



# MBD Leaders 2026

Tuesday 10 November – Underwood Lofts  
6-14 Underwood St, London N1 7JQ



LexisNexis®



*Draft day shape, subject to change*

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09.00 – 9:30am  | <b>BREAKFAST AND NETWORKING</b><br>Grab a coffee and connect with your peers!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 09:30 – 9:40am  | <b>WELCOME</b><br><i>Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 09:40 – 9:55am  | <b>ICEBREAKER</b><br>The fun starts with a quick ice-breaker session designed to get you in the mood to collaborate, share and learn!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 09:55 – 0:30am  | <b>KEYNOTE: Human relationships as the competitive advantage</b><br>As AI re-shapes the services clients seek from law firms, will the human factor increasingly be the key differentiator when it comes to higher-risk work and long-term relationships? If human trust becomes more important, how can BD balance people and tech to become a truly trusted partner in a world where client loyalty is shifting fast?<br><i>Nishma Patel-Robb, speaker, adviser, CEO, Switched ON</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 10:30 – 11:15am | <b>KEYNOTE LEADERS PANEL: The future shape of the MBD function in the AI era</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What will business development, marketing and client teams look like in 3-5 years?</li><li>• Which roles will disappear, which evolve, and which become more important as AI changes how law firms operate?</li><li>• Is "cognitive offloading" inevitable? If so, how can leaders foster critical thinking?</li><li>• What skills will future hires need beyond traditional MBD experience?</li><li>• How should teams balance human expertise with AI-enabled efficiency?</li></ul> <i>Karen Snell, chief business development and marketing officer, Kennedys<br/>Ruth Stringer, director of client experience, Eversheds Sutherland<br/>Shama Perera, director of business development and marketing, Shoosmiths</i> |
| 10:15 – 11:45am | <b>MORNING COFFEE BREAK</b><br>Continue the conversations with a brew                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**11:45 – 2:30pm**

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS:**

Pick a topic and join your peers to share approaches, experiences and learnings

- **Pricing for AI-enabled matters**
  - Exploring pricing models and factoring in the cost of tech
  - Fixed fees and understanding what AI workflows are really costing
  - Profitability by work type
  - How are your firm's lawyers handling conversations with clients around fees?
- **Optimising the client experience to drive brand loyalty**
  - Building trust – what does trust look like from the client perspective?
  - Do your fee-earners know how to really listen to clients?
  - Creating a seamless client onboarding process
  - How can firms use AI to optimise the client experience?
- **Institutionalising the client relationship for longevity**
  - Shifting from 'my client' to 'the firm's client'
  - Getting clarity on which clients are dependent on one partner (and what the revenue associated with that relationship is)
  - Formalising early succession planning with partners
  - Approaches to building multi-partner relationships
- **Tech-driven efficiencies for marketing and BD teams**
  - Use cases to work smarter:
    - Pitching
    - Directories
    - Presentations
    - Agents
    - What else?
- **Career paths and managing multi-generational teams**
  - How to bridge the differing values, work styles and expectations of multiple generations?
  - Benefits to compete with overinflated salaries at other firms
  - What are the skill sets you prioritise when hiring?
  - Developing experienced marketing and BD team members
- **Is your brand GEO optimised?**
  - What is generative engine optimisation anyway?
  - Understanding key differences between SEO and GEO
  - Quick wins – FAQPage structured data, statistics, meta-data and structuring content for AI search
- **AI governance and guardrails for MBD teams**
  - Putting in place the right guardrails that aren't a barrier to use and innovation
  - Client confidentiality concerns – is your team clear where the boundaries lie?
  - Data security
  - Client expectations around AI usage

**12:30 –**

**Head back to plenary for quickfire feedback**

**12:40pm**

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>12:40 – 1:00pm</b> | <b>ROUNDTABLE QUICKFIRE FEEDBACK</b><br>Hear the highlights from the roundtable discussions you weren't part of.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>1:00 – 1:50pm</b>  | <b>NETWORKING LUNCH BREAK</b><br>Keep the conversation going over a buffet lunch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>1.50 – 2:30pm</b>  | <b>Adding up the true cost and commercial impact of AI</b><br>Tokens and budget-busting usage-based pricing is driving a turnaround in thinking on AI use, but the real economics of running agentic workflows at scale are much broader, from the cost of infrastructure, operations, people, risk to the hidden cost of engineering around AI's limitations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The true economics of AI</li> <li>• Token usage and pricing models</li> <li>• Measuring ROI and productivity gains</li> <li>• Which work types create the greatest AI value?</li> <li>• Impact on law firm profitability</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>2:30 – 3:15pm</b>  | <b>Data, client intelligence and growth strategy: Where will your next £10 million come from?</b><br>Identifying and delivering a portfolio of growth opportunities requires firms to better understand their clients, spot emerging demand and rigorously qualify, prioritise and convert opportunities. This is increasingly challenging as demand is uneven, growth opportunities are concentrated in particular practices, sectors and geographies, and clients expect greater commercial value, efficiency and AI-enabled delivery. How can firms bring together client, matter and market data to build a clearer picture of where future revenue will come from? And how can technology help turn insight into action? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does an integrated commercial intelligence ecosystem actually look like? Can firms turn fragmented data into meaningful, actionable insight?</li> <li>• How can firms identify client whitespace, emerging needs, relationship gaps and the growth opportunities they are currently missing?</li> <li>• Will new technologies make it easier for lawyers to capture and share client intelligence and commercial opportunities?</li> <li>• How can firms ensure intelligence reaches the right people and results in meaningful action rather than simply creating more data?</li> <li>• What role do partner behaviour, incentives, collaboration and client ownership play in turning commercial intelligence into revenue??</li> </ul> |
| <b>3:15 – 3:40pm</b>  | <b>AFTERNOON COFFEE BREAK</b><br>Discuss the day so far with your peers over a coffee.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>3:40 – 4:25pm</b>  | <b>CLIENT PERSPECTIVE:</b><br>How do client firms really chose the law firms they work with? Is AI increasingly the killer factor? Where does exceptional client service fit into their choices? What else is table stakes for businesses looking for effective, efficient, and value-added legal advice?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|                      |                                                                                               |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>4:25 – 4:55pm</b> | <b>CLOSING KEYNOTE</b><br>To be announced                                                     |
| <b>4:55 – 5:00pm</b> | <b>CLOSING AND THANKS</b><br><i>Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i>                  |
| <b>5:00pm</b>        | <b>DRINKS RECEPTION</b><br><i>Join the Briefing team and chat to your peers over a drink!</i> |