Empowering legal departments with CoCounsel Legal UK:
Navigating regulatory complexity and enhancing efficiency

Thomson Reuters™

How in-house legal teams can facilitate regulatory compliance, reduce reliance on external law firms, accelerate decisions, enhance strategic impact, and drive business growth with AI

This white paper explores how Thomson Reuters® CoCounsel Legal UK empowers in-house teams to take greater control of their workloads, accelerate decision-making, create efficiency gains, navigate complexity with ease, and deliver more value to their organisations.

By uniting trusted legal content, agentic AI, and your own documents in a single solution, CoCounsel Legal UK helps teams move from bottleneck to business enabler — providing transparent, verifiable answers that build confidence across the enterprise.

With CoCounsel Legal UK, in-house legal teams can:

- Empower faster, smarter decisions, with 88% of users reporting greater confidence in their advice
- Accelerate deal-making and operations, drafting contracts up to 60% faster
- Streamline workflows for policy development, contract lifecycle management, or due diligence, saving time and reducing risk
- Control costs by reducing reliance on external law firms while ensuring consistent, high-quality outputs

CoCounsel Legal UK positions the legal department as a strategic force, delivering better results in-house, today and into the future.

> **The shift is clear: legal leaders are embracing AI not just to keep pace with demand, but to elevate their role as proactive business partners.**

U.K.-based in-house legal departments today face challenges coming from many directions. With often relatively small teams, they have long to-do lists and high expectations from the business.
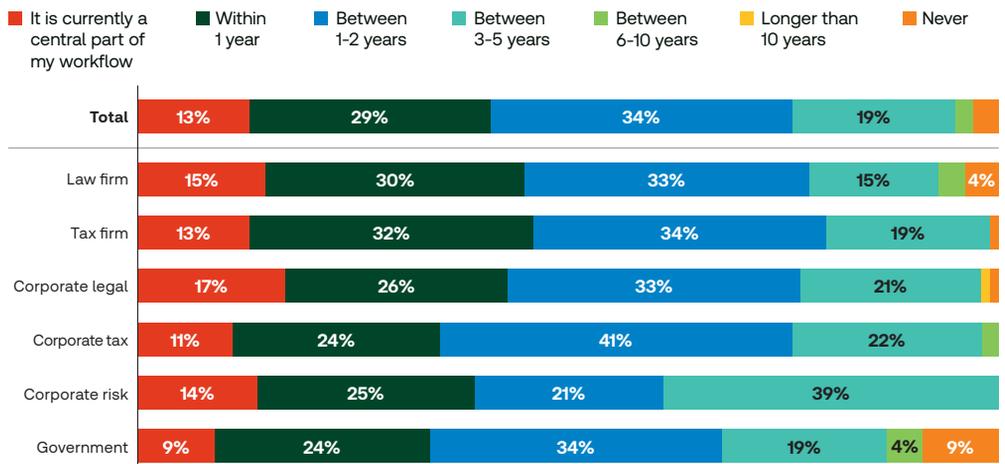
They must efficiently and effectively manage a constant stream of contracts, maintain a wide variety of fit-for-purpose policies, and are increasingly called on to deliver timely, strategic guidance to commercial units and to senior leadership. At the same time, they must get to grips with a fast-evolving and complex regulatory landscape, frequently navigating U.K., EU, and other rules to stay on top of compliance requirements across multiple jurisdictions as their organisations operate across borders.

Too often resource constraints, fragmented systems, and unreliable information force legal teams into a reactive posture — keeping up with demands but with limited headroom to be more proactive. This is especially true when it comes to shaping organisational strategy and playing a part in driving growth. Relying more heavily on external law firms for support is mostly not an option, so GCs are having to think about how to work smarter.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is starting to change the outlook. Although hesitancy around AI adoption remains, interest and enthusiasm are building, particularly for professional-grade AI tools tailored to the needs and requirements of the legal sector as uncertainty over how it can and should be used, the extent of the benefits it can deliver, and concerns over security and accuracy are allayed. As they see others deploying AI in a suitable and successful manner, fears over falling behind — or an impetus to seize the initiative — are prompting more and more in-house legal functions to consider taking the plunge.

According to the 2025 Generative AI in Professional Services Report from Thomson Reuters, 17% of corporate legal departments have already made AI central to their workflows and an additional 26% expect to do so in the next year. The direction of travel seems inevitable: legal leaders are realising they will have to embrace AI not just to keep pace with demand, but to elevate their roles as proactive business partners. But there's a clear sense that not just any AI will do: the Thomson Reuters Future of Professionals Report 2025 found that almost all (88%) of professionals surveyed favour using an AI assistant designed specifically for their industry.

When will GenAI be a central part of your organisation's workflow?

	It is currently a central part of my workflow	Within 1 year	Between 1-2 years	Between 3-5 years	Between 6-10 years	Longer than 10 years	Never
Total	13%	29%	34%	19%			
Law firm	15%	30%	33%	15%	4%		
Tax firm	13%	32%	34%	19%			
Corporate legal	17%	26%	33%	21%			
Corporate tax	11%	24%	41%	22%			
Corporate risk	14%	25%	21%	39%			
Government	9%	24%	34%	19%	4%		9%

Source: Thomson Reuters 2025

CoCounsel Legal brings research, document review, and drafting into a single, efficient workflow.

CoCounsel Legal UK speeds legal services delivery

CoCounsel Legal UK from Thomson Reuters is a full-featured AI platform built by lawyers, for lawyers. It brings research, document review, and drafting into a single, efficient workflow to help in-house legal teams deliver more value in less time.

Deep Research

Deep Research mimics the practices of expert legal researchers to deliver thorough, reliable answers. It builds a step-by-step plan, draws on trusted Practical Law UK and Westlaw UK resources, and refines results as it works. That means compliance teams can quickly understand their key obligations, identify areas of regulatory risk, and brief senior stakeholders with confidence. It also means that a company looking to move into a new domestic market segment can easily find out what its key regulatory obligations are. Work that once took hours is now completed in minutes.

Guided workflows

With agentic AI, CoCounsel Legal UK plans and executes multi-step processes, gathering information and escalating decisions for review when needed. This allows legal teams to reach outcomes faster, without the burden of constant prompting.

Library

The CoCounsel Library is a collection of skills and AI prompts for a broad range of legal tasks, created and tested by Thomson Reuters experts, tailored to U.K. regulatory requirements. Expert-written prompts remove the guesswork so you can immediately get to work, making it easier for AI novices to start using CoCounsel. Curated prompts and workflows are supported by expert guidance for faster legal research, document analysis, and drafting results.

AI legal assistant

CoCounsel, the AI legal assistant by your side at every step, uses agentic AI and generative AI (GenAI) capabilities to streamline your work. It integrates with Microsoft® 365, Practical Law UK, and Westlaw UK to help with tasks like searching for legal precedents, reviewing contracts, and summarising lengthy documents. Together, these capabilities streamline your department's workflows, reducing time spent on repetitive tasks and enabling in-house legal teams to focus on higher-value strategic work.

The future of corporate legal belongs to teams that embrace AI not as a tool, but as a strategic advantage.

From bottleneck to business enabler

CoCounsel Legal UK shifts legal teams from reactive support into proactive advisors by accelerating contract reviews and analysis, standardising policies and compliance reporting, and delivering reliable insights that support strategic tasks — all within one solution.

The result is a significant uplift in efficiency. But it goes well beyond that. By freeing in-house lawyers from repetitive tasks, CoCounsel Legal UK enables them to do more strategic work, shifting from reactive support to proactive business advising. Executives exploring a new market can receive a clear, well-sourced risk assessment before the next leadership meeting, junior staff can rely on prompt libraries to handle routine drafting, and senior legal leaders can focus on high-impact strategy. Across the department, consistency improves as every document aligns with approved playbooks and authoritative Thomson Reuters content.

This should be welcome news to the seven in ten U.K. lawyers who said they don't have enough time to achieve their goals despite working long hours, as found in the Thomson Reuters State of the UK Legal Market 2025 report. What's more, there's less need to ask external law firms for help. Not only should lawyers have more time in their day for high value or complex tasks — with faster, reliable legal research — in-house legal teams can get up to speed on unfamiliar topics more quickly and confidently. From there they can ask outside legal advisers more informed, targeted questions, better focus the scope of matters, or retain more of the work themselves.

For General Counsel and their teams, this means becoming a stronger business partner: delivering faster answers, reducing risk, and scaling legal capacity without increasing headcount or external spend. With CoCounsel Legal UK, the legal department evolves from a bottleneck into a trusted enabler of business growth — delivering standardised, high-quality outputs and credible, strategic advice that drives the company forward.

New and improved capabilities

Summarising

91%
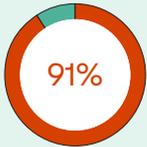
91% of customers agree that CoCounsel helps them better understand lengthy and dense information.
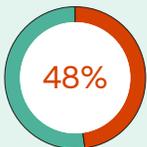
Drafting

61%

CoCounsel cuts down the time needed to draft correspondence by 61%.

Reviewing

60%

CoCounsel helps corporate lawyers review 60% more contracts compared to previous methods.

Searching

48%

CoCounsel customers find the information they need 48% faster than with other methods.

Efficiency gains across the legal team

The functionality of CoCounsel is impressive and the results are stunning. According to the Leading the Future of Professional-grade AI report from Thomson Reuters:

- CoCounsel can reduce the time it takes to perform legal work by as much as 63% for document review, drafting, and reviewing contracts
- CoCounsel cuts down the time needed to draft correspondence by 61%
- CoCounsel helps corporate lawyers review 60% more contracts compared to previous methods
- CoCounsel customers find the information they need 48% faster than with other methods
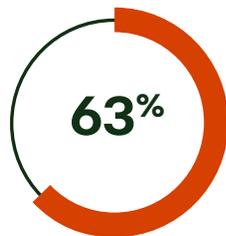
63%

CoCounsel can reduce the time it takes to perform legal work by as much as:

- 63% for document review
- 63% for drafting and reviewing contracts

The legal team at a leading housebuilder adopted CoCounsel and found that it created significant efficiency gains. "There's way more to it now, but the genesis for me was the ability to take a ton of data and summarise it quickly and then spit out a link to where it found that data so you can do your own double checking," said the company's General Counsel. "A task that would previously have taken an hour was completed in five minutes or less."

He and his team began by giving CoCounsel datasets they were familiar with and posing questions to which they already knew the answers. This approach helped them build trust in the accuracy of the outputs, allowing them to accurately gauge how much faster outcomes were being delivered.

The company's use of Thomson Reuters CoCounsel AI tools demonstrates how powerful they are at scale. In one example, the company was undertaking a mergers and acquisitions (M&A) transaction with 87 different land contracts attached to it. They used CoCounsel to take a "first pass" at summarising the documents as part of the due diligence process and organising the insights into a usable format, eliminating the need for a lawyer to read through each one individually.

The project was completed by a summer intern, demonstrating how CoCounsel simplifies document management and makes deal insights easy to access later.

From reactive to proactive:
how one legal team uses CoCounsel

The legal team at a fast-growing tech company struggled to keep pace with business demands. Vendor contracts piled up, executives requested market-entry guidance on short timelines, and compliance reporting deadlines loomed — all with limited staff and budget.

When the procurement department forwarded an urgent SaaS vendor agreement, CoCounsel Legal enabled the lawyer to analyse the contract, compare clauses to approved playbooks, and produce a redlined draft in minutes. Instead of slowing down the procurement team, the legal function delivered timely, risk-balanced guidance that accelerated the deal.

At the same time, leadership was considering entry into a new region. Rather than spending days piecing together regulations from multiple sources, in-house lawyers used CoCounsel to synthesise jurisdiction-specific rules, cite authoritative content, and draft a concise risk memo. For the first time the legal team wasn't scrambling. Instead, they were shaping strategy before the executive meeting even began.

Finally, quarterly compliance reporting tested the team's capacity. With CoCounsel, junior colleagues produced standardised drafts aligned to regulatory requirements while senior colleagues ensured consistency across five jurisdictions. The team delivered on-time, without increasing headcount or sacrificing quality.

By embedding CoCounsel across contract review, research, and compliance, the legal department evolved from a bottleneck into a trusted business enabler, scaling its impact and earning a seat at the strategy table.

Adopting AI in a corporate legal department requires structure and intention.

How to implement AI in a corporate legal department

When it comes to implementing any new technology in a legal organisation, the first question is most often: "Where do I start?" Then, "How do I get people on board?"
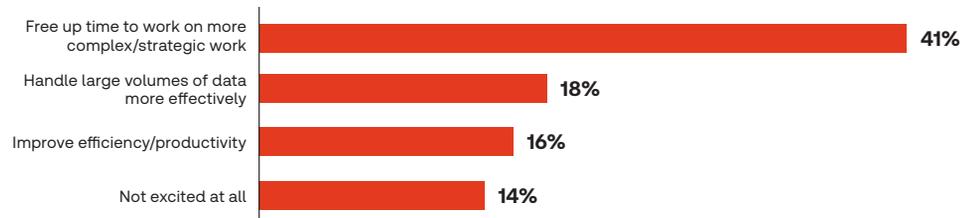
The good news is many professionals are open to AI. According to the Generative AI in Professional Services Report, more than half (55%) of all respondents categorise their sentiment towards GenAI in their profession as excited or hopeful. Meanwhile, the proportion who said they were hesitant, concerned, or fearful fell 12 percentage points from the previous year. Many said GenAI actively should be used for work in their industry and can see GenAI use cases in their own work.

And as per the State of the UK Legal Market Report, GCs see several critical benefits, including increasing capacity for complex or strategic work and generating efficiency gains.

FIGURE 2:
What excites GCs about AI's potential

Potential benefits of AI-powered tech that corporate legal are most excited about

Free up time to work on more complex/strategic work	41%
Handle large volumes of data more effectively	18%
Improve efficiency/productivity	16%
Not excited at all	14%

Source: Thomson Reuters 2025

That's a great starting point for a department leader looking to bring CoCounsel Legal UK to the team. Still, adopting AI in a corporate legal department requires structure and intention. The Thomson Reuters step-by-step framework — Getting Started, What to Do Next, and Strategic Planning — provides a useful roadmap. Below is how to apply it, with a focus on piloting and scaling AI effectively.

Getting started — Assess and learn

Begin by conducting a workflow inventory to identify repetitive, high-volume tasks such as reviewing NDAs, analysing vendor contracts, or drafting standard agreements. Conduct a gap analysis of skills and tools to understand the team's readiness to embrace AI and what infrastructure should be put in place to encourage adoption and enable engagement. When implementing a solution, start with one or two initial use cases where risk is manageable and output standards are clear. The goal is to show tangible, quick wins that you can build on for expansion across the department.

Initial launch — Build confidence and capture lessons

A strong first launch should include:

- Core users, such as General Counsel and in-house lawyers, who face the pain points daily
- Legal operations/knowledge management to drive process consistency
- IT and security to validate data governance and compliance
- Optional business stakeholders, such as procurement and HR, to measure impact

Define success criteria up front: time saved, reduction in manual steps, accuracy, and user confidence. Use weekly debriefs to capture lessons learned: what worked and what training or workflow adjustments are required, then translate them into playbooks that can guide broader adoption.

From launch to full-scale adoption — Scale with discipline
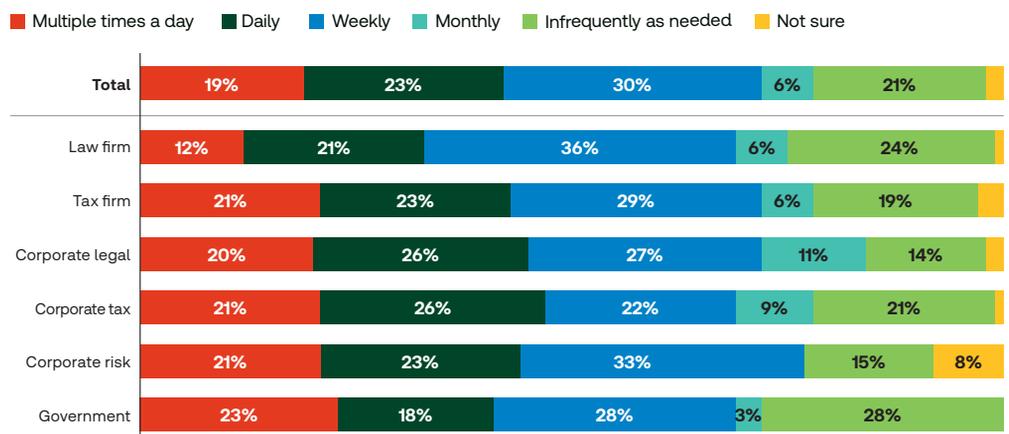
Expand from your initial launch by standardising prompts and templates, sharing results broadly and expanding in phases from contracts to compliance and litigation support. Emphasise early wins, including time savings, so users are eager to join.

Strategic planning — Embedding value

As adoption grows, invest in training and change management so lawyers are comfortable with using AI and oversight practices. Formalise governance for ongoing compliance and model updates.

Current trends suggest that in-house lawyers will be increasingly willing to adopt AI tools like CoCounsel Legal UK. The 2025 Generative AI in Professional Services Report looked at usage trends across the legal industry. Law firms lead in-house legal teams in terms of organisations "already using" GenAI at 28% compared to 23% for corporate legal. But the habit is stronger in corporate legal versus law firms. 20% of users in in-house legal departments use AI more than once a day, compared to 12% of law firm users. This suggests that corporate legal teams will see the benefit and adopt the tools when a clear organisational policy and use case are in place.

Frequency of GenAI use among current users

Legend: ■ Multiple times a day ■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ Infrequently as needed ■ Not sure

Category	Multiple times a day	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Infrequently as needed	Not sure
Total	19%	23%	30%	6%	21%	
Law firm	12%	21%	36%	6%	24%	
Tax firm	21%	23%	29%	6%	19%	
Corporate legal	20%	26%	27%	11%	14%	
Corporate tax	21%	26%	22%	9%	21%	
Corporate risk	21%	23%	33%		15%	8%
Government	23%	18%	28%	3%	28%	

Source: Thomson Reuters 2025

Partner with a leader in legal technology

Successful AI adoption in the legal sphere requires more than technology — it demands trusted content, proven expertise, and secure, responsible innovation. Thomson Reuters brings all three.

With Westlaw and Practical Law — maintained by 1,200+ attorney editors — CoCounsel Legal UK integrates authoritative content to minimise inaccuracies and ensure confidence. Backed by 225 years of leadership in serving the legal profession, Thomson Reuters combines deep industry understanding with forward-looking vision.

The future of corporate legal belongs to teams that embrace AI not as a tool, but as a strategic advantage.

Thomson Reuters has more than 1,000 AI and data science specialists who apply patented methods to professional use cases, rigorously testing products with legal experts. Security and responsibility are central: CoCounsel Legal UK is achieving SOC 2 attestation in 2025 and already holds ISO 42001 certification alongside Westlaw products. Protecting customers' information is at the core of Thomson Reuters' strategy, with a comprehensive information security framework in place supported by a wide range of industry-leading security policies, standards, and practices.

And, with more than £150 million invested annually and partnerships with Microsoft®, Amazon®, Anthropic®, and OpenAI, Thomson Reuters is not just applying AI — the company is shaping its future. Thomson Reuters has also founded and is leading the Trust in AI Alliance with global partners including Anthropic, AWS®, Google Cloud™, and OpenAI.

Trusted industry-wide

As the legal industry moves from experimenting on the fringes with AI to more widespread adoption, CoCounsel is already a proven leader. Today, more than 20,000 corporate legal departments and law firms worldwide use CoCounsel Legal UK, highlighting its role as a trusted AI leader within the legal profession.

In-house lawyers can be confident they are joining a community of peers who are modernising their legal functions with a trusted, secure AI solution tailored to the U.K. market.
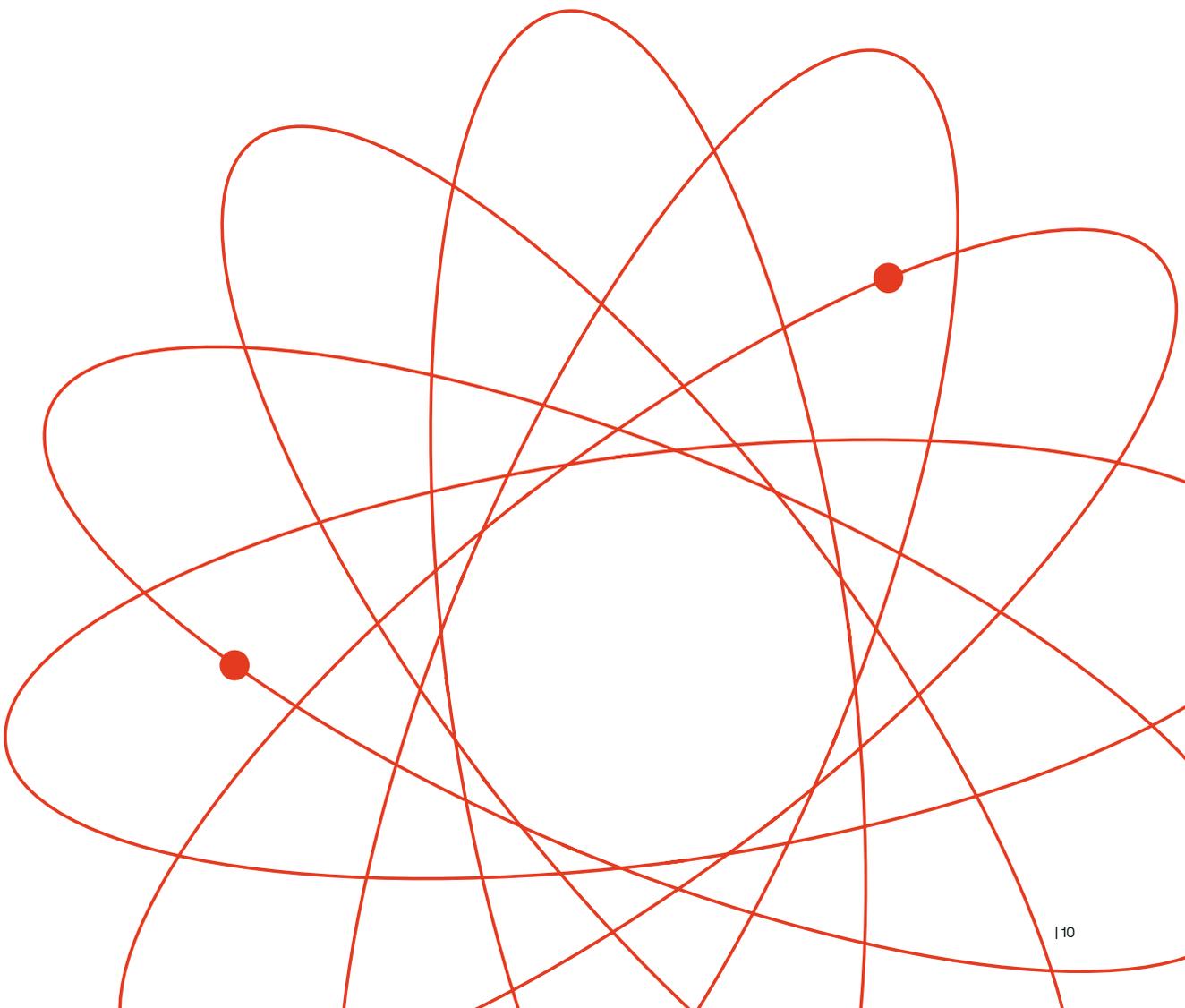
Deliver your best work — at scale

In-house legal departments that embrace professional-grade AI don't just increase efficiency; they elevate their entire function. By automating routine, time-intensive tasks and augmenting human expertise with AI precision, in-house teams unlock capacity to focus on strategic advice, risk management, watertight compliance, and business partnership — which deliver real value to the organisation.

As a result, lawyers are not replaced but empowered: they can deliver their best work at scale, with speed, confidence, and consistency. With CoCounsel Legal UK providing a comprehensive solution that can help in-house legal departments manage regulatory requirements and enhance their strategic impact, lawyers move beyond keeping up with demand — while keeping costs under control. They become proactive drivers of business outcomes, trusted partners to leadership, and enablers of growth.

The future of in-house legal belongs to teams that embrace AI not as a tool, but as a strategic advantage. With the right partner and the right technology, legal departments can deliver better results for businesses — today, and for years to come.

Ready to advance your legal department from a bottleneck into a business enabler? Discover how CoCounsel Legal UK can help your team deliver faster, smarter, and more consistent results while elevating legal's role as a strategic partner.

Get a demo today.

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