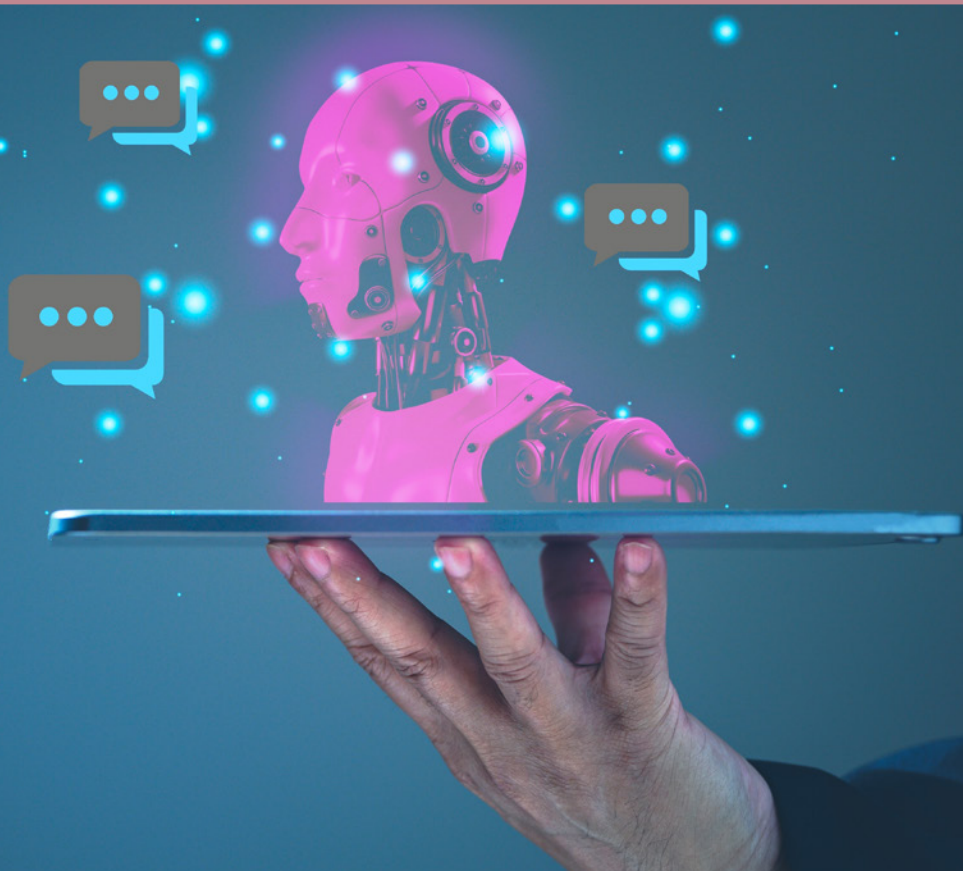




Tech Sector

2026



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INTRODUCTION

Driven by several factors – most notably the inexorable rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital regulation – the technology sector is undergoing a period of profound transformation.

The arrival and proliferation of AI technologies present equal measures of opportunity and challenge, particularly for traditional businesses and industries. This is equally true for those operating in the legal sector. Technology law is developing at considerable speed, reshaping expectations and professional responsibilities. Increasingly, lawyers must address a growing emphasis on operational resilience, data ethics and AI governance. As regulatory oversight and coordination continue to accelerate across jurisdictions, the legal profession must find new ways to respond to the additional complexity and opportunities that technology creates. Within an increasingly connected and coordinated global framework, advisers must provide practical, commercially aligned solutions to their clients' issues while anticipating future developments and mitigating emerging risks.

The pace of change demands adaptability, foresight and collaboration. Legal professionals who embrace innovation and understand the interplay between technology and regulation will be best positioned to guide organisations through uncertainty and unlock strategic advantage.

Against this backdrop, Financier Worldwide turns to some of the leading lights in their field, who share their stories...

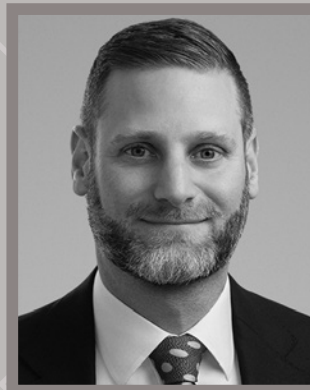




JAMES WALSH
Fieldfisher LLP



ASHLEY WILLIAMS
Mishcon De Reya



LEE RUBIN
Pillsbury



JOE STEPHENSON
Shoosmiths



ANNA BROWNE
Trowers & Hamlin LLP

Tech Sector
2026

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Fieldfisher LLP



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Trowers & Hamlin LLP



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Tech Sector



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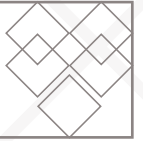
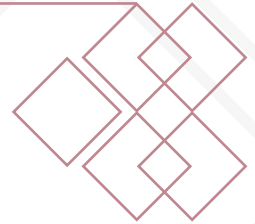
PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

James Walsh is an expert in technology, outsourcing and regulatory projects. He helps clients structure and negotiate complex commercial contracts and navigate digital regulation. The projects on which he advises can extend into the billions and he has a reputation for getting deals done. He is particularly well versed in digital infrastructure like data centre projects and subsea fibre optic cable deals, digital regulations across sectors and on complex new technologies. He prides himself on being able to handle deals and regulatory issues across the full IT stack.

fieldfisher

**JAMES WALSH**

Fieldfisher LLP

**Q&A WITH JAMES WALSH****What standout moments in your career have significantly shaped your professional journey?**

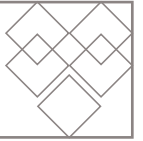
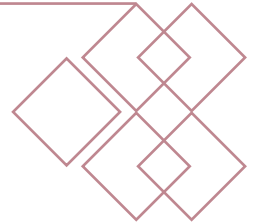
◆ Several pivotal moments have shaped my professional journey. One was early in my career as a junior lawyer, when a senior partner rigorously challenged a piece of complex competition law advice I had produced. That experience taught me the importance of thorough preparation and deep understanding. Another was as a senior associate, acting as the sole lawyer in a critical board meeting abroad. A strategic telecoms project was going awry, and I advised our client to make a multimillion-pound payment without security – relying solely on the enforceability of contractual terms. The project was delivered. Finally, at the start of the pandemic, with a bleak economic outlook, I was offered equity in the firm. Despite the significant capital contribution and risk involved, I chose to back the firm and accept the offer. That decision has proven to be one of the most defining of my career.

Could you describe your approach to tackling complex legal challenges? What principles or philosophies guide your work?

◆ I believe in reasoning from first principles: understanding what the client is trying to achieve, and identifying the legal, commercial and technological constraints. A strong grasp of the underlying detail allows me to quickly pinpoint key issues and risks. Equally important is how advice is communicated. I aim to deliver guidance in a clear, pragmatic way, ensuring it is both persuasive and actionable. Thinking creatively is also essential. When presented with a question, I often probe to understand its origin, as there may be a more fundamental issue to address. Context is critical and understanding it fully is key to delivering the right legal solution.

**JAMES WALSH**

Fieldfisher LLP

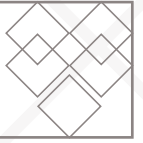
**What are your predictions for the future of your legal specialty? How do you see your vocation evolving over the next few years?**

◆ The legal profession is undergoing unprecedented change, driven by artificial intelligence (AI) and digital regulation. This shift presents both opportunities and challenges, particularly to traditional business lines. Lawyers are increasingly called upon to guide clients through the complexities of AI deployment and digital compliance. At Fieldfisher, we are expanding our work in AI and regulatory governance, combining legal and consultancy services to support compliance and advising on cutting-edge digital infrastructure and AI transactions. We are also embracing AI tools internally to enhance efficiency and develop cost-effective solutions for clients. This evolution will continue, reshaping how legal services are delivered and how lawyers add value. ■

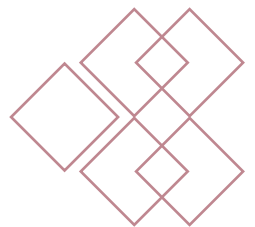
"THE LEGAL PROFESSION IS UNDERGOING UNPRECEDENTED CHANGE, DRIVEN BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL REGULATION. THIS SHIFT PRESENTS BOTH OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES, PARTICULARLY TO TRADITIONAL BUSINESS LINES."

**JAMES WALSH**

Fieldfisher LLP

**REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS**

- ◆ Advising a data centre operator on one of the UK's first 'hybrid' data centre projects with a hyper scale customer for a 24MW facility in London and an additional option for another 24MW facility.
- ◆ Advising on a joint build agreement for a significant European subsea fibre optic cable project opposite three of the world's largest technology companies.
- ◆ Advising a major international ICT provider on its proposed classification as a critical ICT third party service provider under the EU's Digital Operational Resilience Act and on a programme to ensure compliance.
- ◆ Advising various telecoms providers, managed service providers and cloud providers on the NIS2 Directive compliance programmes.
- ◆ Advising a new EV battery manufacturer on international supply and licensing arrangements and commercial joint ventures.
- ◆ Advising on a complex multimillion-dollar dispute concerning a cloud-based CRM system.
- ◆ Advising an ICT provider on a suite of template managed services contracts to modernise its legals for a better go-to-market.





Tech Sector



ASHLEY WILLIAMS

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PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Ashley Williams is a partner and the head of the technology group at Mishcon, specialising in cross-border technology transactions and data protection for multinational and high-growth tech companies. With significant international experience, he advises on large-scale artificial intelligence (AI) deployments, cloud transformations and global data governance. He leads multijurisdictional teams on complex deals, including international partnerships and product launches. As Mishcon's AI practice lead, he focuses on bringing new AI products to market. He regularly guides US, European and Asia-Pacific clients on UK and EU compliance, including GDPR and AI governance, making him a trusted adviser for global technology leaders.

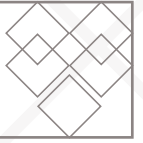
Mishcon de Reya

It's business. But it's personal.



ASHLEY WILLIAMS

Mishcon De Reya



Q&A WITH ASHLEY WILLIAMS

What qualities and values do you believe are essential for building strong, trusting relationships with clients?

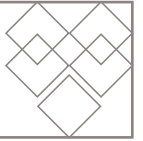
◆ Empathy goes a long way to building strong relationships with clients and understanding it is not a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Putting yourself in the client’s shoes helps to shape advice in a way that reflects what is important to them. I challenge my team every day to never sit on the fence and understand the client’s risk appetite so we can mirror this in the way we work with them and provide commercial and pragmatic advice. I have a very informal relationship with most of my clients, with an ‘ask me anything’ mentality. I want them to feel confident that it will be enjoyable and as pain-free as possible working with us. I know I have reached trusted adviser status when I get a phone call which starts with: “This is not a legal question at all, but I wanted to get your view on...”

How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about in your area of expertise?

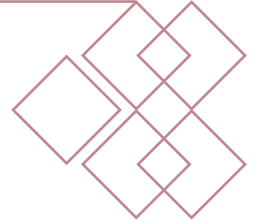
◆ I am surrounded by a strong team of technology lawyers and data scientists who love what they do, and their interest in the technology field goes way beyond the law. This passion and curiosity results in a great hive mind to draw from, coupled with a willingness to share knowledge. We adopt the same mentality when we engage with clients, intermediaries and the government to help create a helicopter view which we can share back. We are well-known for the work we do in the emerging tech space and have the fortunate role of often being involved in think tanks across the full innovation economy. This could not be truer when it comes to AI, where we support hundreds of AI companies reshaping how we do things. We are excited not only to be part of this movement, but to shape how we should regulate and adapt for this emerging tech.

**ASHLEY WILLIAMS**

Mishcon De Reya



Could you discuss a particularly rewarding project or case you have worked on? What made it stand out for you?

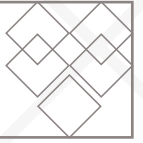


◆ As a junior lawyer working at an American law firm, I was fortunate enough to work with Wayfindr, a not-for-profit organisation using beacon technology to guide vision impaired people through urban environments, allowing them to travel with independence and spontaneity. I supported the organisation on the successful setup of the new venture and its live trial in London's Euston underground station. It was deals like this that resulted in me now spending the majority of my time supporting technology companies roll out new emerging technology solutions to help shape a better world. ■

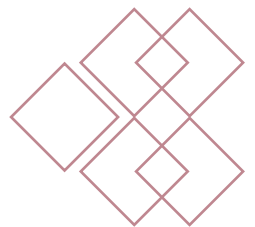
**"EMPATHY GOES A LONG WAY TO BUILDING STRONG
RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS AND UNDERSTANDING IT IS NOT A
'ONE SIZE FITS ALL' APPROACH."**

**ASHLEY WILLIAMS**

Mishcon De Reya

**REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS**

- ◆ Advising Wayve on its strategic partnership with Uber to accelerate the future of automated driving by deploying Wayve-powered self-driving vehicles on the Uber network.
- ◆ Advising a non-profit engineering organisation on the launch of an AI member's programme to develop foundational IP to supercharge the UK and European AI market.
- ◆ Advising a high-growth tech company on the launch of spec-driven code development to reimagine how software code is developed through natural language.
- ◆ Advising Perceptual Robotics on the roll out of drone solutions for intelligent inspection of wind turbine assets.
- ◆ Advising Seabird Technologies in respect of its design and manufacturing arrangements for the world's first high performance all-electric foil racing boat as the exclusive manufacturer to E1.
- ◆ Advising an AI robotics company in respect of live trial use cases for robots and drone deliveries.
- ◆ Advising an AI solutions provider on the launch and roll out of its carbon intelligence platform across three key jurisdictions.





Tech Sector



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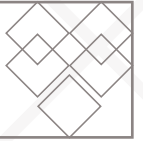
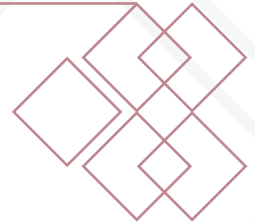
PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Lee Rubin has over 15 years of experience advising leading financial services institutions and technology-driven businesses on navigating complex technology contracting. With his deep experience structuring and negotiating outsourcing, cloud, software licensing, data and systems integration deals, he focuses on enabling clients to manage risk, optimise technology investments and accelerate digital transformation. His experience covers all aspects of commercial and technology transactions, focusing on industries undergoing rapid change through technology. Whether supporting major outsourcing initiatives, negotiating cutting-edge cloud arrangements or advising on emerging technologies, he brings pragmatic, business-aligned legal solutions that balance compliance with innovation.

pillsbury

**LEE RUBIN**

Pillsbury

**Q&A WITH LEE RUBIN****Could you describe your approach to tackling complex legal challenges?
What principles or philosophies guide your work?**

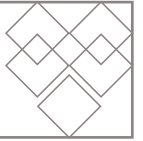
◆ I approach complex legal challenges by balancing pragmatism with precision. My starting point is to clearly define the commercial objectives, then map the regulatory and contractual risks against those goals. I aim to deliver solutions that are not only legally sound but also enable clients to remain agile in highly regulated environments. I prioritise clarity, collaboration and foresight – anticipating how today’s decisions will play out over the longer term. I view my role as helping clients make strategic choices that protect value, foster innovation and create a resilient foundation for growth. My work is about helping clients, often in highly regulated industries, embrace innovation without losing sight of compliance. When tackling complex legal challenges, I focus on breaking issues down to their commercial drivers – whether that is speed to market, cost efficiency or managing regulatory risk – and then building practical, legally sound solutions around them.

How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about in your area of expertise?

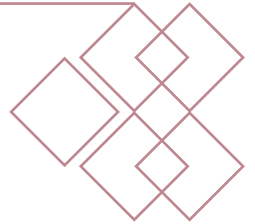
◆ Staying ahead in the technology and financial services (FS) space requires a dual focus: continuous legal education and immersion in the industries my clients operate in. I track developments in artificial intelligence (AI), cloud, data governance and digital assets, as these are transforming how companies procure and deploy technology. I am particularly excited about the convergence of AI with financial services, which is driving both opportunity and regulatory scrutiny. By combining technical understanding with legal analysis, I help clients adopt new

**LEE RUBIN**

Pillsbury



technologies responsibly while positioning themselves competitively. Ultimately, staying ahead is about understanding not just the letter of the law, but the direction of travel. I stay ahead by immersing myself in the sectors my clients operate in. Working with financial institutions and tech providers means I see trends first-hand – particularly how AI, cloud services and data-driven tools are reshaping business models.



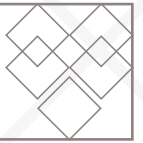
What are your predictions for the future of your legal specialty? How do you see your vocation evolving over the next few years?

◆ Technology law, particularly at the intersection with FS, is evolving rapidly. I see my specialty moving further toward integrated advisory – lawyers acting not just as risk managers but as strategic partners in digital transformation. The growing focus on operational resilience, data ethics and AI governance will demand nuanced, multidisciplinary advice. Over the next few years, I expect heightened regulatory coordination across jurisdictions, creating both complexity and opportunity. Lawyers who can navigate global frameworks while offering practical, commercially aligned solutions will be best placed to add value. My practice will increasingly involve guiding clients through these interconnected legal, technological and regulatory landscapes. ■

**“LAWYERS WHO CAN NAVIGATE GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS WHILE
OFFERING PRACTICAL, COMMERCIALY ALIGNED SOLUTIONS
WILL BE BEST PLACED TO ADD VALUE.”**

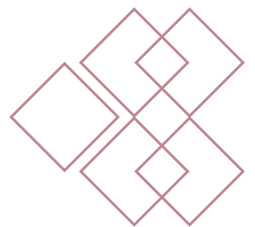
**LEE RUBIN**

Pillsbury



REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- ◆ Advised a systemically important financial institution on the outsourcing of its mainframe operations.
- ◆ Advised one of the world's largest asset managers on a series of cutting-edge transactions to adopt blockchain and digital currency solution offerings.
- ◆ Advised a global leader in AI-driven video analytics, IoT and cyber security on the strategy and execution of a smart security convergence solution for the government of Egypt.
- ◆ Advised a leading provider of trade workflow and real-time data replication technology on the sale of its post-trade processing business and related intellectual property to the London Stock Exchange Group.
- ◆ Advised one of the world's leading logistics companies on the strategy and execution of a multi-year ERP transformation project, enabling digital transformation at scale.
- ◆ Advised a major US custodian bank with significant European operations on the restructuring of its European joint venture arrangements for the delivery of technology-enabled transfer agency services.





Tech Sector



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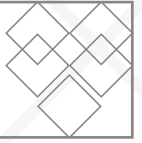
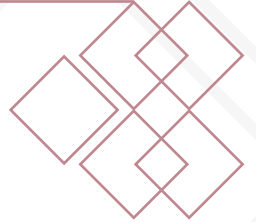
PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Joe Stephenson is a partner and head of Shoosmiths' IT & technology team and technology sector group. He has led the team to national recognition, winning 'TMT Team of the Year' at the 2023 Legal Business Awards and achieving Band 1 rankings in Legal 500 and Chambers UK. He is consistently ranked as a leading individual, praised for his legal expertise and negotiation skills. He advises on complex IT and tech transactions, with deep experience in large-scale outsourcings across automotive, retail and financial services. He is also a leading adviser on AI, Web3 and metaverse projects.

SHOOSMITHS

**JOE STEPHENSON**

Shoosmiths

**Q&A WITH JOE STEPHENSON****How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about in your area of expertise?**

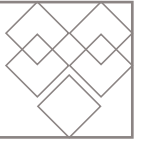
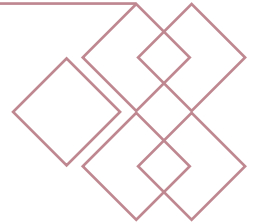
◆ Technology regulation is evolving rapidly, especially in areas like artificial intelligence (AI). Staying ahead means combining curiosity with strategic foresight. I try to stay immersed in the latest developments by engaging with thought leadership and sharing weekly insights through my ‘Friday AI Takeaway’ series on LinkedIn. What excites me about AI is its potential to reshape industries, unlock new capabilities and challenge conventional legal thinking. It is not just a technological frontier; it is a legal frontier too. These changes are redefining how lawyers advise clients, shape policy and interpret regulation. Through our work at Shoosmiths, we are helping build the legal frameworks that empower clients to harness AI’s full potential confidently and responsibly.

Looking ahead, what are your predictions for this area of the market? What key developments are on the horizon?

◆ AI is reshaping the tech landscape at pace, presenting legal professionals with both a challenge and a calling. The tension between innovation and regulation is real, but not insurmountable. For instance, the UK’s principles-based, pro-innovation stance offers a compelling blueprint: one that fosters responsible AI while preserving agility. Legal advisers are uniquely positioned to turn regulation into a strategic asset, building trust, enabling clarity and guiding ethical deployment. As AI becomes foundational across sectors, the opportunity lies not just in compliance, but in leadership. By helping clients navigate emerging frameworks and manage risk, we can shape a future where innovation and integrity go hand-in-hand.

**JOE STEPHENSON**

Shoosmiths

**What qualities and values do you believe are essential for building strong, trusting relationships with clients?**

◆ Building strong, trusting relationships with clients starts with being genuinely people focused. I believe in listening carefully, being present and caring, not just about the work, but the people and organisation behind it. I also place a lot of emphasis on service standards, not just in my own work, but across the organisation. I try to lead by example, encouraging a culture where responsiveness, attention to detail and pragmatism are a natural part of how we operate day to day. It is not about grand gestures; it is about doing the basics consistently well and treating every client interaction as an opportunity to impress and demonstrate our quality. I am proud of the standards we set, but I am always looking for ways we can improve and serve better. ■

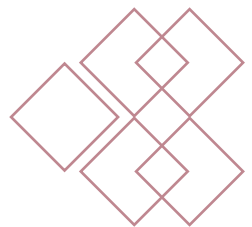
**“AI IS RESHAPING THE TECH LANDSCAPE AT PACE, PRESENTING
LEGAL PROFESSIONALS WITH BOTH A CHALLENGE AND
A CALLING. THE TENSION BETWEEN INNOVATION AND
REGULATION IS REAL, BUT NOT INSURMOUNTABLE.”**

**JOE STEPHENSON**

Shoosmiths

**REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS**

- ◆ Advising one of the world's largest tech companies on its successful bid for UK government tech contracts worth \$1bn.
- ◆ Advising a global automotive manufacture on its \$1bn global digital transformation project.
- ◆ Leading the launch of various Web3 and metaverse projects for multiple global consumer brands.
- ◆ Advising a major telecoms provider on its £200m-plus procurement of a greenfield IT system.
- ◆ Advising a global automotive manufacturer on its £50m-plus next-generation IT services contract and AI-enabled customer contact centre transformation.
- ◆ Advising one of the world's largest banks on IT infrastructure procurement for its new motor lending business.
- ◆ Advising a FTSE 100 company on a multimillion-pound global customer relationship management rollout involving tier one suppliers.





Tech Sector



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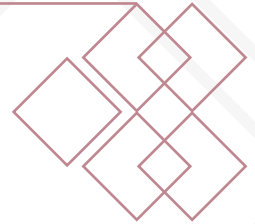
PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Anna Browne is head of innovation and legal technology at Trowers & Hamlins LLP, where she is responsible for the firm's strategy for innovative service delivery, including legal technology and generative AI and AI adoption. She has led the firm's innovation practice since its inception in 2020 and her team work closely with lawyers and technology providers to design and implement practical solutions informed by client feedback that enhance efficiency, improve client experience and support new ways of working. Ms Browne is a qualified lawyer with a background in real estate finance.



**ANNA BROWNE**

Trowers & Hamlin LLP

**Q&A WITH ANNA BROWNE****What standout moments in your career have significantly shaped your professional journey?**

◆ I began my career as a real estate finance lawyer working with clients on secured lending transactions. Over time, I saw inefficiencies in due diligence that frustrated colleagues and clients and limited the volume of work we could complete. Curiosity pushed me beyond traditional practice into legal technology artificial intelligence (AI), design thinking and process improvement. I learned to translate legal expertise into scalable solutions and new ways of delivering legal services. I was given the opportunity to participate in an internal project looking at AI for my department and was subsequently asked to head up the Innovation directorate. This was a turning point for me. A departure from traditional practice and the shift required courage, continuous learning, and redefining success, but it allowed me to shape the future of law rather than simply practice it. As a legal innovator, I now bridge law, technology and strategy, focusing on efficiency, user experience and value.

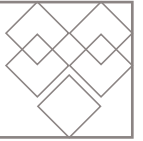
How do you stay ahead in your field? Are there any emerging trends or innovations you are particularly excited about?

◆ There is a real buzz about generative AI (genAI) in the sector. We, like many of the top firms, have implemented this in practice over the last year and are now in the thick of reviewing return on investment (ROI), impact and value for clients. I am personally excited about agentic AI and how that could work in legal teams of the future with knowledge management. Keeping up to date with legal innovation requires some curiosity and debate. I subscribe to newsletters, blogs and podcasts focused on legal tech and innovation and engage in thought leadership with my peers in the

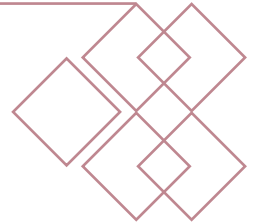


ANNA BROWNE

Trowers & Hamblins LLP



sector at the key Legal Innovation conferences and on LinkedIn. Emerging trends can be based largely on people's perspectives, shaped by their own experiences of legal practice. Our team also has great relationships with technology vendors who we meet with regularly to see new products and features.



What are your predictions for the future of your legal speciality? How do you see your vocation evolving over the next few years?

◆ There is enthusiasm for genAI and the results are promising, but its ROI and how that translates to financial metrics is still being assessed by law firms. In law, the true value lies in expertise, so technology should augment processes rather than replace them, keeping humans in the loop and lawyers at the centre of services. Our goal is to enhance both client experience and the way lawyers deliver work. The future of legal innovation will be shaped by technology, client expectations and regulation. AI will streamline tasks like research and contract review, enabling lawyers to concentrate more on judgment and strategy. Automation and data-driven insights will improve efficiency and access to justice, while ethical governance and transparency remain essential. Lawyers will become much more reliant on technology to deliver services efficiently and law firms will need to prioritise significant investment to keep pace with competitors. ■

"IN LAW, THE TRUE VALUE LIES IN EXPERTISE, SO TECHNOLOGY SHOULD AUGMENT PROCESSES RATHER THAN REPLACE THEM, KEEPING HUMANS IN THE LOOP AND LAWYERS AT THE CENTRE OF SERVICES."

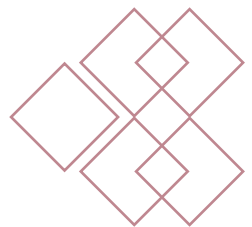
**ANNA BROWNE**

Trowers & Hamlins LLP



REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

- ◆ Leading technology-enabled transaction support and due diligence, leveraging AI-assisted review tools, data analytics and process automation to enhance speed, accuracy and insight across complex matters.
- ◆ Designing and delivering legal innovation and process-optimisation initiatives, combining legal expertise, data and technology to transform service delivery and improve operational efficiency.
- ◆ Advising on the commercial and risk considerations of adopting legal technology, including technology procurement, vendor contracting, data governance and change management.
- ◆ Former associate in real estate finance, acting for clients in relation to the property security aspects of charging properties under facilities ranging from £1m to £450m and in securing own-name bond issues and private placements. Acted for funders and issuers/borrowers in advising on charging large property portfolios in transactions ranging from bonds, loan facility agreements, security trusts, bilateral and syndicated facilities, and restructuring and refinancing existing loan facility arrangements.



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