa
- Artificial Intelligence regulation and ethics in South Africa
- How South African Regulatory Bodies are planning for the use of technology in the legal sector.
- How to ensure clients that their information is secure?

## MENTAL WELL-BEING IN THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

Mental health and well-being in the legal profession is an issue that cannot be ignored. While legal professionals carry out vitally important work daily, sometimes the pressures and stresses associated with that work can have a negative effect on a person's mental health and well-being. Although there are a myriad of "wellness" resources and programs available, many do not focus specifically on the challenges facing the legal industry.

### Key Focus Areas:

- Breaking the stigma around mental health in the legal sector.
- Developing a mental well-being and wellness strategy within your legal department or firm.
- Wellness tips and tricks for legal professionals.
- Addressing the ever-evolving legal technology and concerns about the future of the legal professional.
- Hybrid working environments and the impact on mental health.
- How technology can be utilised to improve mental wellbeing in the legal sector.



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Connecting the ideas community

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