



Legal Ops Technology Roadmap: How To Guide



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CHAPTER 1

How To Guide

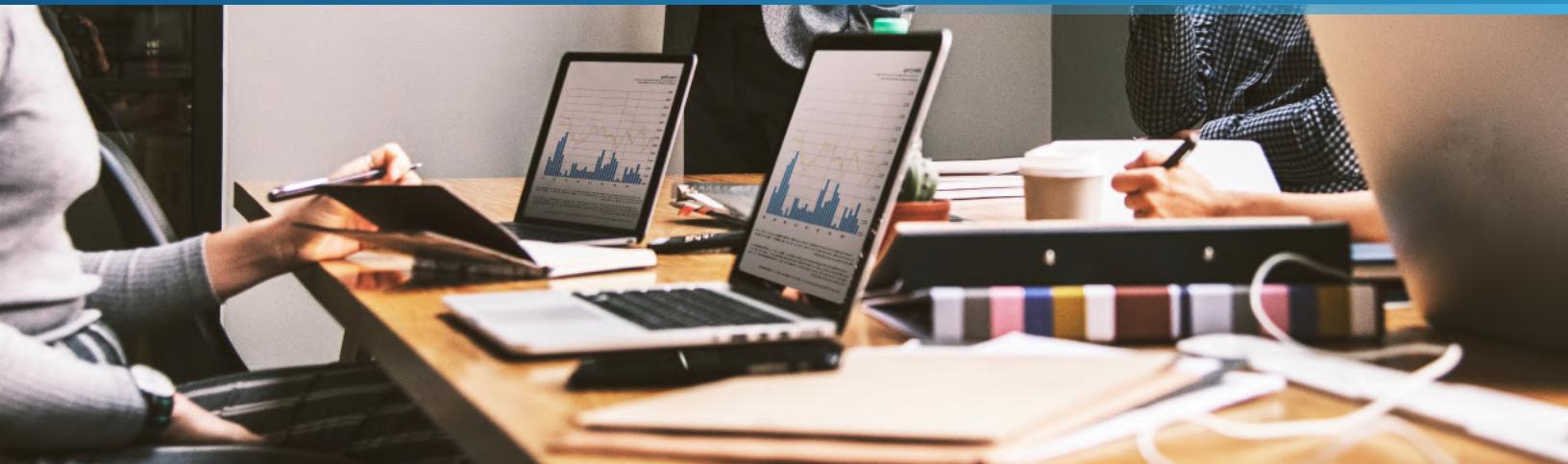
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Legal Ops Technology Roadmap: How To Guide

In recent years, corporate legal departments have led the demand for development and investment in technology. But while legal departments are transforming the legal tech landscape, legal technology in its turn is driving change in the legal ecosystem at an increasing pace. Collaboration between IT and legal operations has never been more critical in optimizing the ability of legal departments to scale, mature, and protect the organizations they serve.





Challenges of Legal Technology

Finance teams rely on tools like SAP and Oracle. Sales and marketing have Salesforce and Marketo. Human resources run Workday. Unlike other G&A functions in a corporation, technology for the legal vertical is still developing and has not fully matured. There is no obvious one enterprise legal management solution to implement, therefore leveraging technology effectively in a legal department requires more strategic planning and prioritization.

Despite a sizable investment, the legal technology landscape remains fragmented, with countless point solutions emerging to solve various parts of the business, often targeted at specific practice groups. As the industry matures, legal enterprise management consolidates, and several large players are beginning to offer a full suite of tools needed to manage the corporate legal department. Depending on the size, complexity, and maturity of your legal department, you may consider these one-stop shops rather than adopt a host of point solutions.

Enterprise Legal Management (ELM) Systems vs. Point Solutions

If you're starting legal tech with a blank slate, it makes sense to consider an ELM solution. This gives you access to a suite of services, not all of which you may need today, but the functions will be available for you to gradually integrate with the services you are currently using.

Anyone who has implemented a third party solution or developed proprietary software knows how challenging this process can be. Add to that the challenges of change management, training, and adoption. Once you implement such a system, ripping it out and replacing with another can be quite a painful, costly, and time-consuming experience. If you use a legacy system, it may be easier to add individual point solutions to address particular needs rather than replacing the entire system with an enterprise solution. As an added bonus, using different providers gives you the greatest flexibility in picking and choosing the provider that is just right for each team and each challenge your department faces.

The Legal Tech Roadmap

Technology can be used to collect and analyze data to create actionable insights, automate manual processes, reduce risks, improve accuracy, scale an organization, solve problems, and create efficiencies. In today's fast moving and constantly changing environment, however, teams often find themselves overwhelmed by the possibilities that technology presents, as their departments continue to rely on manual, time-consuming, and fragmented point solutions. Many teams lack an overall technology vision and deploy costly applications that are underused and disconnected from the workflow of the team and from the overall IT strategies and objectives of the company.

As the legal ops department grows, the need to create a clear technology roadmap that spans all the needs of organization becomes more critical. Developing a technology roadmap can help ease the transition to a modern legal ops organization. But where do you start in developing a useful technology roadmap?

The following guide provides an overview of planning and investment stages to consider in the overall technology roadmap.

Managing Technology in a Legal Organization

The goal is to create a technology implementation plan that accounts for your organizational needs. In other words, you want to deploy a strategic technology solution that automates manual processes, digitizes physical tasks, and improves speed and quality. Below is a high-level snapshot of some of the steps needed to leverage technology successfully across your organization:

- Define the technology vision: create and implement a long-term technology roadmap
- Discover pain points and work to automate repetitive or time-consuming manual processes
- Determine what to build and what to buy
- Evaluate new vendors, suppliers, and solutions
- Incorporate connected tools for e-billing, matter management, contact management, IP management, e-signature, and more
- Assess emerging technology capabilities and incorporate them into your long-term strategic planning
- Structure an effective partnership with your corporate IT team and finance team to secure the budget

Use the [CLOC Core 12](#) as a best practice guide. As an organization matures, it progresses along a fairly predictable growth lifecycle in its technology, tools, and processes. Begin by determining where your organization is in its growth cycle to understand where to begin the technology roadmap.

Legal Ops Technology Growth Lifecycle

	UNDERDEVELOPED	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	LEADING
TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonexistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business objectives defined and preferred key technologies identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-year plan broken down into horizons, with effort, costs, and prioritization framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5-year strategic plan with how technology will support the objectives of the organization with planned effort, costs, convergence, and integrations
CALIBER / SCOPE OF TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underutilized MS Office suite or similar Second-tier legal products not (or no longer) considered market leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented matter mgmt/eBilling; SharePoint or Intranet; eSignature; document Mgmt Most tools are market leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated matter mgmt/claims; Legal hold; IP mgmt; contracts mgmt; knowledge mgmt; GRC All tools are market leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dashboards; data analytics; eDiscovery; matter intake; automated workflows; client self-service; document analytics; machine learning All tools are market leaders
QUALITY OF DATA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decentralized and non-standardized tracking of information Much of it lies in email or unstructured forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined, but limited, standard tracking elements Limited compliance and completeness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule-based validation of standard information tracking Complete within systems, but not across systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard core data across systems Central data warehouse Aligned with legal department reporting metrics Complete, synced, and clear primary sources of records (no issue of redundant data)
LEVEL OF USER ADOPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most tools only used by support staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attorneys using core tools for basic tasks, but opt out of significant usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All levels use a core set of tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All levels are using tools, leveraging analytics, and are represented in tech steering committee

The Legal Technology Ecosystem

Improving and using technologies can enhance the overall efficiency of your legal operations. In view of the proliferation of specialized legal systems and new enterprise capabilities, you must consider a technology strategy that maximizes the use and reuse of legal information.

Organizations have different priorities that align with their corporate objectives, strategy, and vision, from making better data-based decisions to improving business intelligence, corporate governance, and record management. The technology needs of the legal ecosystem are many and varied.

Some have difficulty realizing the benefits of new technologies, whereas others see technology as the solution to all their problems. Begin by assessing your current state and determining what works well and what could be improved. Often, improvements involve replacing people and changing processes. Technology can be a powerful enabler, but will not magically resolve issues unless the people and process challenges are first addressed.

Once you have mapped the current state and the opportunities available for leveraging technology, you can start identifying solutions and filling technology gaps. Make sure to consider interconnecting department and company systems to eliminate overlap, and pinpoint obstacles and system compatibility issues. Remember that each point solution you add has its benefits, but also comes with significant continued investments of time and resources to support it beyond launch. Evaluate whether it's possible to utilize existing systems. If yes, you may be able to better scale your organization and lower the overall costs of technology needs.

According to [Amara's Law](#), organizations tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short term and underestimate its effect in the long run. By developing a robust technology roadmap, organizations can efficiently plan for the future and prepare for the effects of new and updated technology.

CHAPTER 2

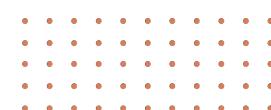
What is a Technology Roadmap?

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What is a Technology Roadmap?

A technology roadmap is a high-level visual summary that maps out the vision of your organization and plans for a complex technology undertaking. It matches technology solutions with short- and long-term goals. A good technology roadmap helps an organization develop the right technologies, capabilities, and organizational structures at the right time to satisfy needs. It is also used to spotlight available additions and improvements in your current stack of technology solutions.



Why Do You Need a Technology Roadmap?

Making any change to the technology environment of a business can be a complicated task, which can create a ripple effect across other systems within the organization. Implementing a technology change without thinking through all the implications could create problems for business operations and adversely affect revenues and customer relationships. It could also introduce security and regulatory weaknesses. Even if the organization knows how to cope with these risks, the change itself could be disruptive.

A technology roadmap can mitigate issues and challenges, and help the organization strategically plan complex adjustments to its technology environment. It can also help the organization implement its vision and strategy, and devise the best way to introduce a technological change. A technology roadmap can include technological changes, such as rolling out an eBilling or a contract management system, upgrading the financial management systems, or developing a legal intranet.

Key Value Propositions of a Roadmap

Every organization should have a technology roadmap to understand current technology infrastructures. A complete technology stack is capable of supporting your business goals and objectives. It has several key functions, including:

- Developing a strategic framework in which to effectively organize and prioritize ideas
- Building a customized, prioritized list of initiatives and programs to undertake, and ensuring that the technology infrastructure can support identified business goals
- Auditing the technology infrastructure and application layers to meet current best practices and industry standards
- Building a gap analysis between the business's strategic needs, the current state, and the desired state of the technology infrastructure, the application layers, and the connection points between various technology stacks
- Understanding the estimated costs and duration of each of the programs being proposed
- Communicating the strategic plan of the department to cross-functional stakeholders and constituents to obtain their buy-in and collaboration throughout the development process
- Keeping program teams on track and on budget during the process

Establishes a clear vision of current and target state

Supports a strategy for change

Quantifies future processes and technology investments

Define Functional Needs, Components, and Priorities

You need to take into account several issues when developing a roadmap. First, identify the components that are a high priority for the organization as a whole and for the functional area. Next, apply the same methodology to each component -- where are we today, where do we want to go, and how do we get there?

Without clearly defined needs and priorities, there is no way to properly assess the options of a department and to plan effectively. Include the following in a technology roadmap:

- A comprehensive review of current business processes, with documented inefficiencies
- Identified technology gaps or areas where existing systems fall short
- The functional capabilities needed to effectively support or improve processes
- An itemized and prioritized checklist of what steps need to be taken

Top Functions of a Technology Roadmap

Describes the vision and strategy

Gets the executives and IT professionals of the organization on the same page and communicates all the current technology programs in one place.

Brings internal stakeholders into alignment

Facilitates a discussion around investing in technology and initiates value-based conversations. Leadership can easily see that spending time and money to upgrade the technology results in better alignment with overall business goals and objectives.

Sets the direction and establishes priorities

Helps functional leaders understand parameters and timelines for each program. Anticipated results are clearly communicated, which helps functional leaders think strategically when requesting new technology or asking for improvements to current infrastructure.

Provides a guide for executing the strategy

Details technology infrastructure improvements that can help the legal ops team anticipate resourcing needs, plan assignments, choose the right solutions and vendors, and understand the costs involved.

CHAPTER 3

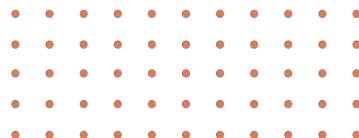
How to Create a Technology Roadmap

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Identify strategic objectives and goals

Building an integrated technology roadmap is usually accomplished in two phases: the initial setup of the roadmap and a period of refinement. Time spent in preparation up-front will increase success.



Obtain feedback from various stakeholders. Input from a steering committee, focus groups, leaders, and other stakeholders is critical for understanding technology needs and ensuring adoption after implementation. Ask your stakeholders the following questions:

- What are your strategic priorities? What is the financial and operational impact you hope to generate? Reducing effort and waste is a great initial goal, but don't limit your thinking. Explore not only today's needs, but also the future goals of your organization.
- What tools and information can help your team become more insightful, proactive, and responsive?
- How can your department deliver a better experience or create additional value for the organization?
- In what ways can technology make it easier to do business within your company? For example: Will an eBilling system streamline financial management and save costs?
- Are there inefficiencies or tedious processes and tasks that can be eliminated through technology? Determine whether the potential expense of the solution justifies the cost of the technology.

Clearly defining strategic objectives and determining how technology will achieve the objectives is a critical step to a successful technology roadmap strategy. Thoughtful preparation in the early stages will help drive the success of your technology roadmap.

Create a technology steering committee and prioritization framework

A steering committee and executive support are key requirements for success -- not only for developing the roadmap, but for clinching management buy-in during implementation. Organizational priorities, corporate goals, department strategy, and individual opinions vary greatly. Therefore, reaching a consensus and ensuring support for the technology roadmap can be difficult.

A technology steering committee should be composed of leaders from various areas in your organization and key departments, like IT, to ensure steady and deliberate progress towards devising a long-term technology strategy, and focus on high-impact initiatives. This will facilitate communication and help overcome sectoral or individualistic thinking. Depending on the size of your organization, you may receive many legal tech requests from stakeholders who have a limited view of the overall needs of the department and who tend to prioritize their own agenda first. This can often lead to “squeaky wheels” getting more attention than other parts of the organization. The goal of the steering committee is to align technology priorities with strategic investment. It will also clear the line of sight between the legal and IT departments regarding the top department challenges and tooling needs. The committee can manage a centralized channel for technology requests, which will bring transparency and accountability to the decision-making and prioritization process. The steering committee will evaluate and prioritize requests on an ongoing basis, and can communicate with individual teams as requests are received.

Gather input and engage key stakeholders

Identify problems flagged by the legal department, outside counsel lawyers, and the functional organizations that will be affected. Many legal organizations share common pain points, but each business is different and may have its own specific point point. Remember, when developing a technology roadmap, you don't have to be an expert on every single business process in every practice area. What you must be able to do, however, is identify the key people who are the subject matter experts in these groups. Often, the practice areas will already have a de facto owner for a given application or business process, and they may have already created a roadmap.

When beginning to develop a technology roadmap, consider all the stakeholders in your organization. It's important to gather input from everyone who will be affected, not only those who are the most obvious. Plan to meet with someone from each practice area. Request actionable suggestions and use open-ended rather than yes/no questions. Allow stakeholders to submit their comments and ideas through an anonymous venue like a survey or poll. This will alleviate any concerns about speaking one's mind on difficult topics and encourage stakeholders to become actively involved in adopting the new technology.

Review and audit current systems and processes

Understand all the systems currently in place to be able to assess future needs and the range of potential scenarios that may affect the roadmap. When auditing systems, ask the stakeholders a series of questions to understand what is needed, for example:

- What systems are currently in use for daily activities?
- What is the purpose of the system and what process does it support?
- Is it cloud-based or on premises?
- Who supports the system (vendor, or internal IT)?
- Is data entered manually or populated by another system? What system is used to populate the system?
- What output is provided and who receives it?
- What other systems are connected to it?

Think about whether systems and technology need to be optimized, upgraded, repurposed, or replaced. Waiting until something breaks or becomes obsolete can be tempting, but it can lead to downtime and service interruptions. Evaluate each technology solution and determine the right path, usually one of the following:

- **Optimize.** Use the inactive features of the existing system. Often changes can be implemented through configuration without the need for customization.
- **Upgrade.** Bring the existing system to its most current version. Bear in mind though that there are many horror stories of companies that heavily customized their systems and are now unable to upgrade them.
- **Repurpose.** Use something you already have. Shop for “new-to-you” technology inside your company, before going outside.
- **Replace.** Buy a new, different system. Often the most expensive and time-consuming option to implement; however, it may produce massive functional improvements that are not achievable with your existing systems.

Evaluating new technology

If you decide to invest in a new system or technology, before committing, you may want to identify providers that appear to be furthest along in each relevant use case. Obtain initial information from market leaders, and if warranted, plan to conduct some demos. If still of interest, acquire access for a fixed time period, and conduct a deeper due-diligence. Assess the value proposition in light of concrete use cases. At the end of this process you will be able to make an informed recommendation to implement or not. Note that several legal consulting firms specialize in doing these types of technology assessments.

Learning about available technology offerings

- CLOC is a fantastic resource for this! CLOC members have access to a document library that contains usage surveys, law department technology resources, and a host of other content from past presentations.
- Another great resource is to work with legal consulting firms that specialize in providing this type of information.

Use a template to track system status and needs

A simple template can help quickly identify the systems in use and the status of each system. Although it may be tempting to create a complex roadmap dashboard with all the data points that can be gathered, your goal is to quickly provide a visual representation of the various programs on the roadmap. Try not to overcomplicate your roadmap!

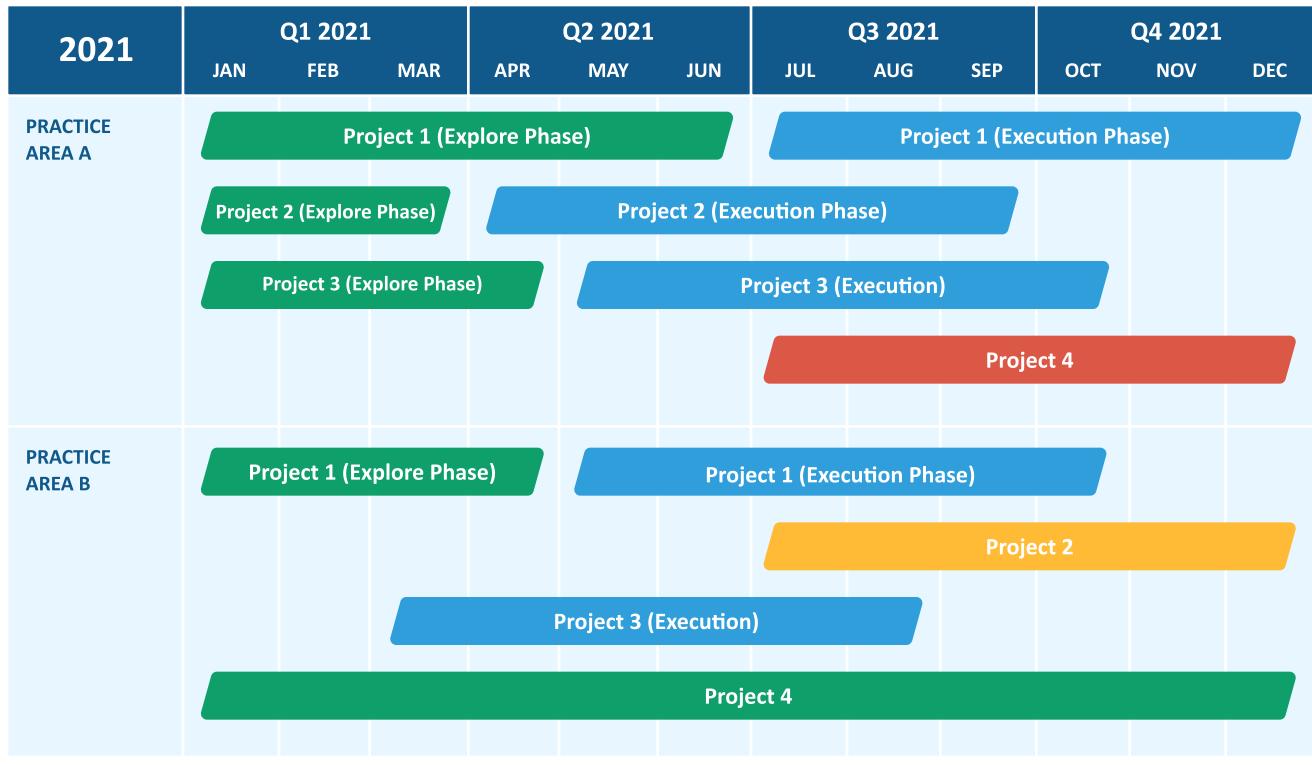
Examples of simple technology roadmaps

LEGAL TECH ROADMAP	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
eBilling / Matter management								
Contract Management								
Content Management								
IP Management								
Business Intelligence								
Knowledge Management								
Board Management								
Compliance Management								
Legal Hold								
eDiscovery								
Case Management								
Subsidiary Management								
eSignature								
Legal Intranet								
Legal Chat Bot								
Workflow Automation								



Repeat Assessment 1-2 Times Per year

Legal Roadmap



PROPOSED

IN PROGRESS

AT RISK

OFF TRACK



Plan for the future

Investments that address only immediate needs result in fewer benefits, duplication of effort, and higher costs. In developing a technology roadmap, plan for a longer time horizon and consider what is needed to stay competitive over the next three to five years. Technology that is flexible, scalable, and expandable enough to accommodate the long-term needs of the department, and organization will get the most value from the investment.



Develop a budget and estimate the total cost of ownership

Technology initiatives can be expensive and capital- and resource-intensive. Investments can vary significantly depending on company, industry, and the complexity and deliverable dates needed for implementation. Realistic budgets must consider all business needs and include routine maintenance, system replacement costs, hardware and software licenses, support, and infrastructure updates.

To ensure success, involve key stakeholders in the budgeting process, including leadership, finance, and IT. Take the time to truly understand user needs, and include users in the design, implementation, and rollout phases of the roadmap. Getting all stakeholders on board has the added benefit of increasing technology adoption rates after implementation. As realistic technology needs are prioritized, budget and resources can be allocated.

GATHER WISH LIST	Bottom up exercise prioritized within practice areas
ESTIMATE PROJECT COSTS	High-level cost and resource estimates per project. Determine IT vs Legal budget submissions
SUBMIT BUDGET	Finalize budget submissions (Legal and IT components)
DETERMINE ROADMAP / PROJECT TIMELINE	Based on funding received, prioritization and resource availability
MONTHLY / QUARTERLY CHECK-INS	Re-baseline budget, prioritization and resource availability

Research pricing across a range of vendors and include realistic cost estimates for each program. Technology costs go beyond the up-front cost of the technology itself. To determine the total cost of ownership, include all direct and indirect costs such as new infrastructure costs, subscription fees, annual maintenance and support fees, and staff training costs.

Assign resources and develop a program plan

To ensure the greatest success of the technology roadmap, hire a professional program manager. An experienced program manager can negotiate achievable deadlines with all stakeholders and keep the program on time and on budget.

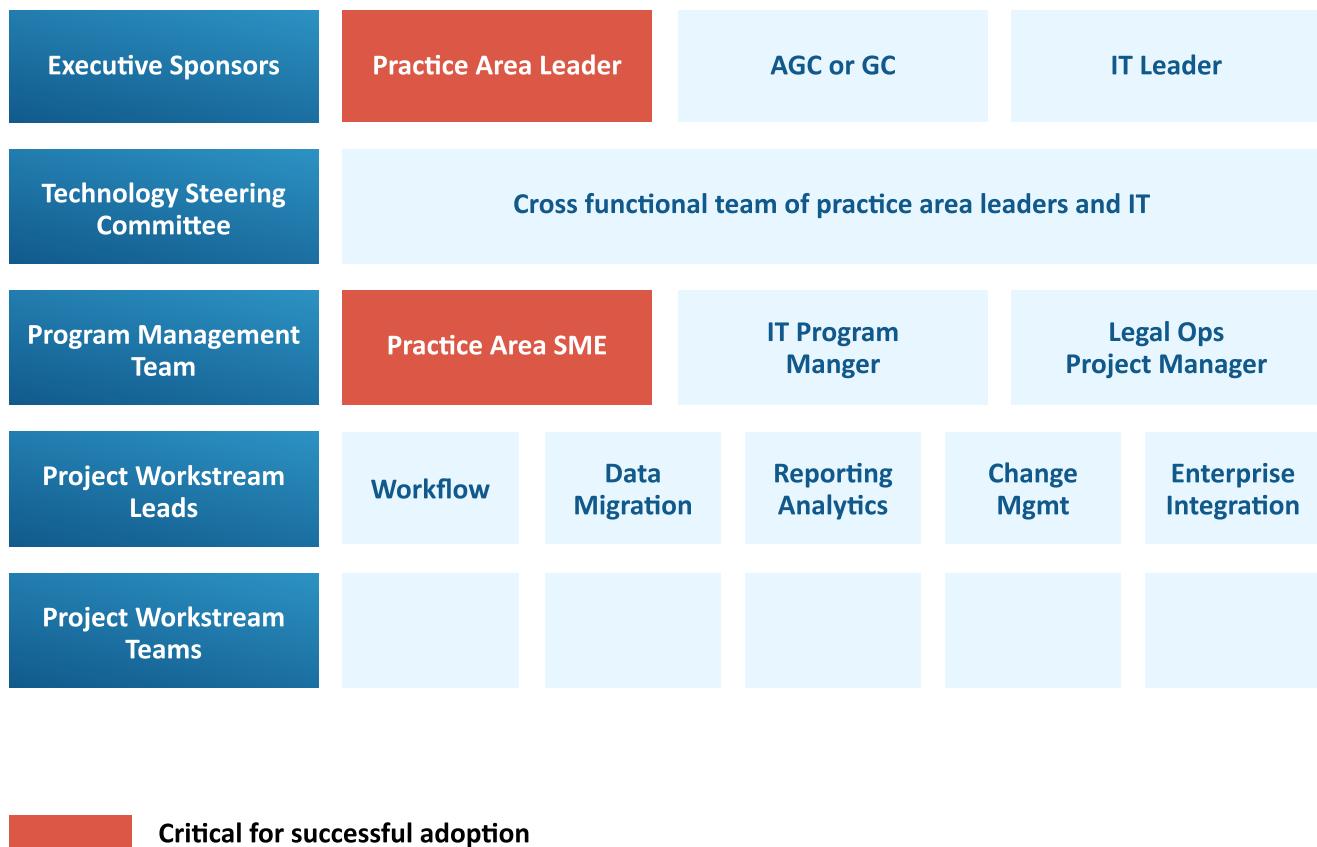
Organize the technology roadmap into phases and task lists, and assign roles and responsibilities. An effective program manager can ensure that tasks are completed, communication lines remain open, and issues are escalated and resolved in a timely manner.

Bring the key stakeholders and program manager together to review the technology roadmap and determine which programs to work on and in which order. Stakeholders need to estimate how long each program task will take, and decide which team members are responsible for each action item. If stakeholders share in the success of the program, they are more likely to adopt and embrace changes in technology.

You may be tempted to save the cost of the program manager, but a good program manager can hold everything together and ensure that the technology roadmap stays on track and delivers at the right time. Make this position a priority to achieve success.

Example program governance structure

An effective program manager is also instrumental in developing a program governance structure, in defining and establishing the processes and procedures involved, and ensuring that all policies and best practices are followed. Below is an example of a program governance structure. Naturally, you need to adapt your governance structure to your concrete situation.



It is critical for adoption success that you have an executive sponsor for the area in which you are implementing the change. If the change is related to patent prosecution, you ideally want the VP of that group as an executive sponsor. If you are releasing a customer-facing CLM application, you want a business counsel VP in your corner, and in any case, you want a business counsel attorney on your program management team.

To boost your chances of adoption, make sure that there is adequate pull from the relevant stakeholders, otherwise the implementation is likely to fail. Having to push the change on a group is a serious warning sign that program effectiveness is likely to suffer.





Presenting the Roadmap to Stakeholders

Presenting the technology roadmap requires a great deal of planning and preparation. Expect pushback from various stakeholders in your organization. Reaching a consensus may be challenging. Not everyone will comprehend every technology initiative in your roadmap. If your audience is not tech-savvy, watch your language. Communicate the relevant value and goals in a way that your roadmap can be easily understood by all.

Be aware that subject matter experts in the various practice areas are likely to have a much better understanding of their business processes than you. Therefore, when you present a new roadmap vision you are likely to run into some resistance. Most of the time, the various practice areas will likely have their own roadmap improvement plans in place for the applications and business processes they own, and those plans are likely to contain critical business process improvements they need to make. If your proposed plan does not address their issues, they will not support it.

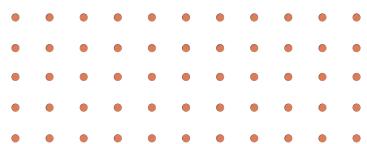
To minimize pushback, you must secure the buy-in of key stakeholders early in the process, and continue to keep the stakeholders informed along the way. Before presenting the roadmap to a large group of stakeholders, consider adopting the “meeting before the meeting” strategy. This enables you to preview the recommendations in advance with each stakeholder before the general meeting, and identify any concerns or issues they have while you still have time to address them.

Below are a few other suggestions:

- Start with big picture thinking. Don’t overwhelm the presentation with tactics or technical details, or an overcomplicated roadmap. Explain the benefits of the roadmap, what it will do for the company, and how it addresses problems and increases efficiencies
- Make the roadmap visually appealing and easily digestible within seconds. Be concise and use only a few words to explain it
- Call attention to the areas in the roadmap that need to be addressed by all
- Back up the proposal with evidence, data, and goals. Add relevant stats, charts, or links to the data presented
- Communicate to the stakeholders that the roadmap is a statement of intent. It can and will change over time. This will help mitigate any unmet expectations

Creating a robust technology roadmap is not a one and done exercise. It evolves over time. Consequently, it will need to be reviewed and re-assessed often. As the business grows, priorities may shift and new opportunities or challenges may present themselves. To meet the updated priorities, the technology strategy may also change and the roadmap will need to be adjusted.

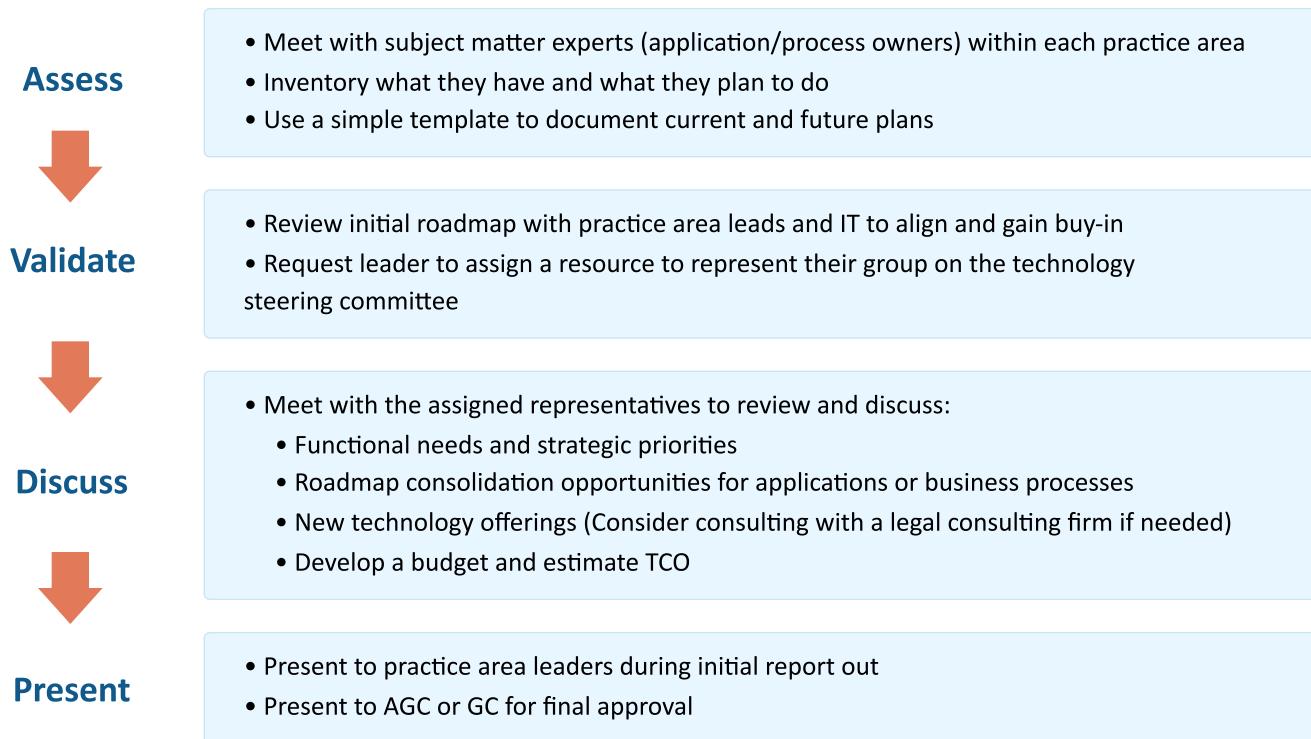
Technology roadmaps are rarely perfect the first time around. It's difficult to incorporate every contingency and to map various systems completely and accurately. It's more important to just get started and keep working on the roadmap to move closer to achieving the vision and goals of the organization. The best roadmaps are flexible, living documents that should be regularly updated, reconsidered, and revised.



A final note for smaller organizations

The process outlined here may appear to be rather daunting and time-intensive, but even smaller organizations will benefit from developing a technology roadmap and applying this methodology. If you have not attempted something like this before, you may wish to begin more simply, using the quick start guide shown below.

Quick Start Guide



Don't wait! Get started today and plan for future technology needs by developing a technology roadmap.

CLOC members, find out more about technology roadmaps online:

[Legal Ops Tools & Technology Overview Usage Survey, Roadmaps and Lessons Learned](#)

[Legal IT Budget - Executive Overview and Prioritization Exercise](#)

cloc.org

