

MULTILAW CONNECT

1/2024



Introduction

Welcome to the Multilaw Connect magazine, exclusively created for our new in-house counsel community, it's bold, bright, and brimming with potential. As Multilaw's CEO, I am really excited about what we're creating here.

This first issue packs a punch with topics that are on everyone's radar: from ESG insights with Esteban Mezzano at Nestlé, to demystifying AI's role for corporate counsel, and highlighting the consumer trends poised to redefine our industry in 2024. In addition, we extend an invitation to our networking events and encourage you to explore the Connect Library, where we've curated an assortment of books, articles, and podcasts designed to pique your curiosity.

We're all ears for your ideas on future magazine content, community engagement strategies, or any visions you have for what Multilaw Connect can evolve into. Your feedback and suggestions are the fuel that will drive this community forward.

Feel free to drop me a line with your thoughts, big or small, at adam.cooke@multilaw.com.

I hope you enjoy the read!



Adam Cooke

CEO
Multilaw



Corporate counsel in the age of AI: Beyond table stakes



Duc V. Trang

Head – Talent &
Workforce Management,
Briefbox

Most of us are both enthralled and apprehensive about Artificial Intelligence (AI). PwC forecasts that AI could contribute \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030 from increased productivity alone. At the same time, it's easy to think of AI as a fad — too complicated, too undeveloped, or unlikely to have any significant impact on your job in the short term.

The hype around AI has been overwhelming. And there's no shortage of commentaries from experts, law firms, and business leaders.

For corporate counsels, what do you need to know about AI — for your company and, perhaps as important, for your career?

There certainly are “risks” associated with incorporating AI into a business:

AI-Generated Content: The legal and ethical implications of AI-generated content, including copyright infringement, defamation, and misinformation;

Data Privacy and Security Concerns: Compliance with data privacy regulations such as GDPR and CCPA, and protection against cyber-attacks;

Intellectual Property Rights and Ownership: Ownership and associated rights of AI-generated content, especially in collaborative or commercial settings;



Ethical and Bias Considerations: Responsible development and deployment of AI systems, promoting fairness, transparency, and accountability;



Regulatory Compliance: Compliance with applicable and new regulatory frameworks addressing AI transparency, accountability, and safety, including industry-specific regulations; and



Liability and Legal Responsibility: Comprehensive risk management strategies and protocols for handling AI-related disputes or incidents, with both end-customers and AI vendors or service providers.

While these are important, I consider these as “table-stakes” issues for corporate counsels. Proactive lawyers will make sure their companies consider these concerns and risks.

What’s more intriguing, and less discussed, is the broader context of what AI may mean for both corporate law departments and each in-house counsel in delivering legal services:

01

Missed Opportunities for Efficiency and Innovation:

In-house counsels should evaluate how AI tools can streamline repetitive tasks, improve efficiency, and augment corporate decision-making processes. In-house counsels who are resistant to adopting AI may miss out on opportunities to optimise legal processes, enhance productivity, and drive innovation within their legal departments. AI technologies offer capabilities such as document automation, contract analysis, and legal research optimisation, which can significantly improve efficiency and free up time for strategic tasks.

02

Delivering a More Strategic Legal Coverage Model:

The integration of generative AI technologies can significantly impact legal workflows and resource allocation. Using AI, corporate law departments will be able to design and deliver a more strategic coverage model – ensuring that the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, are doing the right things to support the company’s commercial priorities.



03 Organisational & Individual Wellness: Without the support of AI-driven tools and technologies, in-house counsels may find themselves overwhelmed by manual tasks, administrative duties, and routine legal work. This may lead to burnout, reduced job satisfaction, decreased overall productivity among legal teams, and increase retention risks.

04 Limited Capacity to Address Complex Legal Challenges: In an increasingly complex corporate landscape, companies rely on in-house counsels to provide strategic guidance and navigate legal complexities in increasingly complex business environments. By shying away from AI, counsels may limit their capacity to address complex business and legal challenges, such as regulatory compliance, risk management, and dispute resolution. This could result in missed opportunities to proactively identify and mitigate legal risks or capitalise on emerging opportunities. In-house counsels who are reluctant to adopt AI risk falling behind their peers who embrace technological advancements to focus on high-value legal activities that drive business outcomes and contribute to organisational success. This leads to the next item, which creates professional risk for corporate law department leaders.

05 Failure to Meet Stakeholder Expectations: Stakeholders, including executives, clients, and regulatory authorities, increasingly expect legal departments to leverage technology to enhance legal services, and improve corporate decision-making. In-house counsels who resist AI adoption may struggle to meet these expectations, leading to dissatisfaction among stakeholders and reputational damage for the law department. Failure to embrace AI could signal to senior leadership a lack of commitment of the law department to innovation and responsiveness to changing industry trends.

06 Education and Training for Legal Professionals: Given the rapid advancements in AI technologies, in-house counsels should prioritise ongoing education and training for legal professionals within their organisations in two key-areas. First, in-house lawyers will need to be trained how to use AI to extract efficiencies from the technology. Second, assuming AI will free up time for lawyers to spend time on higher value and complex matters, query whether lawyers actually have those skills. Our research shows that, beyond legal issues, there's much room for improvement in developing higher cognitive skills, such as strategic thinking, complex problem-solving and business/commercial acumen.

07 Failure to Use AI Hinders Professional Advancement: Proficiency in emerging technologies such as AI will likely become a prerequisite for professional advancement within the legal profession. Employers and clients alike value legal professionals who demonstrate adaptability to AI tools and methodologies, as they are better equipped to deliver high-quality legal services, drive operational efficiencies, and achieve strategic objectives.

In-house counsels who proactively leverage AI to solve complex legal problems and enhance their clients' decision-making processes are more likely to gain recognition, credibility, and leadership opportunities within their companies. They can position themselves as trusted advisors who bring value beyond traditional legal expertise. Conversely, those who remain resistant to AI adoption may be perceived as reluctant to adapt to change, lacking in forward-thinking mindset, and potentially hindering the organisation's ability to stay competitive in a technology-driven world. In-house counsels who resist or neglect the adoption of AI technologies risk stagnating in their careers and falling behind colleagues who embrace AI.



I interact daily with general counsel, and AI consistently emerges as one of the key issues occupying their mind space. Despite such preoccupations, informally, most of them share that they have hardly even played with the technology. Lawyers are not the exception. BCG did a survey late last year of 1,400 executives around the world asking them about generative AI and what they're doing with it. Ninety percent of them are just "observing and waiting for things to happen". The number of lawyers just "observing", however, perhaps is even higher.

Don't be complacent; my suggestion is to dive right in. Be curious – focus on how to couple "human" capabilities with machine-learning to drive better outcomes for clients. The benefits of knowing how to deploy AI are enormous – both to the corporate organisation and to one's own professional development.

Embracing AI technologies can empower in-house counsels to future-proof their careers, by enhancing their effectiveness, delivering greater value to their organisations, and positioning themselves as leaders in the legal profession.

Using AI as a tool for professional growth and advancement, in-house counsels can position themselves at the forefront of innovation, differentiation, and excellence in the legal profession.

Duc Trang's career includes stints as general counsel, global law firm attorney, author, business leader, educator, executive coach, and consultant. His work has spanned continents, including the United States, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, as Duc currently is Head, Talent & Workforce Management at Briefbox, where he designs talent solutions software. Duc's legal career includes senior legal and business leadership positions at **Motorola Solutions, Inc.** and **IBM**, and in private practice at **White & Case** and **DLA Piper**. He also previously advised corporate legal departments and law firms on organisational strategy and human capital strategy.

Duc recently published **Architecture of Deals: Strategies for Transactional Lawyering**, which delves into legal education and training innovation, and has served as an adjunct professor of law at the National University of Singapore and Central European University.



Five consumer trends shaping the legal profession in 2024

01 Truth, trust and purpose >

02 Sustainable action >

03 Blended realities >

04 Doing more with less >

05 The joyconomy >



01 Truth, trust and purpose

79%

Gen Z exhibits the highest need for brand trust, 79% say it's more important today than it's been in the past

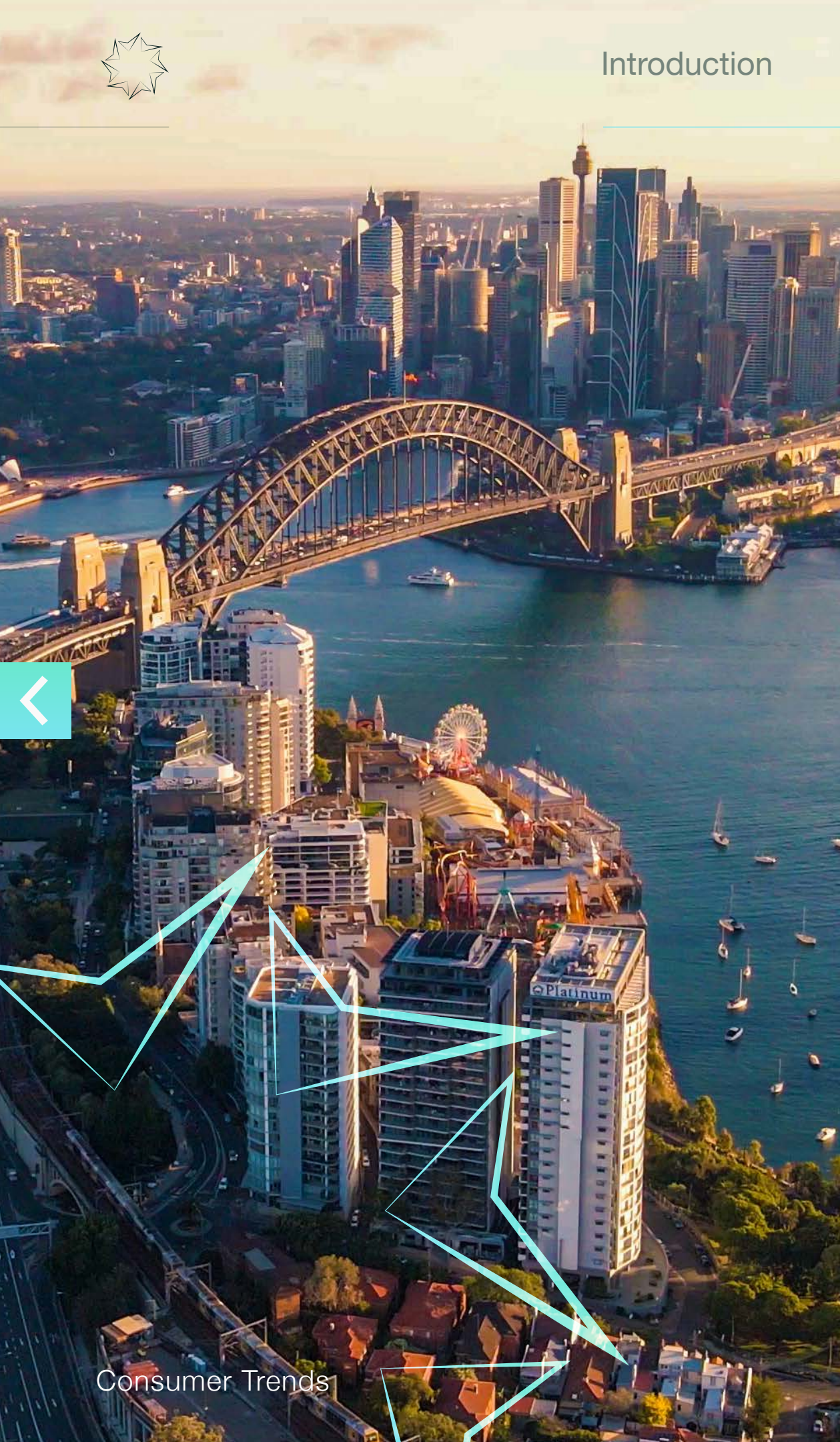
Edelman

Trust is the new currency for businesses. As we enter another year of political, social and economic perma-crises, employees, stakeholders and customers alike will be investing in brands that reflect their own values. Transparency and accountability will be vital, and you'll play a critical role in pushing through your organisation's ethical practices.

The way ahead

Work with key stakeholders to define clear practices surrounding data protection, ESG and company culture to boost trust.





02 Sustainable action

70%

As greenwashing incidents jumped by 70% in 2023, over half of consumers are prepared to boycott brands for misleading claims

RepRisk, KPMG

Across the globe, consumers are taking firmer stances against vague or false ESG marketing claims. Driving forward meaningful actions to prevent climate change and reassure consumers will be at the top of many businesses' agendas for 2024, from offsetting carbon emissions to protecting the environment.

The way ahead

Demonstrate your commitment to net zero through tangible actions. Screen suppliers and other third parties for their sustainability positions, with the aim of negotiating policy alignment.



03

Blended realities

78%

78% of companies say that the introduction of AI has created new jobs

Institute for the Future of Work

Generative AI is the biggest technological shake-up since Web 1.0. It is creating new career paths and ways of working for professionals, and more personalised experiences for customers. It will also bring new dilemmas for legal decision makers, from navigating emerging regulations to evaluating ethical considerations around its usage.

The way ahead

Drive innovation forward for your organisation by making a business case for AI training, developing company policy on using generative AI tools, and shaping internal best practice.



Legislating the future, now



The European Parliament is devising what will become the world's first set of rules on artificial intelligence: The EU AI Act.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)





04

Doing more with less

2.5%

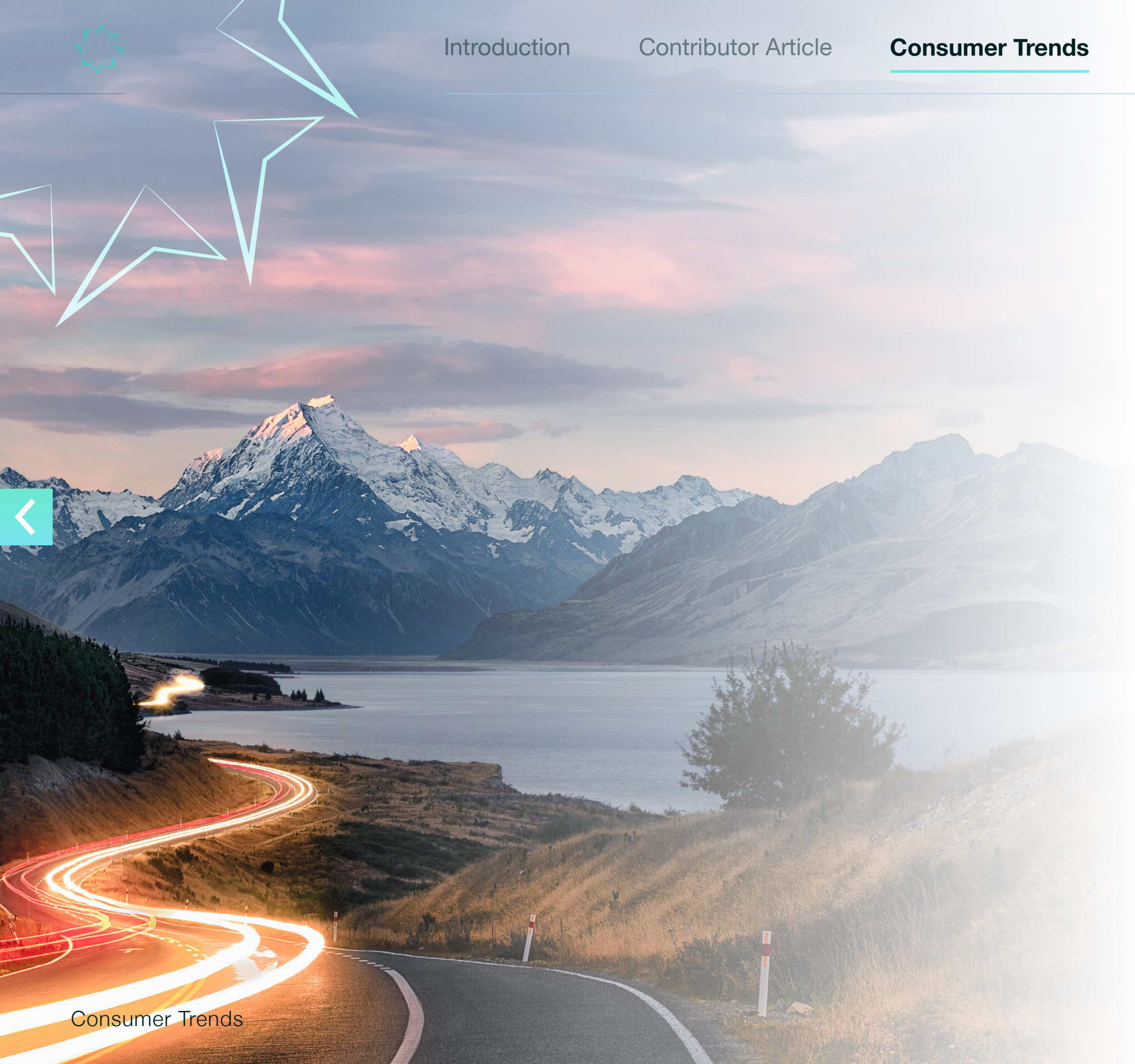
Global GDP growth is expected to slow from 2.9% in 2023 to 2.5% in 2024

OECD

Even though consumer spending is fluctuating, businesses are responding to sluggish economic growth with surprising optimism. Whilst many leading organisations are emphasising investment over austerity, there is still acute pressure for professionals to adopt leaner business models and leverage creative problem-solving methods.

The way ahead

If you haven't already, optimise your processes by implementing automated solutions (such as eDiscovery and legal contract management tools), liaising with innovative ALSPs and using alternative fee arrangements (AFAs).



The changing face of ALSPs

ALSPs have become effective collaborators for in-house professionals, providing specialist services that help legal decision makers off-load manual tasks and drive operational efficiencies. Read more about how law firms are using ALSPs in our report.

[VIEW REPORT](#)



05

The joyconomy

65%

Spending on experiences rose by 65% between 2019 and 2023, compared with a 12% rise on goods in the same period

Mastercard

Even in tough economic periods, **consumers will actively search for and spend their money on experiences as they seek shelter from uncertainty.** As employees place more emphasis on their wellbeing, organisations can tap into the “**joyconomy**” by offering workers meaningful (and personalised) perks, forms of escapism and implement digital employee experience (DEX) solutions that boost both morale and retention.

The way ahead

Senior HR leaders and legal decision makers can collaborate to build a business case for increasing the quality and variety of experiential benefits against projected gains to the business (e.g. lower staff turnover).



Sustainability in 2024 with Esteban Mezzano: 5 key questions answered



We spoke to Esteban Mezzano, General Counsel Corporate Operations & Sustainability at Nestlé, to explore the role legal professionals can play in creating sustainable businesses.

01 What are your top ESG priorities at Nestlé this year?

Among many competing priorities, in 2024, our Legal Sustainability team will be focused on 3 key areas.

Firstly, non-financial reporting. This is an area the European Union is leading with its new mandatory Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Many organisations have been creating voluntary ESG reports in the past, but now disclosure is becoming mandatory, and with similar formality to financial reporting (e.g., audits and Board of Directors approval). This change, very relevant for us lawyers, will only accelerate. Not just in Europe, but in every jurisdiction in the world.

Secondly, we will continue to look at how to best communicate our ESG efforts. Many countries are already regulating greenwashing, while consumers are becoming increasingly interested in knowing the sustainability credentials of the products they are buying. Lawyers are playing a key role in helping brands to produce impactful and responsible communication in this new space.

Thirdly, we will focus even more on risk management of our supply chain. Nestlé is one of the biggest food and beverage companies in the world – we operate in over 150 countries. We need to work with our suppliers across different regions to assess, address and report on the human and environmental impacts our supply chain creates.

02 What’s preventing legal professionals from initiating or scaling their sustainability strategies?

Legal professionals need to learn the language of sustainability.

One of the biggest ESG challenges lawyers face, whether you’re in-house or in a firm, is feeling comfortable with this new area of the law. It’s like a new language that lawyers need to learn. Becoming fluent in sustainability will help professionals foster communication across different practice areas and expertise. Slowly, that language will become commonplace and a natural part of the legal toolkit.

While it might appear daunting at first, it is important that we lose the fear of something new and embrace it. After all, we are all citizens of the world before we are lawyers. We all feel the same struggles in terms of climate change, pollution, and social issues. This commonality should encourage us to learn this new language so that we can communicate better and accelerate progress.



03 What are the foundations of a strong sustainability strategy in 2024?

Materiality is a great way to define sustainability strategies, as a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective. Each company should define what areas matter most to them in terms of impact and opportunities. No one company can ‘solve’ every single area of ESG, it is just too vast. But by assessing areas where your company can have a positive impact due to the nature of its activity, you will be able to define where you can make a greater difference to the planet, to your consumers, and to your business.

There are, of course, minimum baselines of ESG that you will need to meet to remain compliant irrespective of this materiality concept, such as reducing your carbon footprint, whatever that is. **Lawyers can help by focusing on those areas that maximise the positive impact of, and for, your company and, in the aggregate, maximise the common good.**

04 How can legal professionals bring stakeholders together to drive sustainability initiatives forward?

You need to show stakeholders the opportunities that sustainability creates for businesses. If your approach is to consider ESG simply as another list of regulations you need to comply with, you will never be able to capture its potential. **Sustainability goes well beyond compliance.** It can help create more resilient and impactful businesses, fuel transformation and meet consumer demands. To engage your colleagues, you will need to communicate and show the long-term value it creates for your business.

“Business growth and sustainability are not in contradiction.”

05 What advice would you give to Multilaw Connect members?

My advice is that as soon as you start to learn this new “language” of sustainability, you will be able to start to communicate to your clients not only the compliance risks, but the tremendous opportunities behind the ESG agenda. Like digital, sustainability is another transformative revolution for companies. It provides a rare chance to protect the business while helping to ensure a viable planet for future generations. The good news is that in these topics, the main logic should be the collaboration. A network like Multilaw is already well-placed to facilitate the connection and the sharing of knowledge and experience to benefit its clients and ultimately, society at large.



[Esteban's LinkedIn profile](#)



Connect Library

Welcome to the Connect Library! Dive into our curation of books, articles, and podcasts — ranging from sustainability and leadership to AI. All have been hand-chosen to pique your curiosity and help broaden your horizons. We'd love to hear from our Connect members, so if there are any recommendations you'd like to see in the next edition of our magazine, please email Caroline at caroline.kerr-martin@multilaw.com.

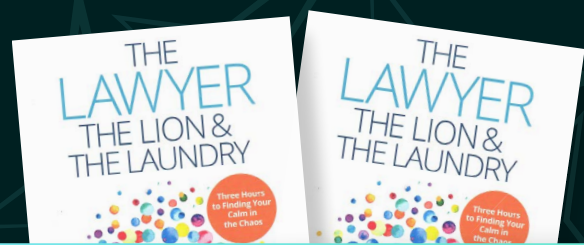


AI For Lawyers: How Artificial Intelligence is Adding Value, Amplifying Expertise, and Transforming Careers

Alexander Hudek and Noah Waisberg



The “**Cockpit Counsel Podcast**”, hosted by Tim Parilla, Chief Legal Officer of LinkSquares, offers actionable insights for legal professionals by examining legal operations, in-house challenges, and strategies with industry leaders.



The Lawyer, the Lion, & the Laundry: Three Hours to Finding Your Calm in the Chaos

Jamie Jackson Spannhake



The big challenges for in-house lawyers in 2024

What's in store in 2024 for law department leaders? Here, senior corporate counsel unpack the headline hurdles to be faced in the next 12 months. **Jerome Doraisamy**



Legal 500 – GCs on Tour series
In their GC on Tour Blog, GC Magazine showcase the stories of counsel they encounter on their travels, sharing a snapshot of what life as a lawyer entails in different countries.





Upcoming Events

Thursday

6

JUN

19:00
- 20:00



Networking Drinks at Multilaw EMEA Conference

COPENHAGEN

Please join us for drinks at our host firm Mazanti-Andersen offices in the heart of the city.

[Confirm your attendance](#)

Tuesday

17

SEP

08:00
- 10:00



Multilaw Networking Breakfast at IBA 2024

MEXICO CITY

Join us for a networking breakfast taking place during the IBA Annual Conference in Mexico City on the rooftop of Habita Hotel in the Polanco district.

[Confirm your attendance](#)

Thursday

26

SEP

19:00
- 20:00

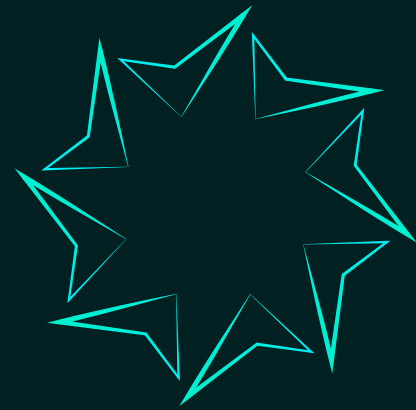


Networking Drinks at Multilaw 2024 Global Conference

BOSTON, USA

Join us for drinks reception to kick off the Multilaw Global Conference in Boston at the beautiful Newbury Hotel in the Back Bay area.

[Confirm your attendance](#)



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