

Press Coverage | August 23, 2023

## Troutman Pepper Rolls Out Proprietary Gen AI Chatbot 'Athena' With Painstaking Care

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Will Gaus and Andrew Medeiros were quoted in the August 23, 2023 *Law.com* article, “[Troutman Pepper Rolls Out Proprietary Gen AI Chatbot 'Athena' With Painstaking Care.](#)”

Will Gaus and Andrew Medeiros, the firm's chief innovation officer and director of innovation solutions, respectively, told Legaltech News that the firm's chatbot uses OpenAI's large language model (LLM) GPT-3.5-turbo via the Microsoft Azure OpenAI Service. Since the service is a closed system, client data is not shared externally to OpenAI to avoid privacy and data security concerns.

Gaus explained that Athena, which went live on Aug. 14, has a range of applications, including writing meeting summaries based on client notes, retrieving key takeaways from note data and assigning stakeholders to manage specific projects. Additionally, the chatbot can also create first drafts of blog posts for attorney and firm websites.

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Gaus and Medeiros stressed that the deployment of such a tool must be done with painstaking care. In designing Athena, that has meant not only mandating ethics and training courses for its attorneys, but also crafting a firm AI use policy based off of guidance from their insurance provider Attorneys' Liability Assurance Society Ltd. (ALAS).

Medeiros stressed that it is vital that all Troutman Pepper attorneys know, when using Athena, what it can, and cannot, do.

“Athena, and [the] generative AI that we have rolled out, at this point, cannot be used for legal research, full stop. That's not its capability right now,” Medeiros said. “[We are] monitoring the logs [of attorney prompts], making sure that the use case are consistent with [our policies] and communicating that over and over to our attorneys.”

While Athena harnesses OpenAI's latest LLMs, and is a product of Troutman Pepper's Generative AI Task Force, Medeiros told Legaltech News that the firm has been experimenting with OpenAI's technology since 2021. At the time, however, the firm realized that older LLMs, which they had access to, were not quite as reliable or capable of generating the necessary output for a tool like Athena.

Medeiros hopes that as solutions such as Thomson Reuters' Westlaw, LexisNexis's Lexis+ and Casetext's CoCounsel, which the firm piloted, hone in on the legal research capabilities of generative AI, Athena might also be able to also harness them in the future. Looking ahead, he noted that the Troutman Pepper may add its firm-

built, proprietary AI models to Athena to expand its capabilities.

While Athena is meant to ease Troutman Pepper attorneys' administrative workloads, Gaus noted that it also is a chance for the firm's lawyers to experiment with generative AI specifically, but in a "safe" and "secure environment."

Medeiros told Legaltech News that several firms have also been discussing plans to roll out similar generative AI chatbots in the future.

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