

Home & business productivity, Legal transcription

Speech recognition strengthens its place in the modern legal practice

[Nuance Communications](#)

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In response to the COVID pandemic, legal firms have had no choice but to close their offices and switch to a remote-working model. We wanted to find out how legal businesses across the UK manage the challenges associated with this new work-from-home model and how it is likely to shape the future definition of modern legal practice. A new research report-carried out by Censuswide and based on polls of 1,000 legal professionals and 20 IT decision makers highlights some interesting findings.

Following the most recent UK government guidelines, which encourage the continuation of remote work, businesses in all sectors – including legal firms – are continuing to seek ways to ensure long-term resilience.

With the outcome of Brexit due to be formally ratified before the end of the year, thereby marking the UK's departure from the European Union, the workload for legal firms is expected to increase significantly in the coming months as contracts need to be adapted – with paperwork especially taking its toll. In order to face this challenge head on, it has never been more important for legal businesses to ensure that their employees are equipped with the tools to remain productive, collaborative, and secure, regardless of where they are working.

A catalyst for accelerated change

Although remote work is not a new phenomenon for the legal industry, 25% of legal professionals didn't feel properly equipped for remote work when the government advised offices to close earlier this year. When asked, 56% of respondents were reportedly lacking the productivity tools to continue to do their job effectively from home. Yet, 80% of respondents who were using speech recognition for document creation in some form during this period felt they were properly equipped.

This comes as no surprise given that regardless of where employees are currently based, companies that do not adopt speech recognition are missing out on productivity gains. In fact, the research discovered that of legal professionals not using these tools, 67% spend between 2-4 hours a day typing. With only a minority deploying internal typists (19%) or external transcription services (5%) on a regular basis, the reality is a considerable loss of time for lawyers and other legal professionals, as they spend otherwise billable hours on administrative tasks.

The pandemic has accelerated a trend that was already underway, as many modern legal firms move to embrace new ways of working and make the most of digitalisation. In this time of economic uncertainty, legal professionals are under more pressure than ever to deliver high quality outputs—including documents—at speed, all whilst upholding the highest standards of data security. Speech recognition is quickly emerging as an essential tool for modern legal professionals navigating the ongoing crisis and trying to meet the new demands being placed upon them.

The future is digital

As legal professionals continue to adapt to this new way of working, embracing modern technologies has never been more important for long-term success. With many respondents (81%) already reaping the rewards of adopting speech recognition tools, others plan to follow suit.

With 49% of legal professionals reporting an increased workload during the pandemic, it stands to reason that businesses across the sector will be looking to tools to give themselves a competitive edge as Brexit approaches.

In fact, 82% of legal firms are looking to invest in these technologies moving forward and 62% of legal professionals not currently using them report that they would in the future.

While it is undeniable that recent months have brought challenges for the legal sector, they have also presented an opportunity to further reform some outdated methods and attitudes. With Brexit just around the corner, and workloads only expected to increase as a result, it is essential that legal firms act now in order to save both money and time in the future. Investing in cloud-based speech recognition solutions such as Dragon Professional Anywhere, that promise scalability, flexibility and greater support for collaborative working, regardless of where employees are based, has never been more important for future business success.

Find more information about Nuance [Dragon Professional Anywhere for legal professionals](#).

Survey methodology

Nuance Communications commissioned Censuswide to conduct a survey of 1,000 legal professionals and 20 IT decision-makers in the legal sector. The survey was carried out between June 23-25, 2020.

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