

WHITE PAPER

THE NO-CODE APPROACH FOR THE LEGAL INDUSTRY

NE  TA LOGIC

SHOULD LAWYERS LEARN TO CODE?

Learning to code has become a big thing for lawyers. For this, we can thank the explosion of interest in legal tech over the past four or five years.

Quite rightly, legal educators and regulatory bodies have realised that technology is changing the practise of law and that people entering the profession with the right skills will quickly get ahead in the new world. But is coding really one of those skills?

It's perfectly understandable for lawyers to learn to code if:

- There is a clear benefit to their career, their practice area or their firm in general; or
- It is something they are truly interested in. Not because it is the latest fad.

Promoting coding as an essential part of a professional skillset is misguided. In particular, it stems from an outdated view of the software tools available to lawyers with ambitions to be creative with technology.

KPMG's Visitor Assist Application

As an example, consider a product developed by KPMG. It's an app designed to assess and manage the obligations created by business visitors to Australia. Employees can conveniently record travel plans and receive instant pre-travel instructions regarding their visas and tax obligations.

The application has been designed to significantly reduce the burden on in-house resources in the management of tax and immigration details for employees, in line with regular legislative change, whilst ensuring minimum interruption to the traveller or business.

It's a sophisticated and extensive piece of software but surprisingly wasn't built from scratch with a traditional programming method - it was all developed using Neota Logic's no-code, rapid-development platform.

BCLP's COVID Estate Planning Solution

Let's look at one example of how a top-tier law firm utilised the Neota Logic platform and introduced a COVID Estate Planning Solution which enables a radical shift in working practices in the face of the COVID-19 crisis and addresses one of the many challenges facing its clients during the current pandemic.

To cater for clients hospitalized or in quarantine because of the pandemic, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner's (BCLP) created an online, easy-to-use solution which enables clients who are planning their estates to quickly find the up-to-date basic signing requirements for their particular jurisdiction. The solution solves a complicated dilemma for clients as the rules requiring wet-ink signatures and witnesses to be physically present vary widely from state to state in the U.S. Starting with a clearly identified issue which became exacerbated by COVID-19, BCLP's Private Client Group and Global Innovation Team developed this digital solution in a matter of days and allowed their clients to receive immediate guidance and clarity on execution issues so that they could focus on what matters most during this time: family and healing.

The Minimal Viable Product (MVP)

Before we delve into more of what you can do with a no-code platform, we want to touch on a key benefit of using rapid-development, no-code platform: the MVP approach.

An MVP is a Minimum Viable Product – or a learning vehicle. What is the smallest thing that you can build that delivers value to the customer?

We believe that one of the biggest challenges posed by the implementation of legal tech also provides the very reason that lawyers are so good at their jobs. Have you lost count of the amount of times a product timeline has been delayed because every single detail needs to be perfect before even deploying the first iteration? And when it is FINALLY deployed, further changes from testing, client feedback and UAT means the timeline is pushed back even more.

You want an MVP which you can release, validate and iterate.

And what better way to do it than with a no-code, rapid-development platform where you can design something, build it quickly, deploy to the early adopters and if changes are required, be able to implement those quickly.

What can you REALLY do with no-code platforms?

We're are of the view that there are two categories of no-code platforms out there. The first is quite basic and only allows users to build simple question forms, logic / reasoning and basic outputs i.e. a word document. If basic digital solutions are your goal, then these would be the ones to go with.

Neota Logic falls within the second category. These no-code platforms enable users to create highly complex expert systems and workflow automation solutions. As an example, Neota Logic's Hybrid Reasoning Engine offers 3 core competencies:

1. Expertise Automation
2. Document Automation
3. Process and Workflow Automation

Applications can be built using 1, 2 or all 3 of these competencies. Depending on how the application is architected, there can be a degree of dependency.

For example, a typical solution that utilises all 3 core competencies are outlined below:

- Select pre-designed contract templates, organized by contract type or industry vertical.
- Complete a draft version of those contract templates by inputting answers to questions built into the solution.
- Navigate pre-built workflows to ensure contract compliance.
- Depart from standard language in certain, pre-defined situations.
- Download and store the final contract in Word or PDF format.
- Track all user input and workflow data.

And we've seen clients build the first iteration of the above workflow solution in Neota in less than a week! Now ask yourself, do lawyers really need to code?!

What else?

This is a question we get a lot. Neota's answer is generally, what can't you do?

Empowering everyone

No-code platforms enable those who have never developed an app before to engage in the software development process. For many people, this is an incredibly empowering and exciting introduction to a world traditionally walled-off by complex coding languages and years of learning.

Business users and subject-matter experts can automate their processes by rapidly prototyping and building apps without coding skills or dependency on overstretched IT departments.

Law firms and legal departments can now accelerate their digital transformation journey by leveraging agile development to generate new revenue and improve operational efficiency.

And all done without touching a single line of code!



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