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LEGAL TECHNOLOGY

Finding Your Way In The Legal Tech World

Colin Levy reviews Legal Tech: A Practitioner's Guide, a definitive overview of legal tech throughout the entire legal industry.

By COLIN LEVY

Dec 4, 2018 at 11:00 AM



The legal world is one associated with many stereotypes like the image of an individual toiling away in a closed-door office reading pages and pages of documents long into the night with the phone ringing off the hook. Sadly, while the long hours have not yet gone away for many, the tools and processes that lawyers use to perform their work has. Technology has encouraged and sometimes forced upon us many of these changes.

For quite some time now, technology has played an outsized role in our lives. Computers, which were once the size of rooms are now the size of our pockets. We use computers for a wide range of tasks from writing emails, to creating presentations, to creating programs. Many professions have used computers to improve the quality of the work that they produce. For example, the financial services industry has continued to make extensive use of technology to perform increasingly complex financial operations and transactions. As of 2012, lawyers now are required to be [technologically competent](#), although the meaning of being “[technologically competent](#)” is still not clearly [defined](#).

This requirement has led to the legal industry, perhaps to some’s misguided dismay, becoming increasingly welcoming to the use of technology. Blogs, websites, and books abound on various aspects of technology in the world of law, such as

predictive analytics and document automation. However, for those looking for a thorough grounding in the current state of legal technology through case studies and analytical commentary, look no further than the book aptly named [Legal Tech: A Practitioner's Guide](#) by [Markus Hartung](#), [Micha-Manuel Bues](#), and [Gernot Halbleib](#).

The book, all 400 pages of it, provides a definitive overview of legal tech throughout the entire legal industry. Centered around 7 key themes including legal tech within big law firms, legal tech within in-house departments and legal tech in the context of the entire legal ecosystem, the book leaves no stone unturned in its coverage of how technology is transforming how lawyers work, where lawyers work, and even what legal work is. Expected topics like artificial intelligence and blockchain are covered as well as others like measuring innovation, improving client-lawyer collaboration, and online dispute resolution. Be forewarned, however, the book is not for the casual reader. It is a well-written and well-organized book, but it is dense and replete with numerous footnotes in many of its chapters. And, lest one think that its thoroughness is the only impressive aspect of the book, there are plenty of others.

Perhaps even more impressive is the collection of contributors that the book has. These contributors include individuals like [Marie Bernard](#), former CEO of [Nextlaw Labs](#), [Mark A. Cohen](#) of [Legal Mosaic](#), [Stevie Ghiassi](#), CEO of [Legaler](#), [Markus Hartung](#), Director of the [Bucerius Center on the Legal Profession](#), [Professor Mitch Kowalski](#), [Gowling WLG](#) Visiting Professor in Legal Innovation at the University of Calgary, [Professor Dan Linna](#) Visiting Professor of Law at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, [Chas Rampenthal](#), General Counsel of [Legal Zoom](#), and [Michele DeStefano](#), founder of [LawWithoutWalls](#) to name but a few.

What is arguably is most intriguing and welcome about the book, however, is Part 7, which features chapters covering how legal tech is being used around the world, including in Africa, Europa, Asia, and North America. Although the USA, Canada, and the UK are typically the most often cited when it comes to developments in the world of legal technology, there are equally exciting and intriguing developments taking place in countless other countries including in Africa and Asia. If nothing else, technological advances continue to make working in silos more challenging to sustain as well as a thing of the past. Perhaps most importantly, technology is also making the world a smaller and more accessible place. It remains increasingly important to not forget this and to welcome it. This remarkable volume, which any legal technology advocate,

writer, blogger, or user should strongly consider purchasing, recognizes this and enthusiastically embraces it wholly and unequivocally. ✕



[Colin S. Levy](#) currently serves as Corporate Counsel for [Salary.com](#). Prior to joining Salary.com, he was Manager, Contract Negotiations for Pearson Education, the leading global learning company where he negotiated and drafted domestic and global agreements with customers and helped develop contract management processes and procedures. Colin is a strong advocate of legal technology and legal innovation. In his free time, he writes a blog featuring interviews with leaders in the legal technology and legal innovation spaces.



TOPICS

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