

# IT Organizations, Are You Ready for Generative AI?

By Ed Empamano, K2 Services

July 22, 2024

**G**enerative AI is everywhere. Every new product in almost every industry has a growing generative AI ecosystem. This trend is far from slowing down. A [recent survey by Deloitte](#) of 2,800 business leaders predicts that 2024 will be “a defining year for generative AI worldwide.” The business of law has not been immune to the impact of generative AI; however, the rising tides have only slowly raised the heavy ships of law.

A year ago, countless articles were published centering on generative AI and its impacts on the legal industry, including in [The New York Times](#) and [Financial Times](#). Nobody can forget when [Chat GPT-4 passed the bar](#) with a score nearing the [90th percentile](#). Yet here we are over a year later and a wave of generative AI technologies has flooded the market while the brass on those boats is still getting polished.

While a majority are still very optimistic that generative AI will change the practice of law, most legal innovation professionals are focusing on appropriate use cases in their organizations. In our precedent-based vertical, inroads and movements can be slow. Use cases for each law



Credit: Dieter Holstein / Adobe Stock

firm and legal department can drive meaningful impact and change. These targeted use cases and focused technologies resonate with law firms and legal departments and can move the internal generative AI conversation forward.

Technology has always raised the productivity bar with each major evolution, and now the previously shocking ability of generative AI to create first-draft work product, summarize massive documents and provide highly accurate starting research results in minutes has become table stakes. Specific, legal-centric use cases coupled with workflows can slipstream generative AI technologies into the practice of law in

a meaningful manner. This approach is being proven every day. However, the question is, are legacy technology organizations ready for these waves of initiatives?

IT departments, if not already planning, must shift their operational model to lead the way for inbound technologies. CIOs and CTOs are now constantly engaged to discuss and plan for generative AI, ultimately opening a seat at the table to help mold the next generation of technology in the practice of law. Are IT departments in law firms and legal departments organizationally and technologically ready? Looking in the IT organizational mirror is a difficult exercise, but it's even more necessary than ever before to ensure firms are not just treading water.

### **Law Firm Technology Departments—Ready for Innovation and AI?**

Innovation is different for various firms and legal departments, but at the core these technology professionals are change agents influencing the practice of law and streamlining business operations. With the wave of generative AI already here, the traditional IT department needs to rethink legacy operating models. Foundational technologies used to be business differentiators but are now simply a utility. Does your fast internet—which everyone can acquire on the open market—make your law firm or legal department function faster or more accurately than the other organization? Do your Azure and AWS

environments really enable your legal practice to be better than another firm? Does spending your limited people resources on refreshing hundreds of laptops a year make your firm more productive? These traditional operational facets of the IT department are becoming commoditized in today's marketplace.

Technology organizations need a modern plan. Pivot those valuable resources to support law firm and legal department initiatives. Make sure your technology organization can build, support and ingest generative AI applications. Increase the knowledge of your developers to include critical prompt engineering skills. We should be reallocating our precious resources from watching alerts and screens to supporting those change agents in the innovation world. Rethink where you focus your dollars and people. Modernize your organization to skill up, and reposition to be a true partner of innovation initiatives. Having legal-minded technologists in your IT department will increase your use case success. Rally, repurpose and reeducate your teams so they are positioned to deliver, support and enhance the ever-growing generative AI and innovation efforts in law firms and legal departments.

Don't let the heavy brass of your technology boats be the drag on the fast-moving generative AI and innovation movement.

**Ed Empamano** is the senior vice president at *K2 Services LLC*, a leading technology-enabled managed services provider for the legal industry.