

Home & business productivity, Legal transcription

Five reasons why so many law firms are exploring speech recognition

Nuance Communications

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As digital transformation continues to accelerate in the legal sector, advances in speech recognition are helping more and more legal professionals produce comprehensive documentation with speed and accuracy. Explore five reasons why so many law firms are considering speech-to-text tools for their teams.

Detailed, accurate documentation is one of the cornerstones of legal practice. And as the industry continues to digitize at pace—legal firms are set to [increase their tech spend by 2025 dramatically](#)—it's one cornerstone that's ripe for transformation.

Recent advances in speech recognition have opened the door to new, more innovative ways of working, allowing legal professionals to create everything from case notes to correspondence in a fraction of the time and without recourse to costly transcription services.

The benefits are so compelling that in a recent survey of legal firms, [80% told us they were already considering speech recognition investments](#). If you're arriving late to the speech recognition party, here are five reasons why so many practices are preparing to take the plunge.

1. They want to save their legal professionals hours of work every day.

We asked more than 120 legal professionals and decision-makers about the technology setup at their firm, and how it affects their day-to-day tasks.

They told us they spend an average of three hours of a day typing out case notes, briefs, contracts, and correspondence. With the right speech recognition technology, most of that time could be much better spent—on billable work and client service.

Today's leading speech-to-text solutions empower barristers, solicitors, paralegals, clerks, and other legal professionals to complete documentation simply by using their voice. And because human beings speak, on average, three-time faster than we type, someone who currently spends three hours a day at their keyboard could find they've two extra hours to focus on more valuable tasks.

2. They want to spend less on support services.

Most practices currently pay to allow their legal personnel to focus on what they do best. Indeed, 98% of our survey respondents said they employed dedicated admin staff for typing tasks, while 94% said they used external transcription services.

Relying on human transcription isn't just an expensive solution it's a slow one—adding an extra step to everyday operations and delaying the turnaround of urgent documents and client correspondence. Which, in turn, diminishes client satisfaction.

3. They want to support remote working better.

Last year millions of legal professionals transitioned to working from home. And though the move may have been rushed, the industry has thrived in this new, hybrid environment. Many firms are now choosing to downsize their offices or even close them entirely, as it becomes clear that remote work is a viable alternative for their teams.

Having the tools to complete tasks quickly and flexibly, wherever you are, is fundamental to the productivity and effectiveness of any dispersed workforce. In our survey, 80% of legal professionals who were already using speech recognition said they felt properly equipped for working from home before COVID-19. This fell to just 53% for those that weren't using the technology.

4. They want to stop rogue IT and stay compliant.

As the potential of speech recognition technology becomes clear, the market is quickly becoming crowded with freeware apps and tools. But while these solutions may appeal to a legal professional who's itching to say goodbye to their keyboard, their colleagues in IT should be much less enthusiastic.

When tech-savvy staff tries to adopt their own speech-to-text solutions, there's a danger they'll bring in unvetted technologies that aren't sufficiently secure—or genuinely fit for purpose.

Freeware tools aren't designed to meet the needs of legal professionals. They don't have the flexibility to incorporate complex legal terminology, the powerful speech engines required for reliable recognition, or the encryption and user management capabilities most firms must demand.

For many legal practices, the best way to prevent staff from turning to freeware is to evaluate the professional-grade solutions available and implement them with IT's oversight and blessing.

5. They want to attract a new generation of legal professionals.

The popular image of law has always featured stacks of leather-bound books, thick folders of notes, and lengthy printed documents. But as new lawyers join the workforce, they're bringing new ideas [and new technology demands](#) along with them.

Young lawyers are used to relying on technology to make their lives easier, at home and work. Law firms that can demonstrate a forward-thinking, tech-enabled environment will increasingly win the best and the brightest new talent.

Dragon Legal Anywhere: Speech recognition for the rigors of legal professionals

Our professional-grade speech recognition engine is ideal for law firms and legal departments looking to boost efficiency, productivity, and client service. It's at the heart of our latest Dragon solutions, which provide up to 99% accuracy out of the box, turning hours of repetitive admin work into an intuitive process that's even simpler than speaking into a voice recorder because there's no need for manual transcription.

With Dragon Legal Anywhere, legal professionals can go beyond simply dictating notes—they can complete forms, draft emails, and even write and edit full briefs, contracts, and reports. They can even add special terms to the already extensive “built-in” legal vocabulary, to recognize complex legal terminology and acronyms automatically, and use verbal shortcuts to insert common phrases, boilerplate text, or signatures.

And because Dragon Legal Anywhere is hosted in Microsoft Azure's highly reliable and secure servers, law firms and corporate legal departments can fully encrypt their data while embracing the benefits of working in the cloud. It simplifies IT admin too, with rapid deployment and a simple system for adding and managing new seats.

Law practice made perfect with speech-to-text

Typing out legal documents costs either time or money—both precious resources in a busy firm or corporate legal department. But with speech-to-text, legal professionals can focus firmly on billable work and better client service, working faster and more flexibly.

Tags: [Dragon Professional Anywhere](#), [Documentation burden](#)

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Discover how Dragon Professional Anywhere adapts to handle the rigors and intricacies of modern law practice.

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