

Tips for Evaluating Legal Technology

By Evan Ochsner | Monday, March 9, 2026

Ed Empamano is busy evaluating legal technology tools after about a month in his role as chief information officer at Jackson Lewis PC. Empamano, who joined the firm from legal tech company Litera, is one of many in operational roles trying to figure out which legal tech platforms are actually worth the investment. Our conversation has been condensed and edited.

Q: Having worked for both vendors and law firms, what's something you wish vendors understood better?

Vendors need to understand who they're working with, and that all firms are different. While it's tempting to generalize, firms vary widely in culture, technology stack, and maturity. Some aren't ready for generative AI, while others are moving aggressively.

Q: What do you look for in a legal tech demo?

I like to ask what I call "silly questions" and say, "I'm just the IT guy." I'm not the practicing attorney, but I dig in enough to understand how it actually works—how many clicks it takes, what the interface looks like. Friction matters. If it takes 10 more clicks, that's real cost.

Q: Where are demos helpful, and what can you learn from them?

Usability is critical. Many demos are scripted, so of course they look perfect. I want to see that—but also understand how it works behind the scenes. What models are being used? How does functionality move between systems like browser to Word?

Q: How are firms differentiating themselves when they're all pitched the same tools?

Differentiation comes down to how effectively you use the technology with clients. Many firms claim to be "AI-first," but it still comes back to people, process, and technology. Get the right people, use the tech as an enabler, and build the right processes around it.

Ed Empamano is Chief Information Officer at Jackson Lewis P.C., with more than 20 years of technology leadership experience in the legal and business sectors. He focuses on advancing AI-driven innovation and leading strategic initiatives that enhance client service and operational performance.

"Friction matters—if it takes 10 more clicks to do something, time is money."

Ed Empamano, Chief Information Officer, Jackson Lewis P.C.

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