



# Start with the problem clients are actually paying to solve.

The tools matter because they let us redesign the relationship between judgment, execution, and value. The hard part of this moment is that the problems lawyers are asked to solve and the tools by which we are now driven to solve them are both changing dynamically. The firm should be built around solving legal problems under uncertainty, with technology serving that professional end rather than becoming the end itself.

## **The client problem comes first.**

Clients are paying for the ability to solve real legal problems under uncertainty, not for the maintenance of a staffing pyramid.

## **The lawyer problem matters too.**

The substance of the job has drifted toward information triage, pacing pressure, and empty friction management.

## **The design response is institutional.**

When the problems and tools are both changing in real time, use modern systems to bring value creation and value recognition closer to judgment and farther from friction.

Professional baseline

“My days and years in our shared professional trenches have taught me that the law bears its own distinctive structure, language, coherence, and integrity. When I was a lawyer and my young daughter asked me what lawyers do, the best I could come up with was to say that lawyers help people solve their problems. As simple as it is, I still think that’s about right. Lawyers take on their clients’ problems as their own; they worry and lose sleep over them; they struggle mightily to solve them. They do so with a respect for and in light of the law as it is, seeking to make judgments about the future based on a set of reasonably stable existing rules. That is not politics by another name: that is the ancient and honorable practice of law.”

Neil M. Gorsuch, *Of Lions and Bears, Judges and Legislators, and the Legacy of Justice Scalia*

That definition still names the center: lawyers help people solve problems. The complication now is that both sides of that sentence are moving at once.

The problems clients bring are becoming more dynamic, data-rich, and system-mediated, while the tools lawyers use to solve them are becoming agentic, interoperable, and capable of changing the pace of judgment itself.

That is the design opening. The firm has to preserve the law’s structure, language, coherence, and integrity while rethinking how judgment, execution, supervision, and value recognition should work when the substrate is changing from both directions.

## The problem

# The old pyramid has drifted away from the client problem.

Clients are not buying a staffing structure. They are buying the ability to solve real legal problems under uncertainty. In the old pyramid-based billable model, the judgment and execution layers can become detached from that thing the client actually values.

That detachment is partly a client-service problem and partly a lawyer-life problem. The job can become less about solving legal problems and more about enduring information overload, pacing pressure, and layers of empty friction that do not themselves create value.

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### Information overload

Complex matters now produce more records, systems, signals, and economic context than the old staffing model can comfortably synthesize.

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### Unpleasant triage

The work of sorting information under pressure has become a large part of the job, and often a punishing one.

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### Pyramid management

Firms have often rewarded lawyers who can manage the pyramid, which may or may not correlate with creating the value the client actually needs.

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### Remote substance

For many lawyers, the work can feel further from legal problem-solving and closer to moving friction around the system.

Basic impulse behind the solution

# A chambers-like firm, built around shared state and small practices.

The model is not a new pyramid. The closer analogy is the chambers system that has long existed in the UK: senior lawyers sharing an information substrate, standards, logistics, and mutual coordination, while keeping practices small enough for judgment, training, and culture to remain real.

## Shared substrate

Senior lawyers can share information architecture, standards, logistics, and technical infrastructure without forcing every practice into one pyramid.

## Small practices by design

Each lawyer should be able to keep the practice small, hire the people they actually want to grow, and collaborate where a matter genuinely calls for it.

## Apprenticeship as differentiator

Where jurisdictionally and ethically permissible, the firm should take seriously apprenticeship as an alternative to the bar exam, backed by real training standards.

## Long-term belonging

The firm should be a place people can stay attached to even when life requires a slower pace, including project-based work during family or personal pauses.

## Own the default stack

We should avoid panes of glass into bad workflows. The firm needs its own working stack while remaining fluent with the systems clients actually use.

The initial economic proposal is deliberately simple: evenly split net profits up to an initial threshold, and agree to revisit the structure once the firm becomes more complex.

That simplicity also sets a cultural precedent. The founders retain an interest in the structure because they are responsible for maintaining the professional culture, while leaving room over time for others to participate in that structure.

Moral and cultural premise

# Build houses, not towers.

A firm is fundamentally about people. Tools matter after judgment, culture, and standards are real enough to hold them.

The goal is a durable professional house: a place for people with principled perspectives, serious work, and enough flexibility to stay attached to the institution even when life requires a different pace.

Principled perspectives

Safe frontier experimentation

Long-horizon professional belonging

Project-based contribution when needed

Attention protected from noise

Judgment over performance

Craft and responsibility

# The center of gravity is work where systems compound judgment.

Two kinds of work belong together: advisory work for clients trying to use agentic AI responsibly, and litigation where properly designed workflows become a real advantage over the life of the matter. The common denominator is not technological novelty. It is legal work where state, sequence, source, and judgment have to stay aligned under pressure.

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- **Agentic AI advisory**

Counsel clients on responsible adoption: governance, privilege, confidentiality, workflow design, litigation readiness, and interoperability across the systems they are already using.

- **Data-heavy, expert-intensive litigation**

Antitrust, intellectual property, and Delaware or Texas Business Court-style disputes where factual architecture, technical proof, and expert work become stronger when designed from the beginning as a living matter state.

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- **Rapid-response cases**

Preliminary injunctions, enforcement defense, and other compressed matters where speed matters, but where speed has to be disciplined by provenance, review, and judgment.

- **Late-stage trial takeovers**

Cases that need order imposed quickly on deposition designations, witness lists, exhibit lists, objections, motions practice, Rule 50 papers, and the trial record itself.

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- **Coordination and market-structure disputes**

Matters involving algorithmic coordination, information exchange, regulated-market behavior, platform conduct, market microstructure, or competitor collaboration.

- **Matters where state compounds**

The best fit is work where each disciplined increment of source organization, issue mapping, chronology, and proof development makes the next judgment easier rather than merely adding billable friction.

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# An hourglass, not a pyramid.

The point is not to remove junior lawyers from the profession. It is to remove the frictional middle that made the tedious part look like the hard part. Senior judgment should stay close to the client problem. Systems should carry the repeatable coordination burden. Developing lawyers who genuinely want to learn the craft should get nearer to the real work sooner.

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## Senior judgment

Strategy, standards, client trust, review

## Deleted middleware

Friction, routing, churn, empty triage

## Trained lawyers

Craft, responsibility, compounding judgment

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### Senior judgment stays close

The top of the hourglass is a small number of senior lawyers who remain close to strategy, client judgment, review, and the professional commitments that cannot be delegated away.

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### The middle gets thinner

What should be deleted is the middleware: status-chasing, routing, version confusion, coordination theater, and brute-force triage that used to masquerade as legal difficulty.

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### Junior talent is not the waste

The firm should still train serious younger lawyers. The point is to expose them earlier to the hard part of lawyering, not to ask them to prove themselves by surviving the miserable part.

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### The five-year asset is people

If the model works, the compounding advantage in five years will not be a tool stack standing alone. It will be people trained inside a better system for judgment, craft, and responsibility.

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# The architecture should make professional judgment differentiable and auditable.

At the conceptual level, the stack is a governed professional system unified by common working standards for coordinating state transitions, but flexible in implementation across matters hosted in varied cloud environments. That flexibility should encourage safe experimentation by lawyers across the firm, not weaken the shared standards. Our starting stack features Google Workspace for business records and Google Cloud's Enterprise Agent Platform for matter-specific work. Others may prefer other stacks. That is a virtue, not a problem, because the firm has to advise clients where they are: coordinating many agentic systems that need to talk to each other for the business to work.

Common standards for state transitions across matters, regardless of cloud environment.

Safe matter-level experimentation without sacrificing confidentiality, provenance, or review.

Google Workspace for business records and Google Cloud's Enterprise Agent Platform as our starting stack.

Interoperability across client agentic systems treated as a core service capability.

# Legal work is movement between governed states.

In plain English, state is the current recorded condition of the work: what exists, what matters, who can act, what has changed, what must be preserved, and who is accountable.

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Every matter has a state: what is known, disputed, preserved, exposed, and ready for decision.

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Every production has a state: what exists, what has been collected, what is withheld, what is logged, and what remains missing.

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Every argument has a state: what has support, what needs authority, what depends on assumptions, and what can survive contact.

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Every client relationship has a state: objectives, permissions, risk tolerance, decisions, and next obligations.

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Agents are useful only when they operate against well-governed state.  
Otherwise they are just faster ways to produce untrusted artifacts.

# Write the agentic AI equivalent of *The Geodesic Network*.

Huber's project began as a DOJ report making the competitive landscape after the Bell breakup legible, then continued in a second volume when the official triennial exercise stopped. The analogue here is a living, non-confidential repo for agentic legal work: state, authority, provenance, supervision, auditability, and human responsibility made concrete before the profession's categories harden around worse defaults.

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If this works, the firm does not merely use emerging standards. It helps write them by building a reference architecture that others can adapt to the legal environments they know best, while we own the smoothing, synthesis, and responsibility frame.

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#### Reference architecture

The point is to make a changing technical, legal, and professional substrate legible before the categories harden, so serious lawyers can build from a shared map rather than isolated improvisation.

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#### Coordinating editors

The proposal is that we serve as coordinating editors for the repo: setting the frame, preserving conceptual discipline, and smoothing the result into a coherent standards-adjacent body of work.

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#### Distributed ownership

Specific trusted lawyers, whether peers or younger lawyers, could own adaptations for areas they understand better than we do: plaintiff-side employment work, state government investigations, business disputes, discovery practice, enforcement response, and other settings where the framework becomes real only through use.

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#### Human responsibility as the through-line

The editorial standard should stay consistent with the framing of *A Moral Act Is All You Need*: computer agency can change the substrate of work, but professional responsibility remains human, situated, reviewable, and accountable.

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Why us

# A fit question, not a credential question.

The point is not that either of us has the whole answer. It is that the combination is unusually well matched to this transition: commercial litigation judgment, AI-in-practice experience, institutional legal architecture, and actual technical implementation.

## **Chris: commercial, practical, New York**

Chris brings the high-stakes commercial litigation side: bet-the-company judgment, practical client sense, New York deal-and-dispute fluency, and live experience turning AI from novelty into trial leverage inside a serious litigation firm.

## **Collin: intellectual, institutional, technical, D.C.**

Collin brings the D.C. side: Kellogg Hansen's trial-and-appellate and Huber intellectual lineage, institutional-law experience that includes service as special counsel to the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee in connection with the Brett M. Kavanaugh confirmation, and the technical architecture behind the repo.

## **The combination**

The fit is that one side keeps the project commercially grounded and litigation-real, while the other can turn it into a disciplined architecture, standards project, and technical working system.

The ambition should be practical enough to earn client trust, rigorous enough to shape the category, and technical enough to build rather than merely comment on the agentic transition.

What you are being invited into

# A serious reaction before the institution hardens.

The invitation is not pressure. It is a request for judgment: help think through what kind of institution this should become, where the theory is strong, where it is underdeveloped, and how to distinguish real leverage from toy automation.

You can help test the people question, the standards question, and the first-matters question. The project needs someone willing to say when an idea is institutionally serious and when it is merely interesting.

# The work becomes real by being sequenced.

The roadmap is not a promise of order. It is a way to see which foundations need to exist before the firm can scale judgment without losing control.

01

## Firm identity and narrative

Name the institution plainly: what work it does, what it refuses, and why the model is professionally serious.

02

## Operating system and governance

Set standards for intake, matter state, agent use, provenance, review, confidentiality, and release decisions.

03

## Founder economics

Launch with a deliberately simple net-profit split up to an initial threshold, then revisit once complexity requires it.

04

## Apprenticeship and training

Map where apprenticeship can ethically and jurisdictionally substitute for conventional credentialing, and what training standards would make that serious.

05

## First matters and case studies

Select work where the model creates real leverage without forcing confidential facts into reusable systems.

06

## Agentic workflows

Build bounded workflows for research, chronology, production state, issue mapping, and document-state review.

07

## Document-state architecture

Develop a secure document lake, parsing layer, graph model, and audit trail for litigation work.

08

## Default stack and interoperability

Build the firm default stack while staying able to advise clients using varied agentic systems and make those systems talk to each other.

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## Standards repo

Develop the repo into a distributed standard-setting project, with practice-area adaptations owned by trusted contributors and edited into a coherent human-responsibility frame.

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## Collaborator network

Identify people who want to experiment safely at the frontier of technology and build a place they can stay attached to over time.

Open questions for you

# The questions are part of the artifact.

These are the places where your reaction is more valuable than another round of internal refinement.

What work should the firm refuse?

What has to remain human-only?

What standards should govern AI use before clients demand them?

How small can the core team stay?

What kinds of people fit the culture?

What would make apprenticeship ethically serious?

Which practice-area adaptations should be commissioned first?

How should founder economics evolve after the initial threshold?

What should be built once and reused?

What should never be automated?

# What the next conversation should pressure-test.

01 What is the real opportunity?

02 What should the firm become?

03 What should stay small?

04 What does the chambers model get right for this moment?

05 What needs to be standardized early?

06 Who else belongs in the conversation?

07 What should the first public artifact say?