Portfolio Media. Inc. | 230 Park Avenue, 7th Floor | New York, NY 10169 | www.law360.com
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

How Legal Teams Evaluate Tech In The Age Of AI

By **Steven Lerner**

Law360 (March 11, 2026, 1:17 PM EDT) -- Legal teams feeling pressure to adopt artificial intelligence tools should focus more on solving problems and getting feedback from stakeholders across the organization, experts advised during a recent panel.

During a session on the second day of ALM's Legalweek Conference in New York City on Tuesday, a group of legal professionals discussed a structured approach to evaluating new technologies. That evaluation framework has always existed, but it takes on new meaning in the age of AI.

From left, Adam Rouse of Walgreens, John Koss of Mintz, Ashley Christakis of CrowdStrike, George Phillips of Morgan Lewis, and Major Baisden of Lineal discuss technology evaluation strategies during a workshop at Legalweek 2026. (Steven Lerner | Law360)

John Koss, the head of innovation, AI and e-data consulting at Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC, said that many of the AI tools on the market feel similar to each other.

"There is just a lot of the same message," Koss aid "The delivery is the same."

Koss said some law firms today are running into "panic purchase mode," needing to show value from AI without a comprehensive approach to evaluating AI tools correctly. This approach often leads to unsuccessful product decisions.

Instead of chasing tools and names, Koss suggested that firms focus on the big problems they are trying to solve, break down the problems and conduct research.

Both firms and legal departments should focus more on the highest-priority challenges they are trying to solve, said Ashley Christakis, the senior manager of e-discovery and legal operations, at CrowdStrike.

Christakis said teams should get feedback from stakeholders and end users about what they need in technology. This includes users from every practice group, as well as information security and finance teams, participating in the process of finding requirements and evaluating tools.

"The evaluation is just as important as the requirements," Christakis said.

Lineal CEO Major Baisden said that service providers and vendors can recommend stakeholders to

include during the evaluation process.

Teams procuring new tools should also consider the downstream effects of the technology and repercussions across the organization, according to George Phillips, director of development and technology at Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP.

Phillips suggested that teams locate a "tech champion" — a stakeholder in the organization who will become deeply invested in the success of the technology — because they will advocate for the tool's adoption and provide valuable feedback.

He added that many AI legal tools are coming out of the "black box" era in 2026 by offering firms more transparency into how the tools work, something that is critical in areas such as e-discovery.

"We need technology to be defensible and repeatable," said Adam Rouse, a senior counsel of e-discovery and director or legal operations at Walgreens. Rouse was also the moderator for Tuesday's panel session.

Evaluating the tools come down to defined success measurements, something that Christakis said is the "gold standard" of a proof of concept.

In terms of measuring a return on investment on new technology, Phillips said to focus on finding AI tools that reduce low-value work so that legal teams can focus more on complex work.

Koss said it is difficult to measure AI tools based on time saved in a law firm, because of variables. Instead, he suggested that firms focus more on giving clients estimates about a range of costs for a matter. He said visibility into pricing might be a more meaningful way to measure cost efficiency.

--Editing by Nicole Bleier.
