

In-house legal in 2022: what's front of mind?



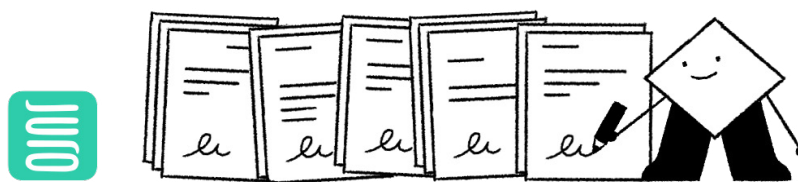
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The findings conveyed and views expressed in this report are the authors' own and not those of their employers, nor those of Juro.

We would like to thank the contributors to this report: Ken Siegel, Ajanta Moushumi, Bianca Stewart, Scott Brown, Claudia Saraiva, Sophie Salisbury, Ann Silla, Andriani Ferti, Asim Khan, Gillian Cloney, Eva Moberger, Tatsiana Sivukha, Danielle McLoughlin and Rob Chesnut. Sanaa Siddiqui edits this report.

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Who did we survey?

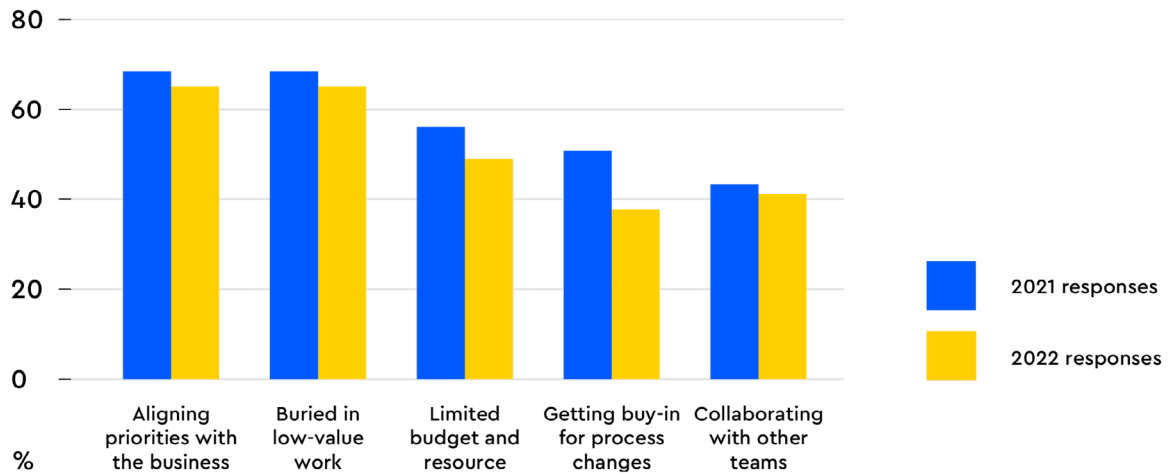
Juro interviewed 90 in-house lawyers between April 11th and April 29th 2022, with the following job titles:

- Chief Legal Officer
- General Counsel
- Head of Legal
- VP Legal
- Senior legal counsel
- Legal operations & innovation manager
- Legal counsel

The results are in: read on to learn about in-house legal's challenges and priorities for the year ahead.



In-house legal's biggest challenges



73%

think they're falling behind their peers in private practice in training terms



47%

would consider leaving their jobs in the next six months

Juro interviewed 90 in-house lawyers about their priorities, challenges and concerns in 2022. Data gathered between April 11th and April 29th 2022.

juro.com

Biggest challenges for in-house legal

"Low-value work continues to block legal from the high-value, strategic work they were trained to do"

Every year, we survey in-house legal teams and legal ops professionals to discover their biggest challenges and priorities for the year ahead. What's changed over the past 12 months? Let's take the temperature of in-house legal at some of the world's fastest-growing companies.

The pandemic may have changed legal's ways of working over the past few years, but the growing popularity of remote working, a strong focus on work/life balance, and the shift to hybrid workplaces haven't impacted the challenges in-house legal teams face every day.

We asked 90 senior in-house lawyers at scaling tech companies about the biggest challenges they faced in their roles; **aligning priorities with the business** and **being buried in low-value work** both came joint first, at 65 per cent. **Limited budget** came a close second, at 49 per cent.

Despite epochal events that stress-tested business models in every industry, legal leaders chose the same top three headaches as they did a year ago.

Buried under low-value work

This challenge came joint-first with 'aligning with the business' – and this could be due to the nature of the scaleup environment. Often, scaleups will grow from the tens to the hundreds while the legal department only scales from one lawyer to two.

That means lean legal teams have a mountain of work to overcome, and much of it is routine, admin tasks – providing routine contracts and boilerplate clauses, answering the same legal questions every day, and so on.



35 per cent

of respondents feel like the business doesn't understand them.

This low-value work continues to block legal from the high-value, strategic work they were trained to do, and can be a point of contention between legal and the wider business.

Legal can be seen as a blocker, delaying high-value business projects, because they're instead inundated with admin work.

Aligning with the business

This was one of the biggest challenges in our 2021 report, in which 69 per cent chose this option as one of their main problems. Though the percentage has dipped slightly, it remains front and center for in-house lawyers in 2022.

In fact, the proportion of lawyers waking up each day and thinking about this problem hasn't dipped since 2020.

Why is aligning with the business so important?

Most people at a small business have likely never worked with a lawyer – so there is the possibility that colleagues already have misguided perceptions on what it's like to work with legal. They could see legal as:

- The department of 'no'
- A traditional, archaic function that doesn't keep pace with the business
- Unapproachable and/or boring
- A department that exists in its own bubble

By joining a scaleup and making it their mission to align on business objectives and goals, legal can disprove these misconceptions, whilst also demonstrating their value as more than the bad cop brought in to say 'no' to business growth.

Being able to understand the business inside out, align on top priorities, and deliver in these various fields allows legal to:

- Collaborate more effectively with the wider business – instead of just saying 'no', lawyers can explain why not and help the business understand the legal perspective
- Drive strategy and influence major business decisions
- Build and maintain trust that grants them full autonomy of the legal function

It's an effective way for lawyers to become strategic business partners, and the drivers of change at their businesses. This is, however, easier said than done.

Why is aligning with the business a challenge?

Aligning with the business is a top challenge, matched only by low-value work, because the latter prevents the former.

If you're spending most of your time on repetitive tasks, the chances are you don't have time to figure out what the business wants, and how to best support on long-term projects.

"If you're joining a small, scaling business, expect to create and scale that legal infrastructure. You'll quickly understand that your work has a tangible impact and will be valuable on each business level.

You need to be aware of the different aspects of in-house legal: you'll be expected to adopt a multi-professional approach, with a desire to dive deeper into new areas of the business, beyond just legal work"



Tatsiana Sivukha is the legal counsel at Flo Health.

It's also challenging to set aside time to understand the business when you're dealing with endless incoming requests.

This struggle to set aside time for meaningful work also manifests in other areas of our survey – **73 per cent** of in-house legal teams think they're falling behind on training, compared to their peers in private practice.

Why are in-house legal falling behind on training?

This again could come down to the workload in-house lawyers have to undertake – which may not necessarily respect downtime.

It could also be due to a lack of specialist legal training that addresses the in-house role – with such a variety of scaleups out there, lawyers may end up working on niche tasks, for which they can't find the relevant resources or training to guide them.

As a result, **47 per cent** of respondents are considering leaving their jobs in the next six months, looking for opportunities with greater flexibility and autonomy.

"Business partners and commercial leaders usually don't need or want to know all of the legal details behind our advice – they just want bitesize, actionable advice.

Not coming across too 'lawyerly' and using plain, easy to understand language is key. Sometimes 'you don't sound like a lawyer' is the best compliment you can get!"



Gillian Cloney is the senior legal counsel at Trustpilot.

If you're looking for a new challenge, [check out our jobs board](#), where we curate the hottest legal jobs at the world's most innovative companies.

Juro community | jobs board

A curated list, updated daily, of the hottest [in-house legal jobs](#) at [innovative companies](#).

Are YOU hiring? Tell us at community@juro.com and we'll post it here.

🔥 Featured role 🔥



General Counsel, Zapp | London: "Zapp is building the future of convenience with a full stack approach to on-demand essential items, 24/7, delivered in minutes. Customer obsession is at the heart of everything we do, and from founders to riders we are relentlessly focused on delighting our customers" [Find out more](#)

We spoke to the following lawyers to find out more about their roles:

- Bianca Stewart, Head of Legal, Motorway
- Eva Mobacker, VP Legal, Planhat
- Danielle McLoughlin, Head of Legal and Compliance, Mission Labs

Read on to learn about what they had to say. [📖](#)

In focus: the in-house role



Bianca Stewart
is the Head of Legal
at Motorway.

Would you consider moving away from the in-house legal role?

Never. Having worked in-house and in private practice, one thing I know for sure is that I enjoy influencing the business from within.

Private practice lawyers are often parachuted in to work with specific people on specific problems, but I know that I produce my best work when I can build relationships over time with my colleagues.

What advice would you give to someone considering an in-house role?

Think about whether in-house supports or hinders your ways of working. This is particularly important when considering a sole legal counsel role or joining a small team.

You are unlikely to have your own office where you can just shut the door and get your head down. On the contrary, people will approach you or Slack you for anything and everything until you have built up mechanisms for controlling this.

On the other hand, you do have the unique opportunity to get under the hood of the company and have a serious impact.

How can in-house lawyers – or the companies they work at – make sure they keep pace with the market?

I have tried to leverage relationships with our law firms to access client trainings and webinars. I also plan to start working with existing firms to see if they can provide short training sessions on specific topics for myself and the team. 📖

In focus: the in-house role

What advice would you give to someone considering an in-house role?

Being approachable and helpful is the most important trait for a successful in-house lawyer.

I'm quite service-minded by nature and I try to be really transparent in how I communicate with the business; for



Eva Mobacker is the VP Legal at Planhat.

example, giving the business a heads up when I'm busy with a high-priority task, such as an M&A project or an unexpected audit.

It's important that everyone knows that legal doesn't function in a bubble, and if I'm extremely busy and slow to reply, there's a reason behind it. 📄

In focus: the in-house role

What advice would you give to someone considering an in-house role?

Research everything you can about the role and the company. It's important to really understand:

- The company's product or service
- The company's mission and values
- Their strategy and how the legal role can help support and drive that



Danielle McLoughlin is the Head of Legal and Compliance at Mission Labs.

This will help in understanding whether it's the right fit for you.

Just as important, be prepared to be agile, commercial and learn fast. You won't know everything so ask lots of questions and enjoy the experience.

It's a privilege as you're able to learn from so many creative and talented people across the business every day. 📄

Creating and tracking KPIs

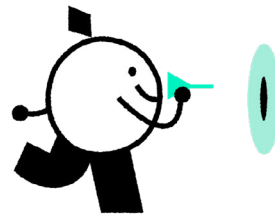
66%

of respondents
don't track legal KPIs



81%

believe legal should
have its own KPIs,
instead of aligning
with business goals



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Data gathered between April 11th and April 29th 2022.

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Spotlight: creating and tracking KPIs

What do lawyers think of creating and tracking legal KPIs? And what's the biggest blocker when it comes to getting started with metrics? Find out in this section.

The legal community seems to be divided on the value of legal KPIs, with **66 per cent** of respondents saying they don't track these at their businesses.

One of the reasons for not creating and tracking legal KPIs could be the struggle to quantify work in such a service-based function – **52 per cent** of those who track KPIs chose this as their biggest challenge.

It can be difficult to measure success when your role revolves around enabling others and preventing risk.

Wilson Sonsini's chief innovation officer, David Wang, says:

"When lawyers prevent something bad from happening, they can't demonstrate a scenario in the multiverse where the risk unfolded. It's hard to explain the impact of something that never happened to business stakeholders."

This makes it difficult to create and track KPIs like other functions in the business.




Aligning KPIs with the business

Interestingly, 81 per cent believe that legal should have its own metrics, instead of aligning with the business, for the following reasons:

- *"Legal milestones are often harder to gauge or quantify. Some of what we seek to achieve isn't quite as visible as other metrics across the organization"*
- *"It's difficult to make legal KPIs meaningful, especially at an early-stage organization"*
- *"We have different styles of work to the rest of the business"*
- *"If business KPIs revolve around growing revenue, we cannot be driven by this alone, because we need to consider the risks"*
- *"Legal work is sometimes contrary to the business' interests"*
- *"Typical KPIs are not consistent with the legal mission of protecting the business. For instance, a contract may take 12 months to negotiate, or it may take a week – it's dependent on many other factors. Ultimately the measure of success should be: did legal protect the company's interests?"*

At the same time, lawyers claim that their biggest challenge is aligning with the business, which raises questions around the value of KPIs and whether that alignment is a strong starting point to overcoming the problem.

We hear from Andriani Ferti, Global Legal Director at The Beat, and Asim Khan, senior legal counsel at Iress, on their thoughts around tracking KPIs.

We also spoke to Rob Chesnut, formerly GC at Airbnb, to get his insights on how legal teams can align with the business – and whether KPIs can help. 

In focus: creating and tracking KPIs



Andriani Ferti
is the Global Legal
Director at The Beat.

Does your legal team track KPIs?

Not yet – the business itself has not adopted a top-down approach towards KPIs, and only specific departments and functions set and follow KPIs.

However, I strongly believe that KPIs can demonstrate the value of the legal team within the organization, and therefore legal should track KPIs.

We're a service-based function, and always called to extinguish fires, but we also need to demonstrate what we've achieved in the past quarter. This influences how the business interacts with and perceives the legal team.

Should these KPIs come from the top down?

Yes, definitely – if I set my own KPIs, this doesn't necessarily mean they would align with the company's requirements.

Working in accordance with company-wide KPIs means getting buy-in for legal's goals from the CEO and the rest of the senior management team.

Without this support, legal wouldn't have a set direction, and wouldn't have

the encouragement to meet and exceed their goals.

What are the best KPIs legal can track?

Legal should track KPIs around budget, or setting a contract management procedure to reduce contract review times, for example.

Risk metrics are also useful – you can map out the risks and assess which areas of the business need the most legal attention in order to mitigate them.

Where can legal teams get started with creating and tracking KPIs?

It's important to set a clear strategy that covers:

- How you structure the legal team
- How you decide on external legal support
- How much risk you are willing to take on

With all this in mind, it becomes much easier to track KPIs. It's also easier to implement these KPIs at an early-stage business – the larger the company gets, the more these processes are set in stone, and difficult to shift. 📄

In focus: creating and tracking KPIs



Asim Khan is the senior legal counsel at Iress.

Why is it important for legal to track KPIs?

Legal teams are now moving towards outcome-based operating models in order to demonstrate true business value. KPIs are an important indicator of whether you're likely to meet these expectations.

What advice would you give to legal teams looking to create and track KPIs?

I always recommend following the rule of three:

- 1) Create a KPI that measures the success of the legal team
- 2) Create a KPI that addresses the needs of the C-suite
- 3) Create a KPI that aligns with the wider business

It's important to take a measured approach so you don't solely fixate on the KPIs and lose sight of the desired outcomes. 📄

Tackling KPIs: how legal can align with the business



Rob Chesnut was formerly the General Counsel and Chief Ethics Officer at Airbnb. He's also the author of the bestseller, *Intentional Integrity: How Smart Companies Can Lead An Ethical Revolution*.

Two contradicting stats in this year's report caught my attention – **81 per cent** of respondents believed legal should have its own KPIs, instead of aligning with business goals – and at the same time, **65 per cent** chose 'aligning with the business' as their biggest challenge.

Being out of sync with the business is one of the cardinal sins of running an in-house legal team. You work for a business, and ought to be aligned behind what the business is trying to do.

There are plenty of ways to resolve this issue of misalignment - and I believe KPIs are definitely one of them.

So what can legal teams do to align KPIs with the business? Here's what I did during my time managing legal at Airbnb and Chegg.

1. Adopt key business goals as part of legal's KPIs

At Airbnb and Chegg, I would insist on taking key business goals and making them part of my team's KPIs. Cascading them through the team helped us all work towards an individual goal, and therefore enable the business.

Even though we're lawyers, we ought to all be working enthusiastically to enable business success.

If those business KPIs are also my team's KPIs, then legal has a greater advantage when it comes to informing and educating the business on regulatory and legal issues – you can tie these challenges to an objective the business understands.

2. Encourage the business to adopt legal KPIs

Both legal and the business needs to be incentivized to drive growth of the business in a way that isn't reckless. The business wants to grow, as quickly as it can, and legal wants to encourage this without taking on unreasonable risks – so what do you do?

I tackled this by insisting that business leaders took responsibility for a few legal or regulatory KPIs. We would all sit together as an executive team and discuss each function's objectives – and I'd tell the business that I wanted legal to be incentivized alongside the business.

The ultimate goal is to support the business, and help drive the mission of the company. So I agree to take on the business goals as part of legal's own, but it's a two-way street – the business needs to adopt a legal KPI as an objective too. It's a trade-off, and the business understands the value of this.

3. Hold the business accountable

This exchange of KPIs is necessary for discussions between legal and the wider business; it holds each party accountable, and ensures that we're all aligned with how we look at and approach risk.

For example, when I had regulatory and litigation expenses at Airbnb that were attributable to a business unit, those were charged to the business. If a particular business unit does anything that results in significant regulatory or litigation costs, they pay it!

The impact it has on the team's budget ensures everyone's a little more cautious towards reckless decisions moving forward – the business learns to take on risk, but not too much risk, in the same way legal does.



It also benefits from a legal perspective – without an understanding of risk, I'm just saying 'no' all the time when the business wants to try something new.

Nothing goes wrong, and I'm a hero to the legal department - but the rest of the business hates me, and there's no balance between being risk-averse and helping the company scale. That's not success.

Aside from these direct changes to how you set KPIs, there are other perspectives you could consider to make sure legal is aligned with the business.

Consider legal as a customer support function

I always saw legal as a customer support function, where the wider business is our client. Our role is service-based, and revolves around enabling others.

I sent out anonymous surveys to different areas of the business, getting feedback on how effective legal was as a supporting organization – and based on the results I would set KPIs specifically around offering that support.

My KPIs would be a blend of six points around:

- Business goals
- Customer support
- Legal objectives, such as budgeting and mitigating risks
- Leadership, such as managing and building a strong, diverse team

Set KPIs sooner rather than later

Everyone should have KPIs, and should set them as soon as possible. You also need to review these on the same cadence as the business – whether that's quarterly or annually.

Even if they aren't formally reviewed every quarter, they should be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that

they're up-to-date and keeping pace with the business.


It's important to have these in place regardless of whether you're managing a global team, or sole counsel at a high-growth business.

In the early stages, with your lean legal team, you want to be aligned with C-suite on what legal's objectives should be and where you should be dedicating your time.

And when you're managing a global team, you have a lot of direct reports to guide – so KPIs are important for that focus and alignment.

The misconception I often hear around creating and tracking KPIs is that it'll take too long to do so – and so time-crunched lawyers will sideline this work in place of other projects.

But setting these KPIs doesn't need to eat up your time, and neither does it need to involve fancy technology – an hour with a pen and notebook is all it really takes to identify your goals and ensure you're best serving the business.

Rob Chesnut is the author of the book [Intentional Integrity: how smart businesses can lead an ethical revolution](#). 

Implementing technology



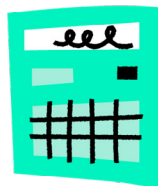
20%

Only **20%** are happy with their contract workflow, which is why ...



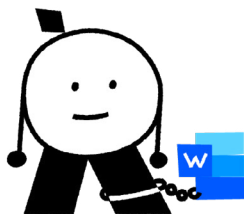
28%

recently invested in contracts software – more than any other software category ...



54%

have their own budget for process improvements ...



58%

and **58%** still agree contracts in Word – down from **68%** last year

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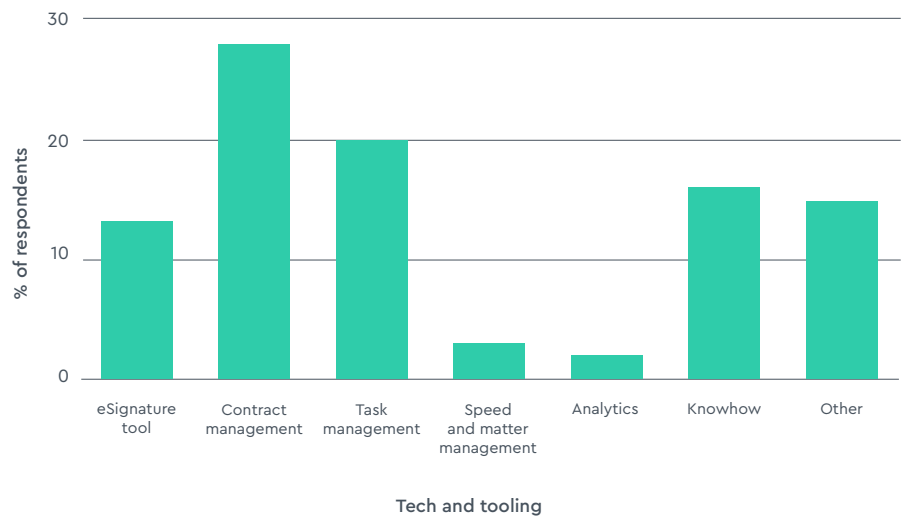
Implementing technology

How has legal's relationship with technology developed over the past year? We explore legal's experience with tech implementation.

54 per cent of respondents said they had a defined legal budget, which has increased from last year. This budget helps legal work more efficiently with tech implementation.

28 per cent of our respondents are investing in solutions that improve the contract process.

Most recent tech implemented in the legal team

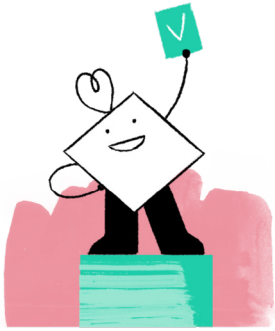


Contract automation vs Word

In 2021 and 2022, we asked lawyers which tools they used to agree and manage contracts.

68 per cent chose Word in 2021.

58 per cent chose Word in 2022.



Juro is the #1-rated contract platform for **ease of setup**, leading the category on both **Capterra** and **G2**.

And interestingly, only **20 per cent** were satisfied with their contract process in 2022.

As we established earlier, lawyers have the budget to implement new tech and tackle the problem – so why aren't they doing so?

- **Limited time.** Lean legal teams often have too much on their plates to consider their tech options. Whittling down the seemingly endless choices available to go through a lengthy implementation process is something that time-crunched lawyers can't commit to, especially when implementation takes months, instead of weeks
- **Limited budget.** 46 per cent of respondents don't have a defined budget in place, which makes it difficult to implement new technology

For the 54 per cent with a budget in place, finding the right tool that allows legal to start small and scale with the business can be challenging. Juro is built for high-growth companies, as the contract solution for businesses like Cazoo, Deliveroo, Gopuff and more

"I can implement a new piece of tech to deal with a legal problem, but how do I know if it'll scale as the business does?"

A scalable solution is something that can withstand the test of time – it has enough features and capabilities that it won't break with a new piece of information.

It's a solution that you can implement and leave to run alone, without too much manual input"



Sophie Salisbury is the Head of Legal at Appear Here.

- **Getting buy-in from the business.** Sometimes adoption causes a greater issue than selecting and implementing the tech itself – if businesses are accustomed to certain ways of working, they might not appreciate an alternative, especially if integrating it into their day-to-day is a disruptive process

Even the best tech is useless if adoption is low. Legal and business teams love contract solutions like Juro for their fast implementation, which ensures value in weeks, not months.

Lawyers buy technology when it's easy to implement, not too costly, easy for the wider business to adopt, and can scale with the company. 📄

In focus: tech and implementation



Claudia Saraiva is the legal operations manager at Personio.

What tools are in legal's tech stack?

We use Juro, Confluence, Jira and Slack – and then the more obvious tools like GSuite.

What do you look for in a legal tech solution?

I look for simplicity and scalability. On simplicity, the solution needs to be simple to both implement and maintain. On the scalability point, the technology needs to keep up with the stakeholders and the legal department.

I also consider configuration possibilities; I need these possibilities to be as granular as possible, so that everyone only receives the information they need – in accordance with the 'need to know' principle.

Being able to configure this information, especially with certain roles and rights, helps me provide the relevant information without overloading my colleagues.

Ease of use is also important. A modern, intuitive UI is always useful – not everyone using the solution has the

technical capabilities to understand how it works!

How can legal teams with limited budgets get started with implementing tech?

In the beginning, I also didn't have a dedicated budget. I found it really useful to exchange information with colleagues in other departments, learning about the tools they use.

This is also useful for implementing new tech – buying another user license, for a tool that exists in another team, is less expensive than considering and implementing something completely new.

I would also recommend looking into your existing tech stack, and exploring the possibilities there. For example, I attended a [Juro community](#) event on Slack workflows and how legal teams can use Slack's workflow builder.

I had experimented initially, but with practical examples I was able to kickstart this project again – and now, we have new Slack workflows in place that help us work more efficiently.

It's useful to try a pilot project; even if you don't have a dedicated budget, there's a possibility that you can make everyone understand the benefits.

What can vendors do better to help legal with tech implementation?

1. Understand your audience. As a baseline, vendors need to understand they're not talking to a person who deals with tech implementation on a daily basis – but rather, someone who does it on top of their actual work.

It's important to explain in layman's terms during implementation: what are the concrete steps lawyers need to take in order to make this project successful?

2. Don't take knowledge for granted.

People in the legal industry may not be familiar with project management and the steps they need to take to successfully adopt new tech.

3. Provide resources to help legal get buy-in. Business case calculations can be difficult for some lawyers, so anything around resource costs, time taken to get a ROI, and so on, is super useful to pass on to your prospects, so we can get buy-in from other team members at a quicker rate.

4. Don't underestimate the time commitment from both legal and other teams. I love the "Who will be in charge of each team in Juro?" question in Juro's onboarding form. Having a team champion is so important, and it's the most effective way to guarantee adoption. 📄

"Juro is incredibly low-maintenance. Once you implement Juro, it's good to go, and you trust that it works"

- Sahana Jayashankar, sales operations manager, Mentimeter

Find out more about how Mentimeter used Juro to enable sales, create a contracts repository, and standardize their legal documents. [Click here.](#)



In focus: tech and implementation



Ann Silla is the Director of Legal at Dext.

Are tech and tooling high on your priority list?

Yes – if we can implement useful technology properly, I'm expecting to:

- Allow the business to self-serve significantly in areas that are relatively low in risk but high in volume
- Free up the legal team's time so that we can refocus on bigger, more complex issues with the aim of succeeding in our strategic plans

What can vendors do better to help legal with tech implementation?

I think too many vendors don't take the time to understand exactly what the legal team needs.

The tech can often be amazing and look great, but if it doesn't address the gap, it's not helpful enough for me to want to take on the implementation task – which can often be seen as a time drain.

If there's a big implementation learning curve, then the appetite to get up that curve will reduce significantly.

If I could buy the tech and have it instantly working, that's ideally what I want – anything which adds complexity to that goal becomes an added barrier to me.

Vendors need to:

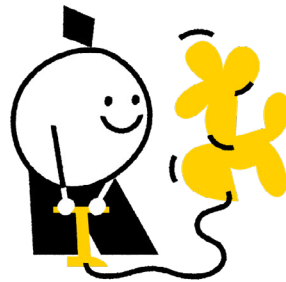
- Identify my specific needs
- Tailor the demo to address those needs
- Reinforce with examples from a similar use case – on the implementation side, how long did it take before the customer was getting value? How many teams did implementation involve? How long did it take? How much did it cost?

All these points mean I'll be more likely to look into the product! 📄

Hiring in-house lawyers

73%

Lawyers are hiring! 73% are scaling their legal teams, but ...



41%

said finding candidates with the right experience was the biggest challenge



Most valuable candidate skills:

- Commercial mindset
- Collaboration
- Technical legal skills
- Adaptability



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juro.com

Hiring for growth

How do you make the 'right' first hire? What are the most valued skills leaders look for in candidates? And what's the biggest challenge when it comes to hiring? We take a deep dive into the results.

It's great to see legal teams continue to scale in spite of the unique challenges brought on by the pandemic – in fact, **73 per cent** of respondents said their legal teams had scaled in the past 12 months.

However, the biggest obstacle when hiring was finding candidates with the right experience, according to **41 per cent** of respondents.

This could be due to the unique nature of working at a small, fast-paced business, which requires a certain level of adaptability and flexibility, as well as an openness to wearing multiple hats.

According to the 2022 data, here's what scaleup lawyers look for in candidates:

- **Commercial mindset.** Lawyers need to understand the business and the revenue-focused goals that the company is striving towards – and more importantly, lawyers need to enable and support the business as it scales. Experience working at a scaling business, with an understanding of revenue and deals, is always a plus
- **Ability to collaborate.** In-house lawyers get the opportunity to collaborate with all areas of the business – from working with product teams to ensure the product or service is legally compliant, to discussing high-level strategy with C-suite. The ability to collaborate is invaluable, as it forms a huge part of the role



- **Technical legal skills and knowledge.** Most time-crunched legal teams need candidates who can hit the ground running. Solid technical skills ensure that the legal team doesn't spend too much time on training and onboarding, and can add value to the business at a faster rate
- **Adaptability.** Startups can be unpredictable at times, especially in the early stages. Working at a startup is a high-risk decision, and a strong candidate should be able to thrive in an unpredictable environment and adapt with the business

We spoke to Ajanta Moushumi, Privacy and Legal Advisor at Whereby, about scaling the legal team.

We also spoke to Scott Brown, Managing Director at Heriot Brown In-House Legal Recruitment, on how in-house lawyers can evaluate the right experience. 📖

In focus: scaling your team



Ajanta Moushumi is the Privacy and Legal Advisor at Whereby.

What do you look at when hiring another lawyer into your team?

Transferable skills are important – in a scaleup, you need to wear multiple hats, as legal has limited resources.

For example, I initially joined as a privacy counsel, but with a background in commercial law; the business expanded my role, with a 50 per cent split between commercial and privacy.

I would also look at the attitude of the person, and prioritize this over transferable skills.

If they're not a team player, their expertise won't yield any results. We need a balance of attitude and experience, and there's a huge focus on this at Whereby.

If we were to hire another lawyer, I would look at how the person works cross-culturally, with different teams, and so on. Are they able to break down complex legal issues into understandable chunks?

You can be the smartest lawyer in the world, but it doesn't make a difference if you can't convey that information in a meaningful way.

And once you have the go-ahead to scale your team – what's next? Where do you start?

When we invite a candidate in for interviews, we help the candidate understand how legal works at Whereby, right from the get-go.

If I were managing this person, I'd prepare by making sure they have the emotional vulnerability to take risks.

In-house positions are different to law firms, and candidates coming from law firms are likely coming with that pressure of needing to be perfect and have clever questions.

As human beings, you're not perfect, and I wouldn't want to miss out on great ideas due to my team's insecurity. 📖

Analysis: evaluating the 'right' experience



Scott Brown is the Managing Director at Heriot Brown In-House Legal Recruitment.

At Heriot Brown, we are laser-focused on enabling lawyers to find fulfilment in their careers. We specialise in placing lawyers in-house and we're fortunate that a lot of the work we do is with some amazing scaleups.

From Juro's report, **73 per cent** of in-house lawyers said their legal teams are planning on growing their teams over the next 12 months. As recruiters, that is music to our ears.

We definitely see this stat reflected in the scaleups we collaborate with on a daily basis. Generally, there's a high demand for legal talent as larger, well-established corporations and law firms are also hiring (and paying) aggressively to attract and retain talent.

The hiring trend and need for lawyers in-house in scaleups is a byproduct of the amount of money being invested through Venture Capital and public markets.

This means there's a war for talent, and scaleups need to think outside the box in order to hire the best people.

Making the move to a scaleup

So, why do lawyers want to move to a scaleup, instead of working in a law firm or at a well-established business? There are several reasons that play strongly to a hiring scaleup's favour.

- **Autonomy.** Lawyers appreciate the flexibility to pave their own career path, and work on the tasks they consider most valuable

- **Working closely with the business.** In a larger corporation, the chances of collaborating with key stakeholders and decision makers and influencing the direction of the company are slim. In most scaleups, you will have direct exposure to senior stakeholders and customers
- **Developing with the business.** Joining a company in the early stages and growing with the business is something many people find attractive – it gives the job a sense of purpose, as opposed to working in a large corporation as another cog in the machine
- **Exponential growth opportunity.** There's a level of variety at a scaleup that won't present itself in a larger business. The legal function in most scaleups will be a work in progress and the scope of the function will be undefined. This presents the opportunity to define and expand the role and potentially accelerate career development

With this in mind, it's easy to understand why there is an appetite among lawyers to join a scaleup. However, **41 per cent** of lawyers surveyed for this report said that finding candidates with the 'right' experience is the biggest challenge.

What is the 'right' experience?

There are four qualities that are in high demand when it comes to seeking ideal legal candidates:

1. Adaptability

Scaleups are often disruptive in their sector. This can mean the company pivots quickly and that the legal advice has to change.

The real value-add for lawyers joining a scaleup and working in a fast-paced environment like this is the ability to adapt, to understand the business' changing commercial objectives, and to interpret the risk environment.



Candidates can stand out by demonstrating their ability to challenge stakeholders internally, as well as having a problem-solving mindset.

2. A collaborative mindset

The ability to collaborate with other areas of the business is essential. Chances are, working at a smaller company, you'll be handling requests from all departments of the business – from sales, to product, to marketing, to finance, and more.

The ability to talk to someone outside of legal, and distil complex legal concepts into bitesize chunks that anyone can understand and apply, is invaluable.

My advice would be to think of yourself as not just a lawyer but as a business operator and enabler who can help the business reach its goals and navigate the risk landscape.

3. A commercial approach

It's important for hiring managers to test candidates beyond the purely legal skills. Some of this is less tangible and involves assessing soft skills and commerciality.

You want to hire people into your team who can move quickly and focus on what really matters, instead of getting caught up with black letter law or the trivial details that slow the business down.

A good way to assess this is through a written technical assessment. Candidates should look to provide an executive summary which advises a hard outcome rather than sitting on the fence.

In the application stage, hiring managers should look at how candidates deliver the message, which is often more important than if the advice on a particular point of law is watertight.

4. Business enthusiasm

Company values and cultures are important in most of the scaleups we work with. Being "entrepreneurial" is a phrase that is used regularly in job adverts in scaleups. What does this mean and how can it be assessed?

In the recruitment process, look for candidates who have a natural curiosity and ask questions. Working in-house this will translate to someone who builds relationships internally and finds out what the business does.

What does the future hold for legal hiring?

It is well documented that we are currently in a war for talent. We have never seen a more competitive market for legal candidates. And the struggle to hire is affecting every business; even the hottest companies are finding it challenging to attract top talent.

For lawyers, there's currently an abundance of opportunity out there. With interviewing processes being online, hiring processes are shorter. This means less friction in entering a recruitment process and less commitment to the process.

Candidates are dipping their toes in the water and may interview for roles they are unlikely to accept because there's less commitment involved.

For the companies hiring, I would recommend:

- **Protecting your early hires.** The lawyers you've had on board for three or four years are incredibly valuable, and are ingrained in the business. They understand better than most how the company operates, and how to support the business on that journey. Do what you can to retain them
- **Casting the net wider when it comes to hiring.** In such a competitive market, it's difficult to secure the perfect candidate, if such a candidate even exists! Depending on



the role, make sure you have an open mind and consider candidates who are perhaps looking to change sectors or someone who has qualified into another area of law

- **Building an employer brand.** Candidates are joining scaleups based on the vision of the company and the individuals who work there. Sell your legal department and discuss the breadth of work in which legal is involved

Getting ahead of the problem can help scaleups evaluate the 'right' experience and hire the best talent for their scaling business at a pace that helps them to drive business growth. 📄

What do the findings tell us?



Ken Siegel is the Executive Advisor at Wilson Sonsini.

The survey reflects a range of concerns for in-house teams – some familiar, and some new. How can we evaluate them as a whole?

Open-ended questions often elicit the most interesting survey responses. I was particularly struck by the responses to the open-ended question: "what's your favorite thing about being an in-house lawyer?"

Although the specific responses varied, a few clear themes emerged. In-house lawyers appreciated:

- **Variety.** In the world of in-house lawyers, it's often the case that "no two days are the same" and it "never gets boring"
- **Working with creative people.** Tech companies depend on innovation to thrive. In-house lawyers have a unique opportunity to observe, participate in, and support the creative processes that drive innovation
- **Solving problems and enabling the business.** In-house lawyers at scaling companies serve a single client – the business. Solving problems and supporting the business as it scales is really rewarding
- **Strategy work.** For me, the most rewarding part of being a GC was the opportunity to provide value-added, strategic advice, and to participate in making key business decisions

The qualitative data here is supported by quantitative data: on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (I love my job), over **90 per cent** gave a response of three or higher, with almost 20 per cent stating that they love their job.

I found one other result particularly intriguing and somewhat surprising: **73 per cent** of respondents reported that they feel

their training is falling behind that of their private practice peers.

Based on my experience as first a private practice lawyer, followed by almost two decades as the GC of several technology companies, I'd like to assuage this fear if I can.

There is no doubt in my mind that the opportunity to hone one's expertise in a particular field of law is greater in private practice than in an in-house role.

There is also no doubt in my mind that the opportunity to broaden one's range of expertise is much greater in an in-house role than in private practice.

To me, breadth equates with variety which equates with continuous learning—including in-depth learning about specific fields of law as real-life situations arise.

I would argue that your private practice peers are falling behind you and not the other way around!

It's also important to acknowledge that these are challenging times. In-house lawyers must advise their companies on legal matters arising from the current macro and geopolitical issues, to rapidly evolving and expanding regulations – all while supporting the day-to-day legal needs of growing companies.

While this may seem daunting, challenging times provide great opportunities for in-house lawyers to earn a "seat at the table" by providing practical, actionable, contextually relevant and appropriately risk-tolerant advice.

I encourage in-house lawyers to take advantage of the opportunities in front of them.

Wilson Sonsini has navigated and continues to help innovative companies navigate through challenges for more than half a century.

We're here to help technology companies and their in-house lawyers navigate through the challenges we're seeing today and those that will arise in the future. ■



Horizon-scanning: what's next for scaleup lawyers?



Richard Mabey is the CEO and co-founder of Juro.

With scaleup lawyers striving to work proactively, instead of reactively, what are the issues that keep them up at night?

We posed a question around the upcoming topics that our respondents feel could be a pressing issue in the next 12 months. Some of the responses included:

- Data protection
- Corporate governance
- Commercial contracting
- Privacy compliance
- Regulation
- ESG
- Infosec
- Scaling internationally
- Licensing
- Legal operations
- New technology, and new markets
- "Everything automation can't solve"

Why are these points of concern for legal teams? And what can they do to get ahead of the issues?

Part of the fun of being a legal leader at a scaling business is not knowing what's coming next. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try – indeed, spotting risk before it eventuates is a core part of the role.

"Lawyers never want to be the blocker that prevents a product from launching in a new market"

Our respondents gave a broad range of answers when it came to the key risks they saw on the horizon, but everything on the list above was referenced multiple times.

While some of these topics are evergreen concerns for in-house lawyers, some reflect the changing role of the GC as a key advisor who feeds into business strategy.

Legal bear traps

Data protection, privacy compliance, information security - given how central software has become to the global economy, and its growth, it's no surprise that data protection and privacy are amongst the top priorities for lawyers.

While several monumental regulatory developments (like GDPR) are in the rear-view mirror (at least in terms of implementation), the next disruptive privacy regulation or court ruling is never far away.

The cost of a breach, both monetary and reputational, can be ruinous to a business, so in-house lawyers are wise to be proactive when it comes to protecting data.

Similarly, entering new markets can create a heavy burden on legal teams, particularly in heavily regulated verticals like financial services or real estate.

Lawyers never want to be the blocker that prevents a product from launching in a new market, so it's important to have the right counsel on speed dial for when opportunities present themselves.

Scaling contracts with the business

The preponderance of lawyers investigating solutions to speed up contracting suggests that it's also astute to look ahead at how your contract process will scale as the company grows.

“Looking ahead to work out the moment a process is going to break - and rescuing it before it does – is a key task for legal”

Our legal customers typically come to us because a fragmented process across email, Slack, Word, Google Drive and an eSignature provider is too messy and leaky to scale adequately without requiring huge amounts of the legal team's precious time.

While it's exciting to think of smart contracts as an opportunity for the future, many businesses still have some way to go when it comes to actually making sure all contracts are searchable, signed, and available to the right people at the point of need. Hopefully, that's where we come in.

Legal operations more generally is a focus for the same reason – manual and disjointed processes don't scale.

Whether it's matter management, tracking external spend, preserving institutional knowledge, or the huge range of operational tasks that fall at legal's door, looking ahead to work out the moment a process is going to break – and rescuing it before it does – is a key task for legal.

Of course, as referenced above, there are some things that automation can't solve. Simple wins like increasing legal's visibility in the business, through better communications, can have a huge impact and help legal teams to get the buy-in they need for high-impact projects.

Although there seems to be a software solution for every problem these days – if you believe the marketing of motivated companies like ours – some problems are much simpler, requiring human solutions rather than technological ones.

High-value work

When lawyers tell us that they're buried in low-value work, our hearts sink, of course. But for those who've managed to find solutions (software or otherwise) that take that low-value work off their desks, the range of high-value work available is really exciting.

Beyond workstreams like corporate governance, which often sit with legal, there are intellectually challenging topics like ESG to get stuck into.

One trend I've noticed amongst our customer base is that GC roles are expanding, with legal taking ownership of 'impact' projects around diversity and inclusion, or sustainability.

This is excellent, and a much better use of smart lawyers' time than trudging through endless contract reviews or answering pings for NDAs in Slack every ten minutes.

As we reflect on the results of this survey, I hope that this time next year, the low-value work and the time spent in Word have dropped again like they have this year – and that lawyers were able to spend more time on high-value work that really moves the needle. 📄

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Juro is the all-in-one contract automation platform that helps visionary legal counsel and the teams they enable to agree and manage contracts in one unified workspace. Juro has raised more than \$31m in venture funding from Eight Roads, Union Square Ventures, Point Nine Capital, Seedcamp and the founders of Wise, Gumtree and Indeed. Juro powers more than 500,000 contracts in more than 80 countries, with a customer base that includes Trustpilot, Deliveroo and Cazoo.



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