AILF INSIGHTS · AI AND TECHNOLOGY

AI for Indian law firms: where it helps and what must stay human

A practical guide for Indian law firms on using artificial intelligence for research, drafting, review and management, with the safeguards that matter.

Artificial intelligence is now part of everyday legal work. The useful question for a firm is no longer whether to use it, but where, and under what rules.

Where AI helps today

Research. Finding relevant judgments and provisions faster, and summarising long decisions.

First drafts. Routine notices, letters, standard clauses and summaries of facts.

Document review. Sorting large volumes of documents in due diligence and disputes, and flagging unusual clauses.

Translation. Working drafts between English and Indian languages.

Transcription. Turning dictation, meetings and hearings into text.

Chronologies. Building timelines from correspondence and records.

Management. Time capture, billing narratives and knowledge search within the firm's own precedents.

What must stay human

- **Judgment.** Whether to sue, settle, sign or walk away.
- **Advice.** The client engages a lawyer, and the lawyer is answerable.
- **Advocacy.** Persuasion before a court.
- **Ethics.** Conflicts, candour and confidentiality.
- **Verification.** Every citation and statement of law must be checked against the source.

The risks

- Invented cases and quotations.
- Out-of-date law.
- Confidential information leaving the firm.
- Hidden bias.
- Juniors who lose the chance to learn by doing.

A sensible firm policy

1. Approve tools. Choose them after checking security and terms of use.

2. Define permitted uses. Be specific about what may and may not be done.

3. Protect client data. No client information in public tools. Where needed, obtain consent.

4. Require verification. The lawyer who signs a document is responsible for all of it.

5. Train everyone, including partners.

6. Follow court rules on disclosure.

7. Review regularly.

Fees and fairness

If a task that took ten hours now takes two, clients will notice. Firms should be ready to pass on part of the saving and to price on value.

Small firms

AI narrows the gap between large and small firms. A three-lawyer practice with good tools and good habits can handle work that once needed a large team. For the unorganised majority of the profession, this is an opening.

Training the next generation

Do not let AI replace the apprenticeship. Have juniors do the work, compare it with the tool's output, and understand the difference. Lawyers who cannot do the task cannot supervise the machine.

The standard

Use AI as a capable assistant that is sometimes wrong and never responsible. Firms that keep that in mind will gain speed without losing trust.

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