



# THE FUTURE LEGAL WORKPLACE

*DESIGNING FOR RESILIENCE IN THE LEGAL SECTOR*

BVN AND CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WORKTECH ACADEMY

MARCH 2021



## **WORKTECH ACADEMY**



### **ABOUT BVN**

BVN is an award-winning Australian architectural firm with an international footprint and global reputation for design leadership and innovation. BVN have had the opportunity to work with a number of legal practices who have had the courage to challenge, like Herbert Smith Freehills, Minter Ellison, McCarthy Tétrault or Allen & Overy amongst many others. We have found it to be highly effective to facilitate peer to peer dialogue where lawyers can speak about the pros and cons of a changing workplace and with this paper, we want to continue to foster this collaboration.

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### **ABOUT WORKTECH ACADEMY**

WORKTECH Academy is the world's fastest growing knowledge platform and membership club exploring how we'll work tomorrow. It brings the best insights, ideas and evidence from the WORKTECH conference series, now in more than 25 cities around the world, to a community of workplace professionals all over the world. The Academy's content is curated in six streams: people, place, technology, culture, design and innovation.

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### **ABOUT CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD**

Cushman & Wakefield (NYSE: CWK) is a leading global real estate services firm that delivers exceptional value for real estate occupiers and owners. Cushman & Wakefield is among the largest real estate services firms with approximately 50,000 employees in 400 offices and 60 countries. In 2020, the firm had revenue of \$7.8 billion across core services of property, facilities and project management, leasing, capital markets, valuation and other services. To learn more, visit

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## FOREWORD

BVN has been working with progressive law firms across Australia and North America for the past two decades to reimagine the legal workplace which has traditionally been based in cellular and siloed environments. Initially, this journey began with the demand for more collaborative and agile ways of working to prepare for the changing nature of the business of law among a small number of forward-thinking law firms in Australia. Over time, the concept of flexibility and choice has evolved and become widely accepted within law firms across the world. This report aims to explore the roadmap and key drivers that are transforming the legal sector and how traditional spatial models are being challenged to respond to these new demands.

As part of this research, BVN partnered with Cushman & Wakefield and WORKTECH Academy to conduct three Round Table Events across Australia, North America and Europe: we interviewed leaders from over 20 multinational law firms across a period of six months in 2020 and had successful discussions of emerging themes across peers. The findings of our research have been outlined in this report and are used to inform spatial settings which are new to the legal workplace and respond to demands of the changing business.

Before the global pandemic hit, the increase of more flexible work habits and therefore more agile workplaces was predicted based on the fact of the integration of automation and AI; and we set out to develop new spatial typologies to accommodate this shift based on the needs of a changing workforce within law firms. As we began our research, the pandemic gathered momentum and so did the need to become agile and flexible within organisations. The sudden but highly successful move from enclosed private offices to remote and dispersed working-from-home environments has surprised most: it reveals the importance of timing and the rare opportunity to grasp this momentum to set out the pathway for change.

We hope you find this report useful as a business leader, designer or employee to understand the direction of a future legal workplace and the importance of creating responsive and resilient workplace ecosystems that can flourish in the face of future disruptions.

**SUSANNE MAYER**  
SENIOR PRACTICE DIRECTOR, LONDON  
STUDIO LEAD EUROPE



# CONTENTS

Click to jump to all case studies referenced throughout the document:

Minter Ellison, Sydney  
McCarthy Tétrault, Canada  
Osborne Clarke, London  
Shoosmiths, United Kingdom  
Garrigues, London

**We thank the participants of the round table sessions for their contributions and insights:**

Australia: Minter Ellison, Gilbert+Tobin, Herbert Smith Freehills, Australian National University College of Law, Law and Technology

United Kingdom: Herbert Smith Freehills, Mayer Brown, Freshfields, DLA Piper, Ashurst, Linklaters, Charles Russell Speechlys, Simmons & Simmons and Shoosmiths

North America: Participants from 9 Top Tier law firms across the US and Canada



<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	8
<b>SECTION 1: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND</b>	10
1.1 PEOPLE	11
1.2 PROCESS AND TECHNOLOGY	14
1.3 PLACE	16
<b>SECTION 2: EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS</b>	18
2.1 PURPOSE OF THE OFFICE	19
2.2 EMERGING LEGAL TALENT	22
2.3 TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND AUTOMATION	24
2.4 CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP	26
<b>SECTION 3: SPATIAL TYPOLOGIES</b>	32
3.1 THE MAGNET	34
3.2 THE MATRIX	35
3.3 THE MUTUAL	36
3.4 THE MENTOR	37
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	38
<b>APPENDIX</b>	40



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report by BVN in partnership with WORKTECH Academy and Cushman & Wakefield examines the changing parameters of space for the corporate legal workplace and how workers in the industry can be better supported in the future.

This report from multinational architecture firm BVN in partnership with WORKTECH Academy and Cushman & Wakefield examines the changing parameters of design for the corporate legal workplace and how workers in the industry can be better supported in the future.

It looks at the competitive pressures in the legal industry before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, and at how approaches and attitudes to working in this sector are evolving across different global regions. We draw on a mix of academic literature, practice reports and a series of Round Tables with legal experts from North America, EMEA and Australia to explore how prominent leaders in law firms are adjusting to significant change and what spaces they will need to be agile and resilient in the future.

The expert panel of legal experts are from firms comprised of 21 international firms. Two of which are ranked amongst the 10 largest law firms in the world and over half have more than 1,500 employees working across more than 20 countries. The Australia Round Tables included four Australian-based firms, the EMEA Round Table included eight European-based firms, and there were 12 North American-based firms in the North American Round Table. Legal experts ranged from global operation office to managing directors, partners and real estate specialists.

The first section of the report looks at the contextual factors that are impacting the legal workplace from the holistic viewpoint of: people, place and technology. Leading on from this, the second section of the report presents emerging

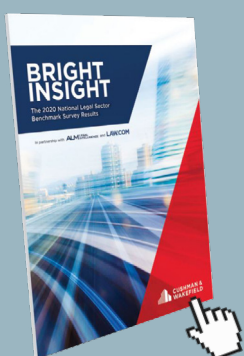
themes and how these have manifested in the legal workplace. These developments suggest new directions for the legal workplace in terms of the function of the office, talent attraction and mentoring, technology and automation, workplace culture and leadership.

The final section of the report presents four spatial typologies for the future of the legal workplace. The Magnet model explores the idea of the workplace as a social setting for client meetings and open collaboration; the Matrix model describes a setting in which lawyers work with, not against, emerging technologies to streamline legal processes; the Mutual model explores the angle that office density will reduce as a result of the pandemic, therefore the office can be more permeable and flexible, and partnerships can be formed with external services and educational institutions; and the Mentor model describes a workspace in which the office is used as a tool to create learning environments and mentorship programs to evolve the discipline and create a culture of 'on-demand learning'.

These spatial typologies are not mutually exclusive, and they share common traits to support lawyers and non-legal employees in the future. The report concludes with a guide to how law firms can design their workplace to facilitate better collaboration, innovation and resilience to future change. The report responds to the rapid changes occurring in the legal industry and how they are impacting the nature of work and office design.



# INTRODUCTION



CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD UNDERTOOK A PROPRIETARY 2020 NATIONAL LEGAL SECTOR BENCHMARK SURVEY, SOME RESULTS ARE SHARED THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT, THE FULL REPORT CAN BE VIEWED [HERE](#).

The legal workplace has been experiencing **disruption** for the past decade with the pace and frequency of the world of work rapidly changing. Today, the industry finds itself at the epicentre of an increasingly competitive global landscape in which the physical, social and technological frameworks it is built upon are being forced under the microscope.

The Covid-19 pandemic has turbocharged the shift that was already occurring within the legal workplace and it has forced even the most traditional legal firms into a **digital, physical and cultural transformation**. This report recognises the opportunities to re-imagine the future of the legal workplace and aims to examine the parameters of new work environments within the context of the legal workplace, in particular charting a path of growth and innovation for the post-pandemic workplace.

Many large law firms are rooted in **traditional work patterns** which is evident through its procurement of prime, centrally-located real estate, luxury on-site amenities and a culture of long hours and office presenteeism. This model is being turned on its head as legal firms race to keep abreast of **new technologies**, working patterns and employee expectations. The legal workplace is now required to adjust to accommodate new business models, significant culture shifts and expectations that the global Covid-19 pandemic has brought to the world of work.

BVN has partnered with Cushman & Wakefield and WORKTECH Academy to outline a series of spatial typologies that respond to the shifts occurring the legal workplace. The report identifies the **disruptors in the industry** both before and during the pandemic and critiques this shift from the perspective of three super regions: EMEA, Australia and North America. These typologies are rooted in the research and the experiences of over 20 leaders in the legal industry.

The overall intention is to inform a new and **different perspective** on the future of the legal workplace through a global lens. The research calls into question four key areas:

- the function of the legal workplace
- the approach to talent attraction and retention
- technology as a major disruptor to the industry
- challenging culture in the sector

The report gives an indication of regional disparities and similarities in the industry and highlights key perspectives throughout. The spatial typologies outlined at the end of the report highlight opportunities to close the gap between the disparities between different regions by providing spatial solutions which represent the direction for change in the future legal workplace.

As the legal sector becomes more dynamic and responsive to change, the potential for workplace **innovation** is greater. This report comprised of contextual trends, emerging development and future workplace design potential, marks a contribution to the debate about change in the legal sector at a critical point of workplace transformation across the world.

# SECTION 1

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

‘A key differentiator between millennial lawyers and their predecessors is that they expect high levels of collaboration and they embrace non-hierarchical management that traditionally has not been typical of the legal industry...’

Much like the financial industry, the development and progression of the legal workplace has been the topic of interest for the past decade. This is because these professional industries are often rooted in tradition, making it sometimes resistant to change and leaving them playing catch up to other industries in the world of work. Despite their influence on the global economy, these sectors are not exempt from the pressures and disruptions that face other professional industries.

In this period of rapid change and global uncertainty, the spotlight is directly on the legal industry to see how it will adapt and be agile in responding to the rising expectations of work and workplace. It is important to look at the landscape of the legal workplace from a holistic perspective, whereby people, place, process and technology are considered in unison. Understanding the context and drivers of change provides a solid foundation to strategically plan for the future and evaluate the significance of the shifts occurring in the industry today.

## 1.1 PEOPLE

The workforce is the key enabler of change for any organisation. Employee expectations, demographics and culture are key to the performance of any workplace. Traditionally, lawyers were known for their long working hours and rewarded with corner offices and premium on-site amenities. This culture of presenteeism in the office is undergoing a paradigm shift as new talent emerges into the workforce and new ways of working take precedent across other industries.

### DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

The legal industry is not insulated from the significance of the demographic shift across the global workforce. If anything, it is more significant as there can be up to a 50-year age gap between newly qualified lawyers and senior lawyers. The multi-generational workforce can be challenging for the way employees communicate with each other, but in the legal industry it has the additional impact on attracting and retaining clients.

According to a 2019 report by the United Nations it is anticipated that 56% of the U.S. prime working aged employees will be millennials by 2025. Millennials now account for more than 35% of the global workforce, and nearly a quarter of all lawyers in the U.S. <sup>\*1</sup>. The influx of the millennial generation has led to many organisations and industries shift their focus entirely to create work environments that meet new Millennial expectations. However, in the legal industry the experience, knowledge and leadership positions held by more senior lawyers means that the sector has been slower to cater for the new demographic.

The relationship between junior and senior lawyers is critical in the legal workplace because there is an ongoing culture of learning and mentorship as lawyers progress through the ranks. Therefore, communication and understanding is a priority between legal staff despite their generational label.

Research has found that the millennial generation of lawyers prioritise a commitment to work/life balance, compensation for their work and training, and professional development, when evaluating potential employers <sup>\*2</sup>. A key differentiator between millennial lawyers and their predecessors is that they expect high levels of collaboration and they embrace non-hierarchical management that traditionally has not been typical of the legal industry.

## How is your firm planning for the integration of millennials growth in the legal sector?

59%

We welcome millennial growth and are adapting firm's business plan but on a modest basis



28%

We welcome millennial growth but are not planning to adapt our firm's business plan



10%

We welcome millennial growth and are adapting our entire firm's business plan on millennials and younger



<sup>\*1</sup> UNITED NATIONS, 2019

<sup>\*2</sup> JP BOX, 2018. UNLOCKING THE TALENTS OF THE MILLENNIAL LAWYER

# SECTION 1

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

‘Law firms can either sit back and let the technology industry dictate the legal sector, or they can become part of the technology industry and collaborate together on the future of the legal industry...’

PROFESSOR RICHARD SUSSKIND, LEGAL FUTUROLOGIST

## TALENT AND RETENTION

In parallel to the demographic shift in the legal workforce, talent attraction and retention is a significant driver of change in the legal workplace. Traditionally, legal firms have relied on the success of their reputation to draw in newly qualified lawyers but now law firms are competing against other industries such as finance and tech for their legal talent. This has forced law firms to adjust their approach to talent attraction.

According to *Forbes Magazine*, technology companies are starting to create legal training and learning centres, and business and computer science companies are offering legal courses that complement their core business models to prepare graduates for a new legal jobs within their organisations. This signifies a shift in legal education from a single diploma and qualification in law to a system of life-long learning centres<sup>\*3</sup>.

The Millennial lawyer enters the workplace with an entirely different outlook and expectation of the workforce to the lawyers that have come before them. In the game of talent attraction, law firms need to consider the new list of demands the emerging generation brings with them and adjust their approach slightly. In his 2018 book, *The Millennial Lawyer*, JP Box suggested that law firms should empower their lawyers with five freedoms: the freedom to rethink when and where work happens; the freedom to bring life into work; the freedom to think of workspace as living space; the freedom to work, think, and connect digitally; and the freedom to unplug<sup>\*4</sup>.

This approach to work has never been more applicable than it is in today's current global landscape. The key difference is now that it is not only relevant to one generation, but the entire legal workforce. While Millennial lawyers may ultimately manage very differently than the generation preceding them, there is no doubt they will make up the majority of the management positions in the future, this means that senior lawyers will need to consider cultural and strategic changes to the business sooner or later. More progressive law firms already have strategies in place to create a harmonious multi-generational cohort of lawyers.

<sup>\*3</sup> FORBES, 2020. COVID-19 WILL TURBO-CHARGE LEGAL INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

<sup>\*4</sup> JP BOX, 2018. UNLOCKING THE TALENTS OF THE MILLENNIAL LAWYER



## SHIFTS IN TALENT AND SKILLS

The legal market has experienced irreversible change in the past decade. A report by Georgetown Law's Centre for the Study of Legal Profession's found that the financial crisis of 2018 brought an end to almost a decade of uninterrupted growth for law firms in the U.S.\*5. As growth plateaued, clients began to demand more value for their 'legal spend', effectively changing the legal market from a seller's market to a buyer's market. As a result, firms have pivoted away from the traditional billable hour pricing towards a combination of alternative fee arrangements and budget-based pricing which accounts for 80 to 90% of all revenues amongst some U.S.-based firms.

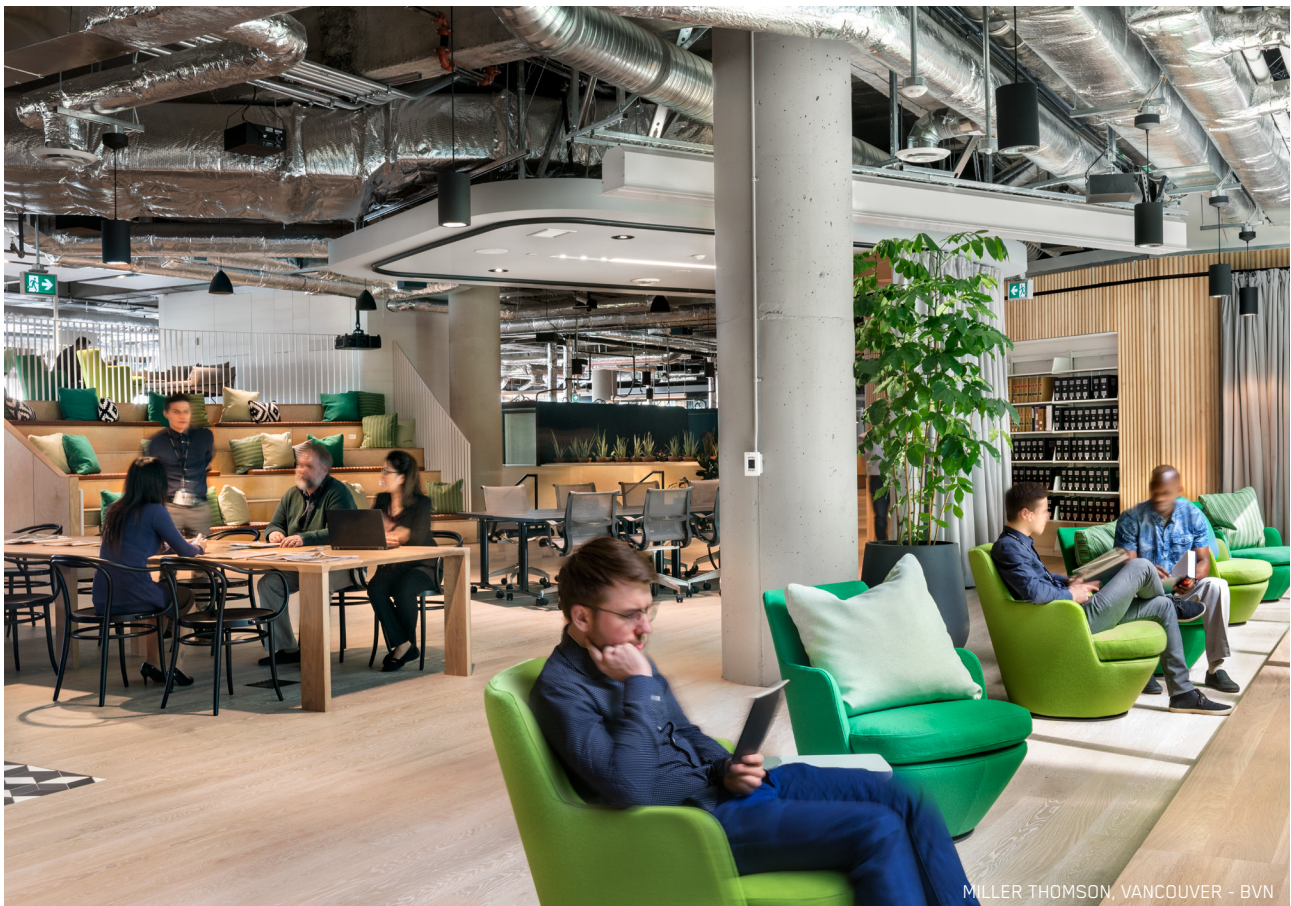
The emphasis on reducing legal costs has led to the erosion of the traditional law firm franchise and a diversification of skills and talent within the legal profession. New job roles have opened up such as Chief Talent Officer and Chief Learning Officer. These roles are responsible for the longevity of the firm's knowledge and ensuring that the right breadth of talent is accounted for across the firm.

Today, fee-earners in the legal workplace are not just lawyers and there is more flexibility and opportunity in staffing models within law firms. Not only are firms hiring more contingent legal professionals as a strategy to balance workloads and improve efficiencies, they are increasingly offering new career paths for lawyers who want more involvement in the technology side of delivering legal advice.

UK-based insurance specialist firm Kennedys has taken an interesting avant-garde approach to legal talent. It has instituted an internal incubator that allows employees to become the chief executives of their own client-oriented product ideas. Employees are responsible for taking the products to market, and if they are successful, the promotions they earn allow for another route into the partnership.

This shift in legal skillsets will have an impact on the type of workspaces that need to be provided within the legal workplace. Corner offices and large, individual desks with ample space for paper storage may be giving way to more agile, project-room space where different types of talent can collaborate and innovate to propel the growth of the firm.

\*5 GEORGETOWN LAW'S CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF LEGAL PROFESSION'S, 2018. STATE OF THE LEGAL MARKET 2018



The most common expectation (40%) is for technology spend to increase 6% to 10%, while almost a third of respondents expect it to grow by **double-digits** over the next two years.

CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

## 1.2 PROCESS AND TECHNOLOGY

In 2016, renowned legal futurologist Professor Richard Susskind said that 'the legal profession has until early next decade to prepare for massive technological advances that will reshape the industry'<sup>\*6</sup>. He went on to say that 'the 2020s will see technologies that can change the way we work – you are no longer face-to-face advisors, you are a person putting in systems and processes' as artificial intelligence moves forward and systems will be able to diagnose and respond to clients' legal problems.

Automation and artificial intelligence has been threatening to transform the legal industry for the past 20 years, yet it is only now technology has shown its true capability. According to data from Cushman and Wakefield, 80% of top firms view advancements in technology as a key challenge over next two to three years<sup>\*7</sup>. Larger firms feel like they are under pressure to lead the way in using and developing emerging and digital technology to improve efficiency and profitability.

<sup>\*6</sup> LAW GAZETTE, 2016. YOU-HAVE-FIVE-YEARS-TO-REINVENT-THE-LEGAL-PROFESSION

<sup>\*7</sup> CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

"More than 50% expect the office will shrink at least by 40%."



CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

## INVESTING IN DIGITAL

At the beginning of 2020, the majority of law firms indicated their technology spend was between two and four per cent of total annual gross revenues, according to Cushman and Wakefield data. Almost two-thirds of firms were expecting technology spend to increase within the year. As Covid-19 work-from-home regulations set in almost 90% of law firms were even more committed to technology investment claiming their investment in technology was expected to increase in the next two years. The most common expectation is for technology spend to increase between six and 10 per cent over the next two years.

In a sign of the legal profession's growing digital maturity, some law firms are taking the lead in training clients to become more technologically competent. Hogan Lovells has crafted a training programme for lawyers at French bank BNP Paribas, which enabled more than 50 intellectual property and information technology practitioners to become digital experts. The programme focused on regulatory challenges, cyber security and the implications of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain for the bank's business. It was both theoretical and practical. This initial cohort are now key to the bank's own digital transformation. This investment in digital training demonstrates that some law firms are preparing for the influx of emerging technologies, and such technologies will change the way lawyers approach their work.

## THE IMPACT OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Advances in technology in the legal workplace have significant implications on how lawyers work and the spaces they work in. Online databases have reduced the need for physical large law libraries and new legal skills will require a more diverse spectrum of workspaces. More recently, the threat of technology has shifted from unemployment to redeployment as legal services will be enabled by the support of new technology and the role of lawyers will shift towards core tasks like interpreting data and applying their professional judgement to solve client challenges.

As AI and automation become more prominent in the legal sector, clients are increasingly saying that they will not pay for work that they believe can be done in an automated way. This will have a meaningful impact on the level of adoption seen across law firms as more firms will seek to create client value in other ways.

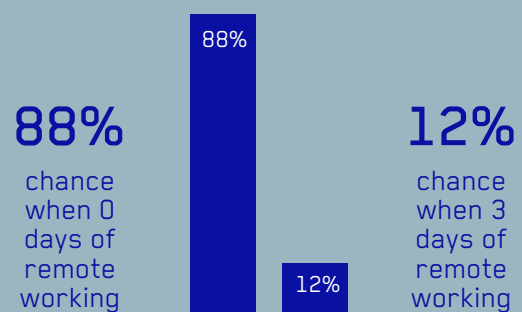
The introduction of robotics, AI and automation to the legal profession presents an opportunity for legal graduates to become knowledge engineers, designers and process analysts. The digital transformation of the legal workplace will have an impact on the types of spaces that are required to conduct work. While automated processes streamline some data processing tasks, it will allow more time for lawyers to problem solve and analyse the data. These tasks require different spaces such as individual focused spaces, collaborative areas, learning spaces and technology-enabled project rooms.

**In two years, what percentage of your attorneys will work remotely more than 2 days a week?**

***In Q2, 2020, 70% of respondents said they will be working remotely more than two days a week.***

CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

**Chance of Employee A & B both being in the office:**



***Random remote work, is likely to result in unsatisfactory outcomes from a company's perspective.***

***Remote work must be managed.***

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD RESEARCH

# SECTION 1

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

**“People are still strongly wedded to the corner office concept in some geographies. Multidisciplinary teams cannot occur until that physical barrier is removed.”**

PARTNER, AUSTRALIAN-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

## 1.3 PLACE

Long leases on premium real estate has traditionally been the mark of a successful large law firm. Currently, the legal sector allocates two to three times the square footage of real estate per employee than any other industry<sup>\*8</sup>. In 2021 and 2022, it is anticipated that a large number of early lease restructures and space givebacks will occur on a widespread basis in the U.S. While for many legal firms this will be a down-sizing strategy, it is more practical to describe this process as the ‘right-sizing’ of the legal sector.

This shift towards ‘right-sizing’ has been occurring in the legal industry for the past decade. The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly accelerated this process as legal firms are reflecting on what the purpose of their office space is. While much of this change has been driven by people’s expectations of the workplace, other factors such as the development of technology, flexible working, and external influences have also driven change in place in the legal sector.

### THE RISE OF REMOTE WORKING

Prior to the global work-from-home ‘experiment’ brought on by the pandemic, there had been a steady increase in firms’ expectations that attorneys would increase remote work in the future. According to Cushman & Wakefield’s Bright Insight Q2 2020 report, in 2017, 62% of respondents indicated that attorneys would work remotely more often in five years. That number was 78% in early 2020 and has now jumped up to 96% as of Q2 2020<sup>\*9</sup>.

This data is supported by a report by the Society for Human Resources Management which found that 69% of organisations allowed employees to work remotely in 2019, three times more than the telecommuting workforce at the turn of the millennium<sup>\*10</sup>. According to recent research, it is expected that the legal workforce will adopt a form of hybrid working as a result of the pandemic. Almost 90% of respondents in an IBA poll expect law firm employees to work flexibly between home and office in the future, while only 4% expect a move to working from home completely<sup>\*11</sup>.

This shift towards more flexible work patterns has changes the parameters of ‘space’ in the legal workplace. Space no longer simply refers to the portfolio of offices accrued by a firm, but instead embodies employee’s homes and third spaces.

<sup>\*8</sup> CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

<sup>\*9</sup> CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

<sup>\*10</sup> SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. 2019

<sup>\*11</sup> IBA POLL. 2020



## FLEXIBLE WORKSPACE

The shift in work style, culture and workforce attitudes has brought with it a new list of demands in the place-based workplace. Traditional legal workplaces have started to change in the past decade as priorities have shifted from being rewarded with physical assets such as the corner office to softer rewards such as more autonomy and a work/life balance.

This is supported by data from Cushman & Wakefield's Bright Insight report which found that having a corner office was ranked as the least important factor for associates; it ranked behind work/life balance, mentoring, work environments and flexible work schedules. However, these priorities are subjective across different regions. Generally, law firms across North America and, to some extent, Europe still view the corner office and prime real estate as a reward for progression and a symbol of status within the firm. Some large Australian firms, on the other hand, have taken more agile approaches to space and reward progression with autonomy over where and how they conduct their work.

The legal sector has been largely resilient to change in the past, but the past decade has exposed cracks in the foundations of the sector. Now is a pivotal time for the legal sector to re-evaluate how their workspace can adapt to respond to change and be resilient in the face of inevitable rapid change and disruption in the future.

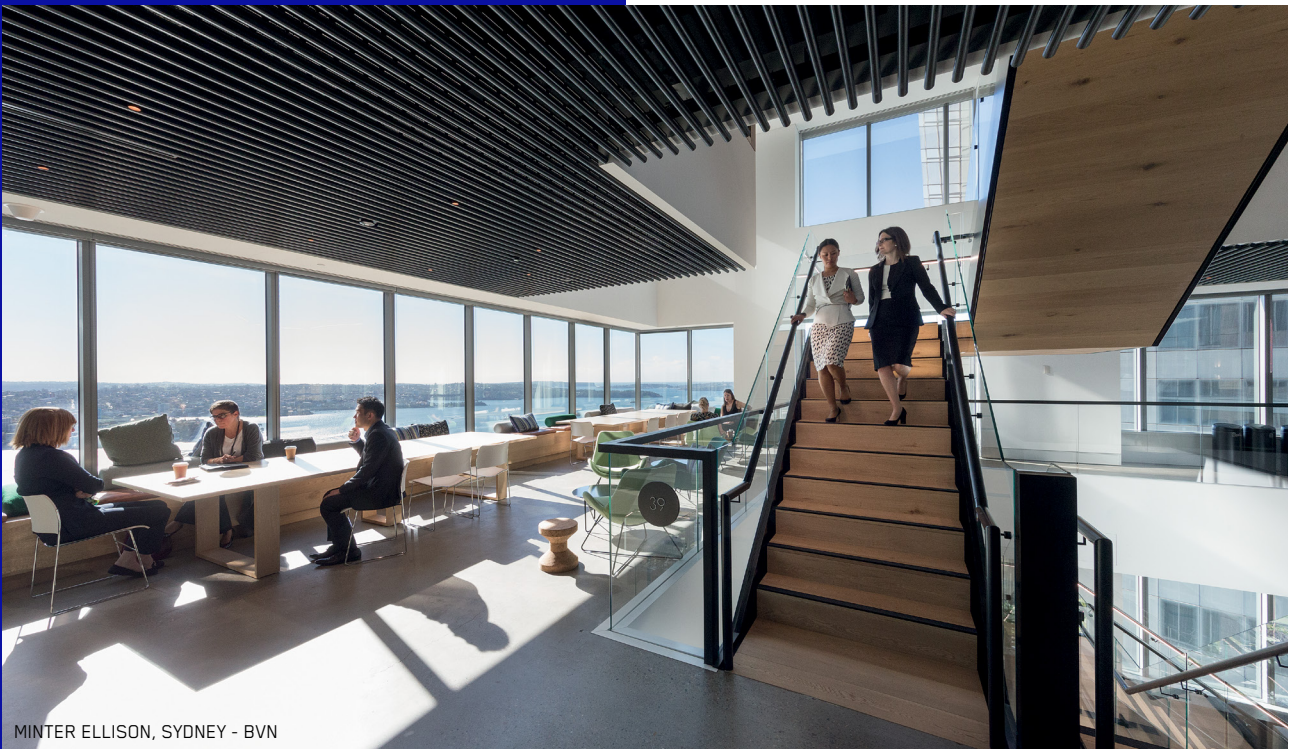


MILLER THOMSON, VANCOUVER - BVN

# SECTION 2

## EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

In this section, we review the interview and round table data and examples of practices from law firms over the world in the legal workplace to capture the key trends driving change in the industry. Case studies and quotes from industry leaders illustrate key changes.



MINTER ELLISON, SYDNEY - BVN



## 2.1. THE PURPOSE OF THE OFFICE

Before the pandemic, the purpose of the legal office was clear. It was a showcase of the success of a law firm through premium amenities from gyms and food and beverage offers to client spaces. The pandemic brought this purpose into sharp focus as law firms started to question what the purpose of these office spaces will be now it has been proven that lawyers can work flexibly across different environments.

The panel of legal experts interviewed in this report offered the perspective that the primary function of the office when employees return will be social. This opinion was shared across all three super regions with Australian-based firms focusing on the flexible and agile working element of workspace and the U.S.-based firms thinking more about the social connection between lawyer and client. In a survey of 62 law firms across Europe by consultancy firm RSG, nearly half said they expected a long-term change in the way office space is used as a result of the pandemic<sup>\*12</sup>.

**“The office is more essential than it has ever been. It is a social support and currently people are losing access to the way we build relationships. I think we always need to provide a forum for that.”**

SENIOR MANAGEMENT, US-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

\*12 RSG, 2020. IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS ON LAW FIRMS IN EUROPE

### WHO USES THE OFFICE

Before we can evaluate how the legal workplace will be used in the future, it is first important to understand the impact the office has on different experience levels of lawyers. This will identify where the links are and what spaces will be necessary in the future legal workplace.

- Associates are the most junior legal professionals in the workplace and are keen to prove that they can step up and progress through the firm. They want to be in the office so they can have the best access to mentorship from partners and to build their credibility. Working from home makes it much harder for associates to have the face-time with partners and career development for junior lawyers tends to heavily rely on supervision and mentoring from senior associates.
- Senior associates have largely thrived working from home as a result of the pandemic. While under lockdown at home, they are uninterrupted by associates and juniors, and

they can generally produce a higher volume of high-quality focus work – with the bonus of a better work/life balance. Typically, this level of lawyer will have a sufficient work area at home with good WiFi and they do not have any strong desire to come back to the office on a permanent basis. But it does leave the problem of who manages and mentors the junior lawyers.

- Principals and partners are the most senior level of legal talent in a law firm. As a generalisation, this cohort have preferred working from their home offices as they tend to have additional space for working at home. However, some traditionalists prefer the routine and proximity to their physical files in the office. At this level, they tend to have private offices both at home and in the workplace so they can easily transition between home and office work.

## *Case study:*

### **Shoosmiths, UK**

Shoosmiths are at the forefront of the legal workplace, with 80% of their 1,700 employees working in an agile way, pre-COVID19, across 13 UK locations. Their vision is to be the leading UK law firm, famous for client experience.

They are breaking down perceptions of legal firms through introducing forward-thinking flexible working principles such as: "output not occupancy" and "the answer is yes". Together with an advanced technology platform, Shoosmiths has fostered a culture of trust. The long-lasting behavioural changes have empowered and motivated staff to choose how to provide an exceptional client experience, through collaboration and innovation.

They do not use the term 'fee earner' internally, promoting mutual respect and equal contribution. No-one has a private office, breaking down the traditional hierarchical structure, making the workplace a place to share and transfer knowledge. Shoosmiths is now closer and more connected to its clients, and are more efficient, productive and flexible.

Shoosmiths are exploring how they can push their boundaries further to evolve into a post pandemic way of working, focussing on client and employee experience, diversity, sustainability, wellbeing and inclusivity.

### **THE MOVE TO AGILE SPACES AND FLEXIBLE LEASES**

Across all three super regions, there was one common theme: flexibility in the future legal workplace is key. Although each region agreed that the workplace needs to be flexible in order to be resilient against future disruptions, how this is implemented varies.

The Australian-based firms have largely adopted agile working into their practice before the pandemic was even on the global radar. They are open to an 'install' not 'construct' design approach, whereby everything is flexible from meeting space to the furniture within it. These firms are focused on creating workspace which enables choice for all different types of work and inspires people to think differently and creatively.

The U.S. and European-based firms are in agreement that flexibility and choice is critical in the design of the future legal workplace. Where they diverge in opinion is whether this will require more or less real estate. In New York remote working and the concept of hotelling, where employees work in third spaces outside the office, has largely been embraced. As a result, this means the procurement of less real estate in the future. This requires the re-imagining of traditional leasing models for law firms. Many law firms now want flexibility in the leases they sign, as well as flexibility in the spaces provided within the real estate.

The move towards more flexible leases requires a new language between landlord and occupier whereby flexibility is embedded in lease agreements. Law firms want an agreement which enables them to grow or shrink within the length of their lease. This changes the relationship between landlords and law firms which were traditionally rooted in long fixed leases. Now, as law firms adopt more agile ways of working, their requirements and needs of real estate have changed and landlords need to adjust their leasing models to meet these new demands.

While it is difficult to define all the potential uses for the office, the general global perspective is that flexibility should be baked into office design and leasing models to ensure the legal workplace is prepared and resilient to every future scenario. These spaces include the provision of individual concentration spaces for lawyers to do the hard crunch work and more creative and collaborative space as law firms become more deliberate about their collaborative efforts post-pandemic.



## CLIENT INTERACTION

In recent years clients have come into law firms less frequently for legal advice and this trend has inevitably been accelerated by the pandemic. However, client interaction remains a critical element of the future of the legal workplace.

During the pandemic lawyers have had to maintain and form relationships with clients over video and online conversations. This method of communication is difficult to build trust which is critical between a lawyer and client. As we look beyond the pandemic, the legal workplace will still need a physical place where lawyers can converse with their clients to build relationships and trust. These spaces will be a fundamental part of the business as customer experience needs to be considered alongside employee experience in the workplace.

**“Junior lawyers have said to me ‘I didn’t join a firm to work at my kitchen table for 20 hours a day’.”**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP, LONDON-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

**“We need enough space for different project teams both for legal and the rest of the workforce – these spaces need to be dynamic”.**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP, LONDON-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

# SECTION 2

## Associates were asked: How important are the following to you personally?

1	Compensation
2	Collegial Work Environment
3	Work / Life Balance
4	Mentoring by Senior Attorneys
5	Exposure to Clients
6	Flexible Work Schedule
7	BD Opportunities
8	Potential for Partnership
9	Private Office

CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD, 2020. BRIGHT INSIGHTS REPORT

## 2.2 EMERGING LEGAL TALENT

The expectations of emergent talent into the legal workforce is changing. Newly qualified lawyers expect a workplace that is digitally enabled, with more opportunity for collaboration with other lawyers and legal professionals. While it is important to perspective talent that a law firm is seen to be progressive, there is still some scepticism around firms that have heavily invested in automation and AI as it can be seen as a threat to their future career progression<sup>\*13</sup>.

The key priority for emerging legal talent today is the exposure to senior lawyers and opportunity for career progression. Across all three regions mentorship and learning through osmosis were areas where law firms have struggled most to engage junior legal talent during the pandemic. Despite the different culture in law firms across Australia, North America and Europe, every legal expert interviewed agreed that it is important for junior lawyers to have casual interactions and team building opportunities in the physical office.

To combat the lack of on-site learning, Pinsent Masons surveyed their young lawyers in Australia and found that they believed they were not getting enough on-the-job training. As a result, junior lawyers are permitted to join client calls and listen in to the meetings. Linklaters also recognised the barrier to learning and put 600 training sessions online for trainees and stepped up its monitoring and feedback process. These responses are a reactive response to the pandemic, but in the long-term there is a desire across all regions to return to the office as a mechanism for learning and mentorship.

<sup>\*13</sup> INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENTS FROM SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, 2020

## LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Richard Susskind has previously criticised law schools for 'churning out 20th-century lawyers' as the majority of legal courses fail to acknowledge the presence of artificial intelligence in the industry. Today, there is a general acceptance that the legal sector has recognised the need to equip people with new skills and ways of thinking in the wake of new sophisticated technology and it starts with academia.

A particular point of interest across the U.S. legal experts was the idea of life-long learning in the legal industry. Once law graduates have entered the workplace, their learning does not stop there. The legal industry should create and maintain a culture of learning and training to ensure that the firm has progressive lawyers that can respond to client needs. Part of this training is learning to incorporate new technologies into the daily workstream and constantly reskill and adapt.

## THE RISE OF TECH TALENT

Technology skills have become more critical in the legal profession since it was declared that automation and AI posed a significant threat to the industry. More and more law firms are employing legal technologists or opening up their ranks to STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) graduates, who can bring a different skillset to providing legal advice. London-based international law firm, Allen & Overy has overhauled its traditional graduate recruitment and launched a non-legal training contract for those who want to work on important client matters on the delivery side, rather than as lawyers.

While Australia-based experts were more open to idea of hiring tech talent and training them in law, the North American and European experts were more sceptical of the practicalities and were more accepting of a blended approach where they saw value in the interface between lawyers and technologists. The European-based experts were particularly interested in how they could develop their own training programme to diversify talent within the firm. One senior leader said that statistically his London-based firm had hired more non-law trainees than law trainees to the firm. This is an interesting change in dynamic as skill shifts start to manifest in law firms across the world.

## *Case study:*

# McCarthy Tétrault, Montreal

In March 2020, McCarthy Tétrault in Montreal designed a concept for a new workplace with BVN, but Covid-19 forced a rethink of the strategy.

The leadership team took this opportunity to explore new options for their workplace. The biggest shift in strategy was to use the mezzanine level which previously was designed as extra workspace, and turn it into the client facing area as a clubhouse: a very flexible and hosted environment (the village square) for clients and staff alike to meet, gather, explore and innovate. Furthermore, the firm is hosting incubator spaces that are open for internal and external teams where ideas, prototypes and developments are being displayed and tested to spark innovation in technology.

## OUTCOME

- All client-facing facilities are moved from the tower to the mezzanine, creating a dedicated environment for clients in the mezzanine and a dedicated environment for their people in the tower
- The mezzanine is a safe and hosted environment, a space for clients and MCT people to engage and exchange knowledge
- This new environment will put the innovative spirit and thought leadership of McCarthy Tétrault on display

**“There will always be a big role for the individual human brain working across complex legal tasks and then presenting it to a client and getting a good outcome in front of another human decision-maker”**

WILL BATEMAN, PROFESSOR OF LAW AND TECHNOLOGY, AUSTRALIA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**“The practice of law will be influenced by technological development. It will focus much more on technology and innovation than it will on counselling”.**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP, NEW YORK-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

## **2.3 TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS IN THE LEGAL SECTOR**

The notion that the pandemic has fundamentally transformed the industry’s willingness to engage with advanced legal technologies may be premature. Nevertheless, the crisis has caused a psychological shift that has made sceptics of the value of legal technology more open to the benefits of innovation. This has laid the groundwork for future waves of innovation.

An interesting point was raised by legal experts in Australia when discussing the impact of technology in the legal workplace in the future. Senior Professor of Law and Technology at Australia National University, Will Bateman, argued that traditionally law firms spend far more money on their real estate than they do on technology. This has resulted in a disproportionate distribution of investment between tech and real estate whereby investment in tech is low but the overall vision for the future of the legal workplace is highly tech-enabled.

The pandemic has forced law firms to adjust their attitude as real estate has almost become obsolete in the short-term and technology has become the lifeline to work. The move to more agile and remote working means that law firms rely on cloud-based software that is available anywhere, anytime and on any device. Cloud-enabled technology has been used by different industries for many years now, but it was relatively transformative to the legal industry which is rooted in paper-based reference materials and documents.

In the U.S., one expert claimed that the onset of working from home meant that the firm invested in video for the desktop, which they didn’t have in the office setting. As a result, video-based communication has become a part of the daily work routine and this method of collaboration is likely to stick around into the long-term.

## AUGMENTATION AND AUTOMATION IN LEGAL PRACTICE

While some futurologists argue that advances in technology will transform the legal workplace, others argue that the legal sector will not be highly automated anytime soon due to the profession's complexity and the nature of the relationship with court procedures.

Instead of focusing on transforming the entire industry, the emphasis of automation should be placed on harvesting data efficiently. This starts with a strategy on how augmented processes can play a role in organising big datasets which legal experts can then interpret and analyse. The general consensus among the legal experts was that artificial intelligence certainly has a place in the legal workplace, but it comes with its limitations.

Automation does not need to be a threat to law firms as lawyers can work with the technology to develop systems that tackle the inefficiencies in the business. Madrid-based multinational law firm Garrigues built a new team within the firm to develop technology tools based on automation, robotics and artificial intelligence. Lawyers have the opportunity to identify areas in their practice that could be more efficient, and then work with technology developers to create products in-house. The team has built two tools to improve the reliability and speed of processing legal documents, reducing the time spent on these tasks by around 750 hours per year.

### *Case study:*

## Osborne Clarke, International law firm

Osborne Clarke is a multinational firm based in 25 international locations with over 900 lawyers and 270 partners. It introduced Project OCx in 2019 to build new skills to help lawyers advise clients on digital transformation. The project includes training lawyers on transformative technologies, the impact they will have on their clients' industries, and creating a head of digital transformation role for the whole firm. Since its introduction, billing on matters related to digital transformation has increased by an average of 112 per cent each month

## *Case study:*

### **Kennedys, Insurance Law**

Kennedys is among firms exploring creative approaches to legal tech. The insurance law firm has created a separate company, Kennedys IQ, that promises to reduce customers' reliance on legal teams - giving away traditional cash and turning that into a subscription model, which has a lower price for the client, but still has a good margin for the business. In February 2020, the firm launched Kennedys IQ, a new company that offers clients direct access to technology developed by the firm. Through a suite of six digital products, clients can automate the process of managing insurance claims and disputes without the need for lawyers. The products draw on Kennedys IQ Platform, which combines data from the firm, clients and other external sources to identify trends and best practices for its insurance clients.

**"If the environment  
reflects hierarchy,  
then you've got  
something wrong".**

SENIOR PARTNER, LONDON-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

## **2.4 CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP**

The legal workplace has a reputation of having a culture of presenteeism and rigid hierarchical leadership structure. This is typically due to the partnership model whereby self-selection and forcing partners out after eight to ten years maintains a constant hierarchical structure. However, more recently the legal sector has been more open to new ways of working which, in turn, has broken down some of the barriers that existed before.

Culture is inherently unique to individual firms, so generalising culture across different regions and across the entire industry is challenging, but there are some general noticeable shifts that have emerged across all three super regions. Currently, all firms are facing the challenge of maintaining company culture with a remote workforce. Across the entire world of work, companies are struggling to build and enforce company culture remotely - this is made more difficult when there is an influx of newly qualified lawyers joining the firm.

However, one positive culture shift that has occurred across all regions is the adoption of a culture of collaboration in law firms. This culture shift has been particularly evident in Australian-based firms that have embraced agile work practice in their offices over the past five years, but European and North American firms are also opening up to the idea. One legal expert in the US claimed that while her firm has not appointed a Chief Culture Officer, it is something the leadership team thinks about a lot.

The pandemic has taken away the physical office space which is where company culture and belonging is most strongly rooted. The office presents a common purpose and identity which is shared by every employee in the law firm, whether they are legal or non-legal staff. Across all regions it is clear that the role of physical space is to manifest culture and demonstrate what the firm stands for - it should not reflect the hierarchy of the firm.



ALLENS PILOT WORKSPACE, SYDNEY - BVN

**“The idea of automation is a misnomer for the legal industry. We should be talking about augmentation.**

MANAGING PARTNER, AUSTRALIAN-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM







## THE EMERGENCE OF INTER-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS

The Australian expert panel noticed a shift in their firms that the collaboration between lawyers and non-lawyers has become more common in recent years. Non-lawyers such as technologists are more frequently working alongside lawyers in an agile development team on initiatives for clients. This partnership is giving rise to a new model whereby both lawyers and other key players such as technologists hold equal responsibility for the project.

This is in response to advances in legal technology as lawyers have recognised it is more efficient to work with technology than to fight against it. This rise in collaboration requires the expertise of inter-disciplinary teams with mixed skillsets. As a result, space needs to accommodate for different types of team dynamics to ensure the right tools are provided and everyone feels part of the team.

The trend towards inter-disciplinary teams is stronger in the Australia-based firms than the European and North American firms based on the discussions shared by the panel of experts. This could be due to Australia's pioneering of agile work styles, where cross-team collaboration has been actively encouraged for many years.

The blend of technology and legal talent is creating a new dialogue in the legal workplace. Technological terminology is being introduced into legal education so lawyers can better collaborate with technologists in the workplace. This allows a common language for technologists and lawyers to communicate with one another and work collaboratively. Successful teams will leverage domain expertise and work on innovative problem-solving solutions. Once this process is successful in day-to-day practice, it will allow for more de-centralised decision-making on a team level.

**"We will know when we are successfully working in inter-disciplinary teams when we don't talk about it anymore."**

COO, AUSTRALIAN-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

## *Case study:* **Minter Ellison, Sydney**

BVN together with Minter Ellison designed the new workplace over eight levels for Minter Ellison in Sydney: an evolution in legal workplace design, encouraging a collaborative, flexible working environment for clients and staff whilst enabling change for future developments. An environment strategy was integrated to identify opportunities for diverse work settings, which resulted in a free address approach which is implemented without the need to redesign or change any built elements. This has shown to be a forward-thinking design approach which was proven to be the right path during Covid-19 lockdowns and easy return to the office.

To further enhance choice, a large plaza space, incorporating cafe, digital collaboration settings, spaces for training and mentoring with library, IT Help Desk and concierge is located on the plaza level – not only is this a place to work and socialise, it is also a place where clients can be taken, further integrating them with the firm and celebrating the Minter Ellison culture.

**“The pandemic is going to have a long-term effect on leadership style and the firms that can adapt will be most successful.”**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP, NORTH AMERICAN-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM



HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS, SYDNEY - BVN

## LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

While senior lawyers typically have unparalleled technical expertise, they do not necessarily have the same level of training in leadership or business management hierarchy has been traditionally embedded into the office design of legal workplaces, with corner offices awarded to those who ranked highest. While corner offices have now been eliminated from many law firms across the world, there is still an opportunity to improve the decision-making processes within many firms.

Now law firms are starting to adapt from a command-and-control leadership style to a more coaching and participative style of leadership that engages people and actively supports their development. This leadership style allows employees more autonomy over their work and places the accountability on the individual employee, while leadership is there to guide and advise.

Lawyers have become more adept at this type of leadership as a result of the pandemic. As the surveillance leadership was scraped with the daily commute to the office, leaders have to trust that their employees are maintaining a high level of performance from home. This type of leadership has come relatively naturally to the Australian-based leaders but the concept a slightly more difficult to adjust to for North American and European firms who typically have a more hierarchical structure.

In many large firms across the world, the corner office idea has broken down. However, it is the progressive Australian firms that have truly embraced the open-plan workplace eroding the physical barriers in the workplace and making the leadership team more accessible to their teams.

However, as the pandemic continues to enforce remote working, all regions are adapting to new forms of remote leadership which consequently have become more equal and less hierarchical.

## *Case study:*

### **Garrigues**

Garrigues built a new team within the firm to develop technology tools based on automation, robotics and artificial intelligence.

Lawyers identify areas in their practice that could be more efficient, and then work with technology developers to create products in-house. The team has built two tools to improve the reliability and speed of processing legal documents, reducing the time spent on these tasks by around 750 hours per year.

# SECTION 3

## DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LEGAL WORKPLACE

“We need a sort of optionality, give people choice, respecting people’s individual preferences.”

PARTNER, LONDON-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

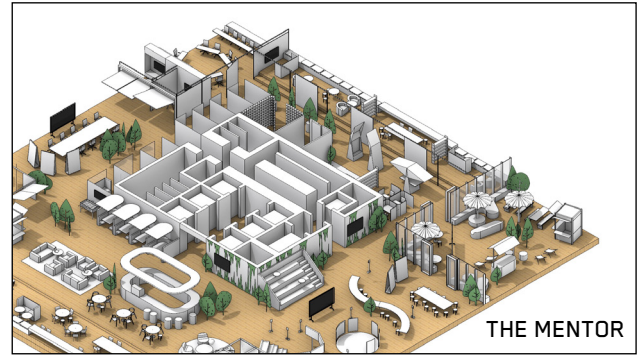
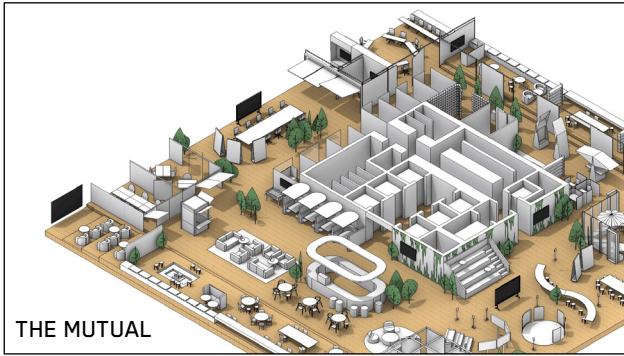
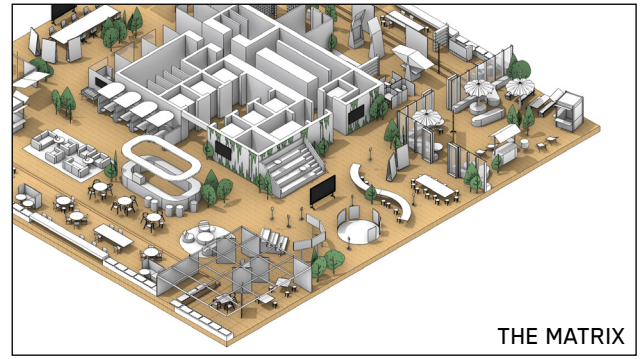
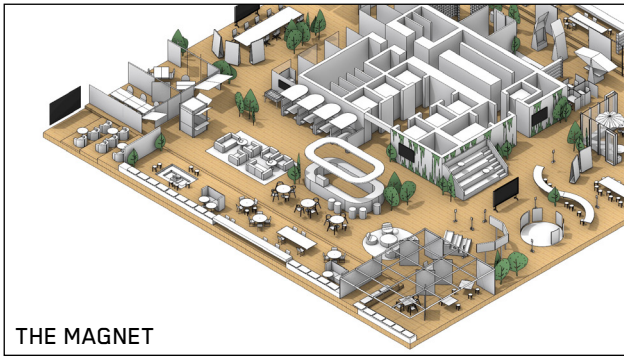
At a time of dynamic change for the legal industry, the intersection of space, technology and culture is opening up new vistas for how the legal workplace is designed. While law firms have adapted well to the shift to remote working, there is still a strong appetite across the three key regions to return to the office.

This report highlights the key emerging trends and shifts occurring in the legal workplace now and identifies what the immediate responses and the longer term impacts the pandemic has inflicted on law firms across the world. Each emerging development has implications in the way the next phase of the legal workplace will be designed. This next section will propose four spatial typologies to guide the design of the future legal workplace.

- THE MAGNET
- THE MATRIX
- THE MUTUAL
- THE MENTOR

These typologies are rooted in research and current best practice. They are not intended to be mutually exclusive; they represent a design response to some of the long-term shifts occurring across the legal industry. To some degree, the designs are interdependent and are likely to co-exist as law firms start to navigate and integrate new ways of working into their corporate culture.



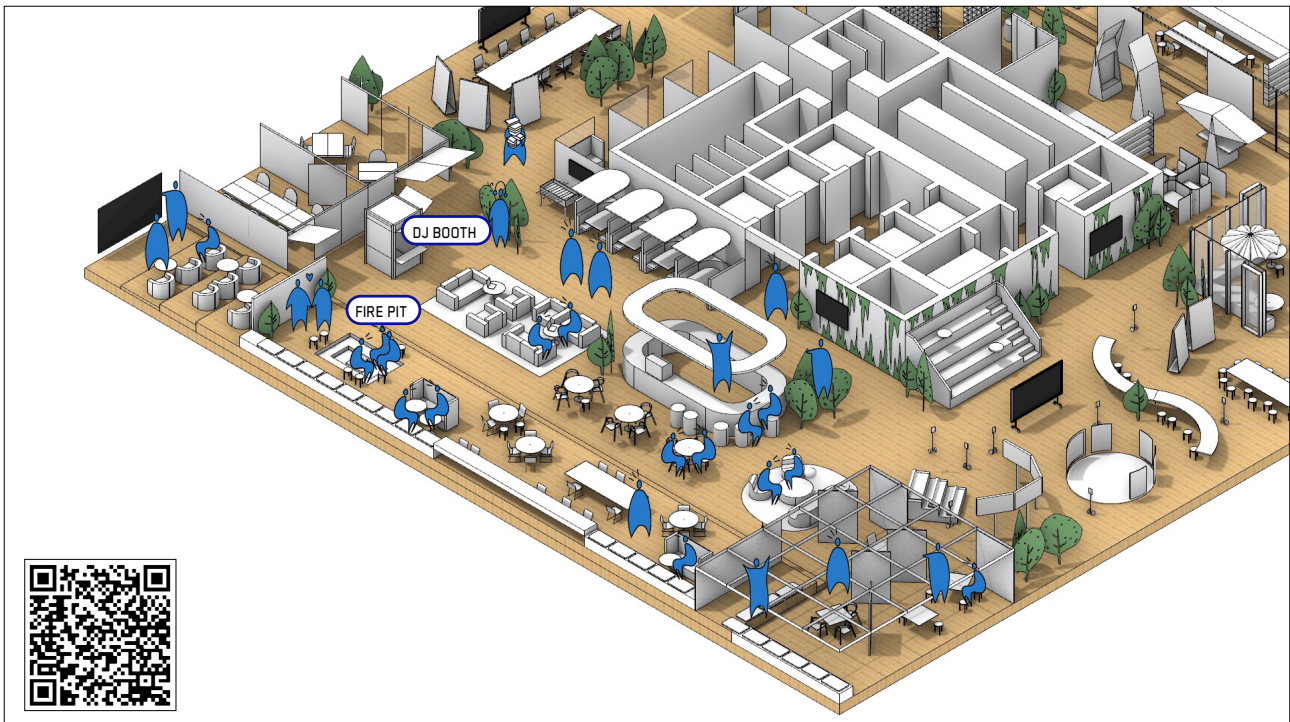


The 4 typologies explore ideas for spatial settings that support the changing needs of the future legal office.

These can be experienced in animated graphics by hovering over the symbols and scanning the QR code:



HOVER OVER THE TAGS TO FIND OUT  
MORE ABOUT THE SPECIFIC SETTINGS



## 3.1 THE MAGNET

This model is based on the idea that the primary function of the legal workplace will be as a 'destination' drawing people in for social interaction. This space is driven by client meetings, collaborative workspaces and the access to amenities to enhance employee experience and engagement. Face-to-face social and professional activities will predominate. The Magnet will be a place to build social capital and culture, a venue to express core human values.

### THE SETTINGS

WELCOME

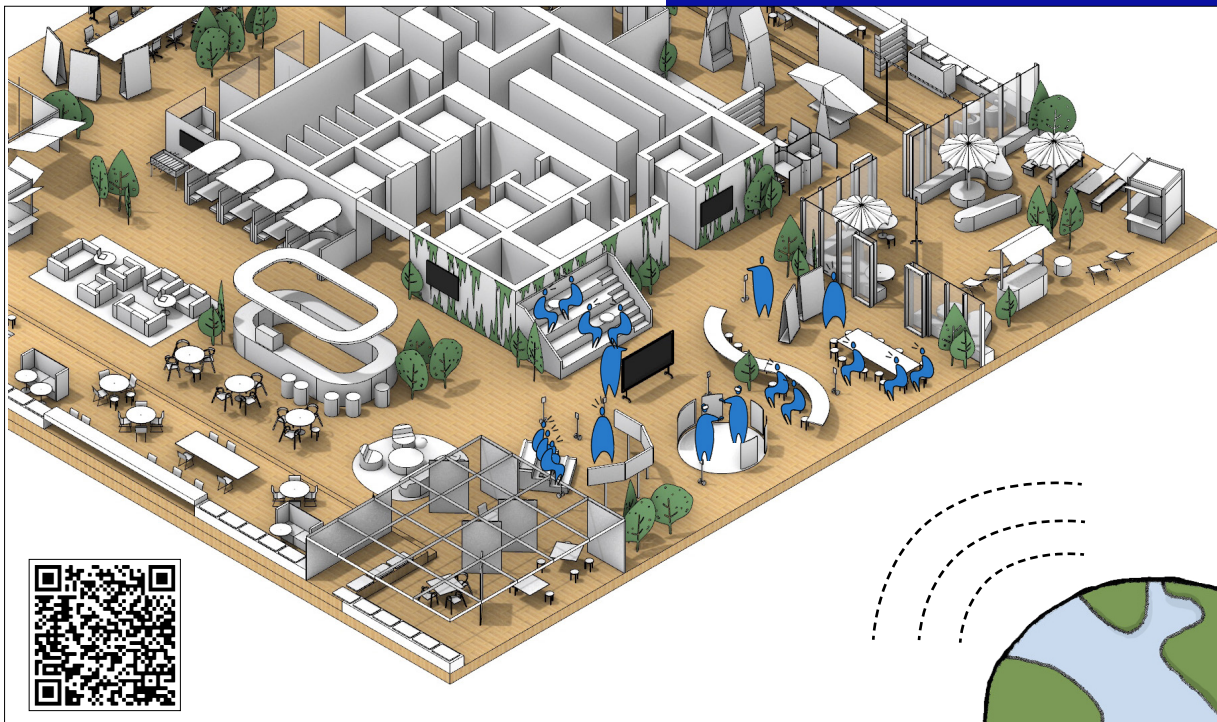
CLUBHOUSE

"ALWAYS-ON"-SCREEN

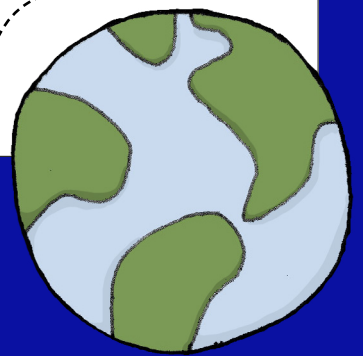
VERANDAH

DESIGN THINKING STUDIO

CINEMA



CONNECTED TO THE WORLD



## 3.2 THE MATRIX

This model is informed by the integration of technology talent into the legal workplace. As interdisciplinary collaboration continues to occur, the provision of highly specialised and technical spaces will be required. Given the purpose of these mixed skillsets coming together is to spark creativity and innovation, these teams will require project rooms and plenty of inspiration. The Matrix will also bring teams together across different geographies and time zones, enabling digital equality between participants in a range of physical and online spaces. Human and machine intelligence will inhabit the same environment as part of the bricks-and-bytes blend.

### THE SETTINGS

VR PIT

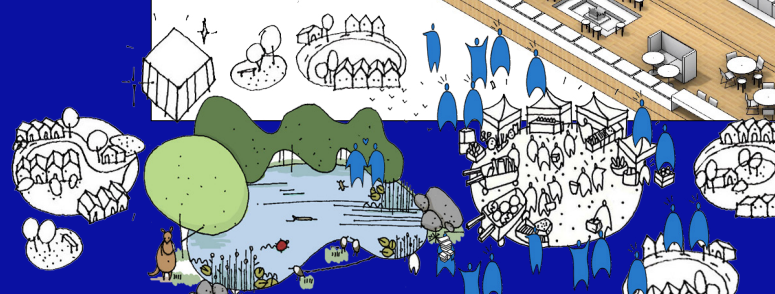
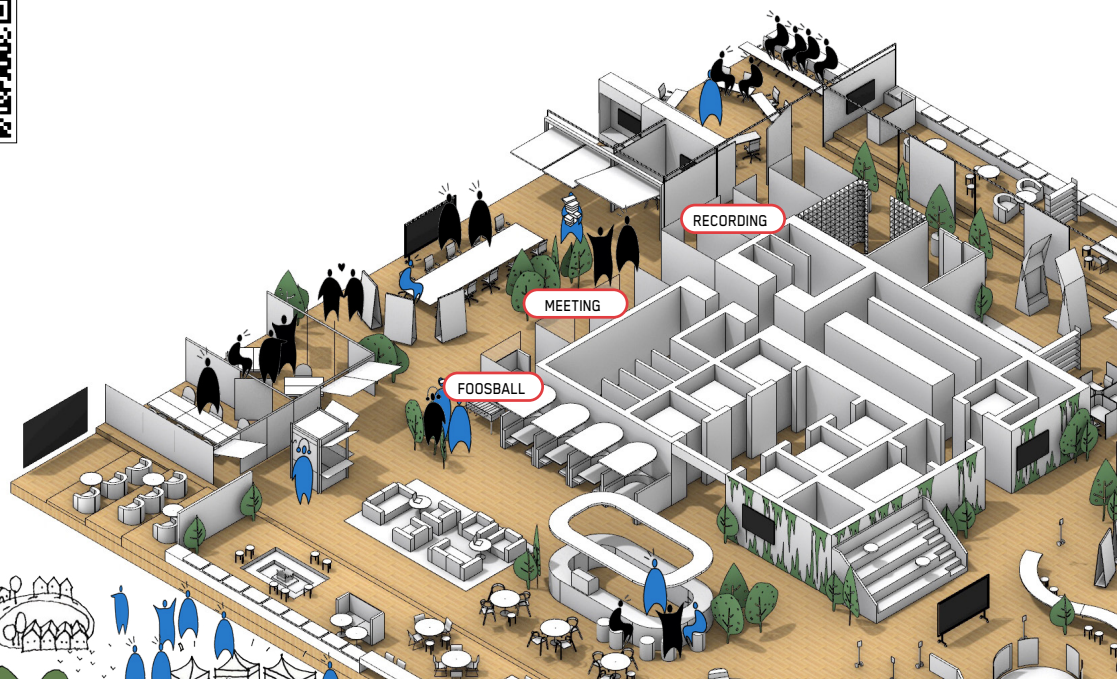
ROBOTS

FORUM

COLLECTIVE

"ALWAYS ON"-SCREEN





CONNECTED TO A WIDER ECOSYSTEM

### 3.3 THE MUTUAL

This model is based on the idea of a shared purpose between different parties. Law firms will undoubtedly have surplus real estate as a result of moving towards a more flexible workforce. When combined with the clear trend towards more collaboration, there is an opportunity to partner with clients, universities or tech companies to share space in a hosted environment and gain access to emerging talent and ideas. Settings will be permeable to external partnerships in form of incubator spaces and based the values of adaptability and mutuality. The concept of mutuality will also extend outwards, taking the legal workplace into a wider ecosystem of work settings and third spaces outside the law office.

#### THE SETTINGS

INCUBATOR

BAR

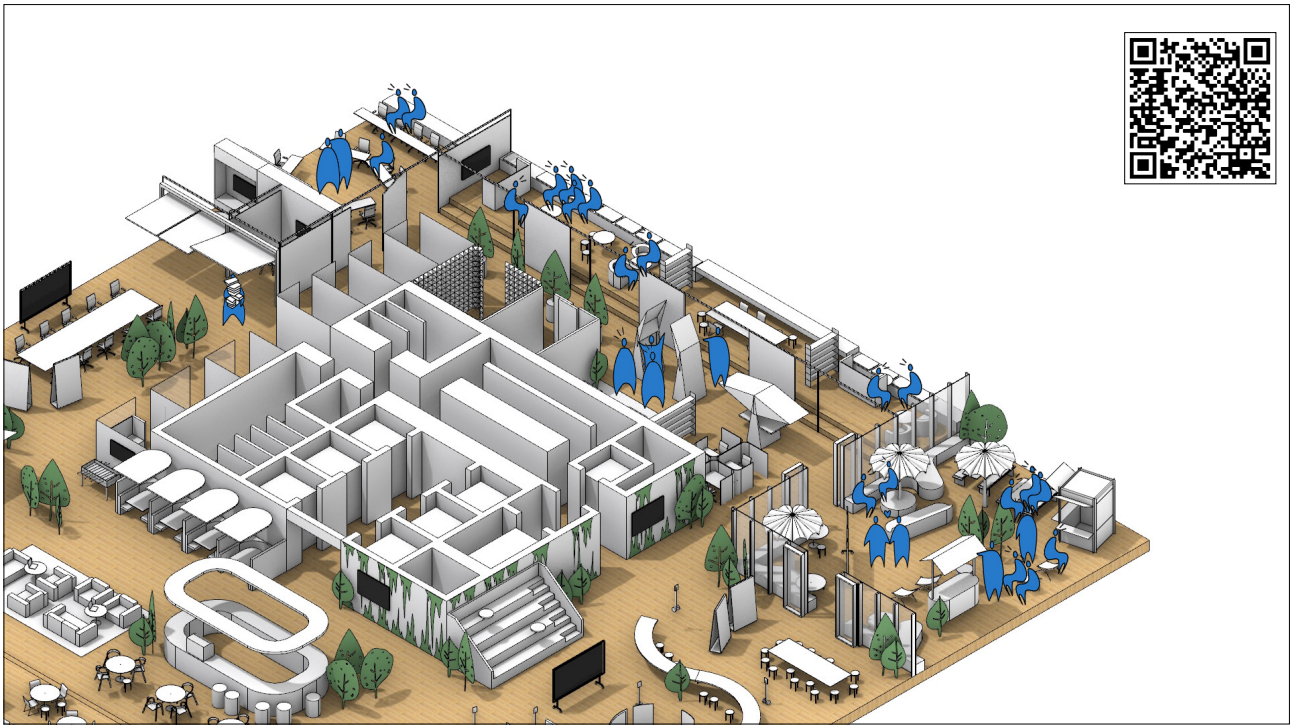
RECORDING STUDIO

GARAGE

LEARNING

ACADEMY





### 3.4 THE MENTOR

The fourth model is based on the concept of life-long learning. This design uses learning and mentoring spaces to promote continuous learning to develop 21st century lawyers. This concept is based on the 'law library' setting for individual learning and the mentorship model where junior lawyers are invited to learn from more senior lawyers in a dedicated space. To learn effectively in the legal workplace depends on providing a healthy environment. The fundamental issue of mental wellbeing, which has emerged even more visibly in the pandemic, is supported by settings like sleeping pods or prayer rooms, quiet spaces and access to outdoor workspaces.

#### THE SETTINGS

OUTDOOR

ANECHOIC CHAMBER

QUIET ROOMS

1-ON-1

LIBRARY

MUTE COURT

MEDITATION / YOGA / PRAYER ROOM

# CONCLUSION

**“We don’t even need the mentoring and training in the office, we should team up with universities and go to their spaces.”**

SENIOR LEADERSHIP, EUROPEAN-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

The research and discussions in this report have highlighted that the traditional legal workplace needs to evolve and embrace the swell of change within the legal sector. This is only heightened as the pandemic continues to enforce new ways of working and more flexible approaches to the future.

As the four design concepts outlined in the previous section of this report suggest, social interaction, technology, collaboration and partnership, flexibility and life-long learning are all key factors that will drive the design on the legal workplace in the mid to long-term future. This approach requires leadership to look beyond the traditional space in law firms towards an environment which truly meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic workforce.

Drivers of change in the legal workplace are likely to remain constant across different law firms around the world – such as the development and introduction of emergent technologies into the workplace, the advent of flexible working and the race for talent. However, there are slight regional differences as to how firms are responding to change.

Based on the findings in this report, Australia-based firms have largely taken a more agile approach to the future of the legal workplace. Australian business is well-known for being an early adopter of agile working practices across a spectrum of different industries. As a result, the legal industry in Australia has been exposed to this way of thinking for some time.

European and North American-based firms have moved more cautiously towards agile working. Due to the nature of real estate models in these regions, it is expected that law firms will take out long leases on substantial office spaces, and this model is seemingly difficult to depart from.

However, all regions agree that a paradigm shift has occurred in the legal workplace whereby the approach to space, technology and people needs to be re-evaluated. The firms that participated in this research were international firms and require strategies that can not only work across their national portfolios but also across their global workforce. Therefore, the next challenge is how to create a truly global law firm with aligned thinking across different regions and locations, and design is a critical tool to conveying a unified company culture and identity both nationally and internationally.

The legal workplace is competing against tech giants, financial firms and large corporates for premium legal and technological talent. The sector can no longer rely on legacy reputations alone to attract the best talent. The future of the workplace is therefore about designing for the different skillsets highlighted in the report, as well as recognising that the function and purpose of legal workspace will change as a result of the pandemic.

In this period of constant flux, firms must be able to pivot, using change to their advantage, rather than losing control and seeing it impact negatively on their business. This report outlines an opportunity for the legal workplace to re-imagine the workflow of employees to create environments which are optimal for increased collaboration across different teams, while also balancing the need for individual learning and focused work.

**“We can’t justify  
the fees we  
charge unless we  
provide a special  
environment.”**

PARTNER, LONDON-BASED INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM

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COLLECTIVE  
*CREATIVITY*  
TO DESIGN  
A BETTER  
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