

**Briefing**  
SMARTER LEGAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

# FRONTIERS 2023

Aderant

 **CATALYST**<sup>BI</sup>  
BRINGING PEOPLE AND DATA TOGETHER

intapp

**nd**  
netdocuments

 LexisNexis

 OneStream

**Peppermint**  
TECHNOLOGY

 THOMSON REUTERS



# Prepare your firm for growth in the Intapp Industry Cloud

- Connect your people
- Standardize your processes
- Unify your data

Learn more at [intapp.com/platform](https://intapp.com/platform)



Who we are...



Richard Brent is director of content. He wrote this report, and regularly analyses the legal market. Contact: richardb@briefing.co.uk



Sarah Newton leads the data unit, and worked on slicing and dicing Briefing Frontiers data. Contact: sarahn@briefing.co.uk



Emily Nash is director of client services, ensuring great value for all our partners. Contact her at: emilyn@briefing.co.uk



Rupert Collins-White is co-CEO of Burlington Media Group. Contact him at: rupertw@briefing.co.uk



Sarah Cox is co-CEO of Burlington Media Group. Contact her at: sarahc@briefing.co.uk

Talk to us

Briefing is where legal business leaders come for content and connections that help deliver better outcomes for their teams and firms.

Find Briefing on Twitter: @Briefinglegal

Email our content team: editorial@briefing.co.uk

Find all our recent reports online: www.briefing.co.uk/our-reports

All monthly issues of Briefing, as well as special reports like this, are now available through an app on iOS or Android devices. Visit: briefing.co.uk/briefing-magazine-app

Briefing is published by Burlington Media Group – the only media and events business focused on legal business services

ISSN 2398-9769

# The transformation of 23: tools up to the job?

Yes, it's finally here folks – the Briefing Frontiers research into law firm strategic direction and intention for another year. Much like the way we all manage work I'm sure, these pages are rather different to how they appeared only a few years ago. We've invested in making the big findings and main messages emerging from our flagship polling cleaner and clearer, and called on an even wider range of leadership roles for their perspectives. Briefing has long banged the drum for pulling business functions away from operating as silos, and bringing areas together is very much a theme in this year's narrative.

Let's start with some good news. The vast majority of the 72 senior strategic leaders (C-suite/director level) who ticked our boxes this year don't see less investment in transformation, innovation – call it what you will, but often enabled by new or evolving tech – in the coming year. Indeed, I'm told by more than one that this would be little short of madness in the context of the competition and client pressure your firms face right now – they simply have to keep up and keep exploring the alternatives to traditional delivery. If anything, the prospect of downturn is a reason to double down on that work of investigating what else is out there and how to apply it.

That said, change also costs time and effort – and people have had a lot of it. There may be work on in terms of reviewing priorities – do we want efficiencies right now or a future-proofed firm faster, for example? It's striking that almost half of respondents don't think they'll have all major systems in the cloud for at least another five years, and a quarter don't yet have a business-wide data strategy they could direct me at. These are big projects – but can they afford to be in the 'too big' pile? With a first for Briefing – establishing 'satisfaction' rankings for different sets of systems – I hope you enjoy this year's read. As always, I'm very open to all thoughts and feedback. ▶

RICHARD BRENT, HEAD OF CONTENT, BRIEFING

## What's inside

08 The certainty of change

Will law firms continue investing in new ideas in the current climate?

22 All systems going?

What's the latest picture of cloud adoption/intention and hybrid working?

30 The strategic data dilemma

Are leaders confident of a truly business-wide data strategy?



Our Frontiers 2023 research is powered by:



# Frontiers futures in brief

## SATISFACTION ... FAR FROM GUARANTEED

Areas of tech where leaders are most likely to say systems need replacing rather than improvement (p38):



12%  
Finance systems

16%  
Pricing tools

28%  
Marketing/BD systems

## HEADS UP OR DOWN?

50%

Of leaders think the UK's economic outlook may lead to a hiring strategy that impacts operations/business services teams (p15). But...

86%

Expect total firm headcount to grow over five years



## EVERY SECOND COUNTS?

1/4

Of firm leaders say it takes over 6 minutes for a fee earner to find the matter information they need to work (p33)

41%

*Of strategic law firm leaders can't say their firm has a business-wide data strategy – but 79% know they'll need one within three years*

## FEELING FRIDAY ...

3%

Of strategic leaders believe that in 2024 most people will spend five working days a week in an office the firm pays for (p26)

## FULL SYSTEM FAILURE

Law firm leaders believe IT functionality is still not being used to its full potential. Here are the three highest-scoring opportunities (p36):

1  
75%  
Client relationship management

2  
57%  
Microsoft Teams

3  
52%  
Practice management system



**Briefing Frontiers 2023** is a survey of **72 senior (eg C-suite) strategic and operational business leaders** at UK law firms with headcounts of 250+. The survey and supporting interviews were carried out between November 2022 and January 2023.

# Love the way you work

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT,  
CASE MANAGEMENT, AND MATTER  
MANAGEMENT SEAMLESSLY  
INTEGRATED WITH THE MICROSOFT  
TOOLS YOU KNOW AND LOVE.

**BORN IN LEGAL  
BUILT ON MICROSOFT CLOUD**

Microsoft  
Partner

Gold Cloud Platform  
Gold Application Development  
Silver Cloud Productivity  
Silver Data Analytics  
Silver Cloud Business Applications



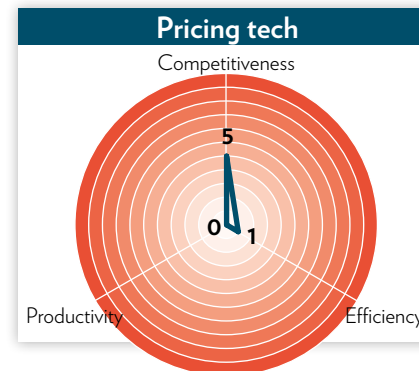
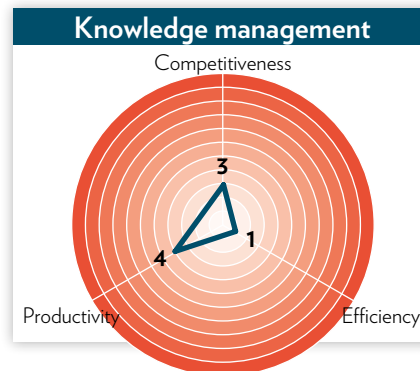
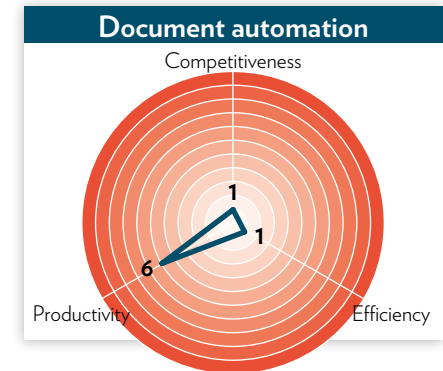
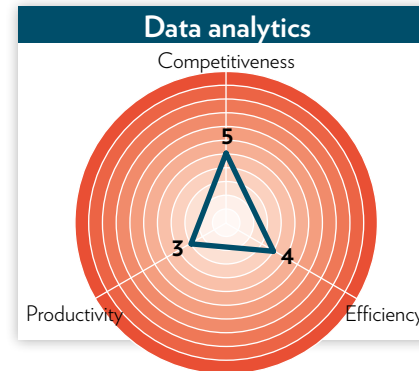
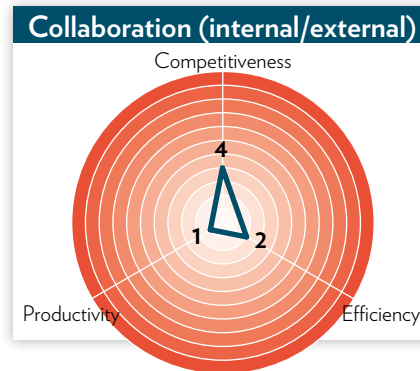
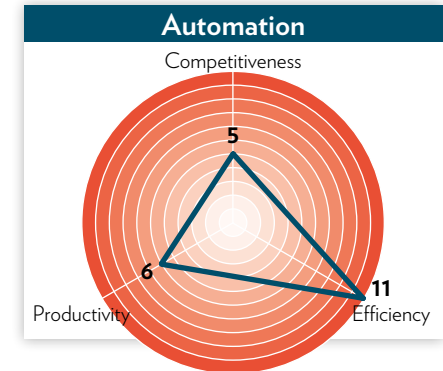
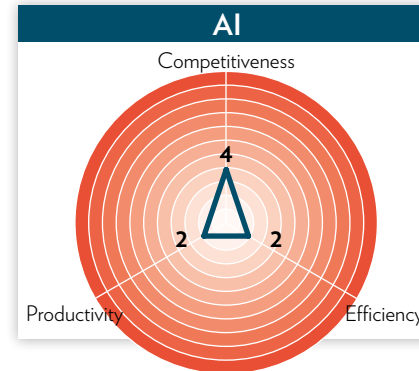
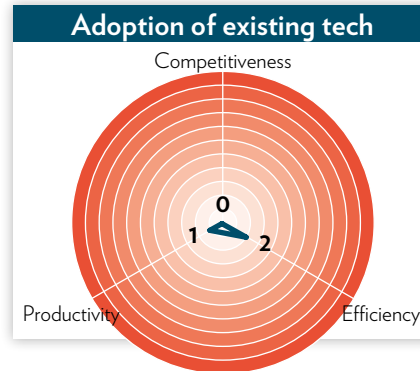
# How far can tools today **move the dial?**

**F**or many years, **Briefing** Frontiers (and Legal IT landscapes before it, RIP) was proud of its **axis of competitiveness and efficiency**. This was where we asked leaders to name the ‘top three’ tech types that came to mind for giving the best business boost to law firm efficiency and competitiveness (so six things in all), then bucketed them together to capture alternative terms for the same essential capability, and showed the results as a scatter graph. As such, this wasn’t designed to be an indicator of what firms were investing in, so much as what they *should* be investing in (if that is, they’re correct about the impacts).


It wasn’t unusual to find catch-all artificial intelligence (AI) right up there on both fronts for many years – perhaps helping the hype that has caused many complaints – and in 2022, document automation and data analytics (including business intelligence) put in strong performances for the efficiency and competitiveness awards respectively.

**In 2023 it’s time for something not completely different** – namely, what if we threw ‘productivity’ into the mix as well? The reason – last year this was the leading factor, we heard, to get senior leadership/partnership backing for a new investment in transformation (p20). Clearly, this requires a little variation on the visualisation.

So here’s what we have – simply, a set of our leadership sample’s top-of-mind techs, with the number of mentions notched up against these three variables for powering up overall firm performance. We can see that **automation** clearly comes out as ‘best buy’ for 2023 – ahead of AI on all three aspects and enhancing efficiency like nobody’s business. **Data analytics** is also a solid performer against all three of the drivers – **but** only if lawyers, managers or clients have faith in what it’s showing them (p30). ▴







Sometimes you need a better way to work.

More and more firms are switching to NetDocuments to experience better end-to-end solutions for document and email organization and management, including:

- Award-winning security and research capabilities
- Robust search, collaboration and automation technologies
- Seamless integrations with other tools you use daily



Discover how NetDocuments can help your teams do their best work.

+44 20 3129 9324 | [www.netdocuments.com](http://www.netdocuments.com)

**netdocuments**<sup>®</sup>

# The certainty of change

In spite of challenges to progress on several fronts, only one in 10 law firm leaders suggest their firms are unlikely to be leaning into 2023 with as much enthusiasm for funding innovation – but business cases may be under more intense scrutiny to ensure they see a return

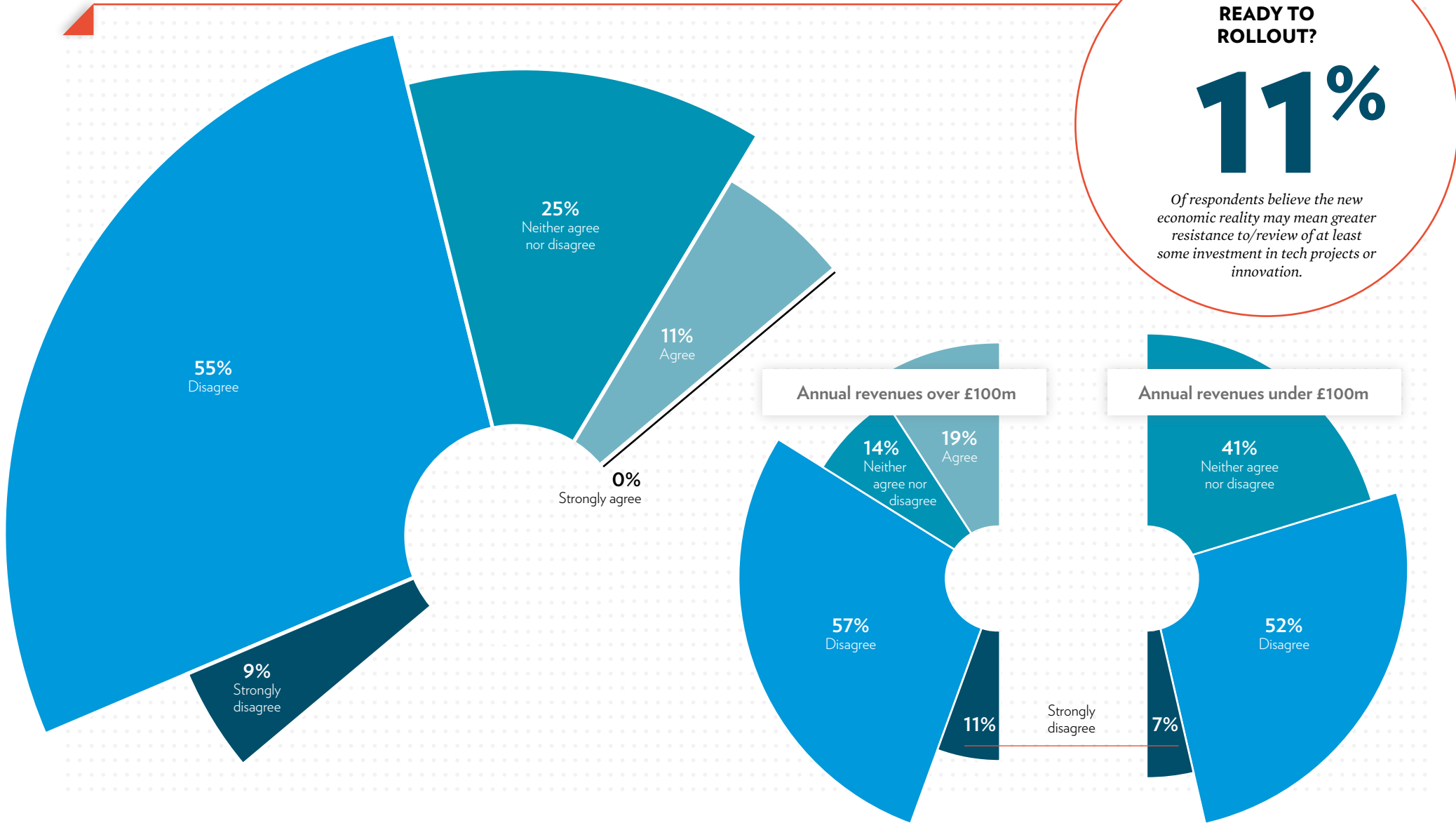
**S**ome questions in our **Briefing** Frontiers research look to track where and how leaders of key legal business areas at UK firms say they are planning to invest or change the business from year to year. Others are new, based on circumstances at the time – the pandemic, of course, thrusting certain questions around office space, work patterns and related IT provision firmly into the spotlight. Our first for 2023 is one such new arrival. Has the latest trajectory of the UK economy since the political events of 2022 had an impact on how strategic leaders feel about investment in new solutions (to old or new challenges)? Will the likely end of an era of ‘cheap money’ – higher interest rates – affect firm appetite for innovation in either business process or

service delivery?

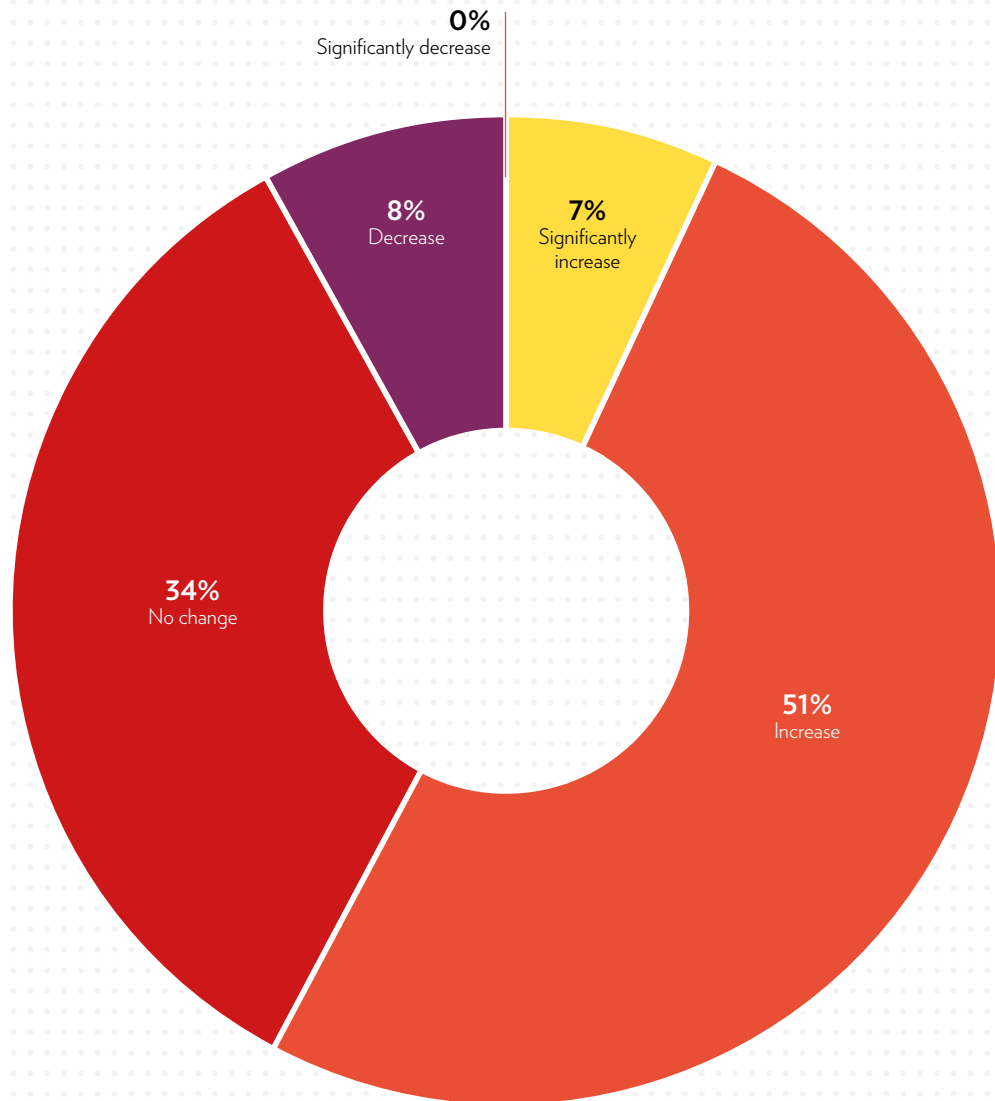
This polling took place before the Bank of England issued its latest economic update in January 2023 – forecasting a shorter and shallower recession than expected. Even without that modification however, legal business leaders have indicated continued confidence to come out of the pandemic period building or buying. Only 11% agree that the economic picture has changed their firms’ outlooks on this score – rising to almost one fifth among the larger firms that responded (p9). Leaders at UK-based firms with annual revenues of less than £100m are less likely to come down hard on one side or the other, but otherwise there’s a clear view that innovation-focused investment should continue. At the same time, 58% believe the percentage of



The death of the era of 'cheap money' will decrease appetite for investment in technology and innovation in law firms – do you agree?



How do you think the percentage of your firm’s revenue spent on all IT (including legal tech, all IT employees and third-party support) will change in 2023-2024?



**!**

**BUDGET BEHAVIOUR**

*Followers of Briefing Frontiers over the years will know the amount spent on law firm IT relative to revenue has stayed stubbornly static. But 58% expect an increase in this financial year.*

revenue that their firm spends on IT across all services and channels will increase in 2023, and only 8% expect a decrease in that budget (p10).

Jeff Wright, director of change and innovation at Foot Anstey, says he isn’t surprised by the indication that firms like his won’t be easing off on the innovation – although he’d wondered if that sentiment would prove quite as widespread as we’ve seen. “Pressure on price and margins means law firms simply have to keep innovating – certainly, our own ambition is on the up if anything. That doesn’t mean they’re all necessarily awash with cash, and leadership may also be a little more cautious with partner distributions, borrowing, or in terms of where they’re focusing for maximum competitive advantage.”



# [BRINGING PEOPLE AND DATA TOGETHER]

Together with our technology partners, data strategy consulting framework and your teams support, onboarding and enablement, you'll receive unparalleled capabilities and expertise to drive your data strategy to the next level.



DATA MANAGEMENT



DATA SCIENCE



DATA ANALYTICS





## PARTNER COMMENT

## The opportunity in a difficult economy

**Adam Auty**  
Head of public sector and mid market  
Catalyst BI



**A**s we appear to be entering a recession, which may last for 2023 or even into early next year, budgets will be more widely scrutinised, many reduced, and resources tightened. Investment in technology and data will continue to provide some of any business's most significant ROI.

If this was ever in doubt, the way companies responded to the pandemic – with large-scale digital and data-led initiatives and improvements, such as remote working, digitising processes, and upgrading digital systems and infrastructure – proved the point. This ROI is why IT and data budgets should be safeguarded, even possibly increased, if businesses want to continue to modernise and improve returns on their capital or operational expenditure.

Many may seek to reduce IT and data investments and postpone projects. However, the opposite should be considered, as the benefits, such as replacing and modernising legacy on-prem systems and infrastructure with cloud-based equivalents, outweigh the drawbacks.

Having a robust and validated data strategy is key to a successful cloud migration. Organisations may also need to refresh data strategy regularly to keep up with rapid changes in technology.

Meanwhile, headcount at many firms over the next 12-18 months may remain the same, or even decrease, as they look to reduce costs. If future redundancies are among business services or operational staff, it's even more important to have strong digital infrastructures and processes in place. This will help firms to remain effective and efficient, getting more from their day-to-day operations with a reduced workforce.

But the need for legal advice and services is unlikely to diminish any time soon. Well-managed firms that can protect their revenue and margins during this downturn will be back to hiring and increasing headcount before you know it.

Attraction and retention of future stars, especially among younger generations, can be supported by the quality of your IT systems and the flexibility they provide. Will

a flexible and mixed approach to working from home, or access to user-friendly cloud systems with an optimal experience, allow you to hire better than your competitors, with less need to pay sky-high salaries?

Finally, recessions often generate new opportunities. People need to look at things differently and consider new business models or operations, using high-quality data and analytics to help identify these new opportunities. For example, analysis of use patterns of office space, which could then be sub-let, could help to maximise income as costs rise elsewhere.

The year 2023-2024 could be problematic for many, with reduced company earnings, increased redundancies and insolvencies on the horizon. But businesses that make it through this recession will generally be leaner, stronger and better for it. ▴

For more information, visit:  
[catalyst-bi.co.uk](https://catalyst-bi.co.uk)

Mark West, director of knowledge management at TLT, also points to the driver of keeping pace with client need. “Firm investment in innovation delivers efficiency in the shorter term, but also an operating model for clients’ longer-term effectiveness,” he says. “Technology is what enables an organisation, perhaps faced with more uncertainty, to ramp up and down or change lead times effectively.”

The latest **Briefing**/HSBC Strategy and investment research, published in October 2022, also contained signals of leadership confidence – this time in terms of growth. Only 11% of leaders at international firms expected some form of ‘freeze’ on expansion, while 58% anticipated continued international growth (p13). Admittedly, 97% of those yet to open outside the UK intended to stay focused on growth at home alone, but none reported a planned pause. At the same time, 70% anticipated more consolidation across the legal

“I’ve noted some more flexibility in conversations with tech suppliers around the length of time we can lock into a contract for a product. Firms could be thinking about the cost-effectiveness of their different options.”

MATTHEW HAYNES  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, KENNEDYS

**IN BRIEF**

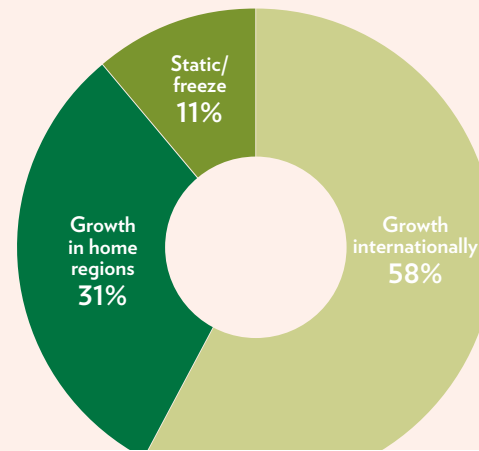
The Briefing/HSBC Law firm strategy and investment research 2022/2023 found the number of leaders reporting that their firms were focused on continued growth consistent with the previous year. And 70% expected more M&A to materialise as some individuals reviewed their options and competitors capitalised; whether on the challenges facing others or through process improvement.

sector in 2023 “as a result of disruption and decisions made during the pandemic period”.

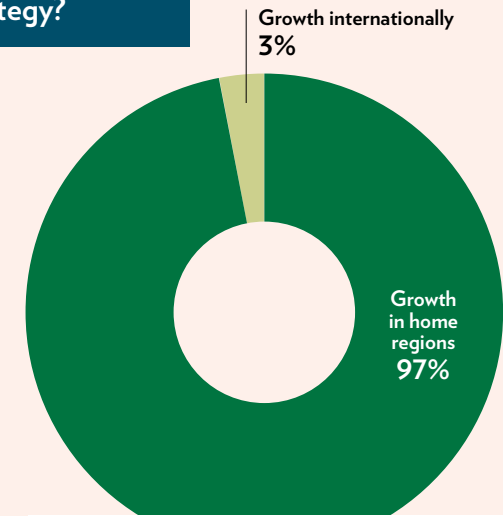
Ben Sears, head of strategy and technology at law firm Naphthens, agrees with Wright. “The legal market has shown itself incredibly resilient, but continuing to invest wisely is really the only way for firms to stay competitive when it’s clearly also consolidating. Partners will of course all have eyes on the economy, and firm business structure may make some difference to how specific arguments are made,” he says.

Matthew Haynes, chief information officer at Kennedys, adds: “A project that delivers long-term value has some natural hedge against inflation. However, I’ve noted some more flexibility in conversations with tech suppliers around the length of time we can lock into a contract for a product. Firms could be thinking about the cost-effectiveness of their different options.”

**What is your current geographic growth strategy?**

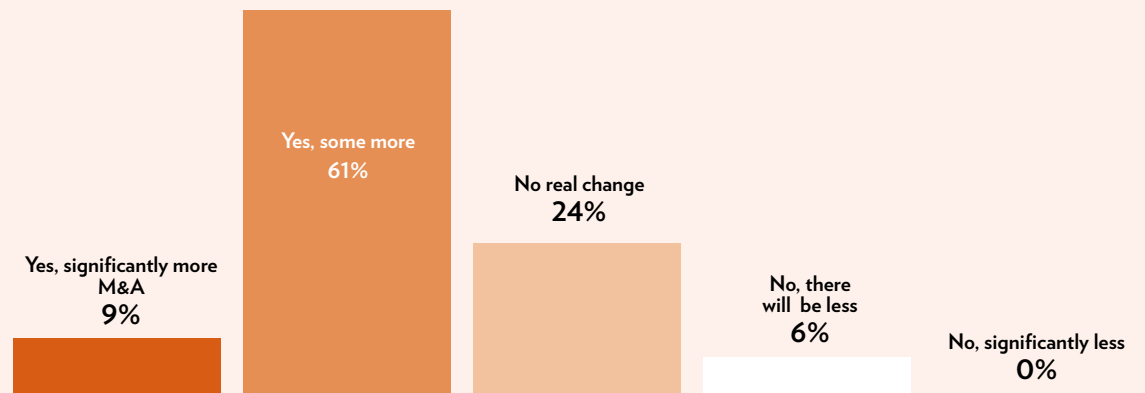


Firms with an international presence



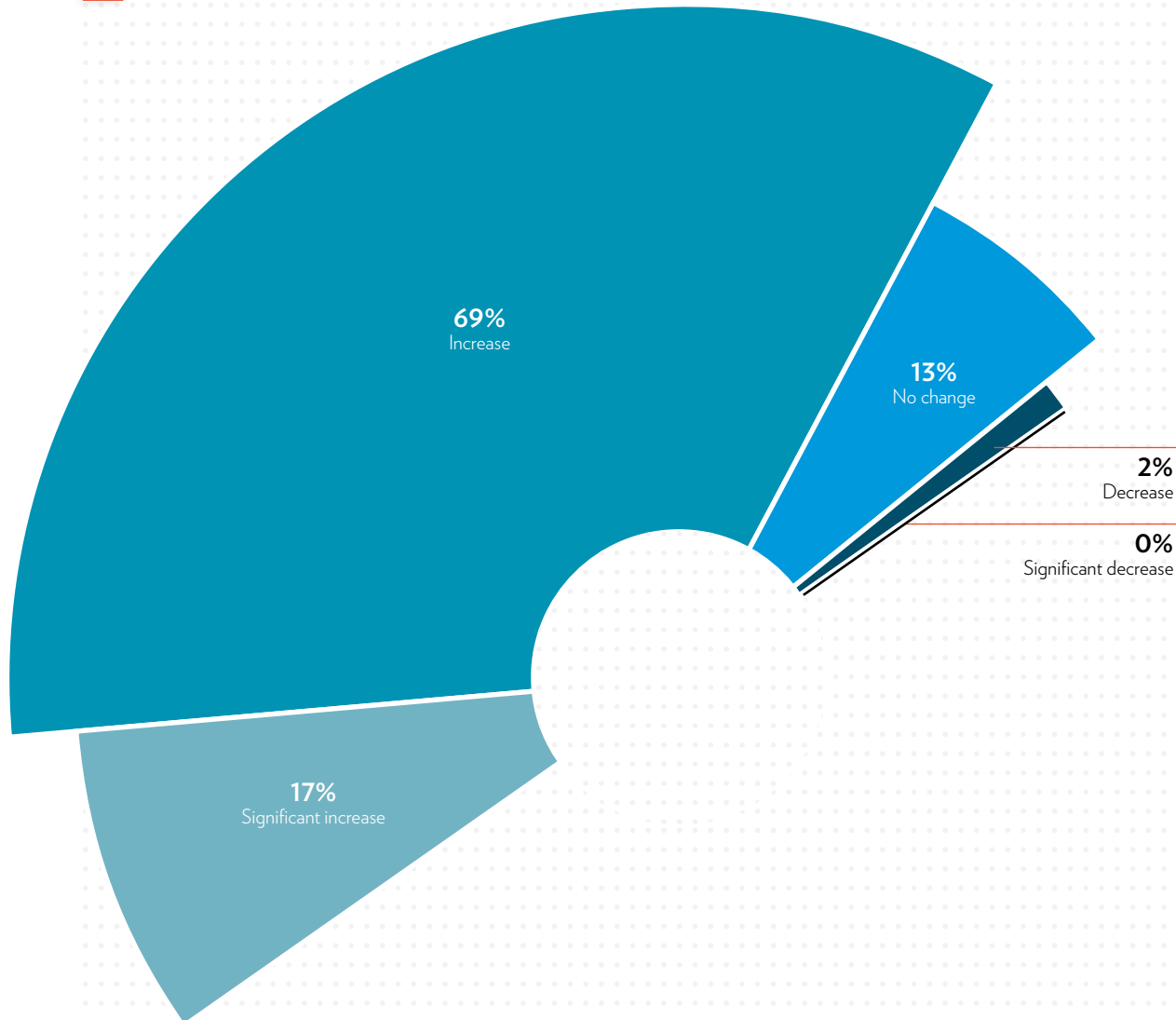
Firms without an international presence

**Do you believe there will be increased M&A in the legal sector over the next 12 months as a result of disruption and decisions made during the pandemic period?**



Briefing/HSBC Law firm strategy and investment survey, 2022/2023

How will the overall headcount of your firm change in the next five years (by the end of 2027)?




**GROWTH RIGHT AHEAD**

*While the economic shocks of 2022 might impact hiring decisions in the near term, leaders don't believe their firms will employ any fewer people in five years' time – not even in favour of more transformative tech!*

CASES FOR CHANGE

Next, how do respondents see the prospect of future growth in their firms' overall headcounts, both at a challenging time and over a five-year strategic window? Similar to the view in February 2022, almost one fifth (17%) foresee a 'significant increase' in the ranks by 2027 (p14). However, the number expecting any growth at all has increased from 66% to 86%, with only 2% envisaging a smaller firm. And this of course considers any other movement in the shorter term – for example, the half of strategic leaders that admit the economic outlook for 2023 could lead to some decrease in their firms' hiring into business services/operations functions (p15). That's twice the number expecting lawyer recruitment to be adversely affected, where 51% believe there'll be 'no change' to speak of. And it



all takes place against the backdrop of the market’s well-covered salary rises, where over half (52%) say they’re paying 10-20% more for new business services/operations roles hires than they were in December 2021 (p18).

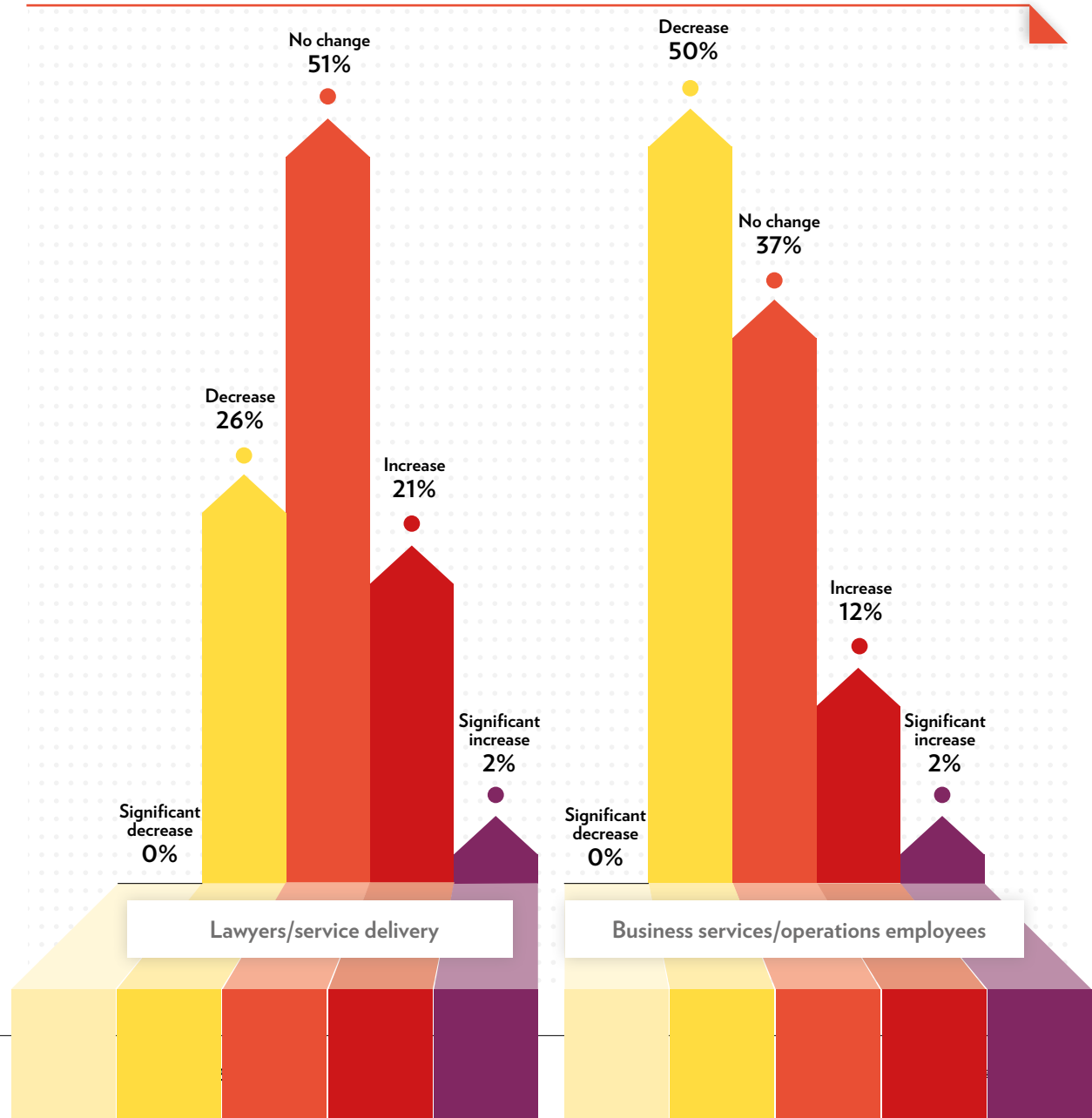
Claire Stripp, head of talent and knowledge at Browne Jacobson, says she expects not just this steady growth in firm headcount, but increasingly also a “different” growth to the paths and priorities of a traditional firm before the pandemic: “We’ll see a greater embedding of legal engineering and project management discipline and skills – and I would hope that, rather than retrofit work today to the pre-pandemic period, there are opportunities to reflect on and embrace change. The impact of even more generations arriving in the workplace should also help the profession to respond positively.”

Wright continues: “As well as those

“I would hope that, rather than retrofit work today to the pre-pandemic period, there are opportunities to reflect on and embrace change.”

CLAIRE STRIPP  
HEAD OF TALENT AND KNOWLEDGE, BROWNE JACOBSON

To what extent might the economic outlook for 2023-2024 influence your firm’s hiring strategy for both lawyers and all business services employees?





PARTNER COMMENT

## Clarity of thought around tech investment

Simon White  
Head of sales  
LexisNexis



The 2023 **Briefing** Frontiers report confirms the legal sector's increasing appetite for tech. The research shows that the legal sector broadly advocates serious tech investment, despite economic challenges such as high interest rates. That shows how far attitudes have shifted in recent years. And it's a welcome shift. Legal leaders are increasingly viewing tech as a solution rather than a problem, a need rather than a desire, a necessity rather than a luxury.

Tech investment has a knock-on effect on other areas of operations. It provides general improvements across departments and law firms. Few firms can automate working practices such as document creation or project

management without investing in tech. Few firms can increase overall employee efficiency, streamline processes, or reduce long-term operational costs without investing in tech.

In short, firms that neglect tech investment will struggle to compete. And that simple fact explains why so many legal leaders expect tech investment to increase in the next financial year.

The research cites maximising productivity as a core driver for tech investment. That comes as no surprise. Tech provides plenty of routes to increased productivity. Consider, for example, the increase in meaningful client-facing work secured by automating admin tasks, the improved client services

gained by artificial intelligence, or faster client solutions achieved by access to tech-driven insights.

Effective tech investment relies not only on the choice of tech, but also the ways that organisations use that tech. Innovation helps firms to make the most of tech by providing permission for lawyers to reimagine processes, experiment with the aim of improvement, harness individual creativity to find new solutions, and much more.

In summary, the 2023 **Briefing** Frontiers research shows a legal sector that wants to invest in tech – a move that will play a huge role in the future of the profession. More than ever, legal leaders are noticing that the failure to invest in tech may well result in a broad failure to compete. Simply put, law firms can't afford not to invest at this crucial time. ▶

Legal leaders are increasingly viewing tech as a solution rather than a problem, a need rather than a desire, a necessity rather than a luxury

For more information, visit:  
[www.lexisnexis.co.uk](http://www.lexisnexis.co.uk)

instrumental in introducing change, law firms will need a growing pool of experts such as no code/low code developers, who can combine their skills with legal knowledge to help design and deliver different services. Many of these roles are sector-agnostic of course, which only adds to the recruitment challenges – more intense depending on your location and spread.” The competition to find this sort of expertise can even come from some firms’ clients, he says.

But does any of this change how law firms should make or weigh up new business cases for their investment (p20)? In **Briefing** Frontiers 2022, two-thirds of strategic leaders told us that ‘maximising productivity’ was the factor most likely to grab the attention of the rest of a firm’s most senior stakeholders in relation to securing funds for further innovation/change – a lot more than cited ‘reducing risk’ (36%) or cost (34%), for example. And while they may have considered it covered elsewhere, only 11% put

“Law firms will need a growing pool of experts such as no code/low code developers, who can combine their skills with legal knowledge to help design and deliver different services. Many of these roles are sector-agnostic.”

JEFF WRIGHT  
DIRECTOR OF CHANGE AND INNOVATION, FOOT ANSTEY

# Innovation explored.

## 3E

Designed for today's challenges and tomorrow's growth.

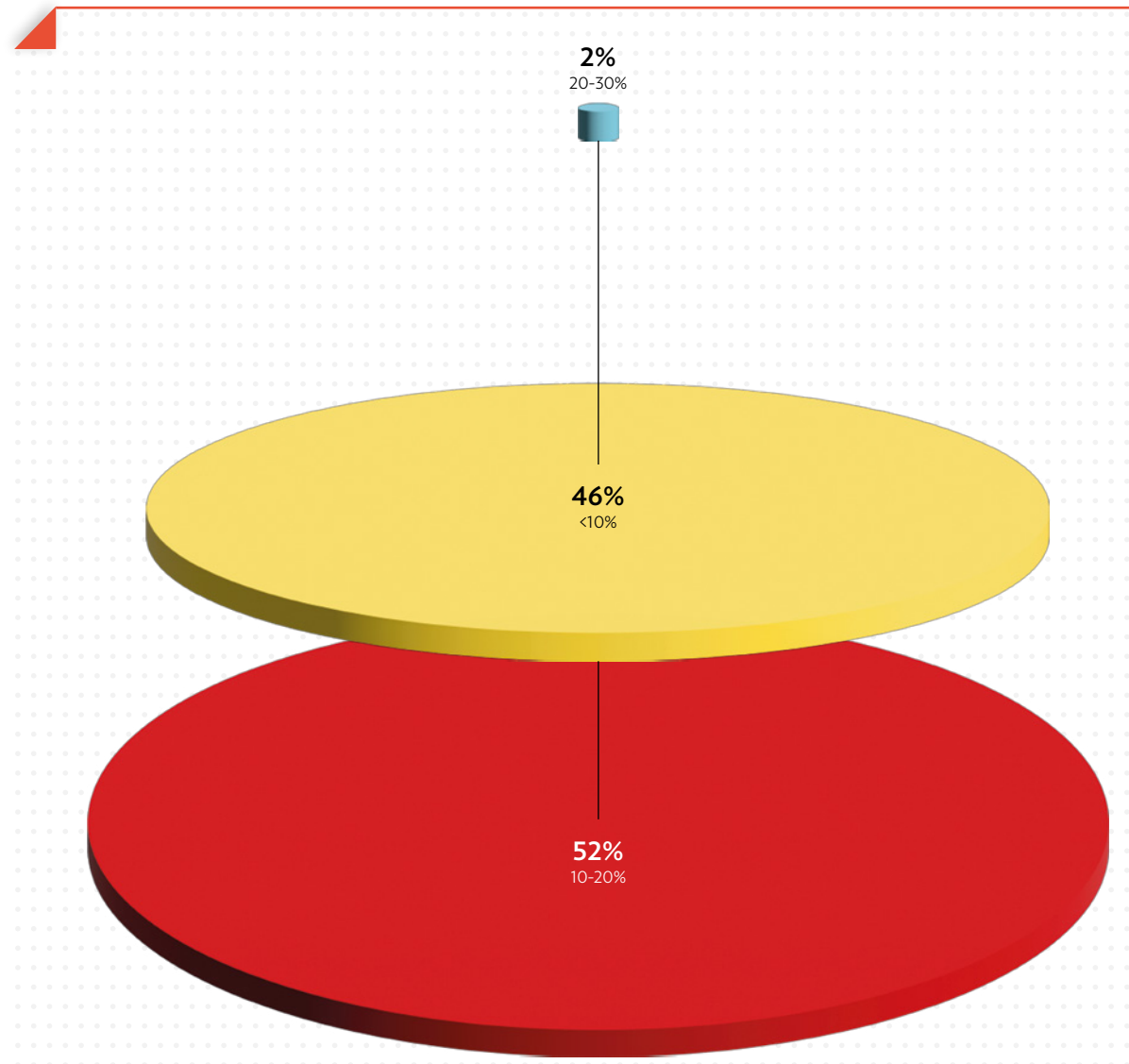
- Open and modern platform
- Enhanced law firm operations
- Ensured success and continued support

**Discover the expansive and flexible Thomson Reuters® 3E law firm management software.**

[legal.thomsonreuters.com](https://legal.thomsonreuters.com)



What is the average percentage wage increase for your new business services/ operations hires now (December 2020), compared to December 2021?



retention/wellbeing of their talent at the top. One year on, 2023 finds productivity continues to be a very compelling driver (for 51%) – alongside very clear demonstration of client value (53%) – but with risk management rising as a consideration (47%). Moreover, leaders who report that their firms are more about ‘selling lawyers’ to clients than ‘selling outcomes’ are more likely to view that productivity gain as a business benefit to stress when pitching another round of change (pp20-21). But both ‘lawyer’ and ‘outcome’ groups naturally say they must still focus on client value. Notably, other talent considerations are in last place regardless.

Wright continues: “There’s still quite a lot that most firms could push through on productivity with continuous improvement, so that driver really should remain. More broadly, the macroeconomic picture doesn’t change the

“In addition to upfront cost there’s the time and effort cost of change, and later optimisation. Firms need to be finetuning the engine, and external environment does increase the pressure to be measuring and optimising legal tech.”

MARK WEST  
DIRECTOR OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, TLT

fundamentals of how we build a business case for change, but it may require some harder metrics around the benefits and more frequent evaluation of ability to deliver those benefits to give surety to the business. At the same time, the pandemic saw firms working out how to deliver a lot of transformation very quickly – but you do need to keep taking the temperature of an organisation to ensure people aren't burnt out by change."

West agrees. "In addition to upfront cost there's the time and effort cost of change, and later optimisation," he says. "Firms need to be finetuning the engine, and external environment does increase the pressure to be measuring and optimising legal tech for desired effects."

Haynes says that security continues to present a significant risk for large law, like many businesses. "However, at a real transition point for moving from traditional paper-based work to many new tools, we also need to focus a lot of attention on user experience – including that one role or individual's typical way of working can impact another's experience."

The streamlining of this can also influence the experience of a client, he adds. Kennedys has recently signed off on a significant investment in a relatively new area – one-to-one coaching on optimum digital working approaches across its network. "Time in a previous role outside the sector taught me that



▲ PARTNER COMMENT

## Squeeze maximum value out of your IT investments

**Duncan Hannigan**  
Sales director, software solutions Europe  
Thomson Reuters



**A**fter a period of muted spending on technology, many law firms are recognising that they now need to increase their expenditure to keep pace with rivals. Essential though that may be, it's vital that those investments are maximised once in place.

One striking takeaway from this data is just how many firms are failing to leverage the tools they are already deploying to their full potential. If demonstrating client value is the key driver behind IT investment decisions, the finding that most firms are not capitalising fully on their CRM systems – as just one example – should serve as a wakeup call.

Similarly, law firm leaders are seeking a productivity boost from their IT investments. Therefore, that so many firms are under-utilising their practice, document, or case management systems – or not squeezing maximum value out of document automation/assembly solutions – gives pause for thought.

For me, the key to improving this situation is not only to evaluate the tech stack, but arguably more important, to look at the customer success programmes legal tech vendors offer to underpin their solutions. It's also vital that firms drive internal engagement by educating people on how innovative tech tools can make their jobs easier and enhance client relationships. After all, the value of technology and its ROI is nothing without usability and adoption. This is not a new problem, however: it is as old as time.

Cloud migration is well underway, and there is only one direction of travel. Lower costs, resilience, agility and security all rightly feature highly in decision-makers' thinking. As more firms make the move, lingering concerns around issues like lack of control or integration are being overcome. The question is no longer 'should we move into the cloud?' The decision is when to move. For many the answer is sooner rather than later, especially as they have

the option to transition with their incumbent supplier, with little impact on end users.

A similar sense of priority is emerging around having a business-wide data strategy. Most respondents whose firms don't have such a strategy admit they need one. As the power of data to inform and transform law firm management becomes ever more apparent, being left behind is not an option. But how can this be made easier for firms without 'data science' resources or budgets? If data is the new oil, most firms won't want to be taking on the challenge of owning and running an oil rig – they'll simply want to be able to visit the petrol pump and carry on the business of law. ▲

For more information, visit:  
[legalsolutions.thomsonreuters.co.uk](https://legalsolutions.thomsonreuters.co.uk)

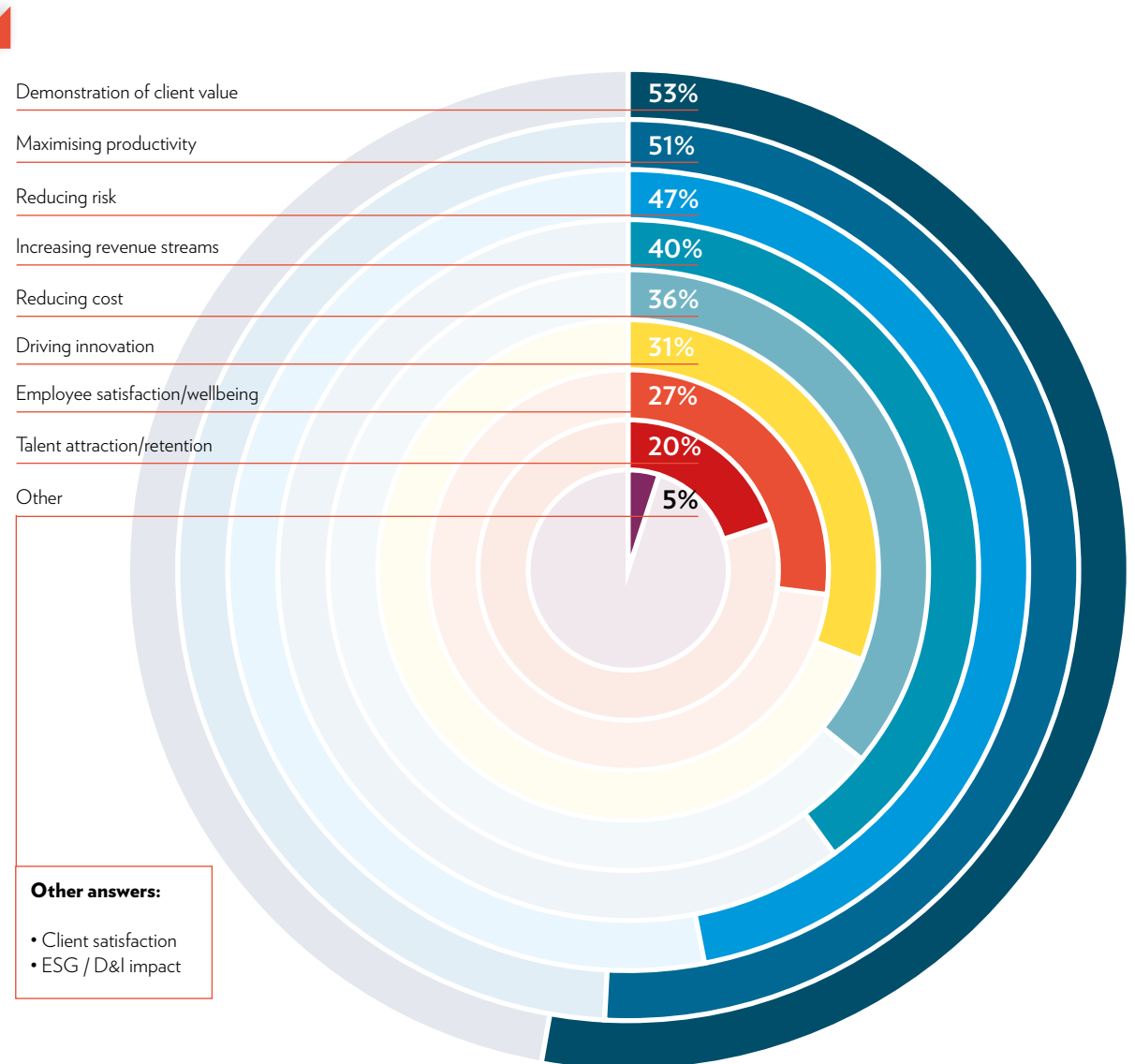
**Beyond pure profitability, which business drivers carry most weight with your firm’s most senior stakeholders when building a business case for systems/IT investment? (Choose up to three)**

people will do what you make easier for them; and our board was more than happy to back this investment given the magnitude of the change it should bring,” says Haynes.

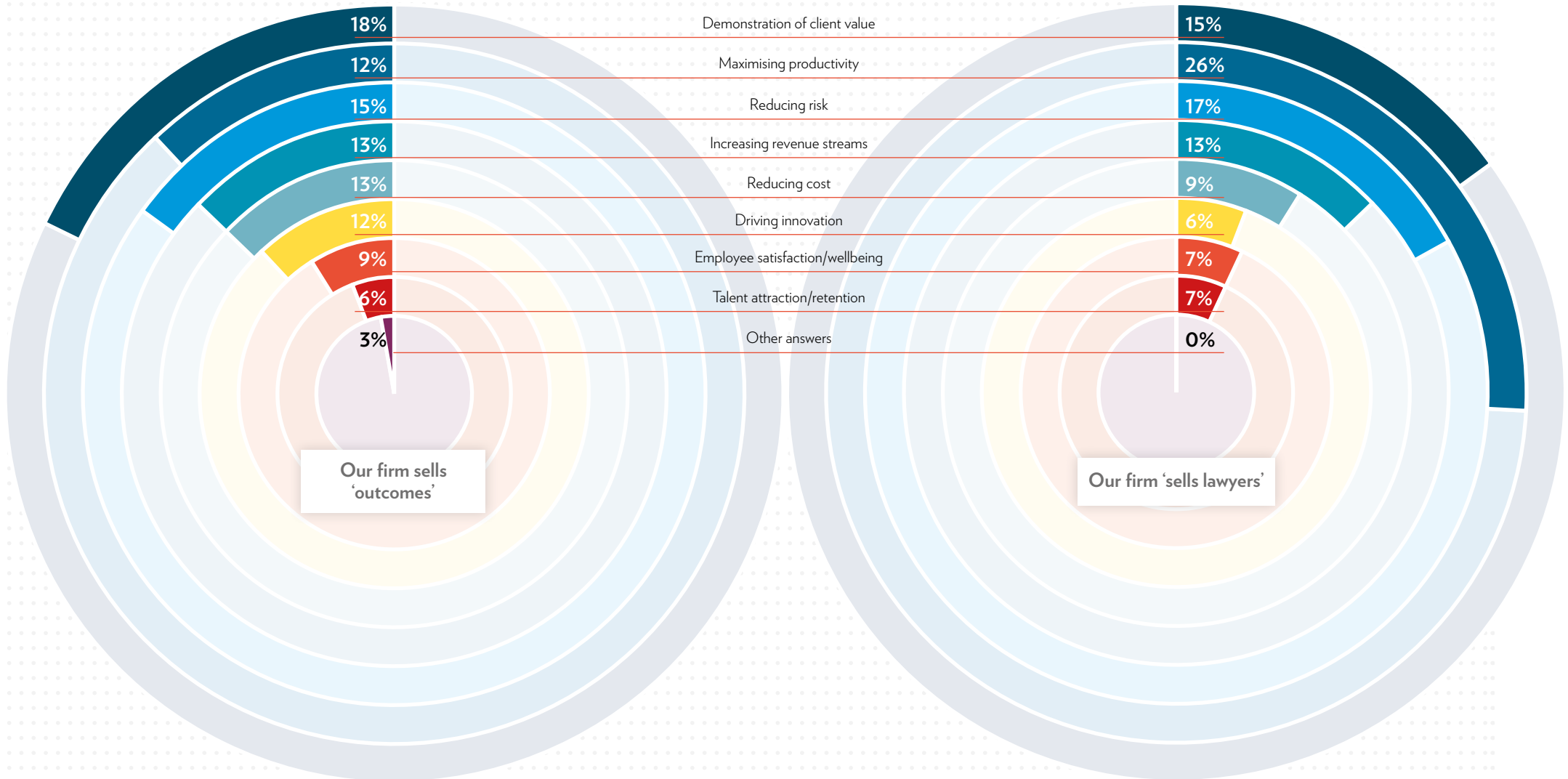
Sears at Naphthens says his firm has an “overarching strategy with a number of different pillars, from profitability to client engagement and futureproofing”. Individual projects may be stronger in one aspect than another. “But they’re all important and we need to invest across them rather than put it all in one pot.” He has just completed a period of investing in what might be called ‘productivity foundations’, he explains – “the ability for lawyers to do their jobs more effectively”. This then paves the way for being more aspirational with change, “moving on from the more traditional elements of delivery and preparing the firm for the future”. ▲

“At a real transition point for moving from traditional paper-based work to many new tools, we also need to focus a lot of attention on user experience – including that one role or individual’s typical way of working can impact another’s experience.”

MATTHEW HAYNES  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, KENNEDYS







# All systems going?

One fifth of law firm leaders report the firm has already moved all major systems to the cloud – yes, even practice management – and the hybrid-working week looks set to stay the sector norm until at least 2024

**M**id-pandemic, in February 2021, **Briefing** Frontiers found legal business leaders far more likely than they'd ever been to say that certain core systems would soon be 'fully or mainly' available 'in the cloud'. That was by 2024 in fact. Over four-fifths (83%) indicated this was likely for both client relationship management (CRM) and document management (in both cases 11% going for 50/50, and only 6% saying these systems would stay fully or mainly on-premises). It was a similar story for case and matter management, and almost three-quarters (72%) even believed their practice management system (PMS) could make the journey in time.

Now that 2024 is just around the corner, **Briefing** has instead asked when/whether you believe all the firm's core systems will be in

place in either private or public cloud (p23). One fifth of leaders say they've already reached this milestone – they are the 'cloud-first'. However, one third believe it will be another two years for all areas to make the move and 30% give themselves a strategic five-year stretch – a not insignificant 11% either think it will take longer than a decade or perhaps just don't know.

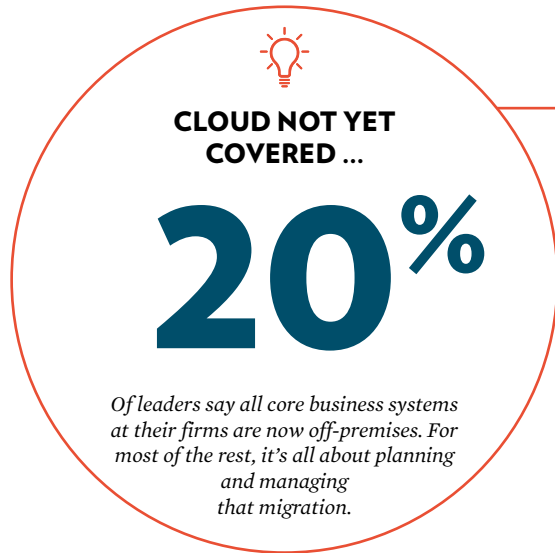
Jeff Wright at Foot Anstey says: "There was quite a long period of explaining and selling the benefits of cloud, but most now appreciate the scalability, agility, and even cybersecurity strength they'd struggle to replicate internally.

"The challenge now is managing the practicalities of migration. It's a necessary journey, but firms need to recognise and reconcile the impact of pushing a major system into the cloud on the pace of other change they

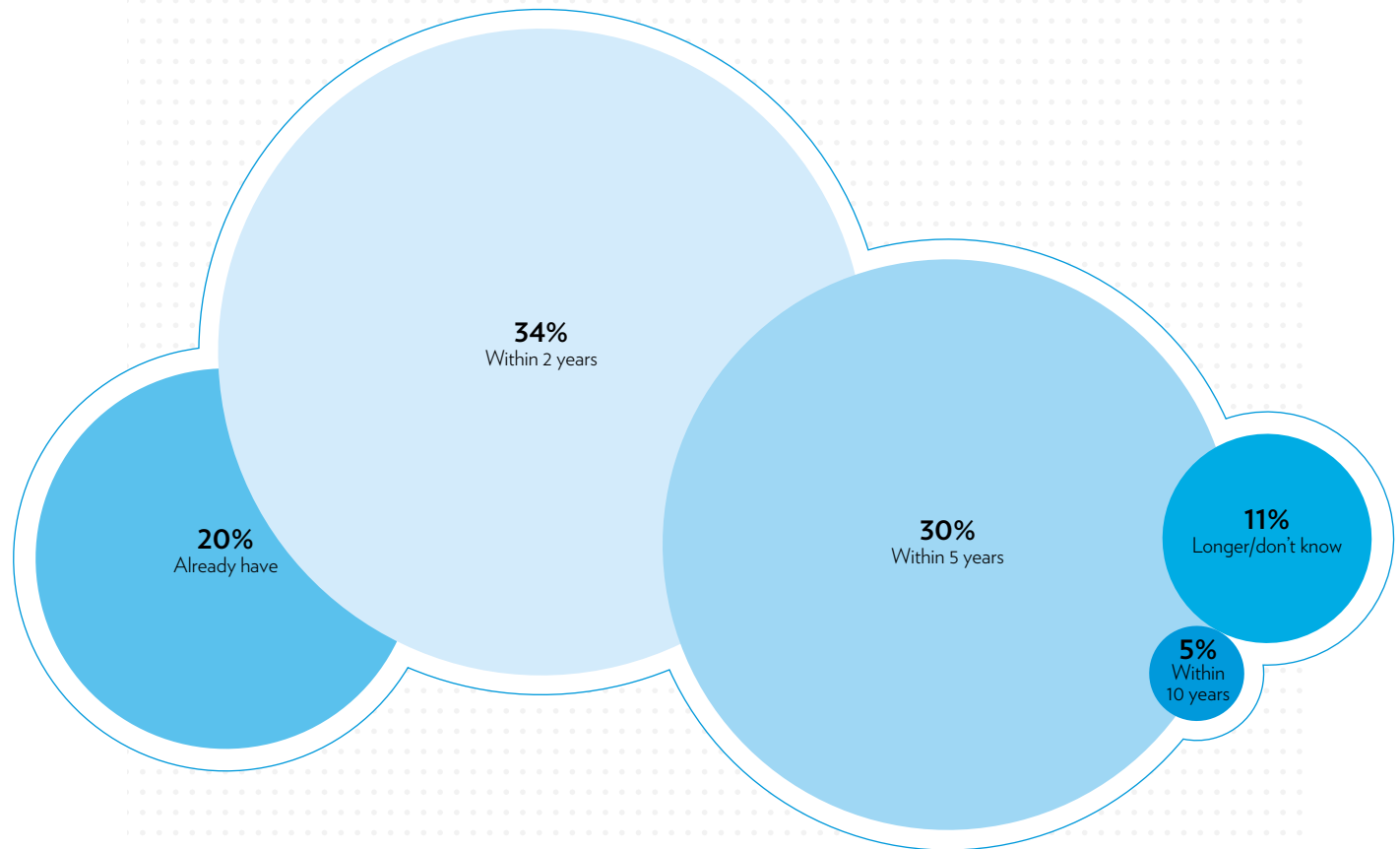
want to see – it's quite all-consuming, and without huge efficiency or margin wins. This is about future-proofing the business."

David Hymers, head of IT at Wedlake Bell, adds: "It's the PMS that is the big time and cost hurdle to overcome as it's such a behemoth of servers, but like many firms we do now look to put any new services in the cloud first."

Steve Dagleish, head of technology at Shepherd and Wedderburn, has just seen his firm's DMS into cloud – and he makes the point that clients also now tend to see the logic that providers are often better placed to manage a modern law firm's infrastructure: "Previous hard client requirements are now softening. There's recognition that they're really likely to see better service from a business that manages its own technology pragmatically."



How soon do you think your business will move all core business systems (eg, practice/case/document management) to either private or public cloud?



Matthew Haynes at Kennedys adds: “Firms with a lot of international offices may see advantage in the rationalisation with cloud, and there are workloads where it can have clearly greater capacity. But providers can also effectively force a firm on a cloud journey where they end development of the alternative.” Kennedys doesn’t currently see the benefit of going all-in, he says, preferring to consider the business case for individual applications.

**HYBRID OFFICIAL?**

And then we’ve another cost/benefit model to consider – the hybrid-working debate that once generated so much heat around the future of office life. As in 2022, we can see leaders’ average expectation continues to be that people will typically spend between two and three days





▲ PARTNER COMMENT

## Third time lucky – and easy does it

**Tony Cox**  
Director of business development  
Peppermint Technology



**A**s you will already know, it's a great feeling being in the right place at the right time!

I had this experience personally when approached five years ago to join Peppermint to help drive a refocus on large law firms and our shift to a modular product set – making it easier for large firms to make the most of each of our core products in the order, and at a pace, that was best for them.

It has happened again for a second time more recently, this time on a corporate level, with Peppermint absolutely in the right market at the right time with the right products.

Strongly echoing the results of the **Briefing** Frontiers annual poll of legal business leaders, Peppermint has experienced unprecedented demand for its products that deliver the 'Holy Grail' of both positively impacting the value of a law firm to its clients and maximising law

firm productivity. Built in the Microsoft cloud, all Peppermint products are designed from the ground up to be secure, resilient, and globally scalable. The resulting flexibility, ability to move at pace, and reduction in risk – coupled with reduced costs and increased simplicity for integration and support – are all accepted norms for true cloud software.

But just as important as all that – and without which all these benefits effectively come to naught – is the critical issue of user adoption. Peppermint products benefit from the familiarity and ease of use of Microsoft software, so end users naturally already know how to use them. This means that within the Microsoft 365 (aka Office) environment there is frictionless working, enabling complete focus on the task at hand, not constantly having to switch between multiple systems with different user interfaces. With wellbeing and the recruitment/

retention of talent a key driver of long-term success for every firm, this additional benefit of an easy-to-use, client-centric solution should not be overlooked.

With large firms increasing their focus and spend on true cloud IT solutions to drive a better client experience and greater operational efficiency, and Peppermint with Microsoft providing state-of-the-art data architecture and analytical capabilities to help firms exploit the large data opportunity, we continue to grow strongly with our ever-growing blue-chip law firm customer base.

As strong competition between firms and ever-increasing client expectations of value and experience drive investment in cloud IT, it should be a case of third time lucky (again) for Peppermint being in the right place at the right time!

Born in legal, built on Microsoft, live in the cloud. ▲

Within the Microsoft 365 (aka Office) environment there is frictionless working, enabling complete focus on the task at hand

For more information, visit:  
▲ [pepperminttechnology.co.uk](https://pepperminttechnology.co.uk)

a week in “an office that the firm pays for” come 2024, although 2% think one day would suffice, and 3% envisage – perhaps hanker after – a return to the five-day office week and all it entails (p26). Leaders at smaller law firms in the **Briefing** market (revenues less than £100m) are marginally more likely to expect the full five days of yore. Almost one quarter say their firms have also reached a decision to sublet some of their office space, but two-thirds have no plans in this regard (p28).

Dagleish continues: “The pandemic has clearly proved that agile working is possible so former barriers have fallen, but one potential challenge for law firms is ensuring a number in the office to make it worthwhile. Hybrid-meeting solutions also need some work to address the persistent skew to those who are in the office that day.”

Claire Stripp at Browne Jacobson adds: “It’s for a business to show people this isn’t about presenteeism or tokenistic, nor a simple push for productivity, but the value of being with others. Rather than focus only on a return to the office, we’re encouraging people to work at home for no more than three days a week on average.” This could involve team meetings elsewhere, client activity, or other options, she says.

The **Briefing**/HSBC Strategy and investment research 2022-2023 also found leaders at half of

Lexis+<sup>®</sup> UK

# Legal Research and Guidance. Simplified.

Find out more:

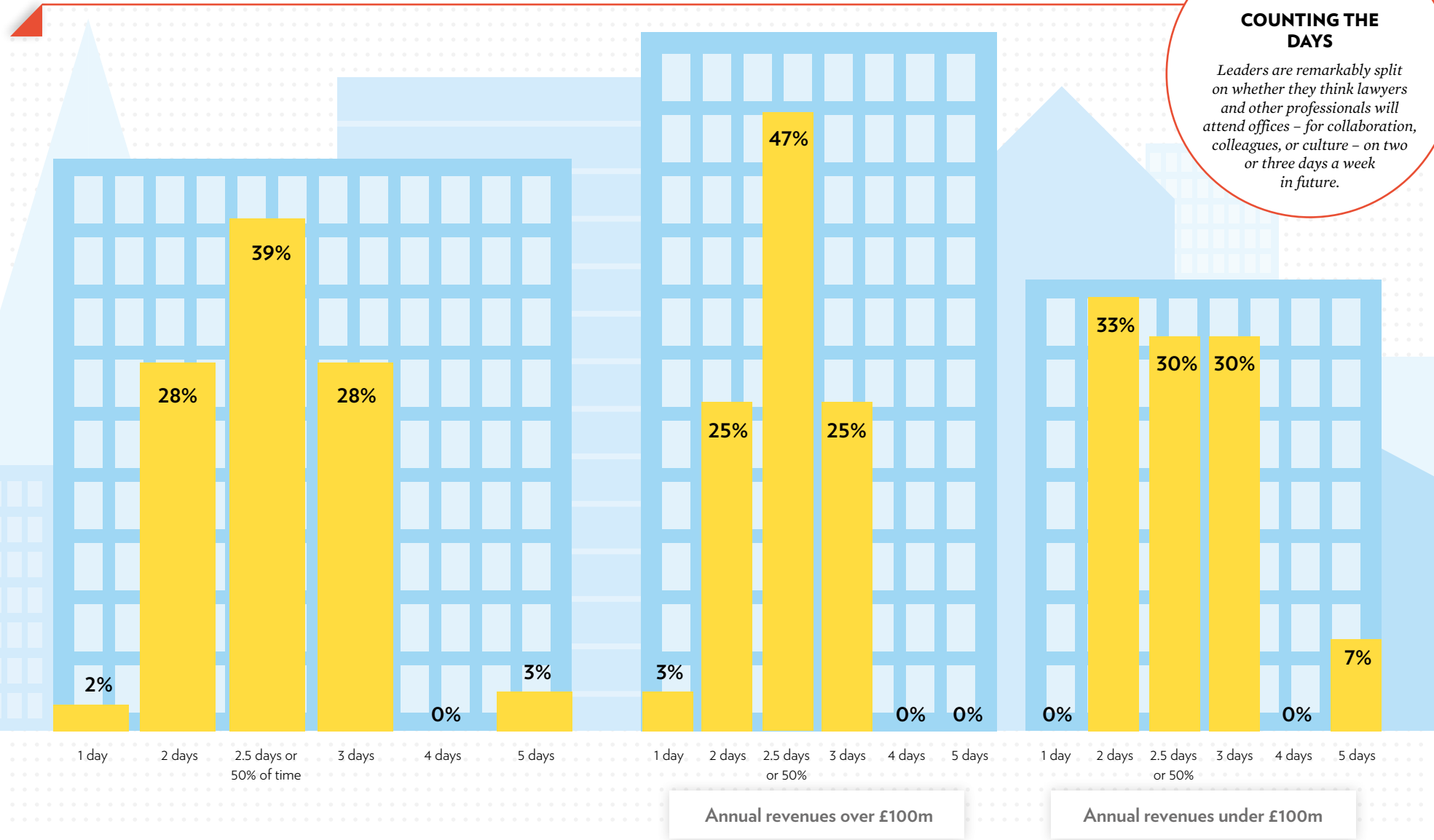


In 2024, how many days in a typical week do you think most of your firm's people will work in an office that the firm itself pays for?



**COUNTING THE DAYS**

Leaders are remarkably split on whether they think lawyers and other professionals will attend offices – for collaboration, colleagues, or culture – on two or three days a week in future.





firms then still planning to reduce their overall office space within the next three years – and continuing to ‘repurpose’ what remains into alternative layouts or environments thought more conducive to effective collaborative working when people are present together (66%). Two-thirds also reported that coming to the office for a day is ultimately a personal choice for people – when and why they attend is flexible (p29). Only 8% say people are expected to be present on days that are decided in advance, but more than a third do have an expectation of a particular number of days present each week or month.

Mark West says TLT used an office move in Scotland to establish a new blueprint for its workspaces more widely – a combination of hotdesks, which can be used for part of a day, and areas specifically designed for different activities. “We decided not to dictate where people work, and instead have team charters setting out the purposes behind being together at certain times, such as for onboarding and training,” he explains.

“Individuals retain some control for their



PARTNER COMMENT

## The calculation of cloud success

**Josiah Chaves**  
Vice president of cloud products  
Aderant



**G**oing cloud doesn’t have to be an all-or-nothing approach. A firm can consider itself cloud-first as it moves forward in implementing new technologies, but these solutions can – and should – still be able to seamlessly integrate with on-prem core systems.

Cloud platforms give increased access and visibility into previously siloed systems and time to data, promoting widespread firm knowledge-sharing. Adopting a cloud-first technology strategy is a good step towards eliminating the often gruelling back and forth between front and back offices. Inherently, cloud platforms provide a level of automation previously unattainable to firms, and allow

for data access in a quicker, more seamless way.

A carefully calculated and well-executed migration strategy is paramount to each layer of the firm finding significant value in ‘going cloud’. For IT teams, adopting cloud-based systems enables them to shift resources away from hardware provisioning and the ever-increasing requirement of securing systems, and instead focus on the enablement of business processes through technology. For both front and back office, accessibility to information and systems becomes easier, which is increasingly important in the hybrid work environment we have all adapted to.

Cloud solutions also provide increased insight into firms’ processes across a broader spectrum of their employees. Take the billing process – with increased access to bill status, as well as timely notifications of non-compliant pieces, a cloud technology solution should ultimately increase firm profits by reducing costly write-downs and rejections that often stem from missed steps in messy manual processes.

The key to a successful cloud migration is for the firm first to identify the value it wants to deliver to end users – and the areas of growth where cloud technologies can accelerate solving business challenges. A successful strategy will include addressing processes or challenges that need attention one by one, rather than having a ‘rip and replace’ mentality. Taking the time to create checks and balances between the cloud solution and legacy systems is vital to both firm success and user adoption. ▀

The key to a successful cloud migration is for the firm first to identify the value it wants to deliver to end users – and the areas of growth where cloud technologies can accelerate solving business challenges

For more information, visit:  
[www.aderant.com](http://www.aderant.com)





PARTNER COMMENT

## Top stakeholder priorities support shift to the cloud

**Kerri Dearing**  
Vice president of international business  
NetDocuments



Is your firm well-positioned to attain its business goals? In this year's **Briefing** Frontiers survey, almost 90% of legal business leaders expect firm headcount to increase and nearly 60% indicated that their spending on IT would increase in 2023. At the same time, less than a third expect people to work in an office that the firm pays for three or more days per week.

We can interpret this to mean that firms are planning and expecting to use technology to support more people than ever in a remote/hybrid way. The time has never been better to lean into the power of the cloud to tackle business challenges, exceed client and lawyer/staff expectations and attain your goals.

Diving in even more, the survey results reveal the top four priorities for a firm's most senior stakeholders are:

- 1 Demonstration of client value
- 2 Maximising productivity
- 3 Reducing risk
- 4 Increasing revenue streams.

Advanced modern cloud technologies like NetDocuments can help to address these priorities with features such as:

- Online access to secure client collaboration tools, automated processes that reduce redundancies and potential for errors, and easy access to allow for quicker overall client response times.
- Technologies that seamlessly integrate and connect to meet your lawyers and staff wherever they work, regardless of device or application – which can ultimately improve work-life balance and flexible work options.
- Inherited security trusted by organisations like the Council of Europe,

which can help to ensure documents, emails and MS Teams conversations remain secure and protected from data breaches, recoverable quickly in worst-case scenarios.

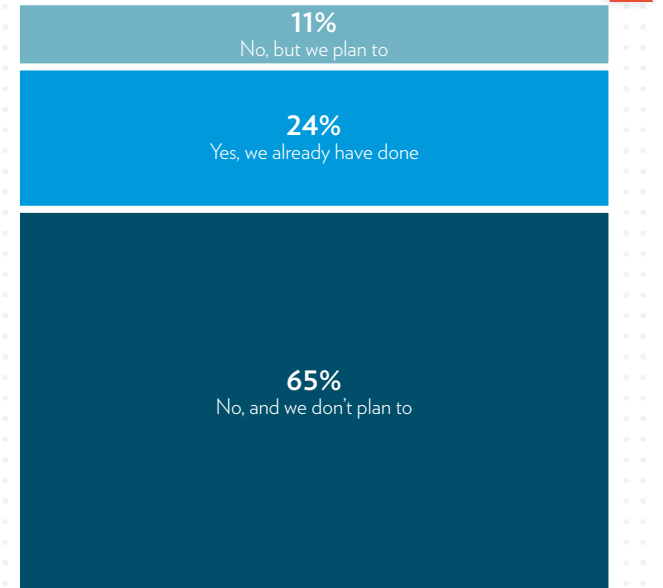
- Built-in automation capabilities that provide the potential for new self-service offerings and endless opportunities to generate low-effort revenue – not to mention the reputational advantages of providing clients with a secure, modern, intuitive experience.

If your firm has yet to embrace the cloud, this **Briefing** Frontiers report provides a strong narrative for anyone still resistant to change. For those already implementing cloud technologies, these results support your efforts. They should encourage you to continue to evaluate the best possible cloud technology solutions for your current and future business needs. ▶

Firms are planning and expecting to use technology to support more people than ever in a remote/hybrid way

For more information, visit:  
[www.netdocuments.com](http://www.netdocuments.com)

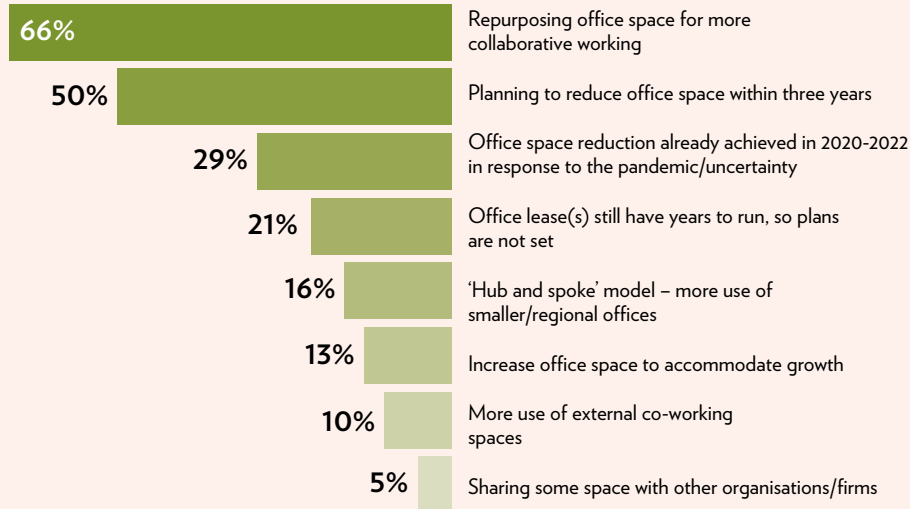
### Are you currently subletting (or similar) a part of your office space in response to working model changes made since 2020?



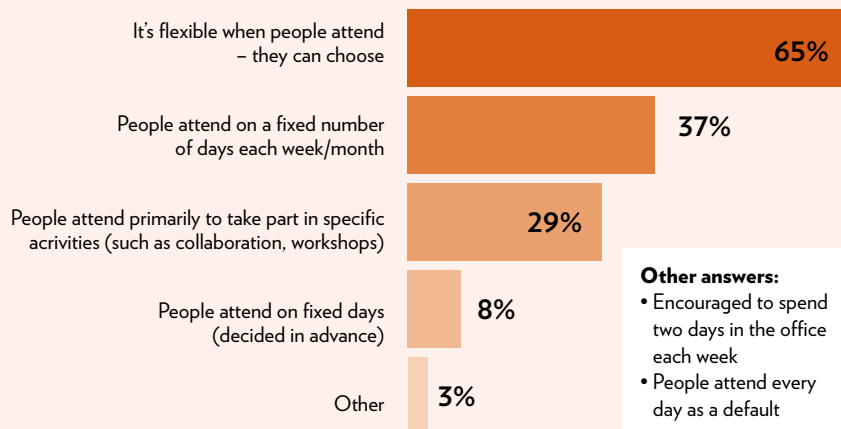
flexibility, and the firm is free to recruit across the country for great cultural fit rather than tied to location. Greater stipulation could see some firms missing out on people who'd make a key contribution."

But everyone at TLT will still be assigned a "home office" to use. "Technology is very good on documented knowledge, but experience and ideas-sharing are always rocket-fuelled by face-to-face contact. The best can come from entirely unplanned conversations," West concludes. ▶

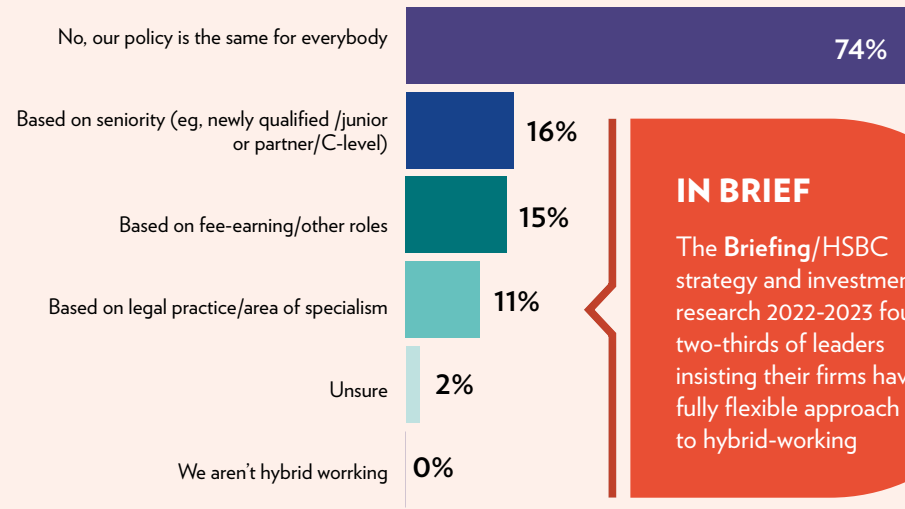
### Which of the following options for change currently best reflect your firm's office strategy over the next three years?



### How are your firm's offices currently being used?



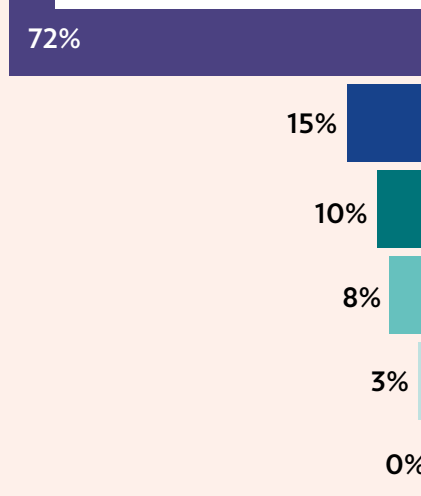
### Does the firm's current hybrid/agile-working policy comprise different expectations depending on role/responsibility?



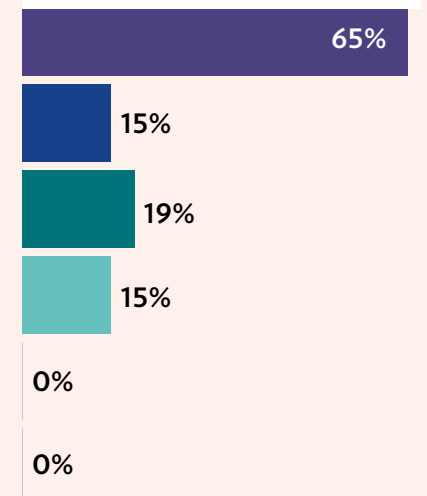
#### IN BRIEF

The Briefing/HSBC strategy and investment research 2022-2023 found two-thirds of leaders insisting their firms have a fully flexible approach to hybrid-working

#### Annual revenues over £100m



#### Annual revenues under £100m



# The strategic data dilemma

Under two-thirds of leaders report their firms have a business-wide data strategy, and almost four-fifths of those without say they know that situation needs to change within three years. Meanwhile, systems currently surfacing the goods aren't being used to their full potential

**T**he phrase 'data is the new oil' may be an overused one on the speaker circuit, but there's certainly increasing recognition that this belongs in the engine room of a modern law firm. It's fuel for effective resourcing, risk management, business development, continuous improvement, and even client service innovation. The big question for **Briefing** in 2023 is the extent to which these firms are equipped and staffed to manage the many different forms of data that often still reside in multiple systems – repositories potentially overlapping as introduced over time, but which may be more fragmented than effectively integrated to feed firm-wide efforts for clients or colleagues.

So can our legal business leaders say the firm has a business-wide data strategy? Just over half (59%) say yes, a quarter (27%) no, and 14% 'don't know' (p31). More leaders at larger firms say such a strategy is in place (64%), but more in

this group also say they don't know (21%) – perhaps implying an issue surrounding designated ownership of such a project at a large organisation. Leaders in the smaller firms are understandably less likely to have a data strategy they can point to now (54%). However, many more in this group also express the belief they'll need one within three years to deliver on their ambition or strategic goals (92%).

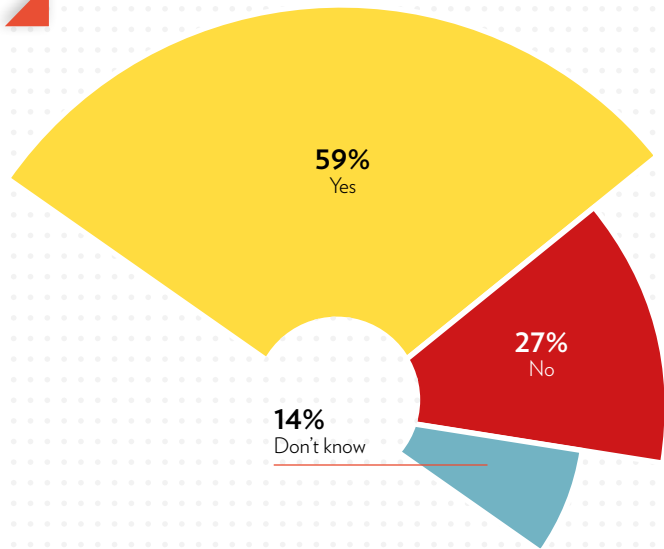
Gareth Powell, group data officer and a partner at Irwin Mitchell, says the firm has established data as a department in its own right, reporting straight into the group chief finance officer. And this development has a clear link to the question of whether – and how – data is viewed strategically.

"This has to begin with recognising that data has really tangible value – it is a strategic asset," he says. Moreover, that appreciation of worth needs to be widespread – not confined to the top decision-makers: "In order to have a cultural

impact you need to bring the benefits to life for all." Practically, he recommends identifying "data evangelists", for example, as well as the more traditional 'champions' to "capitalise on curiosity" – as well as highlighting value-adds as they materialise. "Perhaps also make 'data quality' a key performance indicator for people, in addition to having your governance model and data stewards responsible in different parts of the business," he says.

But it's inescapable that this is a system challenge as well as a people one. Jeff Wright is confident that Foot Anstey does have a firm-wide strategy – it sits with the digital, data and technology team, he says. "Firms need to unwind their legacies of not valuing data highly enough and move to capturing and mining information more easily – and that's not a quick trip. A lot of law firm data is also the unstructured variety, which is harder to expose for analysis in the same structure."

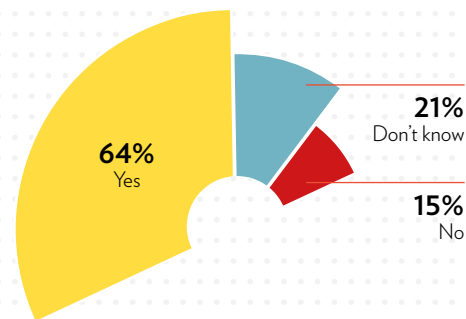
Does your firm have a business-wide data strategy?



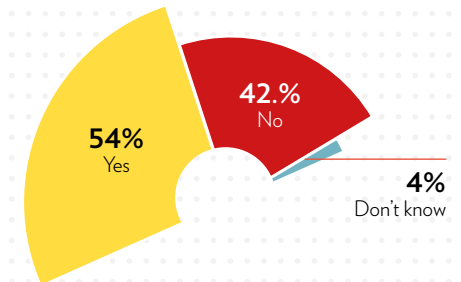
**!**  
**SYSTEM OR PEOPLE PROBLEM?**

*Given its increasing role in the engine room of legal business, why don't more leaders know whether their firm has a joined-up data strategy?*

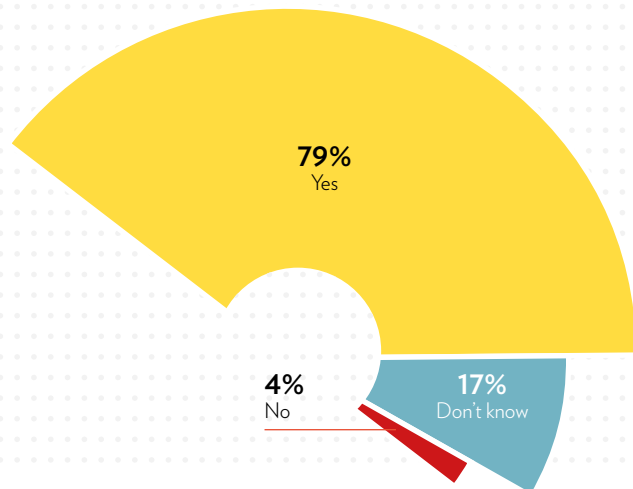
Firms with revenues over £100m – does it have one?



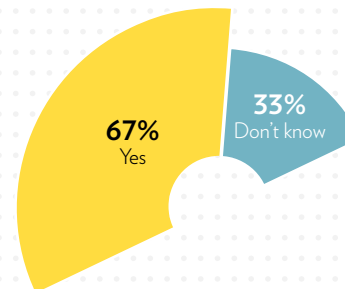
Firms with revenues under £100m – does it have one?



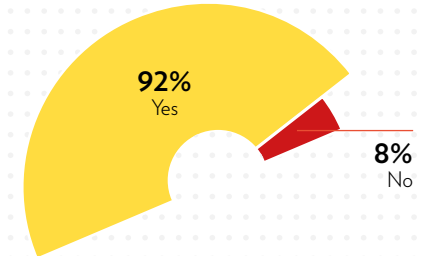
If not, does it need one now, or will it within three years?



Over £100m – does it need one?



Under £100m – does it need one?







## PARTNER COMMENT

## The road to a stronger strategic data picture

**Paul Suffield**  
Account director  
OneStream Software



The Briefing Frontiers 2023 survey (formerly known as Legal IT Landscapes) highlights several continuing themes from recent years. The way to ensure that many of these strategic priorities are addressed is to start by focusing on where to secure the best return on investment, especially in the current and medium-term economic climate.

Technology is a key enabler for delivering on a law firm's strategy for success. However, technology purchases are often made in silos to solve tactical challenges, as opposed to strategically to help deliver key firm-wide objectives (while simultaneously solving tactical challenges).

At OneStream Software we believe the key is unlocking the information that sits in the multiple data sources across the firm. Leveraging the right enterprise technology proven in other global markets can be the differentiator to drive competitive advantage and address many of the challenges highlighted in this year's research.

There are several challenges that can be addressed with a single strategic technology partnership. The most critical is

delivering a firm business-wide data strategy – which 41% of leaders report their firms don't have (or they are not aware of one).

According to the report, 86% of leaders expect to be increasing headcount over the next five years. At the same time, half think the economic outlook may lead to reduced headcount in business services/operational areas. Unlocking data across the firm can help to deal with complex workforce strategy. Leveraging technology to enable growth without increasing back-office functions will protect margins, improve accuracy and insight into performance metrics, and help firms to make strategic decisions quicker than ever before.

And 85% leaders say it takes more than one minute to access client matters and financial data, impacting productivity and trust in the data. In contrast, the automation of time-intensive, manual data collection and manipulation can enable firms to deliver on their data strategies by seamlessly providing financial and operational data. It can then be consumed with full auditability, enabling that data to be interrogated instantly to help drive

data-driven decisions across the firm. Furthermore, cloud solutions will support the changing working practices identified by the 69% of firms whose policies are likely to mean employees work in the office fewer than three days per week by delivering the information required to perform their role from any location.

Outside of these challenges, the right technology partnership in performance management also gives the firm enhanced visibility into its activities, enabling insight to be used by the fee-earning community to enhance client relationships. Bringing together data from across the firm's full system landscape, and turning it into information, will enable the 45% of leaders who highlight financial systems for improvement to make the most of their investments. This will also enhance other key systems across the architecture to drive accuracy and firm-wide insight, and ultimately deliver on a business-wide data strategy to drive success. ▴

For more information, visit:  
[www.onestreamsoftware.com](http://www.onestreamsoftware.com)

Powell continues: “Many firms have a lot of data migration work to do owing to the volume of M&A that has changed the sector – and ensuring the quality flowing from different systems into any data warehouse is paramount. If you aren't working with data that is trusted, it's worth nothing.”

Tom Newman-Young, chief marketing officer at Moore Barlow, agrees. “One challenge is keeping the confidence in a coherent picture – another is the manual intervention required to surface it,” he says. But like many, he's also alive to the opportunities for business management once built. “We plan to bring more data on aspects such as employee engagement into play with finance, business development and growth – in the vein of the balanced scorecard approach.”

Mark West at TLT says approach to data might be better described as a maturity curve. “It won't necessarily be a classic single strategy document, but broken into workstreams, with clarity about the different goals,” he explains. “That way you can also refresh in line with what's happening externally alongside internal success, then identify enablers for moving to the next stage.

“The potential in getting a stronger forward view of business – early-warning rather than lagging indicators – is just huge. Firms can intervene earlier on a whole range of fronts, including resourcing, recruitment and skills development.”

Wright highlights granular detail on the resourcing of different work types to understand

how a change impacts profitability, which might then trigger some further investment. “Firms could also seize an opportunity to punch above their weight on sector knowledge,” he says.

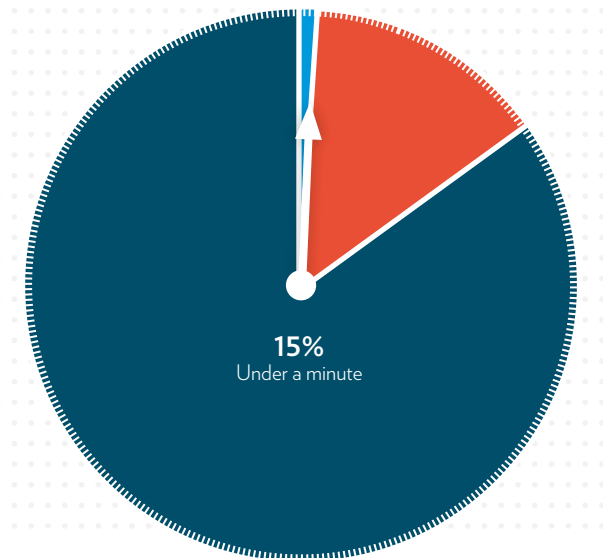
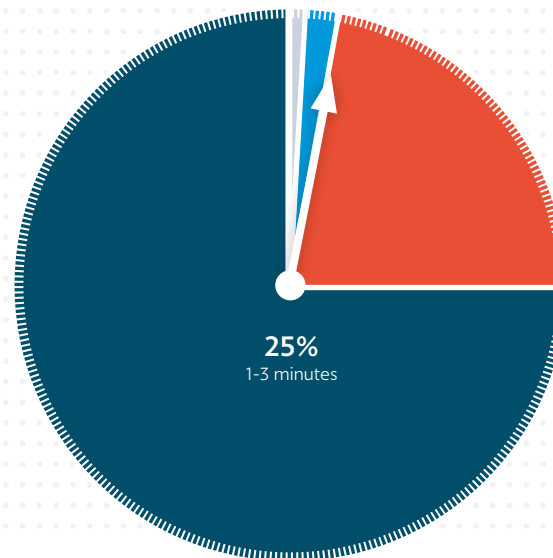
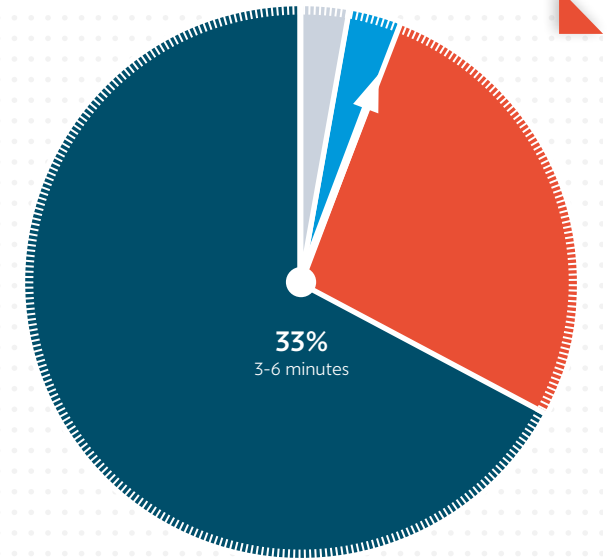
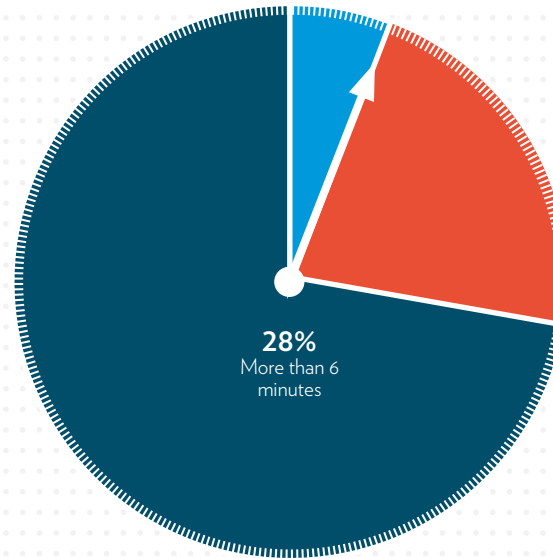
Powell concludes: “From making better predictions, to capturing trends in conversations and automating more manual tasks, there are multiple examples of value for the [data] mining.”

The arrival of hybrid-working-as-normal has also applied more pressure to some operational business priorities involving well-organised data – for example, empowering people to work effectively wherever they are that day, and regardless of others’ availability to answer or advise. Fee earners and business services teams alike need access to persuasive metrics that help them to prioritise and reprioritise, perhaps to switch between different tasks more readily, and of course to progress a piece of work efficiently and effectively for internal or external clients.

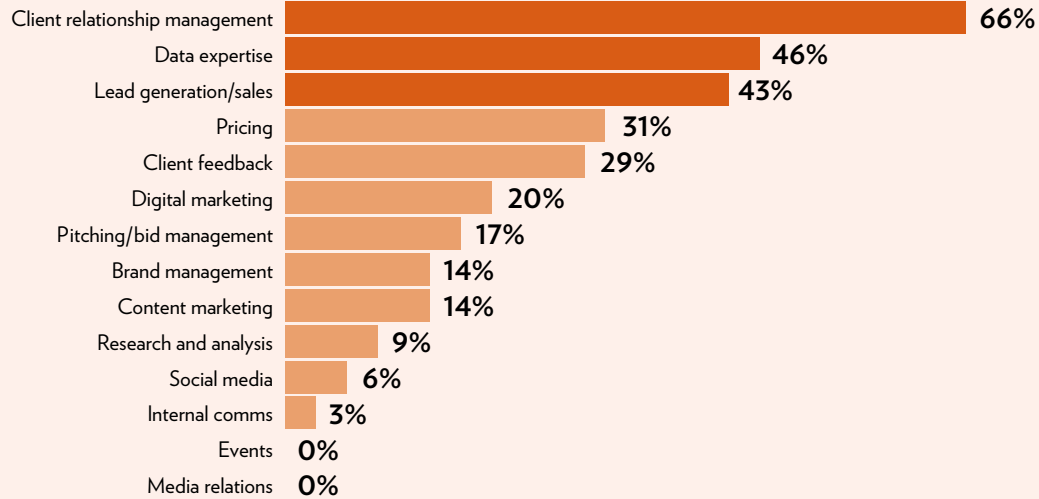
Decision-makers, also working from home or away from desks, then need the most up-to-date view of a practice, or business in the round – the collection of factors on which a course of action could depend. A firm’s fundamental strength in data may affect both ability to find and interpret key information and confidence it’s correct – increasing the likelihood of a timely, trusted decision.

Only 15% of the leaders responding to **Briefing** Frontiers 2023 are confident a randomly selected fee earner at the firm could find the data they need

Approximately how long does it take for a fee earner in your firm to pull up the client matter and financial data they need when they pick up the next piece of work to do?



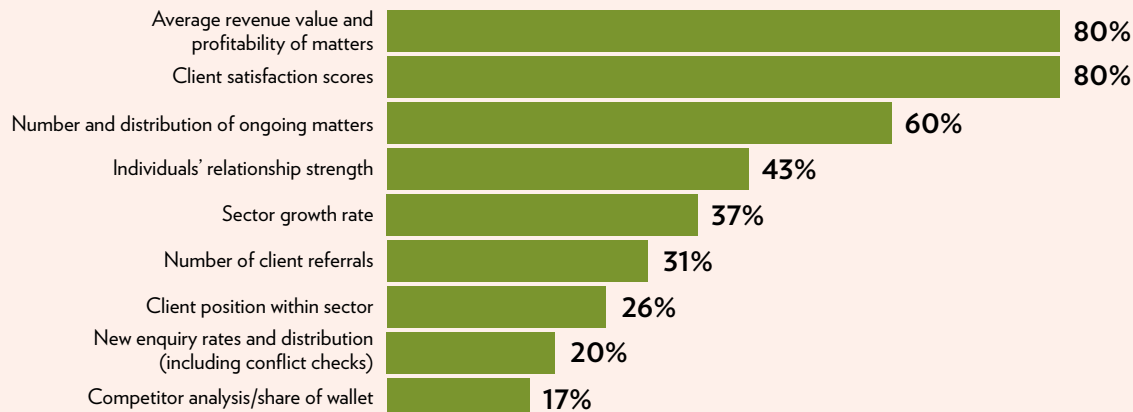
### Which capabilities, if improved, do you think would deliver the biggest overall business impact at your firm? (Pick your top three)



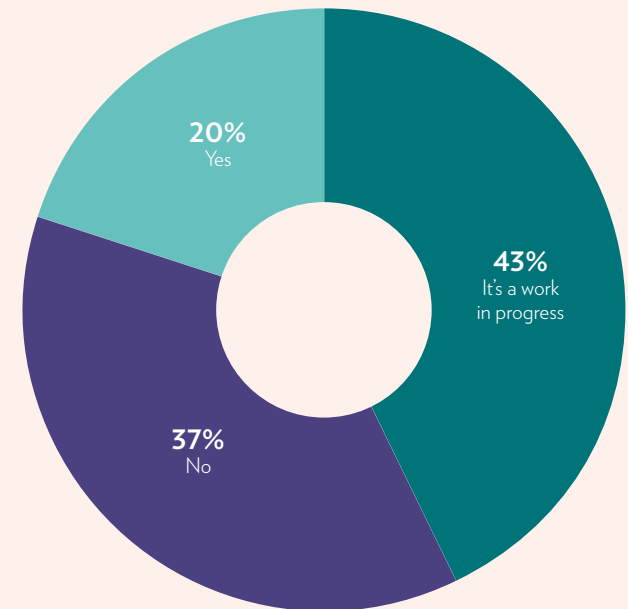
### IN BRIEF

Briefing's annual business development and marketing leaders research, published in June 2022, found this leadership group particularly focused on the potential of data expertise to drive change for the business (second only to CRM) – while under half were assessing a whole host of potential client-focused metrics, including the strength of relationships between individuals.

### Which 'client relationship health' measures does your firm currently assess? (Pick all that apply)



### Does your firm have a framework or map for managing the client journey/experience across the firm?

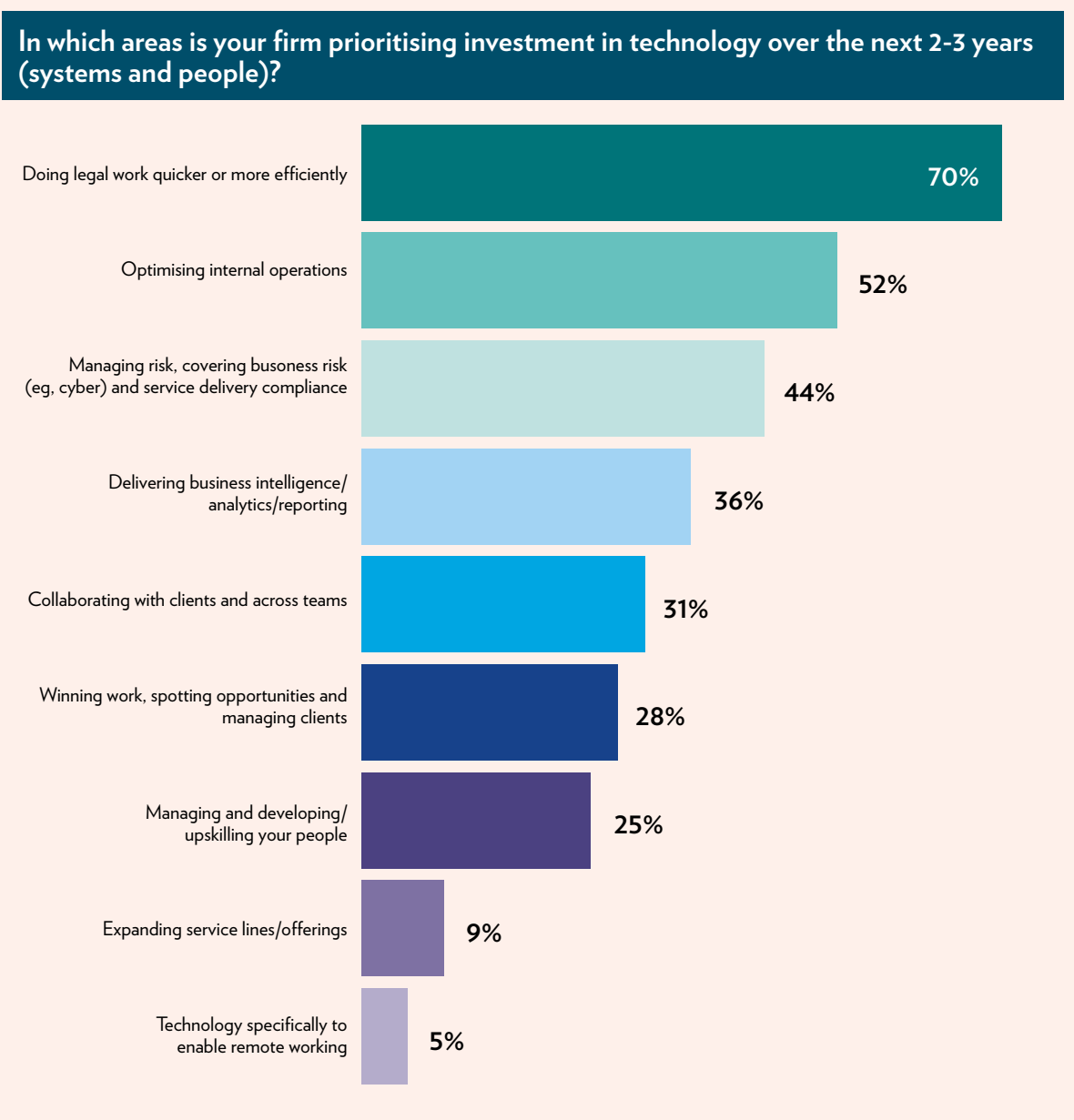


for their next piece of work in under a minute – and more than a quarter (28%) say it would take more than six (p33). While it may be a driver of strategy then, this suggests current systems are supporting a spectrum of productivity levels at UK firms – with implications for working efficiency, client competitiveness, and indeed user experience of technology.

### SATISFACTION SURVEY

Connected to such readiness for action, respondents also suggest that a wide range of business systems aren't currently exploited to their full potential (that is, functionality going unused). This raises a question about ultimate return on investment – and perhaps how well features are either understood or communicated (p36). At least a quarter of respondents believe that every major system has more to offer than their firm is currently managing to capture for one reason or another – rising to more than half in the case of the PMS and prime pandemic-era collaboration engine MS Teams. And the system where most leaders see untapped potential for process change is CRM (75%).

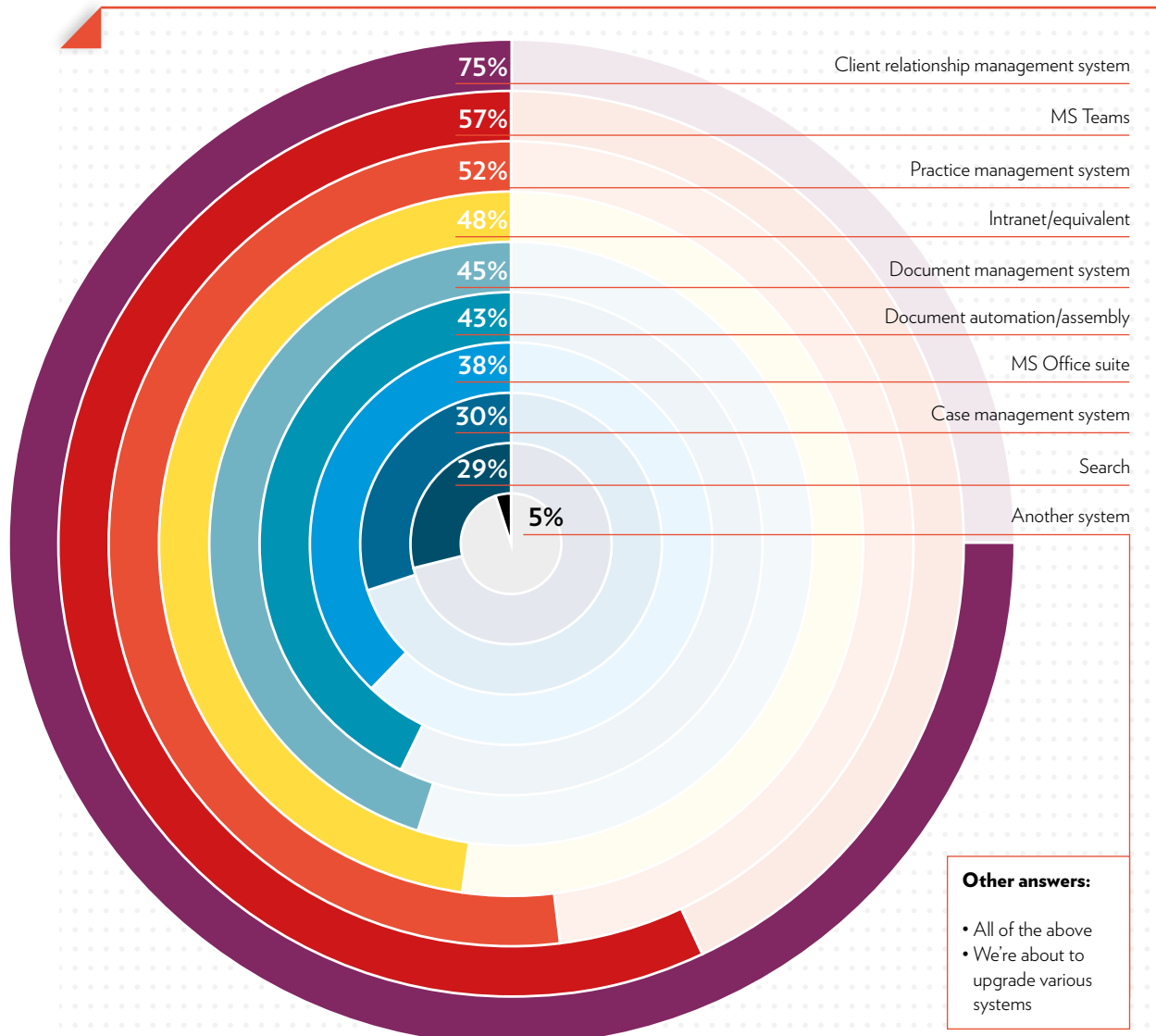
Indeed, rounding off our 2023 polling with another **Briefing** Frontiers first – how satisfied strategic leaders are with the current tech setup overall – it's clear that marketing and business development (MBD) is a leading contender for frustrations with the status quo (p38). Tools for managing pricing is the category where a leader is most likely to report current provision “needs improvement”, but more than a quarter (28%) indicate systems such as CRM or pitching need



Briefing/HSBC Law firm strategy and investment survey, October 2022/2023



Is your firm leveraging significantly less than the full functionality of any of these systems/tech areas? (Choose all that apply)



full-on replacement.

Tom Newman-Young at Moore Barlow is in the midst of an exercise to map all this recently merged firm’s marketing needs – he is not surprised by this satisfaction score for the tech that enables his aspect of operations.

But he highlights that the system’s ultimate capability may not be solely to blame. “Lawyers need training and encouragement to get the best use out of it, and that cultural change hinges on whether they see the value returned by their engagement over time.” he says.

“But a classic scenario is where a firm isn’t using the system deeply enough overall – so use appears poor – and there are also many CRM use cases. Satisfaction can depend on what the firm ultimately wants it for, and the reality is also often a combination of needs.”

Powell adds: “Data must be captured, organised and permissioned for a single view of the client that inspires proactive progression of a conversation in the right way. Some of that work is automatable, but it’s also a team sport – so a cultural evolution for some law firms.”

Notably, leaders appear largely satisfied with the core tech areas supporting their approaches to flexible and hybrid working – typically those that saw a sudden spike in demand for fresh investment during the pandemic years. At the same time, however, more than one in 10 report that a financial system is no longer fit for purpose in 2023.

Steve Dagleish at Shepherd and Wedderburn

says any downturn is sure to bring such questions into some sharper focus: “Law firms will feel greater pressure to understand exactly what they’re paying for but failing to use properly.” In terms of collaboration he sees more to unlock around co-authoring – and says firms may look to their technology to provide better support for establishing alternative fee arrangements (AFAs). “A complexity and decision can arise where a firm has already customised something new and the provider later releases an alternative – which path do you choose?” he adds.

David Hymers at Wedlake Bell also points to co-authoring, and says he’s collating a collection of potential Microsoft 365 benefits to engage the innovation committee: “MS Teams communication, for example, is currently quite varied around the firm – integration with document management and access to more matter information could be a catalyst for more consistent patterns of collaboration in time.”

Another recent focus is internal efficiencies through the Microsoft Power platform, he says: “To date this has principally focused on collaboration among business services teams – for example, an app for automating reminders and updates to different people around the process of onboarding or when an employee departs.”

Mark West at TLT adds: “A Microsoft 365 view of the world is a good match with most of our client sectors, and critically it’s establishing a more integrated toolset for lawyers. Management information is key to testing potential process



▲ PARTNER COMMENT

## Strategic technology investments support growth

Guy Adams  
Vice president, legal industry group  
Intapp



**T**he results of the **Briefing** Frontiers (formerly Legal IT Landscapes) research for 2023 reveal that the legal industry is going through a period of recalibration. During the pandemic the industry moved at a frenzied pace to procure the solutions needed to support a newly remote workforce and win the war for talent. Today, firms are reassessing the value they received from these investments in technology and people – and refining their strategies to optimise operational excellence.

### RELATIONSHIPS INTO INSIGHTS

Most leaders say that their firms are underleveraging their relationship ecosystem. Poor data quality, manual contact management, and disconnected systems, have created gaps in talent’s ability to spot opportunities and access the entirety of the firm’s knowledge.

Firms need a holistic system that passively captures contact data and harvests relationship intelligence to surface insights and opportunities. When law firm leaders and lawyers have a 360-degree view of a client and the associated key engagements, activities,

and opportunities, they’re able to maximise productivity, reduce risk, and demonstrate key-client value – all of which are key returns for successful IT investments.

### ENABLING THE MODERN WORKFORCE

Leaders also overwhelmingly believe that a hybrid work week is here to stay. As such, using tools such as Microsoft 365 to collaborate both internally and externally is significantly more important.

To digitally transform in the new hybrid work environment, firms are relying more heavily on Microsoft Teams, but are rarely leveraging the full functionality. When deployed with the right supporting technology tools, Teams can reduce risk across the matter lifecycle, provide matter-centric intelligence, and improve matter governance to better enable a modern workforce.

### DRIVING TECHNOLOGY-LED CHANGE WITH AN INDUSTRY CLOUD PLATFORM

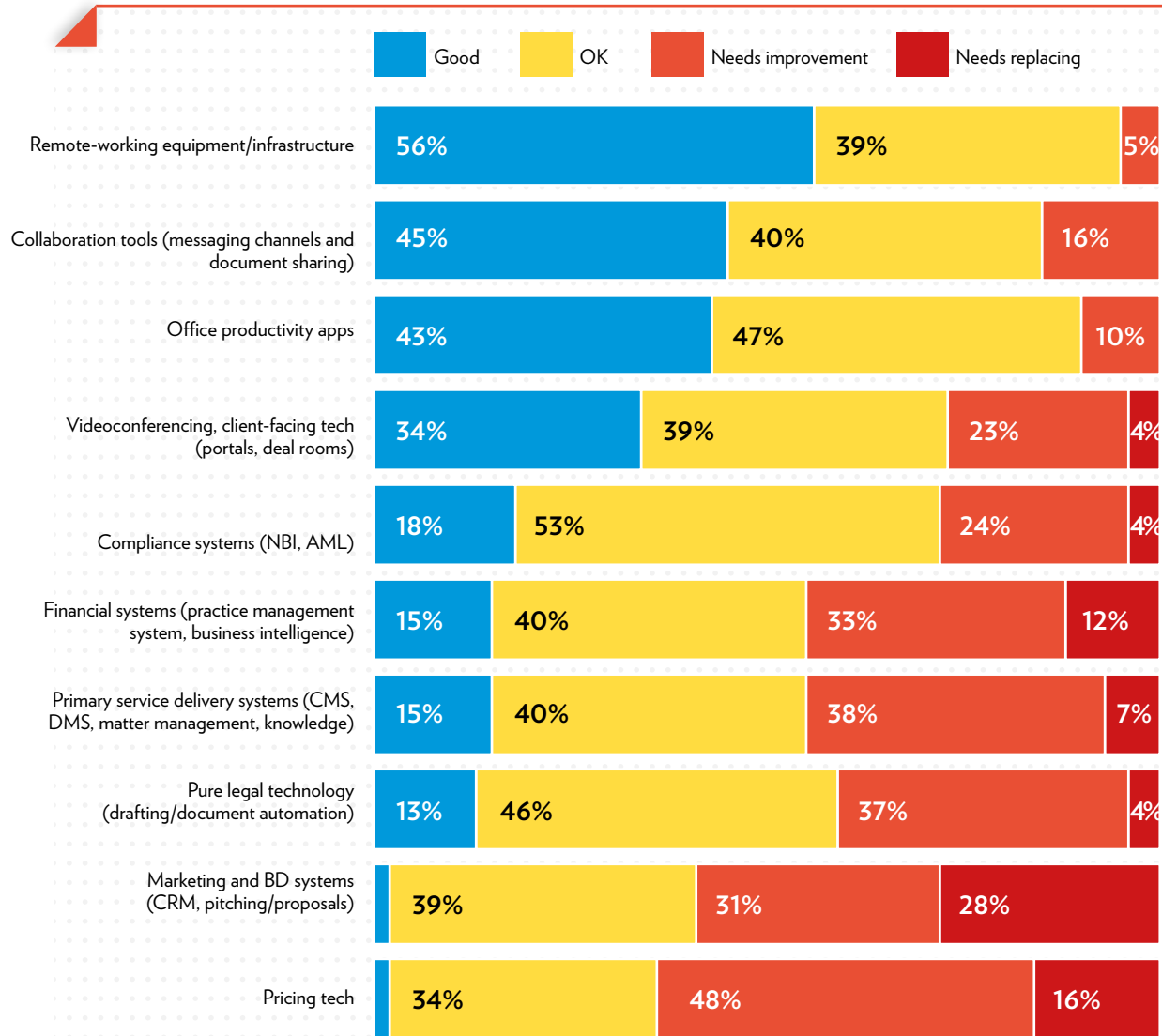
Industry cloud platforms have been identified by Gartner as a ‘top strategic

technology trend’ for 2023. With increased adoption driving their popularity, industry cloud platforms are purpose-built to meet the specific needs of a vertical industry, reflecting organisational workflows and including critical internal and external data that helps busy professionals do their jobs more effectively and efficiently.

The Intapp Industry Cloud for professional services combines purpose-built software with a low-code platform, industry data, AI, and infrastructure capabilities – all together tailored to meet the needs and challenges of the legal industry. We believe this will accelerate the digital transformation and technology-led change that will enable firms to thrive and better support client success in the future. ▲

For more information, visit:  
▲ [www.intapp.com](http://www.intapp.com)

### How satisfied are you with the following areas of technology in your firm?



improvements effectively, and firms also need to invest in some more ‘imagineering’ – considering how tools designed for one purpose might be transferred to transform in other areas”.

Almost two-fifths (38%) identify their core delivery systems, such as document, matter and knowledge, as ripe for improvement, and 29% see ‘search’ as an underused area. Claire Stripp at Browne Jacobson says: “Introducing more auto-classification is one quite striking opportunity for knowledge – achieving consistency and reliability alongside productivity.”

Sears at Naphthens is surprised to hear that Teams is so apparently underused, but less by the result for case management (30%). “It’s true that some departments will tend to default to use technology as though it has just come out of the box. It can take people arriving at a firm from elsewhere to highlight untapped potential. That’s also why we have business analysts here, for example, who can work with teams proactively,” he says.

“Another way we’re maximising our investments is by no longer jumping to buy the newest item off the shelf – to pick projects wisely – and also engaging a lot more with technology suppliers that target other sectors. They may have a wider view of what’s market-leading in an area such as augmented reality or true artificial intelligence, and we can progress particularly useful conversations for the firm’s future.”

# 5 Signs it's Time to Re-Imagine Your Financial Close

01



Time Wasted

02



Lack of Extensibility

03



Low User Acceptance

04



Missing Functionality

05



Quality Concerns



WHITEPAPER

DOWNLOAD NOW:





# Aderant: Beyond Expert<sup>®</sup>

**We are more than just a PMS.**

From core back-office practice management to attorney time tracking and talent management, firms around the globe partner with the “A” to keep their day-to-day moving and inspire innovation.

**Explore our variety of cloud solutions that will help you run a better business.**

**[www.aderant.com/solutions](http://www.aderant.com/solutions)**

