CoCounsel Case Study: Primas Law

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Adam Kerr, Managing Partner, Primas Law

Progressive UK law firm Primas Law gains a competitive edge with GenAI technology

Niche commercial law firm Primas Law was established in 2014 by Managing Partner Adam Kerr, and today employs 60 staff across four offices in Manchester, Liverpool, Cheshire, and London, advising businesses of all sizes, local authorities, and property developers across the UK. The firm has always been tech-driven, and as the latest step in that journey, it implemented Thomson Reuters® CoCounsel, the first generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) assistant developed specifically for lawyers.

Within six months, CoCounsel has already shown its value in helping to sharpen the firm's competitive edge. In addition to improving efficiency and productivity across legal research, drafting, and document review, CoCounsel offers the firm enhanced work quality and enables lawyers to focus on more intellect-intensive tasks – major drivers during the selection process.

Kerr was eager to be an early adopter of generative AI, having followed its development closely over several years. He explains, "I think GenAI is a transformational, seismic shift. It's on the same scale as using email as opposed to handwritten letters. You want to try to be at the front of that steep curve."

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"Primas Law has always considered itself to be a dynamic and progressive law firm which continually looks at ways of improving the quality of service we provide to our valued clients. We view generative AI as a key opportunity. We evaluated several technologies and found that Thomson Reuters CoCounsel offered us by far the most comprehensive solution for our needs. It was streets ahead of the competition."

Flexibility and Reliability

It was important to choose generative AI solutions that could be used across the firm so that teams were not using disparate technologies. CoCounsel offers that vital flexibility. According to Kerr, "The use cases are different in each team. Litigation uses CoCounsel differently than Employment, who uses it differently to Corporate, who uses it differently to Real Estate, and so on. But some of those use cases can be repurposed across the teams. And we're finding new use cases all the time. It's a very flexible tool."

Reliability of outputs was also a critical consideration— and this was another key reason why Primas Law chose CoCounsel from Thomson Reuters. Given that the firm was already using Westlaw and Practical Law for legal research and guidance, using GenAI tools that built on these trusted platforms made a huge amount of sense.

Kerr says, "CoCounsel will allow us to leverage our investment in Practical Law™ and Westlaw® from Thomson Reuters, reducing research time and maintaining the quality of our work. The generative AI skills within CoCounsel will enable our lawyers to use their expertise more effectively, enhancing the client experience. We are particularly excited about the CoCounsel Drafting functionality which will transform the way we draft documents in conjunction with Practical Law. This increased efficiency and productivity will support Primas Law as we continue to grow our business."

Recognising that some people have concern around the accuracy of AI outputs, Kerr advises that human oversight remains just as important as ever. He gives the example that research undertaken by a trainee would be reviewed by a more experienced lawyer before being sent to a client—and points out that work generated by AI is no different.

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Attracting Talent and New Business

Primas Law's innovative approach as an early adopter of GenAI has enhanced the firm's appeal to top talent and clients. Kerr dismisses the idea that AI will replace lawyers, pointing out that instead it will make them more productive and allow more time to focus on cognitive tasks.

In his view, "Lawyers, particularly of a certain generation, are really attracted to the idea that we're doing this. Where we're competing for talent against much larger firms, people might not think that we'd be at the cutting edge of GenAI—and we are. That's proved a useful recruitment tool for us."

"CoCounsel also makes it easier to pitch for and win new client work. You can get information about some of the issues the client might want to look at quickly so you can engage with them about the substance of the matter and navigate your way into a meaningful conversation much faster than would otherwise have been the case. It's good to be able to impress clients early on with minimal time input. Clients also are attracted to the idea that we're a progressive practice."

Kerr believes that although putting KPIs (key performance indicators) around the use of AI may not be straightforward, he expects core metrics such as realisation rates, profit margins, new business conversion, and—ultimately—revenue to improve over time as use cases become more embedded.

"The obvious upsides of GenAI are around efficiency, productivity, and being more agile and interactive with your clients. It gives us a competitive edge in that sense. We're able to do things a bit more cleverly and faster. And that will only increase," he says.

Successful Implementation

Kerr adds, "This is the next evolution for the delivery of legal services. It felt natural to us to be at the forefront of that rather than playing catch-up. There are some important strategic advantages to being early adopters, but there are challenges to it as well." For the successful implementation of GenAI solutions, he advises firms to:

- Articulate the business case before implementing any AI solution

- Interrogate potential products thoroughly with an in-depth trial

- Phase the introduction—and start with the "easy wins"

- Bring the team on the journey. Ensure people are using it and get feedback as you go

- Create "super users" in each team to push the boundaries and communicate the benefits

- Train people well and get them to talk about their experiences to promote best practices and solutions to issues

- Be realistic about expectations

"When it comes to GenAI, you need to work with it. It's like any other tool. You need to develop how you use it, and you get out what you put in," Kerr says. "I'm a big believer that if you buy into this new world, you'll reap the rewards." He's already being proved right.

About Primas Law

Specialising in corporate and commercial work, commercial property, employment, commercial litigation, and insolvency, Primas Law provides a complete range of legal services for businesses, offering quality as the priority, meaning clients can expect a first-class value for money service.

Challenges

With AI set to revolutionise the business of law, Primas Law aimed to stay ahead of the game, seeking to leverage AI efficiency gains and quality improvements to work outputs.

Why Primas Law chose Thomson Reuters CoCounsel

The firm wanted a flexible solution that could be deployed for a variety of use cases. The suite of tools available through CoCounsel offered that adaptability. Building on the extensive knowledge and expertise of Practical Law and Westlaw, it offered all-important trustworthiness and reliability.

Benefits

- Accelerates key tasks, including research, document review, and drafting

- Delivers high quality outputs

- Boosts productivity

- Offers flexibility to be used in different ways across the firm

- Builds on trusted Practical Law and Westlaw platforms

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