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Technology and Legal Practice: A Revolutionary Nexus

The paper seeks to highlight the inclusion of technology in the legal practice domain in the recent years and thus seeks to develop a strong relation between technology and legal practice which has only been realized lately. It also aims to deal with various facets of the same viz. advantages, future prospects besides laying down suggestions and ideas as to how the nexus between the two can be optimized and turned into a productive one.

Introduction

Technology is one such aspect which has barely left any entity free from its touch and what is important to take down from this is the fact that it has not just left those entities touched; rather it has completely revolutionised it.



“Technology is a means to fulfil a human purpose. ... As a means, a technology may be a method or process or device... Or it may be complicated... Or it may be material.. Or it may be nonmaterial. Whichever it is, it is always a means to carry out a human purpose.” -
W. Brian Arthur

Legal Practise and Technology

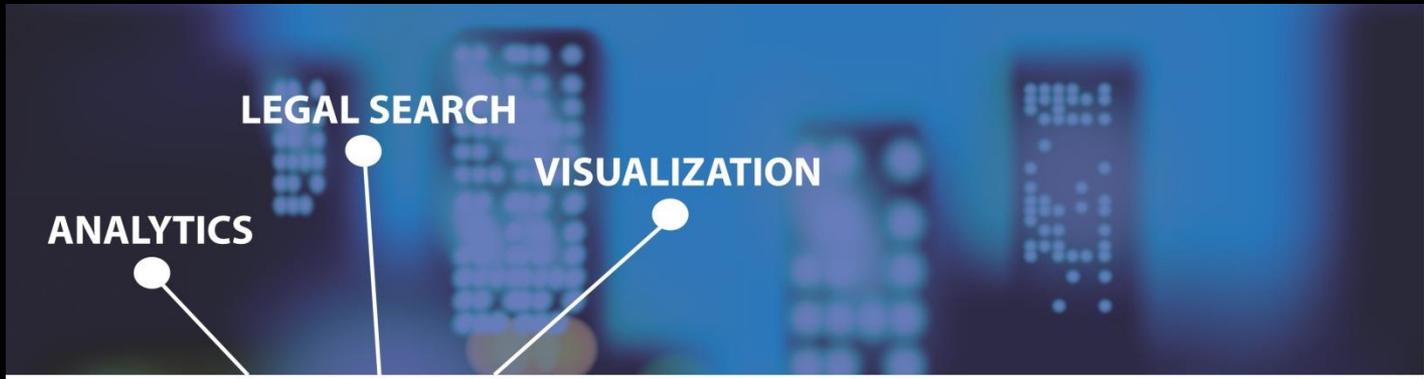


“Economic pressures and the need to increase the productivity of law practice will motivate lawyers in increasing numbers to investigate the availability, potential benefits, and costs of computer-based data processing services.”

Furth by making use of the terms like ‘will motivate’ and ‘investigate’ in his above written prediction, intended to emphasize a very common characteristic of the legal field viz. *Restraint from imbibing the tools of technology into it.* But with age and rising complexities, it has very much dawned upon the men that this age and also the ages to come belong to the technology and any express effort to suppress or bridle its growth would be very much against them.

Moore's Law

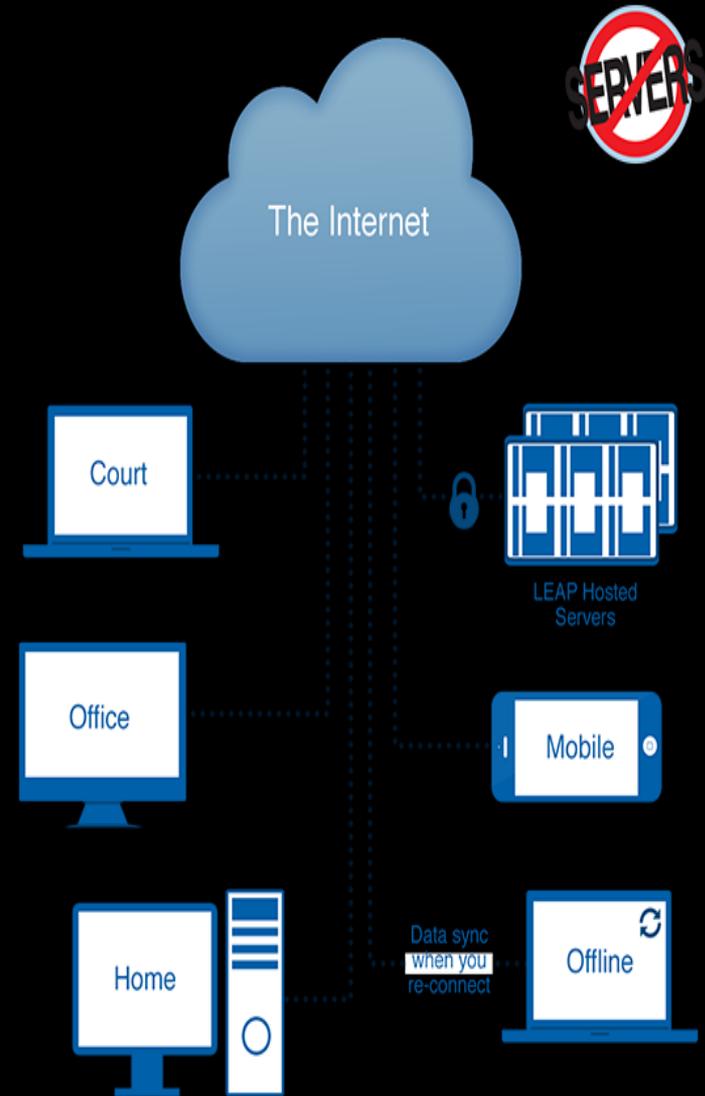
Gordon E. Moore, one of the Intel founders, observed that the number of transistors on integrated circuits doubles approximately every two years. This is known in the computing world as **Moore's Law**. This law elucidating the rise of technology has proved itself to be of substance for indeed the world has seen such magnitudes of growth.



However, what is same for the technology or computing world need not necessarily be true for the legal world as well for it has been observed that although technology around the legal world has been growing overly, the penetration of the same into the field has not been of the same intensity.

Reasons for Reservation

- ✓ When it comes to the aspect of lawyering, it is a commonly held belief that lawyers as a class are more fault-proof than the technological counterparts.
- ✓ Further, it is difficult to imagine the nature of accountability or responsibility on breach of an obligation that can be imposed on something as an artificial intelligence.
- ✓ It is incomprehensible as to how something like technology which is governed by objective formulas can come to rescue in situations requiring subjectivity seasoned by experience and skill.
- ✓ Also, it is indeed very hard to understand as to why the service provider would resort to something modish which comes with new risks and additional costs rather than relying on process where the results are guaranteed and risk free.



Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is defined as *“An area of study in the field of computer science which is concerned with the development of computers able to engage in human-like thought processes such as learning, reasoning, and self-correction.”*

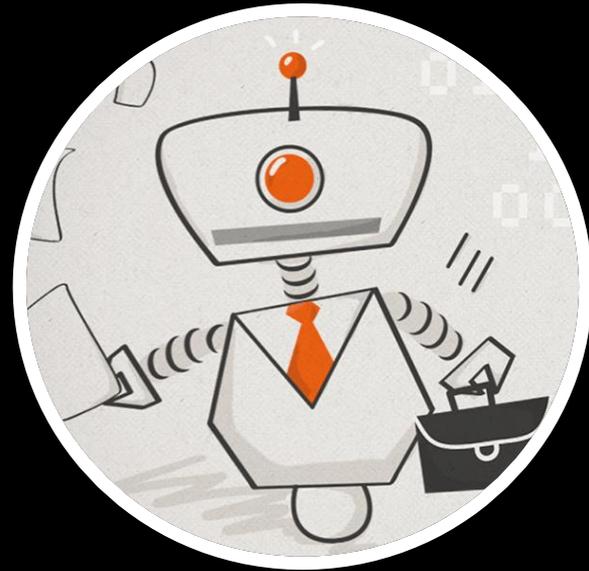
The term artificial intelligence thus, connotes the process of making use of non-human entities for purposes which were conventionally meant to be undertaken and fulfilled by humans only. In present era, a persistent shift has been made to accommodate more and more of artificial intelligence entities and thus replacing human capabilities.



Will the Robots oust lawyers?

When we think of amalgamation of legal practise and technology, a question does arise as to whether the technological dominance can be to such an extent so as to completely sabotage the role of lawyers. Such far-stretched notions are however wrong. Since long, technology has seen its application and utility in the field of legal practise and there has been no hint whatsoever to hold an impression

that technology advancement has reached to such horizons that it can completely cripple the important role played by lawyers. It has been constantly used in activities like legal research by employing certain formulas, systematic recording of documents, predictability of results, accounting, billing etc. However, what it merely does is to aid and accelerate the activities done by lawyers and it cannot be asserted that it can supersede lawyers for law is such a profession which is characterized by individual thinking and judgement.



Drivers of Change



Through years, there have been systematic changes in the legal domain; which have ultimately become the cause of the intrusion of technology into it. This aspect of study is two-fold which can be studied both from the demand side as well as the complementary supply side. Demand side includes entities like Clients and courts to whose needs the lawyers cater. Courts, today, are increasingly resorting to digital services. Also, the clients have started to prefer those lawyers who have higher digital competency.

From, the supply side, the lawyers have not exploited the technological resources merely on account of the force from the demand side, but also because of the fact that it has reaped them multitudes of benefits too. Where time is money, adopting digital practises have ensured a profound increase in the efficiency and productivity of the lawyers.

Initiatives of the Law School



The alma mater of a lawyer i.e. the Law school is the place where he/she for the very first time gets to deal with law comprehensively. It is this very place where a budding or aspiring lawyer gets seasoned and the kind of moulding one receives here turns out to be a determinative factor of how that person does in his/her professional life. Since, technology is the future; it thus becomes highly imperative on the law schools that its students are groomed in a digitally competent environment.

Accordingly, institutions have started to equip their students with modern tools of technology and the various exercises that they require to be performed by the students are modulated in such a fashion that extensive reliance on technology is being made.

Legal Technology: The way ahead



Technological changes have been taking place incessantly leaving little to prediction or imagination. However it won't be too much to posit that with regard to the direction in which changes are taking place and also the pace with which it is happening, legal practise will continue to get technologically revolutionised in the future and it is expected that technological penetration shall increase in the days to come.

The future of this relationship between law and technology looks promising enough and the already interesting field of legal practise is sure to become even more interesting.

Dream big! The future is not what it once seemed.

Thank You!

- Arpit Agarwal