## **An Interview with Ben Evenstad, Owner at Evenstad Law**

## **Company Snapshot**

Evenstad Law is a small boutique law firm headquartered in Los Angeles, providing criminal defense, civil litigation, and business dispute services to individuals and small businesses across Southern California. They specialize in representing clients in jury trials and complex litigation matters.

## **Primer**

Ben discovered Rev through his attorney wife and values accuracy above all else for transcribing police body camera footage.

**Perspective** **Ben pays anything to avoid transcribing police videos himself.** As a solo practitioner in his 10th year, time is his most valuable resource—he lacks support staff beyond a freelance paralegal and ghostwriter attorney. He needs transcripts accurate enough to present in court, where they serve as aids for jury members following along with video evidence. While he was initially impressed by human transcriptionists' accuracy in identifying different speakers, recent AI-generated transcripts fell short of his standards. Rev's speed impressed him initially, but accuracy remains his non-negotiable priority since inaccurate transcripts force him to re-do work himself.

### **Pulse**

• **Accuracy expectations** — AI transcription quality declined from human transcriptionists → requires manual correction time • **Speaker identification** — Multiple officers and witnesses create transcription complexity → crucial for legal proceedings  
 • **Peer recommendations** — CAALA listserv discussions carry more weight than Google searches → drives vendor selection

**Protocol** *Transcript treatment:* • Removed filler words and verbal hesitations • Preserved all substantive content and meaning • **87% verbatim preserved**

*Interview details:* • Date: 5/29/2025 • Duration: ~34 minutes • Format: Video call • **Deal Status: Closed Won**

### Transcript

**Nick Delgado:** Can you briefly talk about your role in the firm?

**Ben Evenstad:** I'm a solo practice. I'm in my 10th year. I'm kind of a one man shop. I have freelance paralegal that I use. And I also have an attorney that's a kind of a ghostwriter that does some of the more technical oppositions. Like, if there's a motion for summary judgment and we need to do an opposition, it's very intensive. And sometimes I find that using a ghostwriter is a better use of my time. So besides the ghostwriter and the paralegal freelance, I'm pretty much a one man show.

**Nick Delgado:** What prompted you to evaluate transcription services like Rev?

**Ben Evenstad:** I had a criminal case where there was a lot of body worn video. And I needed a transcription. And there was, like, I forget how long it was, but it was like, at least 30 minutes and different people talking. So I asked my wife, who works at a mid-size, she's also an attorney, works at a mid-sized defense firm. And they defend public entities, school districts, some local governments, and also big box stores. And their practice is very litigation intensive. So I asked my wife, I said, you know, I can sit here for three hours transcribing a 30 minute video. I'm like, what do you guys do? Do you have a person? Do you have a service? And this is I'd have to go back and look. But this is at least 3 or 4 years ago, maybe even longer. And she's like, oh, we use this company called Rev. It's just like online. So my understanding of the company at that time was that it was like a person doing it somewhere in the world. And so I uploaded the video and paid whatever it was and got it back in, like, like, no, like couple hours, I think. Or maybe the next day. And it was not perfect, but it was very good. And most importantly, to save me time, it identified Officer one. Officer two and it caught the name of the this person that was speaking and that person that was speaking. So it said, like this person said this. And then officer two said that and blah, blah, blah. And so I was like, wow, that's like crazy. And it worked out really well in that case. And to be honest, I didn't have occasion to use it for a long while. And then I more recently used it also for police body worn video. And I think it was AI this time that was doing it or automated that was doing it. So that's kind of my experience with Rev is just those two times.

**Nick Delgado:** Going into the process, what expectations did you have for how the service would support you?

**Ben Evenstad:** So I had earlier in my career, I had transcribed videos myself, and I'm a very fast typer. But the issue with transcribing is you still need to deposit every, you know, 10s to catch up or whatever. And if you need to put like an ellipses in there or whatever you need to do, it's like just I really it just takes so much time, and I was willing. I mean, don't tell them this, but I was willing to pay anything to, like, not have to sit there and do that. So to get like, a reliable transcript of a piece of video for a fairly nominal cost. It was like such a huge help. And I've talked to older attorneys where they would have to have their like, you know, support staff do it, or I think there used to be like court reporter services that could also do transcriptions from different videos. And I don't know what they paid back then, but I know what court reporters still cost today, and it's insane. So I don't know if this answers the question, but just to have that transcription like ability and quick. And the cost is in the right zone. That's like. Yeah, that's why I love the service.

**Nick Delgado:** Have you evaluated any other vendors since using Rev?

**Ben Evenstad:** I think when I was first asking my wife about it, I think I just did a Google search and saw a few different ones. But before I even started looking into those, she had already told me about Rev. So I was kind of first one I went with.

**Nick Delgado:** In thinking about the service, did you have criteria for evaluation?

**Ben Evenstad:** So, you know, accuracy is, you know, that's what you want. So I don't know if you're familiar with this, but when a video is shown, let's say, in front of a jury at trial, let's say, you provide the jury with a transcript of what's in the video, and the judge instructs the jury that the transcription is not evidence. Do not read what's on the page as evidence, only take into evidence what you are hearing and what you are seeing in the video. But the transcription is like an aid. Like kind of follow along and in my experience, it's been like kind of 1 or 2 page like short transcripts, but I've heard of trials where they're going to watch a 45 minute video and they read the transcript. And to be honest, the save in and again, I'm a small, you know, one man show. I don't know if a mid-size or larger firm wouldn't care as much about this, but, you know, I don't have, you know, besides my paralegal, I don't have a support staff. So my time is kind of the most valuable thing. If the transcription can be accurate and not require me to, like, go back over it and fill in a ton of stuff. Then it's just saving me time. And that's like, that's the game changer for me. It's like it has to. I want to think of as little as possible about a transcript. I just want to have the finished product.

**Nick Delgado:** I have different criteria and I'm wondering if you can rank them. We have speed, cost, accuracy, data security, compliance, ease of use, specific features. What would be most important?

**Ben Evenstad:** I would go three then two. Speed, I told you earlier, like I was first time I used I was like, surprised how fast it came back. For the most part, you know, it's whether it's criminal litigation or civil litigation. And I'll just speak for Los Angeles, where I practice. You have a lot of time. And the court will give you, if you need another four weeks to get the most together, whatever it is. So time is speed is cool, but it's not really. If something took a week, that wouldn't really matter to me generally. So I would say accuracy. Number one. Cost number two. Ease of use I would probably say is my third top one. Maybe then I would say speed. And as far as data security and compliance, you know, I don't have institutional clients. So my clients, the person accused of, you know, getting in the stabbing or the robbery or whatever it is. So, you know, we very much are, you know, confidential and all that, but. Although now that I'm thinking about it, when they give us the body worn video or dash cam video from the police, we do enter into a stipulation. What do they call it? They have like a it's the penal code as a name for it. But you know that that information cannot be by law, cannot be disclosed. So I yeah, I guess data security is important because if for some crazy reason, like a piece of video I uploaded were to like come out on the internet or something, that that would be very bad. So that's important. But again, I don't like I don't represent governments. So it's not and then specific features. I guess I would have to know what those were.

**Nick Delgado:** How much of your evaluation needs would you say is specific to the legal industry?

**Ben Evenstad:** Well, I mean, good question. I guess, you know, my wife again, at a, like, at a bigger firm, She might have a different like prioritization of those things, but accuracy. I would be if you were talking to people in the legal world, I if accuracy was not number one for pretty much everyone, I would be surprised. If there was a lower cost option, but it made me have to go back and go over it all over again to make it more accurate. I wouldn't want to do that. I'd rather pay more to be accurate the first time. So I think accuracy would be like in the legal world would be absolute number one. And then I think cost would be number two, and then those other ones would probably be distributed. However after that.

**Nick Delgado:** Did anything stand out from Rev compared to your expectations going into the process?

**Ben Evenstad:** Well, like I said, I was surprised at again that first time I used it when it was a human. I was surprised again at how quick it was and how and how good it was. I'm trying to. I don't want to confuse something I used Rev for with something I used Dropbox for, because I know Dropbox has. If you have, if you upload a video to Dropbox and then click like give me a summary, it'll tell you like this is a police. It's like it's not a transcription, but it's like, this is a police interaction between a male officer and a female officer and a subject who, you know, blah, blah, blah. And it'll kind of give you like, a breakdown. I think the last time I used Rev, they had some kind of I thought they had some kind of summary of what was happening. And again, sorry if I'm confusing this for for the Dropbox service, but I remember thinking wow, in a couple of years this will be so amazing because it will be so accurate and right. But as far as like the transcription itself. And again, sorry, I'm like going all over the place, but. The first time I used Rev when it was a human doing it, I found that it was more accurate than the most recent time I used it for transcription when I think it was the computer or AI or whatever, and it was not as accurate.

**Nick Delgado:** You mentioned that summary. Summary quality not where you'd like it to be now. But is that something as a feature that you see value in if the quality was to be improved?

**Ben Evenstad:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Because a lot of times, you know, if there's I had a domestic violence case recently where there was six officers on scene and in discovery, we got the body worn of all of them, and all in total, it wound up being three hours or something. And a lot of it was duplicative because there's two officers interviewing one person. So you get both videos. So it's like kind of like waste of time. Again, going back to my time being somewhat valuable, I don't want to sit there for three hours and go over all that. So the summaries, if the summaries have time stamps and it says at 12 minutes and 50s, the officer number one is talking to this person. Then I can go in and watch, like kind of focus in on that part myself. So kind of having like a little roadmap super helpful, but I'm like, I read like a lot of stuff about AI and kind of where we're going with all that. And I'm not an expert by any means, but I can imagine that in a couple of years or whenever that it will be insanely accurate and it will be able to tell you, like, not only, you know, what was said and what the conversation is about, but I don't know, who knows, maybe it'll start coming up with like, you know, subject number two has these legal defenses, like, available to him or whatever. I mean, you know, who knows? You know, it's going to put lawyers out of business one day, which whatever. But yeah. So from the like for the summaries. I find that it can be very valuable to, like, point me in the right direction. And so I'm not sitting there just, like, trying to fast forward through through stuff. Because when you do that, you, you also miss stuff. And, you know, I have a duty to my clients, I review everything. There's not one second that I do not review. But having these tools for that kind of stuff, especially when it's very lengthy is a value add and I think will be a bigger and better value add as the technology gets better.

**Nick Delgado:** Were there any other features or elements specifically to Rev that you felt where they fell short of your expectations?

**Ben Evenstad:** No, my only thing would be, you know, when I. And again, I'm probably not the, like, ideal interview person because I've only used the service a couple few times. But my only, like, little negative would be when it did do the AI transcript super fast. Super. I won't say affordable. I think it might have been free because I only had, like a kind of a shorter clip. But it just was not as accurate. And again, with accuracy kind of being the number one thing. That'd be my only thing.

**Nick Delgado:** In addition to yourself, is your paralegal using Rev or any other contractors that you're engaging using Rev through your accounts?

**Ben Evenstad:** I don't know, with her specifically. So I'm a member of CAALA, do you know what CAALA is? The plaintiff? CAALA is Consumer attorneys Association of Los Angeles. It's the plaintiff's bar. It's a voluntary, but it's mostly solos and smaller firms that represent plaintiffs and consumers as opposed to bigger firms like the represent companies. And we have a listserv which is kind of old school. But I think there's 2000 attorneys on it or somewhere 1800 somewhere in there. Obviously some more active than others. And there's like different listservs that you can be on and some are just about work products. Like, what about this change in the law or what about this new ruling or what's going on with that judge or, you know, whatever. But then there's another listserv. That's CAALA, I think they call it CAALA Life. And it's just like, hey, I need a vendor to, like, do this or that, or, like, I need a temporary office. Whatever. And transcription is something that has come up before on and I know that people have recommended Rev and also recommended other ones. I've never participated or posted in those discussions themselves because I, you know, I already have a service that I'm happy with. If somebody were to ask me, I would recommend Rev. But yeah, I think just from like looking at those threads a couple times, they've popped up. There are other solo attorneys that are certainly using transcription services.

**Nick Delgado:** Do you find that peer to peer insight and perspective is valuable? Would you put increased emphasis on those recommendations versus like a Google search or other information sources?

**Ben Evenstad:** Oh, yeah. And yeah, absolutely. And there's been other people that have been practicing. You know, I'm in my 10th year of practice. There are people on CAALA that have been practicing 50 years that, you know, are on there and giving advice and it's, you know, when you work at a firm with 20, 30 attorneys or big law with hundreds of attorneys, you can go down the hallway and knock on someone's door and like, hey, what about this? What about that? Have you ever dealt with this issue? Solos. We don't have that. So CAALA is like our our main, like, way to kind of stay in touch and interact with colleagues that are kind of on the same side. And yeah, I absolutely, if somebody recommend I mean, I was throwing a party a few months ago and I went on there and I'm like, hey, does anyone have a good taco vendor? And yeah, it's just it's people that do the same thing I do day in, day out. I know some of them in person, some I just know I've seen them on the thread. But yeah, I find that extremely valuable. And I would for a legal vendor like transcription service, I would absolutely put more weight on what a some like a CAALA member thinks than just a Google search.

**Nick Delgado:** What do you do with the transcripts after you receive them?

**Ben Evenstad:** So in the first one I talked about where it was a body worn, it was a assault with a deadly weapon. It was just in a super small nutshell. It was like a she said she said roommate situation where the allegation was that my client, they had gotten into some kind of dispute in the kitchen, and my client had kind of touched her with a knife and there was a scratch. But there also was kind of like a mutual combat like self-defense element to it. So when the police got there, they interviewed everybody, and there was, like, other witnesses and stuff. So when I got the transcript and this is like I'm saying, the first time I used it and I was so impressed that it I thought it would say person one person two person, you know, whatever. It said like. And I think even one of the officers had had their name had their like Sanchez. Officer Sanchez or whatever. So I had to go through, like, the parts I was going to use that had like, crucial statements. I went through that. You know, you know, slowly myself and compared it just to make sure if I was going to present it in court that it was, is, you know, complete as possible. But for the rest of it, where the areas where I, you know, let's say a witness who wasn't in the room when it happened. So I kind of knew I wouldn't really need to know that much about that or use that. You know, then I just kind of reviewed the transcript. Nothing popped out. So. Yeah. Sorry. I don't know if that answers.

**Nick Delgado:** Do you use any tools that are integrated with Rev today?

**Ben Evenstad:** No. But software packages? No. Give me like an like what would.

**Nick Delgado:** In some cases the transcript could be integrated into a workflow, like into another software for additional processing or part of a broader workflow in general.

**Ben Evenstad:** So like a Clio type, one of those like, yeah, I understand what you're saying. No, I don't, I am pretty old school and I, you know, I have my Adobe Acrobat, which is like the most powerful piece of software I have. And. No, so I kind of I keep it basic. I've looked into those services, but it's like another monthly fee like another vendor. It's like that's that's one thing I will say. I, you know, I don't know what like revenue models Rev is considering or has or whatever, but I try to limit my subscriptions because I find even if you can cancel anytime. You know, it's like six months goes by and like, how much was I paying a month? And I think I never like. So I try to stay away from anything with a subscription unless I unless like Acrobat like which I could not do without. So no, I've kind of avoided those. Like all in one we do the billing. We also do discovery responses like I don't not for me, not not yet. Maybe. Maybe one day.

**Nick Delgado:** Are there specific features or functionalities you would like to see added in the future or improved?

**Ben Evenstad:** Well, like that example I gave when it identified the different speakers where it's not, you know, clear who's speaking. It's not let's say a you know, I'm just imagining this, but if there was like a, you know, let's say you wanted, you had a recording of a phone call where it was, you know, Jen and David and then it'd be pretty easy to say Jen said this, David said that, blah blah, blah. But again, the situations I'm talking about where it's like multiple parties, some things are kind of muffled or some person over here says something, but the video is not on them, so you don't know, but you could put it together like a minute later. So the more that it it could identify each person that is talking and if it could and I know you can, you know, control f and change person one to officer whoever like throughout the whole thing. But if it could identify each speaker that would be huge. And do it again accurately.

**Nick Delgado:** What are your thoughts on using AI in the legal industry in your field of work?

**Ben Evenstad:** Yeah. So let me give you an example. Because I, you know, I feel like people, attorneys or lay people or whatever, that, like, they don't understand what is happening with and like how fast things are about to change and are changing have already changed. I'll give you one example. I have a client who's had his home was the subject of a search warrant. A criminal search warrant. They executed the search warrant. They took a ton of stuff, and after they execute a search warrant, they give you a property receipt. This is everything we took from your house and it's been a year. They haven't filed charges. He wants his stuff back. I need to file a motion for return of property. I've never done that before. I looked in practice guides. I could not figure it out. I tried to file it in a civil with a civil clerk's office. They rejected it, and they said we cannot initiate a case based on emotion. Unless there's an asset forfeiture proceeding by the government, we cannot initiate a case. There was no asset forfeiture. There's no nothing. There's no case. So I was at my wit's end with this thing, and I talked to colleagues. I posted on CAALA about it. Nobody knew I could not figure it out. I went to ChatGPT and I described the very specific with more specifics that I'm telling you, and it said, you need to go to the criminal clerk, and the criminal clerk can initiate do case initiation under a miscellaneous setting. And I called the criminal clerk's office in that county and said, hey, this is what I'm trying to do. And the guy said, yeah, that's exactly how to do it. And I asked ChatGPT, where, where did you get that from? Like where the local rule of court or where is that? And it couldn't tell me where it got it from, but it had the 100% correct thing to do. That took me two weeks to try to figure it out. And this isn't the question you asked, but I'll just say this. The state bar, who have a lot of problems with, it is a guild and they will protect us and they will work with lawmakers, in my opinion, and make sure that human attorneys still need to, you know, appear in court. Do you know present evidence? Can only a human attorney can do this? They will limit somewhat. I can do because they want to. The guild wants to protect its members. So I'm not worried about I joke about I'm going to be out of work. I'm not really worried about that, but the, you know, just with, let's say, discovery. Discovery can so much time and it is so repetitive and, you know, I know folks that I don't do personal injury, but I know folks that do personal injury and they have to go through medical records and the AI, even the stuff they're using now, it's like, wow, that would have taken me two full days. That would have taken me, you know, 10.5 hours, whatever it is. And it just got done in ten minutes. I don't know how younger attorneys are going to deal with that. I don't know what our industry is going to look like in a few years. Again, I'm not worried that, you know, I'll be out of work, but the tools are just are so insane and they're only going to get more accurate and more cost efficient and more and easier. So it's it's kind of it's kind of exciting, to be honest.

**Nick Delgado:** If you were the CEO of Rev, what would you change to better serve firms like yours?

**Ben Evenstad:** I, you know, one thing would be. You know, get in front of folks like me or, you know, get the product in front of folks like me. So we can try it again. When I asked my wife about it, I had never heard of it. And, yeah, I could have found it maybe on a Google search, but I might have also found five other services and not known which one to use. So like once I used it the first time and it was like like I saw, you know, I didn't, like, arrange a demonstration and like, whatever, I just, like, found it, used it myself. And I was, like, surprised at how good it worked. So I would say if I was a CEO, I would get with my marketing people and say, just get in front of as as many attorneys or firms that might not know about the service and are still doing things the old school way. And I that would be like the starting place. And, you know, let's say I had a case that, you know, some hypothetical like some crazy, you know, multi-million dollar civil case or some crazy murder case or something. And there was a lot of transcription to be done. Then, you know, a service like Rev would be invaluable in a case like that. And. But I would need to know about the service first.