

Brainwave July 2026

AI Has Arrived: Don't Run Off the Cliff

By [Brandi Pack](#), Director of Innovation, [UpLevel Ops](#)

Technology is not going to slow down.

Every week brings a new AI model, platform, capability, or prediction about how artificial intelligence will transform the legal profession. The pace of innovation is relentless, and there is no finish line in sight.

The danger is that legal teams become so focused on keeping up that they race toward the edge of the AI cliff without a clear destination.

I regularly speak with legal teams that have spent the past two years attending webinars, evaluating platforms, comparing models, forming working groups, and debating strategy. They can explain the differences between major AI platforms, emerging agent capabilities, and whatever the latest AI buzzword happens to be.

Yet many still struggle to answer a much simpler question:

What are we actually trying to improve?

Every new breakthrough creates another reason to pause, reconsider, or change direction. Should we accelerate? Wait? Pivot? Start over?

As a result, many organizations are not falling behind because they ignored AI. They are stuck in a state of perpetual evaluation, searching for the perfect tool while delaying practical implementation.

The irony is that the technology they need is already here.

Large language models, chat assistants, and agent-based tools have matured into reliable foundations for building customized, inexpensive, and effective solutions. For many legal teams, the bottleneck is no longer the technology itself.

It is execution.

At some point, organizations need to stop chasing every new development, return to the fundamentals, and start building on the foundation that already exists.

Another trap emerges when teams become consumed by the pace of innovation. They begin assuming that every new capability requires a more sophisticated use case.

It doesn't.



The greatest gains from AI are still coming from the same opportunities we've been discussing since the beginning: reducing repetitive work, streamlining routine processes, improving access to information, and eliminating administrative burdens.

Most legal teams are not losing hours because they lack autonomous agents or cutting-edge workflows. They are losing hours answering the same questions, searching for information, reviewing routine documents, drafting standard communications, and managing countless low-value tasks that accumulate throughout the day.

These are the areas where AI can create immediate and measurable value.

Before exploring increasingly complex use cases, legal teams should ask a simpler question:

Have we already automated the busy work?

If the answer is no, it may be time to go back to basics.

Brandi Pack is Director of Innovation at UpLevel Ops, where she helps legal departments navigate the intersection of AI, Legal Operations, and business transformation. She is a frequent advisor and speaker on AI adoption in legal and is known for translating emerging technologies into practical, real-world applications.

At UpLevel Ops, Brandi leads the firm's AI Strategy & Enablement practice, helping legal teams build readiness for AI through governance, training, approved use cases, platform-native AI tools, and practical implementation support. The goal is simple: help legal departments adopt AI in ways that are responsible, sustainable, and aligned with business objectives.

Learn more about **UpLevel Ops' AI Strategy & Enablement** services at UpLevelOps.com.