Generative AI Activation and Acceleration for Law Firms

5 Questions Law Firm Leaders Should Be Prepared to Answer

A practical approach for law firms of all sizes to activate and accelerate generative AI (GenAI) capabilities.

You want to do something about generative AI, and perhaps your firm already is. The topic continues to build interest and buzz in industry forums, generating a certain "fear of missing out" amongst lawyers and administrative leadership. Clients continue to explore the adoption of this new technology, seeking advisory perspective on how to safely introduce it within ethical guidelines and boundaries. Almost daily it feels like competitors are making a splash in the news, sharing thought leadership or even experimenting with reimagined services, all while building maturity and competence with generative AI along the way.
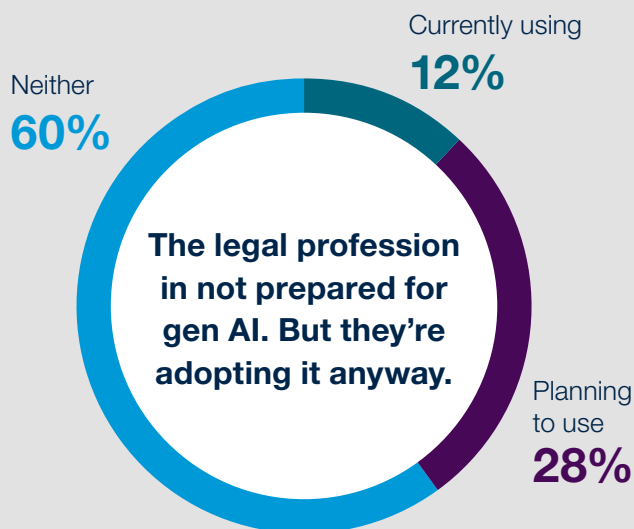
If this sounds familiar, it's because you're not alone. Rest assured, most law firm leaders share angst about where they are in the race to adoption, and many have failed to realize the progress and momentum that they would have hoped to achieve by now. Despite these challenges, we believe that the upside remains promising for generative AI. With the appropriate structure and discipline, firms can position themselves to capture value and achieve long-term success.

Opportunity at Hand:

Generative AI has the potential to reshape legal advisory as we know it. Adoption is still early, but it is growing and accelerating rapidly. According to an August 2023 report released by Everlaw (in partnership with the Association of Certified E-Discovery Specialists (ACEDS) and the International Legal Technology Association (ILTA)), **40 percent of legal professionals are already using generative AI tools or plan to do so soon.** Even so, 72 percent of those surveyed believe the industry is not ready for the impacts of generative AI. Firms recognize the risks associated with the technology and the potential lack of firm infrastructure to support it, but competitive pressure and the size of the opportunity are compelling them to act quickly.

So how should you proceed? It is our belief that at this early, uncertain stage, the long-term winners will be those who take thoughtful action now to begin to experiment, build discipline and gain competence at a measured pace over time.

Currently using
12%

Neither
60%

The legal profession in not prepared for gen AI. But they're adopting it anyway.

Planning to use
28%

2023 eDiscovery Innovation Report – ILTA, Everlaw and ACEDS

In our experience, leaders in the legal space must be prepared to answer five core questions in their pursuit of generative AI, agnostic of their firm's size or business model. Here is our perspective on each, and how A&M can support clients through their journey.

5 Questions Every Law Firm Leader Should Be Prepared to Answer About Generative AI

1. How do we determine our firm's maturity to adopt generative AI solutions?
2. How do we build the case for change and demonstrate the benefits of generative AI in a way that resonates within the firm?
3. What structure needs to be in place, and how do we need to evolve as a firm to embrace generative AI capabilities?
4. How do we establish a discipline for building generative AI capabilities without distracting from other strategic priorities and work efforts?
5. How do we upskill and evolve our workforce to grow with the technology?

Q **How do we determine our firm's maturity to adopt generative AI solutions?**

It's hard to evaluate your firm's maturity against a moving target, and at this point in the evolution of generative AI, it's somewhat of a fool's errand.

However, it is important to consider how generative AI will fit into your existing firm ecosystem and where you may need to refine or adapt capabilities. Specifically:

- What structure is needed to support generative AI (e.g., org, process, tech)?
- What repeatable processes are needed to evaluate and deploy generative AI?
- What is the mechanism to identify learnings and continuously evolve?

Most projects fail or flounder because they focus on the technology and neglect consideration for everything else that needs to sit around it.

Q **How do we build the case for change and demonstrate the benefits of generative AI in a way that resonates within the firm?**

Generative AI is ambiguous, and many leaders do not fully appreciate how the technology can or should be used. Even traditional use-case definitions may prove challenging. Anchor your ideas in business terms. Be very clear about the business challenge or opportunity that you are trying to address, and help stakeholders visualize the need through desired outcomes.

Expand on the value proposition by really thinking through the tangible benefits, trade-offs and considerations. Be realistic and invest the time and energy to produce a narrative that will resonate with executive leadership.

Q **What structure needs to be in place, and how do we need to evolve as a firm to embrace generative AI capabilities?**

Operating Model and Org Structure: Consider how your internal and client-facing operations will need to adapt, evolve or, in some cases, completely transform to realize the benefits of generative AI solutions. Be prepared to pilot new models, learn and continuously refine.

Tech and Data: Spend the time to reflect on the current health of your technology and data. Define how generative AI fits into your technical strategy, and thoughtfully consider how this might alter your roadmap. Upfront planning is critical to protect against avoidable bottlenecks that have the tendency to diminish your value proposition.

Q **How do we establish a discipline for building generative AI capabilities without distracting from other strategic priorities and work efforts?**

Once ideas make it through initial justification, the next level of planning is critical to establish appropriate parameters without impeding the creative design process. Especially for firms that are early in their adoption of generative AI, the ability to design and deploy capabilities with the least amount of effort is critical. This may require prioritizing some of the easier to achieve use cases as a mechanism to build internal competence around how to tackle the higher value, higher complexity ideas.

Taking a page from The Lean Startup methodology, the early design objective for generative AI solutions should be to shorten the cycle for the "build-measure-learn" feedback loop.

Q **How do we upskill and evolve our workforce to grow with the technology?**

Culture and Change: Embracing generative AI requires a willingness to step outside of the comfort zone for firm leadership, as well as lawyers and staff. The firms that culturally embrace creative exploration often find the adoption curve to be less daunting. Regardless, self-awareness is the first step in the journey to achieve change.

Growth and Competencies: One of the most effective catalysts for change is embedding expectations for generative AI maturity within workforce planning. By formalizing expectations into human resources (HR) disciplines (e.g., performance management, job architecture, growth and development), firms can effectively direct and support the growth of lawyers and staff.

Conclusion:

Many law firms are finding that the approach to embracing generative AI is different and unique to previous emerging technologies such as cloud solutions or even traditional forms of artificial intelligence. There is a greater degree of unknown as the technology continues to evolve rapidly. All law firms—regardless of size, practice areas or technology maturity—face challenges in determining what role generative AI should play.
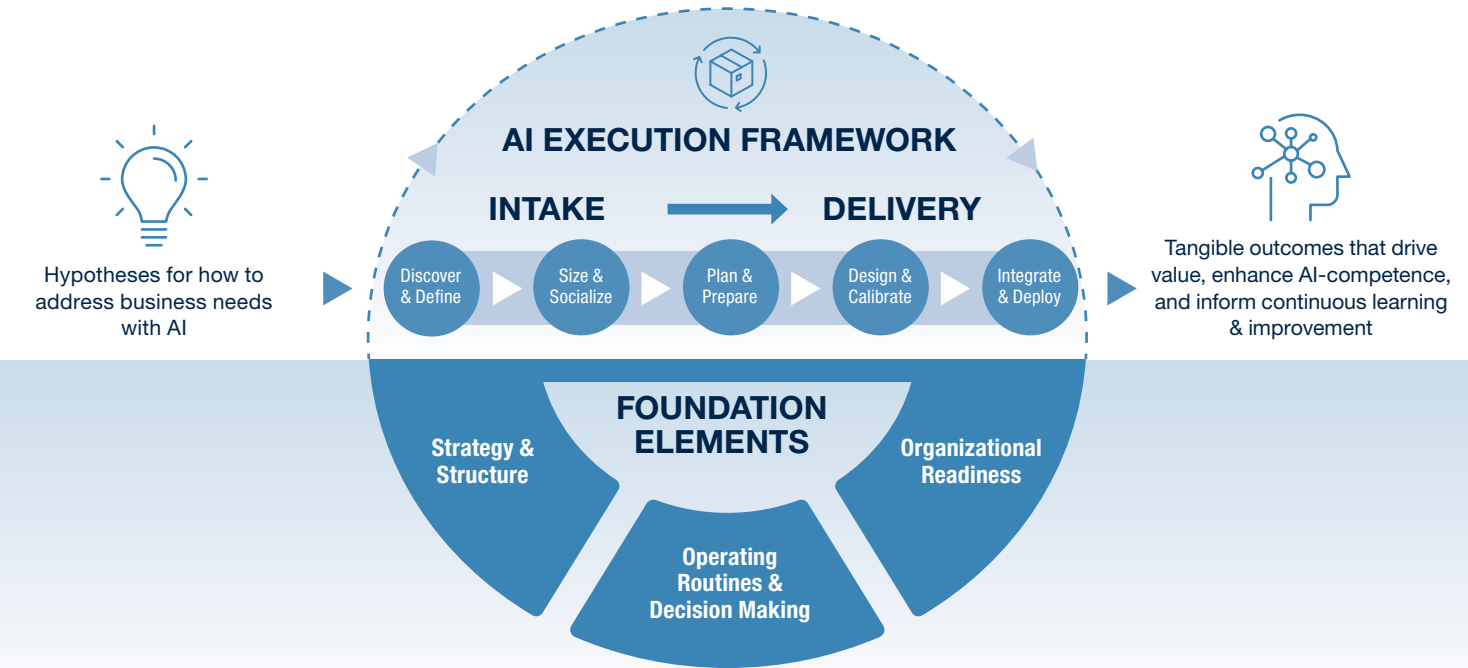
In our experience, the firms who have demonstrated the most progress to date are those who take a pragmatic approach by remaining open to change, thoughtfully consider what structure will need to sit around generative AI and manufacture momentum from continued exploration and learning. They engage with AI experts, data scientists and industry thought leaders to gain insights into the potential applications and limitations of generative AI in their industry. Collaborating with knowledgeable partners can help you make informed decisions and stay ahead of your competition.

Regardless of where you sit on the adoption curve, A&M is well equipped to support you on the journey. Our teams bring a powerful blend of expertise, infusing together generative AI technical depth, product and design thinking capabilities, strategic advisory and industry operator expertise. Our approach is pragmatic, providing the necessary structure to rapidly translate ambiguity into tangible outcomes.

If you're looking for an extra boost in the generative AI journey, we'd love the opportunity to discuss further.

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LEADERSHIP. ACTION. RESULTS.℠

Repeatable framework to translate ambiguity into outcomes, facilitating the practical experimentation, prototyping and integration of generative AI solutions

Approach to Generative AI Activation and Acceleration

Hypotheses for how to address business needs with AI

AI EXECUTION FRAMEWORK

INTAKE → **DELIVERY**

Discover & Define → Size & Socialize → Plan & Prepare → Design & Calibrate → Integrate & Deploy

FOUNDATION ELEMENTS

Strategy & Structure

Operating Routines & Decision Making

Organizational Readiness

Tangible outcomes that drive value, enhance AI-competence, and inform continuous learning & improvement

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