

Home & business productivity, Legal transcription

2023 Censuswide survey: Make every legal service profitable with speech recognition

[Nuance Communications](#)

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As the pressure ramps up on legal firms to start offering more competitive, flat-rate prices for routine work, many are being forced to decide whether to let this revenue stream go or accept making a smaller profit. But some forward-thinking firms are using speech recognition to make this work more economically viable. Our recent survey of more than 100 UK legal professionals revealed some valuable insights into this challenge, and how the sector is currently tackling documentation. Here are the key takeaways.

Technological innovation has put more bargaining power into the hands of consumers across a wide range of sectors—including legal. Consumers can now compare attorney performance and prices for legal services to get the best value for the lowest rate. And in other cases, they can even use pre-approved forms and self-service tools to complete routine legal work themselves, all at a fraction of the cost of a legal professional's time.

This is putting pressure on many firms to offer more competitive flat-rate or fixed-price legal services, which are harder to profit from. The alternative option is to pass up on this crucial stream of revenue and just focus on less frequent but higher-value client work.

But many progressive firms are taking a different approach to documentation to make flat-rate legal work more economically viable, use their talent to its full potential, and save time across higher-billed legal work.

To understand how law firms are tackling routine legal work and admin today, we partnered with Censuswide to survey more than 100 UK legal professionals. Here's what we found.

Legal documentation takes up the majority of professionals' days

Of the legal professionals we surveyed, nearly three-quarters (74%) spend more than two hours a day typing, and the average time spent typing was 4.3 hours—more than professionals in other sectors. Whether it's communicating with colleagues or writing up notes from client meetings, admin and documentation can easily take up over half a legal professional's working day.

Yet nearly half (45%) of respondents say their firms don't do anything to relieve the burden of admin. And when they do, it's usually just using internal or external typists—an expensive and inefficient way to deal with day-to-day documentation.

However, some firms are taking a smarter, more modern approach. [Speech recognition technology](#) is helping legal professionals complete documentation faster and reduce the burden that admin places on their roles.

A way to speed through documentation and admin

Most respondents (65%) who are currently using speech recognition say it [reduces the burden of admin they experience](#) in their daily roles, and nearly all (88%) say it saves them time throughout the day.

Legal professionals report that speech recognition is most valuable for internal communications (45%), external communications (40%), writing up meeting notes (35%), and completing contracts (15%). And as these time savings stack up, they're saving these legal professionals an average of 1.5 hours every day.

With this time released, legal professionals report being able to spend more time communicating with clients and improving relationships (38%), finish work earlier and spend more time with their friends and family (36%), and focus on proactive ideas that benefit their colleagues and clients (35%).

And the benefits don't end there. Some are using the time saved on documentation and admin work to help them solve their challenges with flat-rate work.

Turn flat-rate work into a more profitable revenue stream

With the ability to tackle documentation faster and save time across all forms of legal work, the dilemma of choosing whether to take on flat-rate work suddenly becomes an opportunity for more revenue and profit.

Flat-rate work becomes more economically viable when more junior associates are equipped with speech recognition tools to help them complete this routine work more efficiently, while senior associates focus on higher-value work. As well as keeping a vital revenue stream, it also means firms can develop and retain price-sensitive clients, who may come back with higher-value work in the future.

And, by equipping senior professionals too, firms can maximise billings across more complex work and save time in other areas—helping make projects more profitable and reduce the risk of burnout among your teams.

Make the most of your firm's talent with speech recognition

One of the biggest benefits of using speech recognition across your firm is that you'll be able to make the most of your firm's talent—at all levels of experience.

With junior professionals empowered to confidently handle routine work and senior associates saving time throughout their busy days, you'll be able to maximise the value you gain from interactions with your clients.

Speak to one of our experts today to explore how you can use speech recognition to empower legal professionals across your team, and start making flat-rate work more economically viable in your firm.

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