



Briefing Operations Leaders

Thursday 5 November 2026

Norton Rose Fulbright, 3 More London Place, London SE1 2AQ

Gold partners



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Harvey

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Draft day shape, subject to change

08:00 - 08:30	BREAKFAST AND NETWORKING Grab a coffee and croissant, and connect with your peers!
08:30 - 08:35	WELCOME <i>Andreea Dulgheru, editor, Briefing</i>
08:35 - 08:40	A WELCOME FROM OUR HOSTS <i>Rod Harrington, chief operating officer, Norton Rose Fulbright</i>
08:40 - 09:15	OPENING KEYNOTE: The AI Economy: What Comes Next for Business, Investment and Growth Conflicts, a looming energy crisis and trade wars have all been headline news for the past year and more. But AI is increasingly a key player in the global economy, driving massive capital investments, altering workforce demands, and promising substantial long-term productivity gains. How are warnings of an AI bubble and safety concerns impacting valuations and investor appetite? What might this mean for AI providers of legal tech? Should law firms stiffen their stance around value for their investment in AI tools? <i>Brian Davidson, director, macroeconomic forecasting and energy, Fathom Consulting</i>
09:15 - 10:00	LEADERS INSIGHT: The future law firm operating model As AI moves from experimentation to enterprise-wide adoption, law firms face fundamental questions about how they are structured, staffed and managed. What will the law firm operating model look like in three to five years' time? What choices must leaders make today to prepare for that future? This discussion will examine how AI is reshaping service delivery, transforming workforce models, and accelerating the need for firmwide change. The panel will explore the strategic, financial and organisational implications of building an AI-enabled law firm. <i>Barbara Hamilton-Bruce, chief operating officer, Birketts</i> <i>Catherine Tsang, director of operations, Osborne Clarke</i> <i>Matt Peers, global chief operating officer, Pinsent Masons</i> <i>Chair: Andreea Dulgheru, editor, Briefing</i>
10:00 - 10:45	ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS: Choose a table and share your perspective on some of the strategic challenges for operational leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none">Standing out in a market where everybody looks the same<ul style="list-style-type: none">With AI ever more embedded, what will genuinely differentiate law firms in the next 3-5 years?

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- How can firms build distinctive cultures that attract and retain both clients and talent amid increasing competition and mobility?
- What does a modern client relationship look like when technology is levelling the playing field across the legal market?
- **Beyond productivity gains: reimagining the AI-powered back office**
 - What genuine productivity gains are emerging across business services functions?
 - Where is AI creating new demands rather than reducing work?
 - The boundaries between legal and business services teams are becoming increasingly blurred; what new operating models are emerging at your firm?
 - How should firms approach investment between buying, building and integrating AI capabilities to maximise long-term value?
- **Bringing clients on the AI journey**
 - How can firms have more constructive conversations with clients about AI-driven efficiency, pricing and value?
 - What do clients need from law firms as they develop their own AI capabilities and bring more work in-house?
 - How can firms collaborate with clients to develop trusted, transparent and commercially viable AI-enabled service models?
- **Developing the AI-era professional**
 - What are the new skills which will distinguish successful lawyers and business services professionals in an AI-enabled law firm?
 - How can firms develop analytical thinking, judgement and commercial acumen while AI increasingly performs routine tasks?
 - What does career progression look like in a future where traditional pyramid structures evolve and new specialist roles emerge?
- **Cyber resilience in an age of AI and third-party risk**
 - Balancing rapid technology adoption with increasing cyber, privacy and regulatory risks
 - What are the biggest vulnerabilities arising from growing dependence on vendors, cloud platforms and AI providers?
 - How can firms build greater organisational resilience against cyber incidents, outages and increasingly sophisticated threats?
- **Seeing around corners: leading through continuous disruption**
 - What are the biggest opportunities and threats likely to reshape law firms over the next three years?
 - How can operational leaders distinguish between short-term technology hype and genuinely transformative developments?
 - What processes and capabilities are needed to identify emerging risks before they become strategic challenges?
- **Governance, ethics and trust in practice**
 - Creating governance frameworks that manage risk without slowing innovation
 - How can operational leaders help build trust in AI among partners, employees and clients?
 - Where should accountability ultimately sit as firms adopt increasingly autonomous and agentic technologies?



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10:45 – 11:15	COFFEE BREAK
11:15 – 11:25	ROUNDTABLE QUICKFIRE FEEDBACK A quickfire session to share the key points that have emerged from each table's topic discussions. Feedback needs to be short, concise and succinct – it's a timed exercise!
11:25 – 11:55	IN CONVERSATION: Choosing a partner, not a product – lessons from Burges Salmon's firmwide AI rollout Many firms are still deciding which AI tools to back. Burges Salmon has already made that choice and rolled it out across the firm. Emma Dowden, the firm's chief operating officer and lead sponsor of its AI programme, talks to Harvey's Joe Cohen about how it went. She'll cover how the firm tested legal AI platforms on live work across several practice groups. She'll explain why the question "where will this partner be in three years?" counted as much as the features. And she'll describe what it took to move lawyers from curiosity to everyday use. This is a candid look at the operational side of getting AI adopted: governance, change management and the lessons learned along the way. <i>Emma Dowden, chief operating officer, Burges Salmon</i> <i>Joe Cohen, legal innovation partner, Harvey</i>
11:55 – 12:40	DATA IN PRACTICE: building the foundations for an AI-enabled firm AI is exposing long-standing weaknesses in law firms' data structures, from inconsistent taxonomies and disconnected systems to uncertainty about who owns information once it crosses functional boundaries. This session will explore how operations leaders can create a coherent data foundation without waiting for a perfect, firm-wide transformation programme. <i>Brad Sidwell, field chief technology officer, Intapp</i> <i>Marie Armstrong, chief operating officer, DAC Beachcroft</i> <i>Simon Rees, head of data architecture, Bird & Bird</i> <i>Tara Pichardo Angadi, director of knowledge, data and insights, Norton Rose Fulbright</i> <i>Chair: Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i>
12:40 – 12:45	CLOSING REMARKS <i>Andreea Dulgheru, editor, Briefing</i>
12:45	LUNCH Join us for a light lunch before you head back to your office