

Clients Aren't Always on Board with Law Firm Innovation. Now What?

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Jason Lichter

Jason Lichter, principal with Troutman Pepper eMerge, was quoted in the *Law.com* article, "[Clients Aren't Always on Board with Law Firm Innovation. Now What?](#)"

Of course, how clients want firms to become more efficient varies, and can pull firms in different directions. For example, Jason Lichter, principal at Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders eMerge who has been involved in the firm's launch of internal generative AI-based chatbot [Athena](#), said at the [Future Lawyers Week](#) New York Summit that while some clients may inform the firm that their outside counsel guidelines prohibit generative AI use, "we have [had] clients mandate that we start to adopt these technologies for increased efficiency [and] cost savings."

The "polarizing" nature of the technology can present challenges, he tells *The American Lawyer*. But for Lichter, it comes down to recognizing that every client has its "own risk tolerance informed by a whole multitude of factors." To address these varying tolerances, law firms can deploy technology selectively. For instance, Lichter says generative AI doesn't have to be used across the board for all clients, even if the firm chooses to invest in it.

"Some clients are ready for that and are eager for that and the benefits of the technology ... some want to wait on the sidelines for right now and see how things shake out and we adjust accordingly. We are not interested in doing anything that [our clients] are not comfortable with—whether that [means] setting aside Athena on matters that implicate their information or whether it is not using the GPT-powered tools that we are piloting in the e-discovery space," Lichter says.

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"As a general proposition, we're not in the business of mandating that our clients use any particular tool or technology that we have," Lichter says. "We make the case for why we think that using those tools or adopting those technologies or allowing us to do so on their matters will enhance the quality and/or efficiency of our legal services. And then we let them make the final decision on whether to authorize us to do so." The idea of "making the case," Burney adds, and doing so as early as possible can also prove instrumental in bringing hesitant clients on board with a law firm decision.

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