



Are Your Skills Holding You Back? 5 Surprising Ways CMS Can Advance Your Legal Career

Technology, Privacy, and eCommerce



As a young associate, I stayed on top of the newly emerging eDiscovery rules. As a junior member of a Fortune 50 legal department, I kept up with growing digital privacy and data security regulations. And as a lawyer at several startups, I have the most effective SaaS agreements practically seared

onto the back of my eyelids.

Each time I learned a new skill that was in high demand, it propelled my career forward in unprecedented ways. The same opportunity is ripe for your taking too.

Knowing the law is just table stakes. Successfully practicing law starts with intentionally aligning your skills with the trends that occur where law and technology intersect.

Whether you are at a law firm or legal department, legal tech — and specifically Contract Management Software (CMS) — helps create that alignment. Here are five skills that CMS enhances that will help ensure your continued job security and career growth in an ever-changing legal market.

1. Designing efficient, predictable processes

Today's clients demand more predictability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness — all of which result from effective process design. To create efficient workflows and effective oversight procedures, you need to know how to use AI and automation in ways that support business objectives.

CMS gives you a manageable framework in which to design and apply processes. And it gives you the critical data you need to understand challenges in context and in relation to overall operations.

Within efficient, effective process design lies the opportunity to also learn important soft skills. An empathetic understanding of every stakeholder's pain points serves you well in building consensus, obtaining corporate and user buy-in, and implementing change in ways that leave no one behind.

You will use this combination of tech and soft skills for years to come as a legal practitioner.

2. Envisioning new ways of generating value from data

Which statement do you want to go in front of a corporate board and say:

"We tend to spend a lot of time negotiating limitations of liability."

Or:

"Changing our default position from unlimited liability to five times what has been paid reduced our contract close time by an average of 60 percent (40 days)."

A good CSM solution provides data that helps you make decisions that lead to better business outcomes. Data informs your assessment of processes, challenges, and opportunities. You can also more quickly determine whether your decisions create or destroy value. With much better insight into where things stand, you can give client-specific, targeted advice confidently and quickly.

3. Scaling with technology

I learned a lot about scaling operations when I served as a senior lawyer and general counsel. I led companies through important milestones during hiring sprees and expansion as well as more conservative contraction cycles.

When organizations subscribe to cloud-based CMS platforms on an as-needed basis, flexibility allows them to scale more efficiently. They also avoid the hassle of changing tech solutions amid both growth and reduction periods.

Lawyers will always be relied on to shepherd clients through change. Knowing how to use CMS to adapt allows you to help companies to scale smartly.

4. Creating a collaborative culture

The most important influence in any company is its people. A CMS platform gets people working together simultaneously (as opposed to sequentially) in real time where they can share useful intelligence and unique perspectives that help them build off each other's work.

CMS is an ideal tool for proactively implementing collaborative processes to face new and ongoing challenges such as regulatory reform. Collaboration is here to stay because, among many other benefits, it eliminates duplicative work and leads to huge savings in time and effort.

5. Overseeing legal and personal well-being

CMS transforms lawyers from risk managers to valuable asset creators and strong asset managers — two of the most highly sought-after skills in business.

With CMS, you are informed of events and issues earlier, so you can offer remedies and jump on opportunities sooner. Greater visibility into contract lifecycles allows you to monitor important milestones more easily and to ensure requirements are fulfilled to avoid risk and prevent loss.

The efficiencies gained with CMS also free up time for strategic planning and time to take care of your personal well-being. Both are important for securing your overall life and career satisfaction.

Strategically positioned for unparalleled opportunities

Lawyers now face technology-related challenges neither law school nor prior experience prepared them to handle. CMS positions you to gain the skills you need to strategically apply legal *and* business principles in a tech-driven world.

Use CMS to strategically position yourself at the intersection of new technologies and law, and you'll discover unmatched opportunities to propel your career forward. Lawyers who understand technology and eagerly innovate to solve challenges with solutions that complement business growth will always be in high demand.

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Mack is also an award-winning (such as the prestigious ACC 2018 Top 10 30-Somethings and ABA 2022 Women of Legal Tech) general counsel, operations professional, startup advisor, public speaker, adjunct professor, and entrepreneur. She co-founded SunLaw, an organization dedicated to preparing women in-house attorneys to become general counsels and legal leaders, and WISE to help female law firm partners become rainmakers.

She has authored numerous books, including *Get on Board: Earning Your Ticket to a Corporate Board Seat*, *Fundamentals of Smart Contract Security and Blockchain Value: Transforming Business Models, Society, and Communities*. She is working on her next books: *Visual IQ for Lawyers* (ABA 2024), *The Rise of Product Lawyers: An Analytical Framework to Systematically Advise Your Clients Throughout the Product Lifecycle* (Globe Law and Business 2024), and *Legal Operations in the Age of AI and Data* (Globe Law and Business 2024).