



# THROUGH THE LEGAL LOOKING GLASS

WILL YOU STILL WANT TO BE  
A LAWYER TOMORROW?

An LOD In Collaboration Report with Jordan Furlong

# LOD

Over the past decade, we've transformed the way in which lawyers, consultants and legal teams work. Today, we're one of the largest and fastest growing flexible legal service providers, continuing to lead the market we created and completing hundreds of assignments with the world's leading companies and law firms.

Winning numerous awards along the way, LOD is continually recognised for creating different and better ways of working for both lawyers and legal teams.

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# FOREWORD

**I**t's one of those small pleasures in life to finish a book so good that you immediately want to share it with others. However, the book I've recommended most over the last twelve months is not what I wish it was. It's not a deep contemporary novel, a coffee table art volume or a comic masterpiece. Instead, it's a rather dry-sounding book about careers - *Designing Your Life* - by two Stanford professors, Bill Burnett & Dave Evans. Despite the subject matter, it's a strangely compelling read. It offers a practical framework for reflection on where we want to go next - what each of us does with the rest of our working lives. That's a big question, whether we are 20, 40 or 60. Especially when as lawyers we are in an industry and a world which seems to be in a state of flux unprecedented in our lifetimes.

This ability to reflect across time is our curse and our joy as humans. Neuroscientists will tell us that we concurrently ponder the past, live in the present and plan for the future like no other animal on the planet. And because we lawyers like as much certainty as we can get, future unknowns can be an alarming prospect even though they might offer great possibilities too. That's where this latest *LOD In Collaboration* report comes in. It offers a view of the landscape in which we will each need to conduct our careers over the next 5 to 25 years. But unlike others, ours isn't about determining the abstract future of the industry - it's about imagining an individual future that works for you.

Back in Stanford, the team have a sign outside their building saying "You Are Here", a rather clarifying start point, wherever we are in life. As lawyers, once we know where we are we can look much more clearly at what



next and ask what will my profession look like in the short, medium and long term and what new potential will it offer for me?

Our writer, Jordan Furlong, is someone who has been looking at the future possibilities for lawyers for more than a decade. In that time, we've found his insights to be some of the very best - and always a good read too. Here he gives each of us a structure to look forward in a positive, hopeful and realistic way, whether you're a GC or a paralegal.

We were also curious to test out some of Jordan's theories, so asked a few of our LOD lawyers. The responses (liberally littered throughout the report) have been interesting indeed - with views on why people had chosen law in the first place, through to their predictions for the coming years.

There is certainly a common theme and a reinforcement in our belief in the power of finding new and better ways of working. You might not agree with all Jordan's views and they certainly won't all come to pass (that's part of the fun of the future, right?) but we hope you find them an interesting way to think about what it means for your own next steps. Happy reading and, as ever, do please send us your feedback.

**Simon Harper**

*LOD Co-founder*



You are  
here





# YOUR UNPREDICTABLE LEGAL CAREER

**L**ook to your left. Look to your right. Look all around you in a circle, if you like, and see all the lawyers in your workplace and in your life, especially those who are older than you. Almost all of them share a secret in common:

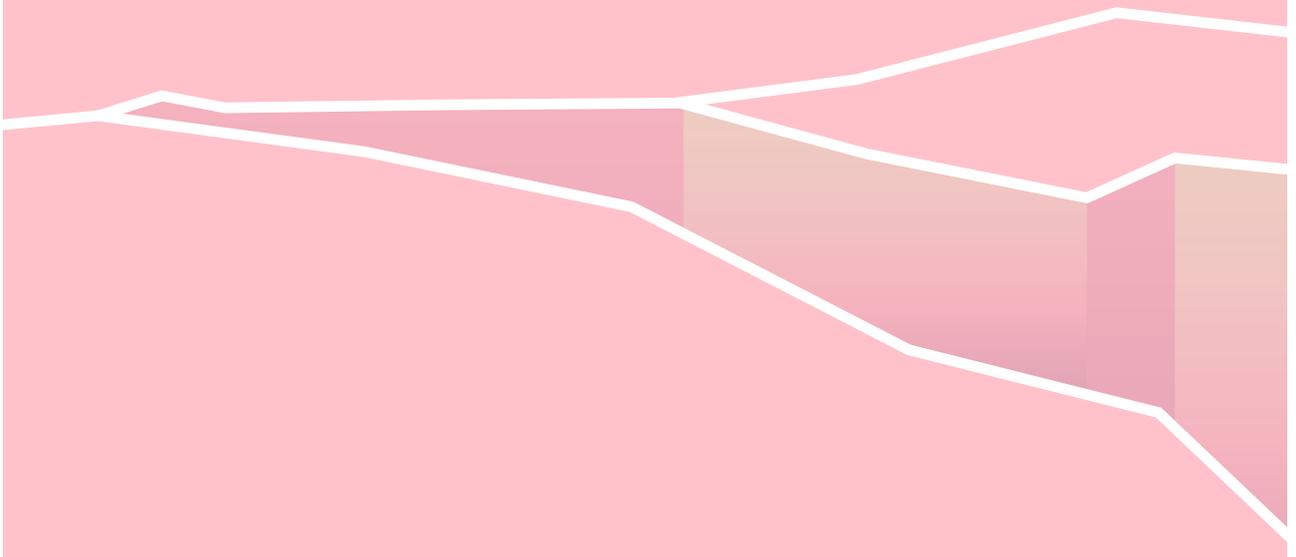
**What they're doing today is not what they went to law school to do.**

For some of them, this fact is an ongoing source of disappointment: for one reason or another, the career dream that launched them into this profession didn't come true, and they still struggle to come to terms with this unhappy reality.

For many more of them, however, the discrepancy between the lawyer they thought they'd be and the lawyer they are today is a pleasant surprise. Maybe they tried their planned legal career, only to find that they hated it, and they quickly pivoted towards something better. Or maybe they stumbled upon another legal career by accident, and found themselves unexpectedly delighted and thrilled by it.

Or maybe they're like your author: they entered law school with no clear vision of why they wanted to be a lawyer and graduated three years later none the wiser. For myself, two years after graduation, I had no job in the law and no reasonable prospect of getting one. Five years after I graduated, I was doing something I'd never remotely considered: running a national legal newspaper.

This report is meant to advise you of the likeliest (but by no means certain) nature and direction of the fault lines along which the legal career landscape will fracture and remake itself in the coming years.



**Now, look at yourself.** Do you know why you became a lawyer? Did you have a vision of a career you thought you'd someday lead? The odds would suggest that if you did, either you're not leading that career now, or you won't be leading it for long. If that's the case, rest assured that you're with the great majority of lawyers on this, and that's totally fine. Career stops, swerves, and restarts in the law are the norm, not the exception.

**But here's the thing:** Even though most lawyers' career paths have twisted and turned and looped back in unexpected directions, the landscape over which they've zig-zagged these past few decades has been pretty smooth, sedate and predictable. The course of these lawyers' careers might not have been foreseeable, but for the most part, the course of the legal profession was, and that made the twists and turns easier to navigate.

Today's lawyers, or anyone who enters the legal profession in the coming years, probably won't be as fortunate. The fundamental landscape of the law is being remade as we speak, and the next two decades in particular will feature upheavals and disruptions at a pace and on a scale we've not seen before — following and matching similar tribulations in the wider world.

This report is meant to advise you of the likeliest (but by no means certain) nature and direction of the fault lines along which the legal career landscape will fracture and remake itself in the coming years. Our hope is to help you anticipate these developments and adjust your own career plans in response, on the fly if necessary.

But this report aims to do something more. Our guess is that at some point in the next several years, you're going to look out over a vastly unfamiliar legal landscape — one that's forcing you to reconsider some basic assumptions about law as a career — and you'll wonder, *“Do I still belong here?”*

We'd like to help you reassure yourself that, even with all the turbulence coming our way in the legal sector, the law is still the right place for you. The legal world will shift all around you, but your reasons for wanting to be part of this world should still ring true.

So, before you proceed any further into this report — before you draw closer to answering the question, “*Will I still want to be a lawyer tomorrow?*” — you need to think about why you're a lawyer today.



# THE RISE OF THE CIVIC LAWYER

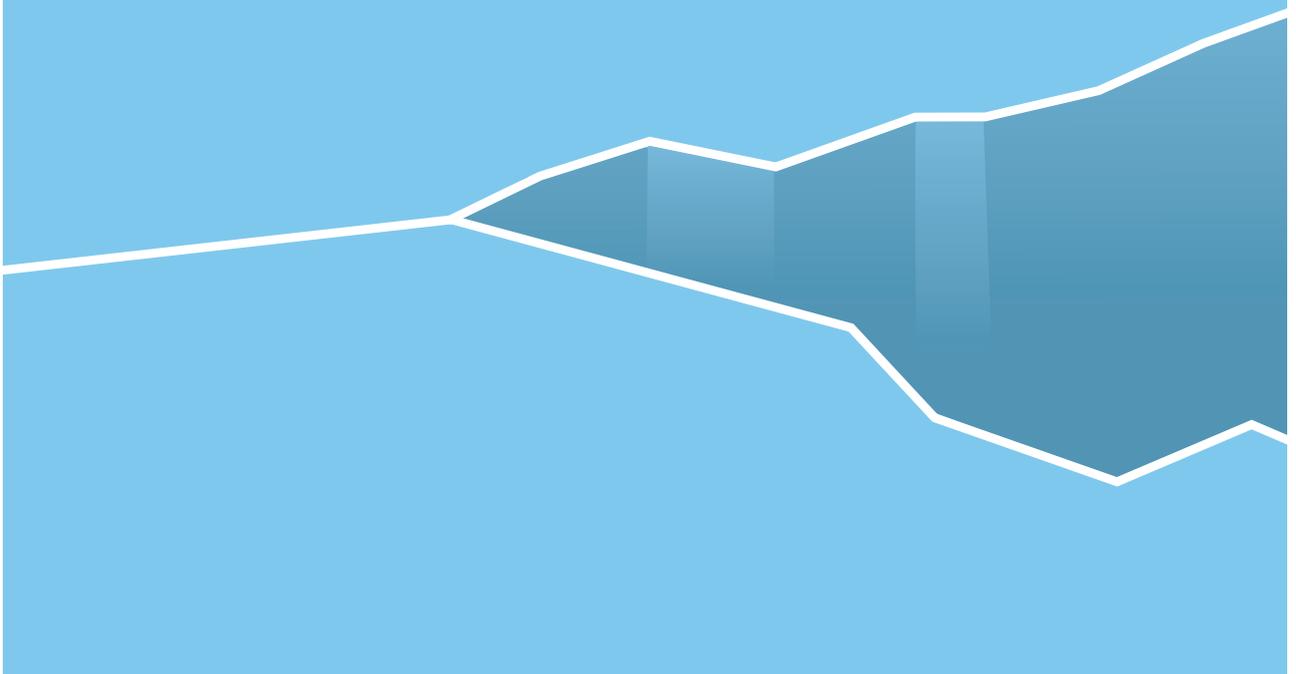
**I**n many respects, being a lawyer is just like any other career. You come to work, carry out a set of (law-related) tasks, and go home when the day is done. You get paid regularly, or, if you're the owner of a legal business, whenever your clients pay their bills.

In this sense, lawyers are really no different than football players, coal miners, or smartphone makers — they make, buy or sell products or services to people and businesses in competitive markets. When you hear people say, “Law is a business,” this is what they mean — you do what your boss or your client pays you to do, and you do it well enough that they'll continue to keep you busy and compensated.

But in other ways, being a lawyer places you in a smaller, more important category. Lawyers are also key participants in constitutional democracies: They guarantee and defend people's rights and obligations towards one another and sketch the breadth and limits of state power. They are empowered to perform functions we deem vital to the proper functioning of society. In return, they are frequently protected from the impact of normal marketplace forces, most visibly through the privilege of self-regulation and the tradition of marketplace exclusivity.

In this respect, lawyers are more comparable to teachers, police officers, and social workers. When you hear people say, “Law is a profession,” this is what they mean — that you have responsibilities to society at large, to the justice system, and to the rule of law.

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Lawyers' dual nature is unusual, even among the professions. Accountants and architects aren't considered to be backbones of the constitutional order; doctors and nurses aren't (in most countries) expected to be private-sector profitable.

**But lawyers are asked to be both**, and that's exceedingly difficult. So much so, in fact, that lawyers invariably choose one role or the other. They can participate in the commercial legal market, and generally receive above-average wages; or they can devote themselves to public-interest causes, for which they can expect below-average wages.

Either option, to be clear, is completely legitimate. But it's fair to say that most lawyers in the last 50 to 60 years have chosen the commercial path over the public path — the secular over the societal. In fact, we would suggest the story of law over the last several decades — a story of the remarkable growth of lawyer wealth and power during a time when the legal system atrophied and accessible justice dwindled — can at least partly be explained by this choice. It's also our hypothesis, however, that that pendulum is about to swing back. Starting within the next five years or so, we should begin to see more lawyers drawn towards fulfilling the profession's vocational or societal role, rather than choosing to pursue a private-sector commercial path.

This will happen because:

- generational change will bring new attitudes to the profession,
- technological advances will reduce private legal work opportunities, and
- a series of public crises will drive more lawyers by necessity towards societal roles.

Both explicitly and implicitly, the legal profession will increasingly view itself, and will be viewed by society, as a public utility as much as a private concern — possibly, more so.

It seems likely enough, in fact, that we're leaving the era in which law was predominantly viewed as a **safe, prestigious, private career**, and entering one in which law is just as often considered a **challenging, self-sacrificial, public career**. More lawyers will find themselves grouped with teachers, police officers, and social workers — positions that pay decently but not spectacularly, that play a difficult but critical role in the civic order. We could call this the rising career path of the civic lawyer.

Whereas the common 20th-century conception of “lawyer” often meant:

- Problem solver
- Technical expert
- Persuasive advocate
- Elite insider

That conception will soon shift to include:

- Fighter or defender
- Advisor or counsellor
- Activist or civic worker
- Leader or statesman

Now, does that mean you have to abandon your dreams of a highly profitable private-sector legal career, and instead “settle” for a monastic life of low-paid social service? Not at all.

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The private-sector lawyer, selling and buying high-end legal services, will remain and even surge in the years to come. There will still be high-powered lawyers delivering high-value services in private commercial markets — often enough, for more money than most lawyers today could ever hope to make.

But if your primary or even sole motivation for entering the law is to become a wealthy member of the financial and political elite, then we suggest you should start looking for alternatives now. These types of careers will be fewer and farther between, and we suspect they will be increasingly at odds with the emerging spirit and character of the profession.

As we explore, throughout the balance of this report, the likeliest legal career options at various points in the future, keep in mind the growing importance of the “civic lawyer” in the years to come. We believe it will create an important and enticing new dimension to lawyers’ career considerations.

*“My dad’s advice was to try and get a profession; that being good route to job security....whilst my dad was right, and I am really pleased I do have this profession, its no longer the case that Professions have such a stranglehold on commerce...”*

LOD LAWYER, UK





# THE LEGAL WORLD IN 2024

**A** word, before we begin this section, about predictions: They are invariably a fool's errand.

Yet we soldier on, because even if the outcome should miss the mark, the attempt is still worthwhile. Trying to predict the future helps us to identify the most important economic, technological, and social forces at work in our present world and to make our own assessments about where those forces will take us.

With that caveat out of the way, here's what we think the legal world in 2024 will feature:

- **The zenith of BigLaw** is reached, if we haven't reached it already. The top firms, grown super-large through merger and consolidation, shatter profit records in the Boomer generation's last-chance power-drive of the billable-hour engine.
- **The disaggregation of legal work accelerates.** Flex-lawyer platforms and managed legal services companies use ramped-up demand and outside funding to go on lawyer hiring and legal technology acquisition sprees.
- **The corporate legal world continues to slowly evolve** towards multi-disciplinary purchasing and operational standardisation, but traditional in-house counsel still control most buying and decision-making functions.
- **A crisis materialises in public-sector law**, as increasingly populist governments cut services to reduce taxes, and

older government lawyers take early retirement en masse. Courthouse closures increase.

- **Amazon buys LegalZoom in the US** as part of its entry into the global services sector, offering discounted legal services to Prime members. Regulators' challenges will fail, signalling the beginning of the end of lawyer control of the legal market.
- As legal aid funding dries up, some lawyers respond with **crowd-funded legal assistance squads** roaming borders and airports, serving poor neighbourhoods, and settling disputes in pop-up "people's courts."
- Mirroring a similar movement among university graduates, **young lawyers start refusing to pay off their student loans**, as both a protest and a practical reflection of their inability to meet huge debts on low salaries.

Predicting the legal market is difficult; predicting the state of the world is absurd. Yet it seems reasonable to suppose that over the next five years, western democracies will experience ever-rising pressures on institutional and cultural norms, along with the real potential of a significant negative geopolitical event. Britain should be post-Brexit and the United States post-Trump by 2024; the likelihood that either country will emerge stronger from these experiences is not especially high.

*"The difference between private practice and in-house counsel will become more blurred as better technology leads to closer integration of teams around the world."*



But we will still have lawyers, and they'll still be doing many of the things lawyers do today. The commoditisation of low-end legal work will not be complete, so there will still be entry-level jobs in law firms, although fewer than today. But the disaggregation of this work from law firms will be rapid and continuous, shifting many young lawyers towards careers with managed legal services providers — at salaries significantly lower than what their predecessors made as law firm associates, but with much better training and skill acquisition opportunities.

The full empowerment of legal buyers is still a decade or so away, but even by 2024, people alienated by the increasingly anachronistic and failing legal system will be pushing hard for the authorisation of any kind of legal assistance, qualified or not. Populist leaders worldwide, eager for an easy target, will try to deregulate the legal profession and will certainly work to remove the last vestiges of lawyer oversight of the legal market. The resulting waves of slick new legal services providers — some qualified, others not — will only intensify the competitive and price pressures lawyers are already experiencing today.

We will still refer to “alternative” or “non-traditional” legal careers in 2024, although less frequently with the qualifying phrase; “traditional” careers will be entering a slow decline. New lawyers will be likelier than today to land a job in-house with a corporation, perhaps after a year or two with a flex-time platform that provides training in lieu of salary or benefits. Legal tech providers will hire lawyers to conceive, architect, program, and test legal task performance software.

But a few lawyers will choose a more ambitious path, trying out new ways to engage with individuals and address their problems and needs. As government services are cut back, the existing holes in the social safety net will become larger, inspiring a mini-movement of “guerilla lawyers” who



**“I believe that whilst clients of lawyers will continue to expect a more flexible and pragmatic approach to how we lawyer, lawyers themselves are likely to expect the same of their workplaces. Remote working, flexible working, better use of technology to enable connectivity and knowledge sharing seem to be under the spotlight.”**

**LOD LAWYER, UK**

provide on-the-ground legal assistance in crisis locations and disadvantaged communities, supported by private donors, charitable foundations, and whatever their clients can pay. It will prove to be a more financially sustainable model than first expected.

Generally, 2024 will feel as if one stage of the legal profession is passing away and another is taking shape to replace it. Legal institutions we take for granted today — bar associations, law societies, several well-known law firms and law schools — will be in real danger. Most lawyers will be unhappy about these events, and there will be enough instances of client exploitation and justice miscarriage to warrant deep misgivings about the way things are going.

But if you find yourself pondering your career at this critical juncture, don't be over-eager to throw away your legal qualifications and skills. There will still be plenty of ways to make a living as a lawyer, and more importantly, there will be a small but growing number of opportunities to make a difference as a lawyer. This period should mark the legal profession's inflection point, where it starts to finally evolve from a protectionist guild of autonomous specialists to a more responsible, more civic-minded, and more inclusive service profession. You will be part of this change. Hopefully, you will help to lead it.



# THE LEGAL WORLD IN 2034

**F**ifteen years down the road, the legal sector should be a very different place than it is today.

- Many post-WWII institutions, including the World Bank, the IMF, NATO, and potentially even the United Nations, are greatly diminished. A few countries have new borders. A new international order has been established.
- Revitalised governments recruit lawyers in droves to build and maintain accessible, state-run legal information and services systems. China and India, the globe's rising economic powers, draw lawyers from around the world to build their sophisticated, high-tech legal systems.
- BigLaw consists of several dozen massive, high-end, multi-disciplinary, legal and business advisory firms. Some familiar AmLaw and Big 4 names are mixed with new Chinese and Indian enterprises. They are incredibly profitable.
- The fusion of advanced data and AI capabilities has produced legal technology that can perform an astonishing range of legal tasks, employing legions of lawyer-technologists to continuously develop better and more sophisticated products.
- Solo law practice has undergone a dramatic transformation, as millions of young, mobile, highly specialised domain experts worldwide are consulted on both individual matters and large corporate projects. There are very few general practitioners anymore.

“...as the world moves towards an era where established private corporations begin to behave in ways, glaringly (thanks to the Internet and social media), that result in a loss of public trust. As such, new types of decentralised businesses shall emerge, and lawyers will need to prepare themselves to handle the conflicts that these new businesses might have on society, and to find solutions for the harmonious coexistence of these businesses with societal needs.”

LOD LAWYER, DUBAI

- The consumer legal market is a complex web of online systems, information engines, problem-solving hotlines, para-professionals, and lawyers. Standardised procedures limit competition, and the state mandates some legal purchases (e.g., wills).
- Courts are used primarily for criminal and constitutional matters. Family dissolution no longer involves the courts; it is a bureaucratic but affordable government-run process. Most civil dispute resolution takes place in online forums, while boutique litigators privately negotiate and arbitrate settlements.
- Most traditional bar associations have disbanded. Lawyers no longer regulate legal services and have limited authority to regulate their own affairs. Some deregulated lawyers become nomadic problem-solvers — or full-time legal enforcers for corporate oligarchs.
- Many law schools are owned by or affiliated with corporations and BigLaw firms, which hire their graduates. Others have become “people’s law schools,” granting “degrees” to individuals to solve their own communities’ legal problems.



If you're looking for a rough comparable for this future era, think 1950s-60s America. No, we don't mean squeaky-clean, white-bread conformism — diversity will be an everyday reality in a post-globalisation world.

Instead, we mean a period of strong economic growth, social stability, technological advancement, and perhaps most importantly, a renewed level of trust in and respect for public institutions. Many of those institutions will be new, having been formed in the crucible of the crises and chaos of the previous decade, or in their immediate aftermath as a way of managing recovery and reconstruction. Today, we've grown accustomed to the many government, religious, and corporate institutions that have lost people's trust, especially among Millennials. Fifteen to twenty years from now, it will be Millennials, much like their Boomer predecessors, restoring that trust.

Many lawyers, even those who've spent most of their professional lives in the private sector, will find themselves considering a plethora of opportunities in public service. Not just in government, but also in non-profit and low-profit organisations built to serve the needs of communities, nation-states, and ecological zones. All these entities will put out a call for civic lawyers, and that call will be answered. And not just at home: Rapidly accelerating Asian and African economies will need lawyers to help build sturdy rule-of-law frameworks as well.

The growth of opportunities for civic lawyers likely will reflect a drop, or at least a slower rate of growth, for commercial lawyers, at least relative to the late 20th century. Law firms will still be around, and many of them will be significantly larger than they are today — but much of the personnel growth will be among “non-lawyers,” or people with some legal training who nevertheless have developed specialities in machine learning, systems design, data analysis, industry



Legal services  
will be regulated  
by the state,  
not by the legal  
profession — and  
if there's one  
prediction in this  
report you can  
take to the bank,  
that's the one.



intelligence, value metrics, and other aspects of successful post-modern enterprise. The “T-shaped” lawyer, the “lawyer-and” dual practitioner, will be the most common lawyer profile.

If you’re a BigLaw lawyer in this period, chances are you’ve got a particular combination of specialties — a forensic hacker tracking down violations of bilateral personal information treaties, for instance, or a software engineer recoding a client-facing system for auditing compliance with carbon-trading laws. You will be an expert at collaboration and a polished team player, incentivised to garner the highest project satisfaction rating from internal and external review panels.

*“As we are catapulted into a world where great strides in technological advancements promote brilliant innovations such as AI courtrooms, drone deliveries and designer babies, the subject of law and ethics will become ever more relevant. In 2034, a big part of being a lawyer might be grappling with conflicts resulting from ethical conundrums in all areas of law and life.”*

LOD LAWYER, DUBAI

*“In addition, a greater fragmentation in the way in which legal services are delivered - growth in the gig economy, online bidding to do legal work, collaborative work approaches etc. That, I think, means that lawyers will have to be very clear in what service they offer to clients: it just wont be enough to be an expert on a particular area of law or expect clients to have the loyalty to firms they’ve had previously.”*

LOD LAWYER, UK



You might be working in a regional or suburban law firm, serving smaller businesses based in your jurisdiction. Or you might be a sole practitioner with deep knowledge of obscure subjects that garners you consulting inquiries from all over the world. Or you might be working for an online consumer-law engine, adjusting the program based on user feedback or dealing with more complex matters beyond the software's practical reach.

Much of the traditional infrastructure of the legal system will have been transformed, however. Law schools for lawyers (specialty instruction and credentialing institutes that must meet strict standards for new lawyer aptitude and competence) co-exist with law schools for “non-lawyers” (access-to-justice training facilities). Most law societies and state bars will either be narrow discipline and competence assurance bodies, or they'll be antiquated relics of interest only to a few elderly Gen-Xers. Legal services will be regulated by the state, not by the legal profession — and if there's one prediction in this report you can take to the bank, that's the one.

**But in a way, it doesn't really matter how accurate (or wildly off the mark) any of the foregoing projections turn out to be.** What matters is that no matter what sort of world you live in nearly two decades from now, people will still have problems to be solved, questions to be answered, disputes to be settled, rights to be asserted, opportunities to be grasped, complexities to be simplified, anxieties to be calmed, lives to be lived. In other words, there will be a need for lawyers — the key will be identifying as many of the value-creation opportunities around you as you can, and then sifting through them to determine which ones suit you best. If you actively engaged in the change process that began a decade earlier — or even better, if you helped lead that process as we suggested — then your chances of tailoring a thriving legal career today are even higher.



**“Despite technological advancements, I think there will always be a place for lawyers to utilise their analytical and problem solving skills, and offer creative solutions for clients.”**

**LOD LAWYER, ASIA**

# THE LEGAL WORLD IN 2044

**A re you kidding?** There's no way we're making solid predictions about the legal world 25 years from now. Imagine asking someone in 1994 what they thought 2019 would hold for the legal profession. They'd probably tell you that "Windows 2019 For Lawyers" has just been released, and that every law firm has a copy of every court decision in the world on Digital Access Tape. We're willing to go out on a limb in this report, but not on a twig.

Nonetheless, we can probably make a few parting prognostications about the state of play in the mid-21st century. As people celebrate the 100th anniversary of D-Day and the 50th anniversary of the Channel Tunnel, the legal profession will once again be responding to changes in the world around us as we grapple with forces beyond our control. Here's some of what we might expect.

- Much as we currently hope otherwise, it's likely that the most severe effects of climate change will manifest themselves by this time, bringing an end to a period of relative social stability and prosperity. Civil unrest inside borders and mass migrations across them will roil societies, as harsh measures are taken to safeguard food and water supplies. Immigration and refugee law will be in high demand, as well as constitutional lawyers to help oversee the rights of a population facing widespread resettlement orders
- In a permanently hotter world, the fossil-fuel industry will be dead and buried, as a host of better energy sources and technologies (including solar, wind, wave, battery,



biofuel, nuclear, and geothermal) spring up across the globe. Lawyers with science and technology expertise will oversee new-fuel startups, draft licensing and distribution agreements, fight over rival claims of patented technology, and negotiate intellectual property rights, part of a nascent new energy law specialty.

- Mandatory estate plans, standardised divorce and child custody procedures, automatic punishments for crimes caught on omnipresent security cameras, unfettered corporate use of personal information, and other changes in areas that once constituted “small-firm law practice” will form part of systematised government management of people’s lives. Individual legal rights and obligations will be subsumed into larger issues of individual responsibilities and duties in an increasingly rigid and conformist society.
- In the following years, the pendulum will finally start to swing back towards a reassertion of the rights of individuals against the power of the government. The “civic lawyer” will again start to yield ground to the “private lawyer,” who asserts that higher authorities than the government or the public interest must be heard and followed.

These are little more than conjectures, based on both historical patterns and educated guesses about geopolitical trends. No doubt, several unanticipated events and trends will materialise and push our world and our profession in several other directions. But once again, the foundational importance of lawyers will emerge, especially during periods of crisis. It’s quite possible that not only will the general public forget, in the years to come, the critical role of lawyers in standing up for the rule of law and safeguarding people’s baseline rights — but also that many lawyers might forget too. Maintaining the flame of that belief, and reigniting it when necessary, will be the role of each cohort of lawyers called to the bar throughout the next decade or two.



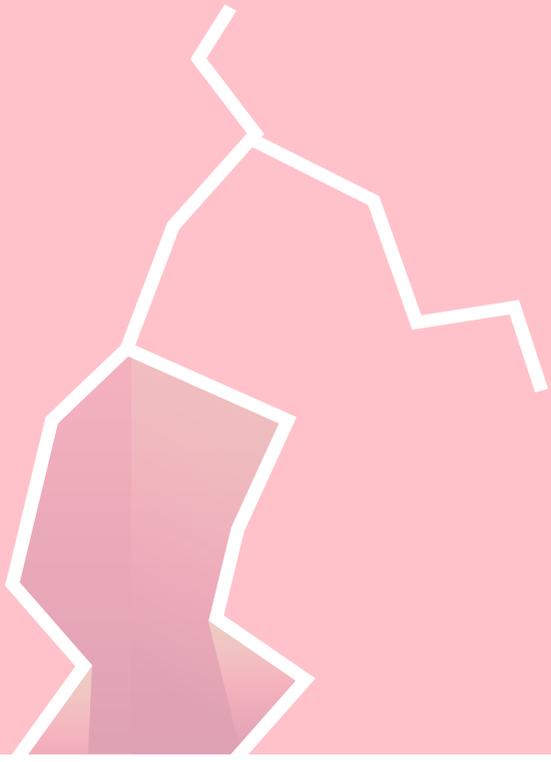
You should have little doubt that there will be a place for you in the legal profession of the future, or that you will find a career (or more likely, multiple careers) within the law that make the best use of your talents while fulfilling important business and social functions. Will many or even most of these career paths be as lucrative as you were promised back in your law school days? Perhaps not. But they will be important and meaningful, and they will allow you to make a good living while giving the people you serve better lives as they build a stronger and fairer world.

And we think that's a pretty good trade-off.





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# CONCLUSION

**A**s Jordan rightly admits, reaching into the future and divining what will become of society, technology and the legal profession isn't an easy exercise. However, he has certainly given us food for thought.

It's also been a fascinating exercise for us to reach out and grab some of our LOD lawyer insight from our team across the world, and we wanted to wrap up this report by observing the shared thinking between Jordan and our LOD lawyers.

A life in law certainly used to guarantee a particular lifestyle. A good profession, dedicated demand and a level of prestige. Many of our LOD lawyers felt that this was a career for life and one that would ride through economic uncertainty.

It was good to see that a number of them also joined the profession because they really wanted to do something that made a difference (despite the odd admission that American legal dramas also may have played a small role!). As the nature of being a lawyer changes, it is interesting to think whether the status of the profession will change. Will the prestige remain? Will the desire to make things better still be an option - indeed, might this possibly be on the increase?

But perhaps the most striking similarity between what Jordan has predicted and the thinking of our LOD lawyers has been in the future interplay between lawyering, technology and ethics. With the advancement and empowerment of lawyers through technology, it is interesting to see where people think this may end up. It's true that we have seen a change, but its nowhere near the seismic one

that was predicted 20 years ago. It will be interesting to see how this will play out in the next 20 years.

Perhaps more importantly, how will the lawyer of the future fit into their role as increased demand blurs the line between commerce and doing the right thing? Finding the sweet spot between commercial need and legal context will increasingly be the toughest part of a lawyer's job. Will the legal team of tomorrow be able to shout loud enough to be heard over the noise arguing for cheaper labour, less red tape and commercial domination?

So, what will it mean to be a lawyer? This is the question that has both infused the report and continues to preoccupy us here at LOD.

Since we helped to pioneer the NewLaw movement back in 2008, LOD has been committed to new and better ways of working. Naturally, we're focused on the future of work and how we can improve the lives of lawyers. Across the world, we have lawyers and consultants who are challenging the status quo and working in ways previously hard to imagine. The future excites us. We opened this report with an idea: "You are here". We leave you with this thought: "Where would you like to be next?"



## JORDAN FURLONG

Jordan Furlong is a speaker, author, and legal market analyst who forecasts the impact of changing market conditions on lawyers and law firms. He has given dozens of presentations to audiences in the US, Canada, Europe and Australia to law firms, state bars, courts, and legal associations. Jordan is a Fellow of the College of Law Practice Management and a member of the Advisory Board of the American Bar Association's Center for Innovation. He is the author, most recently, of *Law Is A Buyer's Market: Building a Client-First Law Firm*, and he writes regularly about the changing legal market at his website, [law21.ca](http://law21.ca).



## SIMON HARPER

Simon Harper is Co-Founder of LOD, starting the business in the UK in 2007. He was the *Financial Times*' "Legal Innovator of the Year", was recognised by the *American Lawyer Magazine* as a Top 50 innovator of the last 50 years and is a member of *The Lawyer's Hot 100*. Before creating LOD and pioneering the NewLaw movement, Simon was an equity partner leading BCLP's media and tech team. Simon still looks after LOD's UK business and loves "the daily opportunity to work in a creative environment with people I like".

# LOD

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