

THE VIRTUAL VERDICT:

EVOLUTION OF LEGAL
TECH IN 2023

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3.4 Collaborative Efforts and Potential A2J Solutions

A vast global population remains underserved in terms of civil legal needs. Legal Tech could potentially bridge this gap, making services more affordable and accessible. But technology's utility isn't always readily apparent. Therefore, training initiatives could help legal professionals to leverage new digital tools for wider reach. By combining new tools, training, and funding programs, we could unlock additional capacity levels for a new era of justice that works harder to level the playing field. In the Litify survey, respondents anticipated that reduced workloads and expanded access to legal services would be foremost among the benefits that AI could potentially deliver to their field.

Goldberg elucidated how the digitization of evidence and documentation already empowers better collaboration and communication in legal proceedings. He described how his firm can “seamlessly share evidence with opposing parties, insurance adjusters, or even jurors.” Furthermore, the shareability of digital media not only streamlines legal representation but also makes for a “clear and compelling account of the accident and its consequences,” helping to secure damages.

Shavon Jones, a practicing administrative lawyer and Chief Content Officer at the training and coaching resource Sales4Lawyers, highlighted technology's potential role in ameliorating a critical challenge. [Citing the World Justice Project](#), Jones noted that 5 billion people globally grapple with unmet civil legal needs. She remarked that this downmarket demand is known as the global Access to Justice (A2J) crisis.

Jones recognized the potential of emerging technology segments, suggesting that “Legal Tech coupled with sales technologies and narrow AI can immediately impact and ultimately help solve the Access to Justice (A2J) crisis by helping consumer attorneys and community legal firms build volume practices. Volume practices drive down the cost of legal services and would allow the legal profession to meet more demand downmarket.”

Highlighting the broader societal implications, she emphasized that “Access to Justice is an ESG opportunity, particularly outside the U.S. where there is less complex regulation of the legal industry. However, even within the U.S., it is possible for industry, government, and the investment community to address A2J.”

Jones cautioned against a sole reliance on pro bono efforts, asserting that while there is a place for pro bono legal services, which in her view entails “addressing systemic

harms or serving individuals who already utilize other social safety net programs,” even a meaningful uptick in the provision of such services wouldn’t be on par with the scale of the problem. Jones suggested, “If every lawyer in the world spent 10% of our work year providing pro bono services, we’d still fall woefully short of meeting the unmet demand of the middle and working classes. So, the solution is to make consumer legal services affordable, not free.”

Her proposed remedy involves integrating technologies that ultimately transform not only practices but incentives, so that it becomes profitable to serve this down market. This is rooted in the recognition that for many lawyers today, “debt burdens often outweigh their altruism.”

With “a combination of technology, ESG funding, and industry resolve behind a down-market strategy,” Jones envisions a future where legal services are both profitable and accessible, which would “allow consumers to address their legal needs with dignity and without degrading means-testing to qualify for help.”

Key Takeaways

- A staggering 5 billion people globally lack adequate civil legal services, underscoring an urgent demand.
- The synergy of Legal Tech, ESG funding, and a committed industry approach can lead to a model that addresses this global demand more effectively. The shareability of digital evidence has already aided in collaboration and communication throughout legal proceedings.
- An emphasis on making legal services affordable and profitable as opposed to focusing solely on pro bono services could be a practical way to approach this transition, as Jones contended.
- New training initiatives aim to equip lawyers with the tools and knowledge to leverage technology to its fullest potential.






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