

Building Your AI-Powered Legal Function

A practical roadmap for legal leaders looking to scale impact, not headcount



Legal teams are being asked to do more than ever before

Legal departments sit at the center of nearly every critical business initiative. They support revenue generation, manage risk, oversee compliance, enable procurement, guide corporate strategy, and help organizations navigate an increasingly complex regulatory landscape.

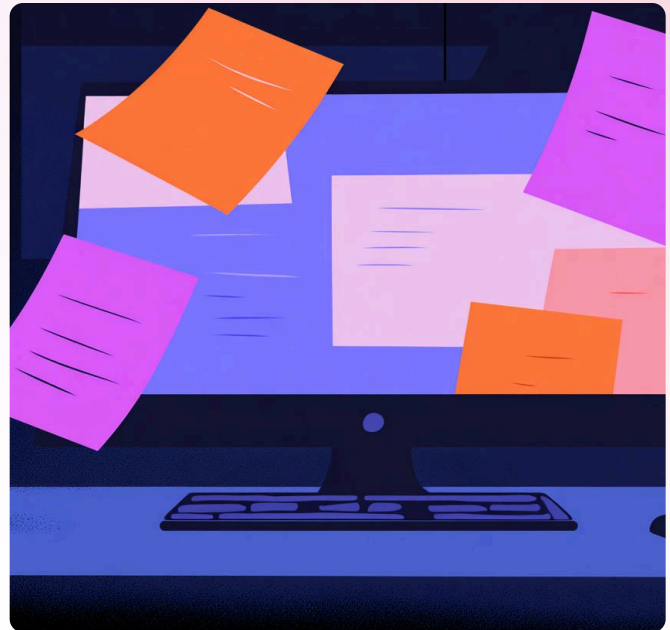
At the same time, expectations continue to rise.

Business stakeholders expect faster contract turnaround times. Executive teams want greater visibility into risk and obligations. Regulatory requirements continue to evolve. Yet many legal departments are being asked to meet these demands without corresponding increases in budget or headcount.

As a result, highly skilled legal professionals often find themselves spending valuable time on work that does not require legal expertise:

- Reviewing routine contract language
- Searching for agreements and key terms
- Tracking obligations and renewal dates

The challenge facing legal teams today is not simply managing more work. It is finding a way to scale their impact without scaling their workload at the same rate.



Artificial intelligence has emerged as one of the most significant opportunities to help legal teams meet this challenge. It's no longer about whether legal should adopt AI, but how legal teams can operationalize AI responsibly, effectively, and strategically to increase capacity and improve business outcomes, empowering legal professionals to focus on the work that matters most.

This guide explores how legal leaders can identify high-impact opportunities for AI, build a practical adoption roadmap, and position their teams for long-term success.

The Growing Legal Capacity Gap

Across industries, legal teams are experiencing the same challenge: demand is growing faster than resources.

Contracts move through organizations faster than ever before. Sales teams expect rapid responses. Procurement teams need efficient reviews. Finance teams require visibility into obligations and commitments. Executive leadership expects legal to provide strategic guidance while simultaneously reducing operational risk.

Legal teams are expected to do all of this while operating with lean teams and limited resources.

This creates what many organizations are beginning to recognize as a legal capacity gap: the growing distance between the amount of work legal is expected to support and the resources available to support it.

When this gap widens, several challenges emerge:

Routine contracting work consumes attorneys

For many legal departments, a significant portion of the day is spent managing the same types of agreements and negotiations repeatedly.

Reviewing similar language, redlining common provisions, and comparing contracts against internal standards and playbooks. While these activities are critical to protecting the business, they often require substantial time and effort, particularly when contract volumes increase.

The challenge is not that this work lacks importance. The challenge is that highly skilled legal professionals often spend hours performing repetitive reviews that follow established patterns and guidance.

As contract volumes grow, these activities can consume an increasing share of legal capacity, leaving less time for strategic negotiations, complex legal analysis, and business advisory work.

83%

of legal departments expect demand for legal services to grow.

Source: CLOC State of the Industry Report, 2025



Contract information becomes difficult to access

Critical business information is often buried within thousands of agreements. Answering seemingly simple questions may require hours of manual searching and review.

Questions such as:

- Which agreements contain automatic renewals?
- Which customers have non-standard liability language?
- What obligations are due next quarter?
- Which contracts require notice before termination?

These consume significant attorney and legal operations time, and the requests only continue to pile up.

63%

of in-house lawyers cite workflow and resource constraints as their biggest issue.

Source: CLOC State of the Industry Report, 2025



Administrative work consumes legal expertise

Many legal professionals spend substantial portions of their day performing tasks that, while important, do not require legal judgment.

Examples include:

- Updating contract records
- Extracting key terms
- Routing approvals
- Managing intake requests
- Tracking contract status

While necessary, these activities can limit a team's ability to focus on strategic legal work.

Legal becomes a bottleneck despite best intentions

When information, workflows, and processes rely heavily on manual effort, requests begin to accumulate. Business stakeholders wait longer for answers. Contract cycle times increase. Strategic initiatives compete with day-to-day operational demands.

The result is often frustration on both sides. Legal teams work harder while business teams perceive delays.

The issue is rarely a lack of effort. More often, it is a lack of scalable systems and processes.

Where AI Creates Leverage for Legal Teams

The most successful legal teams are not using AI simply to work faster. They are using AI to create leverage.

It enables attorneys and legal operations professionals to focus their time where expertise creates the greatest value.

Leverage allows legal teams to accomplish more without adding proportional effort.

Today, leading organizations are using AI in four primary areas:

01.

Operational Efficiency

AI can streamline intake processes, approval workflows, and contract routing to reduce administrative burden and improve consistency across teams.

This allows legal departments to support growing business demands without introducing additional operational complexity.

02.

Workflow Automation

AI can reduce time spent on repetitive tasks including contract drafting, redlining, data extraction, and contract review against established standards and playbooks.

The goal is not to replace legal judgment, but rather eliminate repetitive work while preserving control and oversight.

03.

Contract Intelligence

AI can transform contracts from static documents into accessible business intelligence.

Instead of manually reviewing agreements, legal teams can quickly identify obligations, risks, renewal opportunities, commercial commitments, and non-standard language across their entire contract portfolio.

04.

Self-Service Enablement

Modern legal organizations increasingly empower business stakeholders to access approved information, contract insights, and routine answers without requiring direct legal involvement. This reduces interruptions while improving responsiveness across the organization.

When implemented effectively, these capabilities allow legal teams to shift their focus away from process coordination and toward strategic business partnership.

Assessing Your Legal AI Readiness

AI adoption is not the goal. Creating a more scalable, efficient, and strategic legal function is. As you evaluate your current approach, consider the following questions:



Are you reducing repetitive legal work?

Review your current contracting processes and assess whether your team can confidently answer "yes" to the following:

- Contract language can be drafted or reviewed against approved standards and playbooks.
- Contract data can be extracted without manual review or data entry.
- Common legal positions are applied consistently across similar agreements.
- Attorneys spend more time exercising legal judgment than performing repetitive administrative work.



Are you turning contract information into business action?

Many organizations have access to contract data. Far fewer are able to operationalize it.

- Key obligations, risks, and business terms can be identified on demand.
- Upcoming renewals, notice periods, and deadlines are proactively surfaced.
- Contract intelligence can trigger workflows or business actions.
- Business stakeholders can access contract insights without requiring legal to manually search agreements.

→ *The goal is not simply storing contracts. It's making contract intelligence accessible and actionable across the business.*



Are your processes designed to scale?

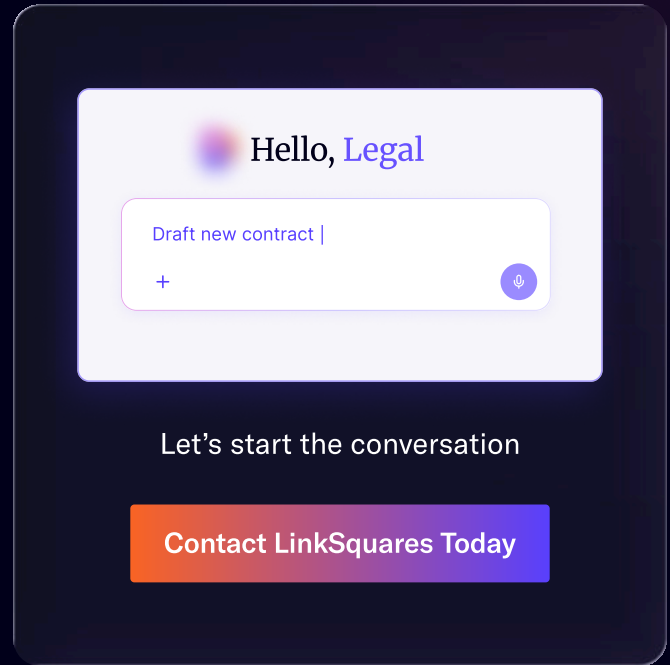
As demand increases, scalable processes become increasingly important.

- Contract requests follow a standardized intake process.
- Approval workflows are managed through defined processes rather than email threads.
- Stakeholders can self-serve routine contract information when appropriate.
- Legal is viewed primarily as a strategic advisor rather than a process coordinator.



Organizations that scale effectively remove friction from legal processes while maintaining appropriate oversight and control.

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Renewal Date

Territory

Industry

MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Master Services Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into as of June 1, 2024 (the "Effective Date"), by and between: Harrison Healthcare, Inc., a corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with a principal place of business at 275 Franklin Street, Suite 1800, Boston, MA 02110 ("Client"), and Arbor Ridge Solutions, LLC, a limited liability company organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with a principal place of business at 124 State Street, Fifth Floor, Boston, MA 02109 ("Provider").