Tech Talk

A Handy Glossary of Essential Terms

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Aa

Abandonware	Abandoned software aka abandonware. It is a software that is no longer being sold, maintained, released, updated or supported by the owner/copyright holder.
Agile	The term refers to an approach towards the process of software development that includes early release of software to receive user feedback and thereby making the necessary improvements and enhancements. This process is considered useful for environments where the focus is on new and/or different areas.
AI Assistant	The term refers to a virtual assistance system that is powered by artificial intelligence (AI). Generally, such AI assistants can handle simple tasks such as setting up appointments, reminders etc.
Algorithm	It refers to the set of mechanisms that governs the performance or behaviour of a software/ machine/ computer etc. In simpler terms, algorithms can be referred to as the rules/guidelines following which a software/machine/computer works.
Alternative Legal Service Providers (ALSPs)	These are service providers in the legal industry that provide specialized work dedicated to different types and stages of legal operations, acting as alternative to traditional method of executing the same type and stages of legal operations.
Analytics	It is the process of making sense (analysis) of data with the help of computers and/or computation.
App	It refers to a program that runs on a computer, generally a mobile phone/smart phone and offers service/products in a similar manner as that of a website accessed through a browser.
Application Programming Interface	It is the method through which two computer systems interact with each other. This is seen in the real world when a user is able to access the service of another vendor from the portal of one vendor. For example, payment gateways on websites.

Approval process	As the name suggests, it is the process followed for approval of an element. How this translates into tech is having specified workflows that ensure the element passes through all the required stages before seeking approval – all done online on one single portal without having to switch between different applications.
Artificial Intelligence	It is the ability of a computer system to mimic human intelligence including the process of improvement/change thereof, i.e. continuously improving, evolving and updating as time passes and more information (data) is available.
Automation	It is the technological intervention in manual repetitive tasks to make them conclude faster with improved and increased efficiency and accuracy.

Bb

Backups	It is the exercise of copying their data to remote servers and store the data in case anything happens to the main server. This is so that, should something happen to the main server, they would be able to easily get the data back from a backup sever.
Benchmarking	In general terms, this refers to reviewing present and past data of the performance data of same/similar industry and its best practices and setting the expectations of improvements for the upcoming time. For technology, this is in reference to products.
Bias in AI	AI is designed to mimic the process, development and output of human intelligence and this includes the bias that humans carry. However, this bias is considered just as bad in the technology world as it is (most times) in the society, especially considering responses from AI are considered to be impersonal and relied on heavily many a times. Bias in AI can have potential risks that include wrong or unfair responses.

Big data	This refers to data sets from a large source that is so complex that it cannot be analysed or processed through traditional software for data analysis and process. For legal tech however, this was previously considered as an important and ground-breaking element that quickly lost its prominence as there was no google-scale data set available for law.
BigLaw	This is an industry term that refers to big names and big sized law firms in a city. For technology, the relevance of this term is that in such big law organisations, there generally exists a dedicated resource overseeing the intervention, introduction and smooth adaptation of technology into the organisation's operations to ensure faster and efficient work processes across teams and locations.
Blockchain	It is a method of storing information in the form of blocks linked together through cryptography. Cryptography is the method through which information is coded in a manner whereby only the intended receiver can read it). Most common use type is that of a ledger of transactions. For legal tech, blockchain carries a lot of potential being explored by many organisations simultaneously.
Business Intelligence	This refers to the use of technologies such as data mining, visualization and tools etc. to present information (business data) in a manner that is most easily consumable allowing for data-driven decision making by businesses.
Business Process Management (BPM)	This refers to the exercise of efficiently analyzing and optimizing processes to improve business outcomes. With reference to technology, several technological tools driven by data analytics and representation help in business process management. For legal tech, this mean introducing

Cc

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Change Management	This refers to the systematic and efficient management of the process of smooth introduction and adoption of any change introduced to an organisation's existing process and/or method. This includes changes and/or adoption of technology.
Chatbot	It is a software program that mimics human conversation – spoken and written. It started with pre-decided and designed prompts and their responses (ex. connecting with customer care service on call (press x number for one service and y number for some other service) or on chat (having limited and service-provider decided responses to different issues). This is slowly evolving to free-hand conversation with the help of newer technology.
Client portal	It is the section of portion of a software service wherein the clients of the service buyer can see the content related to them on the portal, allowing them to have a ready secure access to status updates of the progress going on, including any documents and other information.

Cloud Storage	This refers to online storage of data, files etc. that allows for easy, convenient and anytime-anywhere access to the stored items. This is executed by having offsite data centers accessed through internet.
Clustering	This is the categorisation of different objects/elements under different heads so that same/similar objects/elements are under one single head through the use of technology.
Cognitive Computing	It is the use of computers to attempt and mimic human intelligence, reasoning and development.
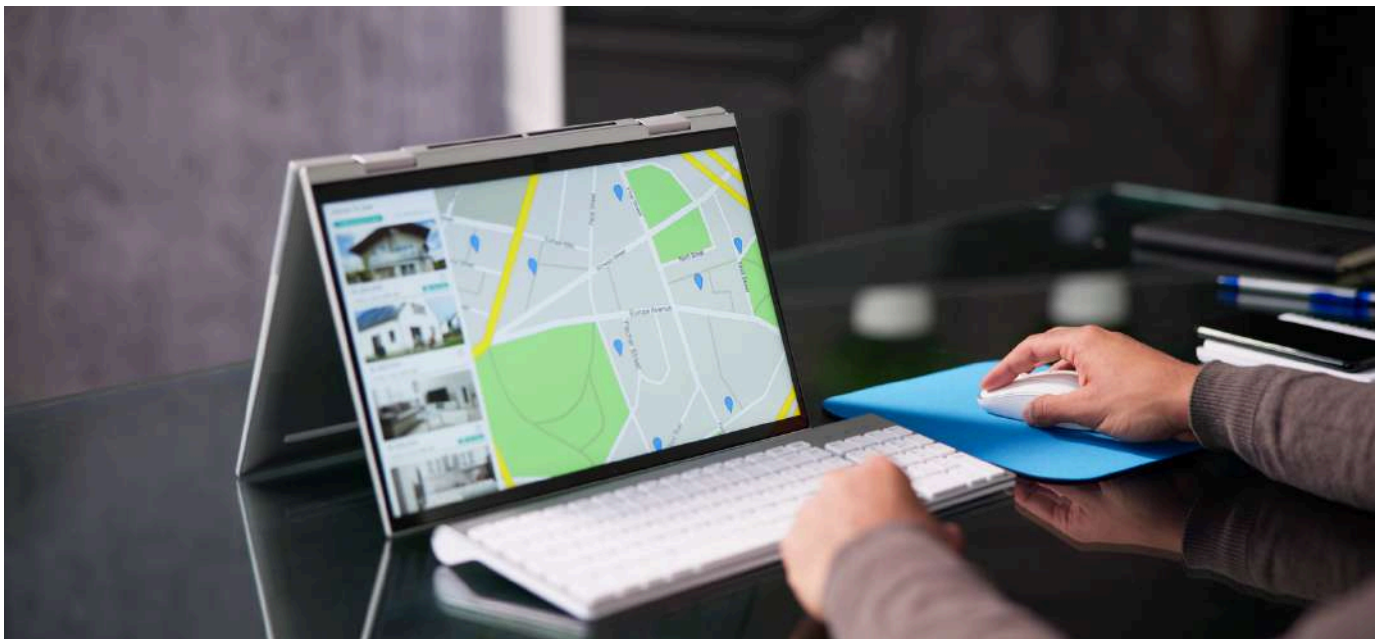
Cookie	It is a block of data that is stored in the web browser and carries information about browsing activity which is used to manage sessions, personalise web browsing experience and at times even track web browsing activities.
Compliance Management Software	A software that helps in the managing – identifying, filing, maintaining records and tracking progress – of applicable legal and regulatory requirements (the compliances).
Computable Contract	This refers to a contract that can be read, understood and executed by a computer or computer programme.
Configuration	In technology, configuration refers to the change or development in a software to adjust to or meet new and specific requirements.

Contract AI	Contract artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the use of AI specifically designed to help with or even independently conduct different stages and tasks of contract lifecycle management, such as drafting, reviewing, analyzing and managing contracts.
Contract Lifecycle Management	It is the process and method through which the entire lifecycle of a contract – from drafting to signature to performance and then post-conclusion obligations – are managed. With technology, CLM processes stand to be automated and modernised to a very large extent.

Contract Management System	It is a system that is designed to facilitate the smooth functioning, management and performance of contracts. These generally form part of organisation process when dealing with contracts. With technology, this system has become automated to a significant extent improving efficiency.
Corpus	In the context of technology, corpus refers to large dataset of text that is analysed.
Cryptocurrency	Cryptocurrency or crypto is a digital currency that works on blockchain technology and is different from typical currency.

Dd

Dashboard	It is generally the page on a software service where the consolidated information of the account and its activities are presented for one-view information consumption.
Data	It is a set of information that is to be analysed using technology.
Data Analytics	It is the method of gaining insight into available data to identify patterns, weak/strong areas, commonalities etc. to be better informed and accordingly make decisions.
Data Mining	This is a method of analysis of data to identify the different existing patterns and relationship between the elements of data set. This generally helps in identifying trends and history to better analyse current scenario for future.
Data Room	It refers to an online method of securely sharing documents whereby only the intended recipient can access the document. This minimises the risk of unauthenticated or unintended access to a document.
Database	The space and manner of storing and accessing data.
Decentralised Autonomous Organisation	It is an organisation process method wherein no central authority exists, rather power is distributed amongst the members (tokenholders) and they make decisions by casting votes. The method relies heavily on smart contracts that dictate the behaviour of the blockchain used for the DAO.
Deep learning	It is a method of data processing used by computers that mimics the human brain using neural networks. It is used in the context of performing complex tasks and solving complex problems.
Design thinking	It is the method of strategising and planning while designing used by designers dependent on user behaviour and preferences to make the final product most user-friendly and pleasing. It uses methods to understand user behaviour and preferences and apply the same the final desing.

Distributed Ledger Technology	It is the digital storing of details related to a transaction in multiple places at the same time instead of a central data storage place.
Document Automation	It is the automatic generation of documents through technology in the desired manner with minimum to no human intervention on the basis of particulars provided.
Document management system	This refers to the system of managing the documents of an organisation. With technology, documents can be securely stored online, accessed from anywhere-anytime and prevent unauthorised access and use.
Digital signature	Guarantees the authenticity of a document or message.

Ee

| E-discovery	E-Discovery is generally a part of online document management systems which facilitate easy, quick and accurate document fetching amongst the wide data set of documents.
E-Filing	It is the practice of using online means to file documents before the authorities.
E-learning	This refers to online learning modules and courses that are convenient for learners to learn and improve their skill set without the requirements of physical presence in one single place.
E-Privacy directive	Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive 2002/58/EC on Privacy and Electronic Communications, otherwise known as ePrivacy Directive is an online privacy directive of European Union regulating usage of cookies, data collected etc. to ensure ethical privacy practices online.
E-Service	Services that make use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their execution are e-services.
E-signatures	Electronic signatures are signatures made electronically, i.e. through the use of technology.
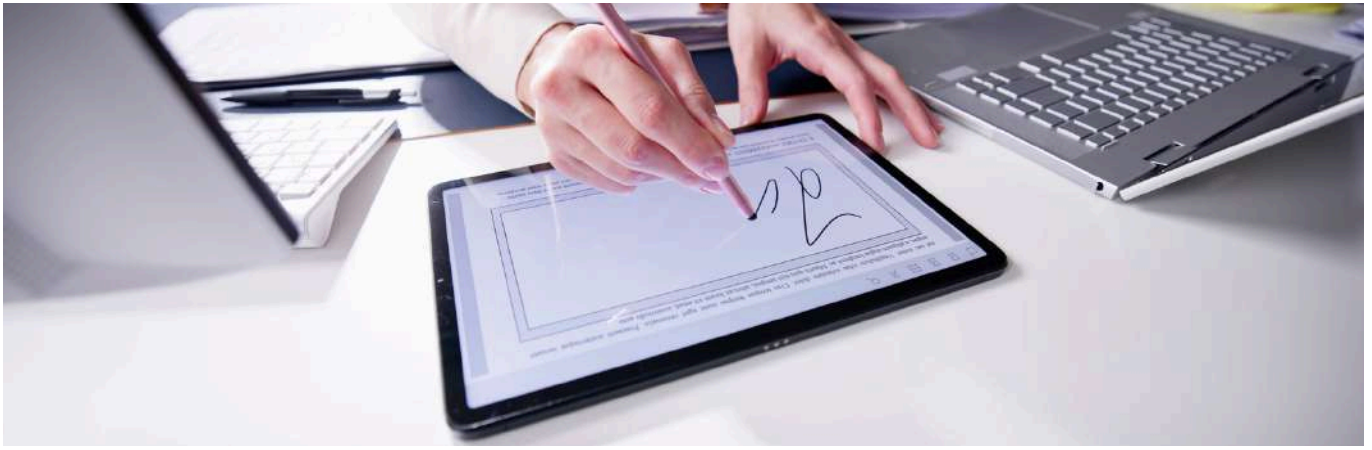
Encryption	It is technological method to turn data into hash codes to maintain security and privacy of the data.

Expert system	It is a computer program designed to solve complex set of problems and make decisions with the ability and manner that is like a human.

Gg

General Data Protection Regulation	GDPR are the privacy regulation directive of the European Union that has unified the law on privacy in the jurisdiction ensuring privacy and security of personal data for the subjects and responsible and ethical actions for the intermediaries.

Generative AI	Generative AI refers to the type of AI that can generate responses to a given premise based on data set that it was trained in a human-like manner.

Hh

Hallucinations

Hallucinations in the context of technology refers to incorrect and at times "nonsense" information and response generated by AI.

Hash

It is the element to which a given information is converted to using hashing in order to protect and secure the information.

Ii

Information Governance

It is the principle and rules that an organisation puts into the management of the information it holds.

Intake

In the context of software technology, this refers to the concept of ensuring new projects are duly recorded, tracked, maintained and accounted for.

Integrations

In the context of technology, this refers to the smooth culmination of two different technologies to provide a service/feature.

Intellectual Property (IP) software

This refers to software used by intellectual property rights (IPR) lawyers and other professionals for quick and convenient IP operations and tasks resulting in enhanced IP management of an organisation.

Internet of Things (IOT)

It is the system of elements that are embedded with sensors and other communication-like devices allowing them to exchange information and stay connected over the internet.

Kk

Key performance Indicator

These refer to the parameters against which the progress, performance and objectives of a product or organisation are assessed.

Knowledge Management

It is the method and process in which an organisation manages the knowledge it has including adopting ways to leverage and use it in most optimum and efficient manners.

Ll

Lawtech Accelerator

This refers to the process of training lawyers and law students to best use technology and leverage the features of technology to help them in their daily legal operations and tasks.

LEDES File Format

Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard (LEDES) is a standard form of billing/invoicing that was developed for the exchange of such information between organisations/corporations and law firms and/or legal service provider(s).

Legal e-Billing

It is the software that prepare an e-bill for legal services with little to no human intervention and include accepting/issuing invoices, generating reports, sending invoices to appropriate authority for approval etc.

Legal Operations Platform	This refers to technology platforms that help legal departments or entire companies and organisation manage their legal operations with improved efficiency.
Legal Process Outsourcing (LPO)	It is the process of outsourcing a particular task of legal operations to outside service providers in order to decrease the burden of tasks on own team and increase their efficiency.
Legal Project Management	It is the management of a project, legal in nature to ensure its conclusion to be as desired – for example, contracts, matters etc.
Legal Service	It is the service of legal nature required by an entity. With the introduction of technology, many legal services are now easily available at the click of a button.
Legal Technology	Legal technology or LegalTech refers to the integration of law and technology to provide a solution or service.
Litigation and Case Management	This refers to the efficient management of all things related to a litigation or case – ongoing, concluded or at pre-litigation stage. This includes tracking important dates, accumulating required documents etc. With technology, litigation and case management is conducted efficiently through online document management, e-discovery, encrypted access and date trackers amongst other things.

Mm

Machine Learning
Is the process in which a computer system is trained and developed (learns) through data sets provided.

Matter Trackers
It is the technology with the help of which the change in status, updates and important dates of a matter are tracked by a user.

Metadata
Simply put, it is the data (information) about a given data (information).

Nn

Natural Language processing
It is the technology used to analyse, understand and process natural language and speech.

Negotiation platform
It is an online platform used to negotiate the terms and clauses of a contract. Use of an online negotiation platform ensures the maintenance of all changes made across versions with clear demarcations of by whom.
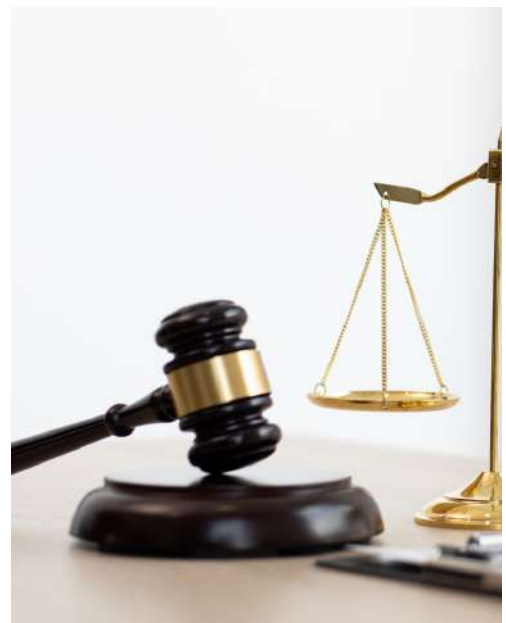
Neural Network	It is the design of algorithms that are inspired from the neuron network of a human brain. The purpose is to recognize patterns and process complex data.
NewLaw	This refers to the concept of adoption of newer technologies to perform tasks related to law.

Oo

Objective coding	It is the extraction of very specific type/category of information from documents and entering the same into a database.
Off-chain Transaction	It is Cryptocurrency transaction that has moved the value outside (off) the blockchain.
Online Case Management	This is the use of technology to manage cases online. An online case management system typically allows the user to efficiently manage all things related to a case – ongoing, concluded or at pre-litigation stage. This includes tracking important dates, accumulating required documents, online document management, e-discovery etc.
Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)	ODR is a method of dispute resolution whereby parties in contention have access to experienced dispute resolution professionals with the help of technology and internet. ODR is generally used for ADR methods.
Online Reverse Auction (RA)	It is an online auction process wherein suppliers submit their bids in a competitive process and is different from a typical auction as the bids decrease as the auction processes and not increase.

Open source	It is a type of software that is not subject to the copyright of exclusive use of the provider and thus the end user is free to use it.
Optical Character Recognition	It is the recognition of characters and letters in a given image to make it "readable", editable and searchable, in a manner similar to a typical document or pdf file.
Outside Counsel Rationalization	It is the use of outside counsel by companies for their legal requirements even to the effect of entirely eliminating in-house counsel teams at times. Legal tasks may also be done in collaboration of in-house and outside counsels to achieve maximum output and desired results.

Pp

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Patent	It is the intellectual property related to technological innovations that protect the innovation from being copied without the assent and authority of the patent owner.
Peer-to-peer (P2P)	It is a computer network within which data is shared directly without a central server for such data share and direction.
Permissioned (private) Ledger	It is a blockchain transaction ledger that is cannot be accessed publicly.

Permissionless Ledger	This refers to an open blockchain transaction ledger that can be accessed by anyone.
Playbook	It is the documentation of the methods to be followed for different outcomes in a process.
Practice Management Software	It is a software that assists legal departments and professionals involved in the practice management of an organisation to leverage the benefits of technology to efficiently manage the legal practice of the organisation.This is typically done though online document management, date tracking, e-discovery, automation of repetitive tasks, e-billing etc.
Predictive Analytics	It is the use of technology of data analytics to predict certain elements basis a given data set.
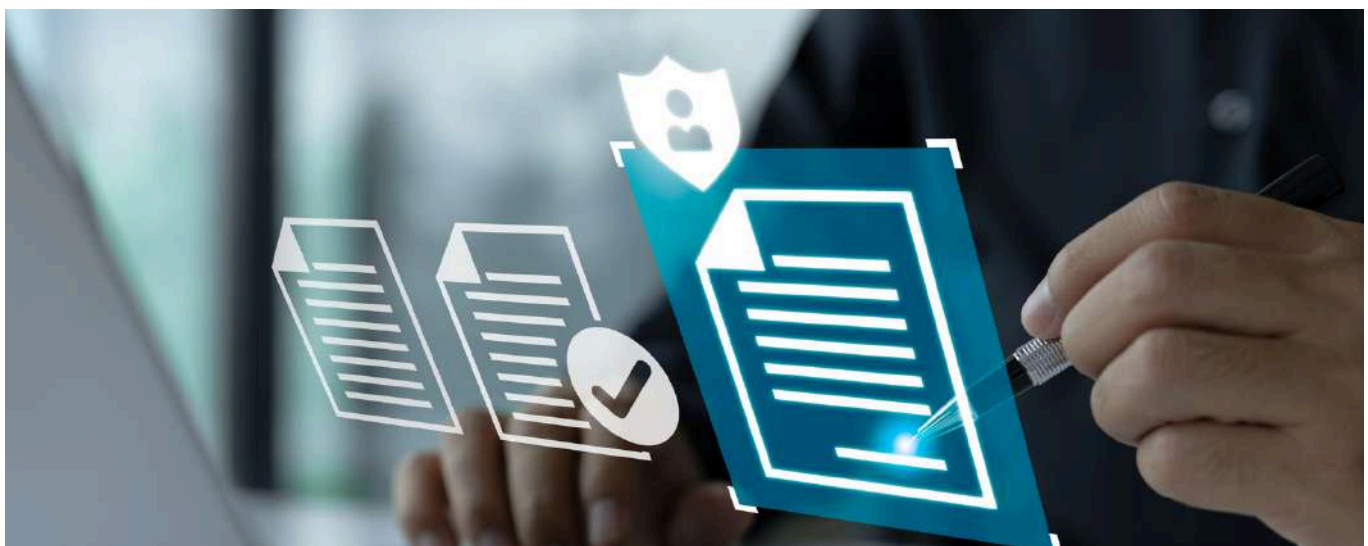
Privacy Policy	It is the undertaking of an entity about the use of private data they receive.
Procurement	It is the accumulating of required resources and elements for a particular purpose.
Project management	It is the strategic management and planning of a project to ensure smooth and successful running of the project.
Prompts	These are the keywords or otherwise input that is provided to artificial intelligence to enable it to give appropriate responses to the query.
Proprietary	It is the term used to enforce and establish ownership over something.
Public domain	For any subject matter to be available in public domain refers to the availability of the said subject matter without being subject to any copyright.

Rr

Records Management	It refers to the practice of maintenance of records in an organisation.
Redaction	It is the method of hiding particular area or type of information or data while still making available the rest of the portion of the data.
Reinforcement Learning	It is a machine learning method that teaches a computer software to make optimum result oriented decisions using human-like trial-and-error learning process.
Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)	It is a technology method dedicated to improving the quality of responses from generative AI.

Request for Proposal (RFP)	It is business term used for a document that is essentially a call for proposals to perform a service. The document typically details its services required as per the parameters listed.
Ricardian contracts	A previous type of computerized contract wherein the agreement was split into different transactions to be performed and thereon tracked and accounted for.
Robotic Process Automation	It is the technology through which robots that emulate human-behaviour can easily be built, released and managed for human-like interaction with softwares.

Ss

Secure Cryptographic Hash Functions	It is a mathematical function with proven security used in cryptography. It works on the basis of taking variable length input and giving outputs of fixed length.
Security Certificate	It is essentially a small data file that is used as a secure technique for the protection of identity, authenticity and reliability over the internet of a website.
Semantic Search	It refers to the capability of a search engine to identify and understand the intent and context of the user searching. The feature aims to improve search results and their relevancy.
Sentiment analysis	As the name suggests, it is the assessment of the type and tone of emotions present in a given text – whether positive, negative or neutral.
Service Level Agreement	As the name suggests, it is the agreement of providing a service between parties wherein the exact details of the service – manner, duration, type, hours, responsibilities, cost, payment manner and method etc. are laid down.
Sequence-to-sequence (seq2seq)	It is a machine learning model that processes sequences. The input will be in one sequence and the output will be in another sequence. An example of this can be language translation.
SharePoint	A software by Microsoft primarily focused on online document storage and management whereby online collaboration between teams and people is easier and smoother.
Shareware	It is the limited use of a software that is shared with a potential user as a "trial" version of the complete software.

Shrink-wrap contract	It is a common form of contracts online whereby websites/applications make users agree to the terms and conditions of the website/application by simply continuing the use of the product.
Smart contract	Contracts that are designed in a manner in which technology can be used to assist the parties as well as the authorities in their efficient execution.
Smart Courts	This terms refers to the optimum use and integration of technology in the day-to-day running and operations of a court in order minimise the time and effort taken to complete a task and maximise the output of the operations.
Software as a Service (SaaS)	It is the availability of a service which a software. The software in this case caters to the requirements of the users and is generally licensed to the user for their use.
Source attribution	In technology, this refers to the ability of AI to present the source it has used to present/give an answer to a query.

Spend Management Software	As the name suggests, this refers to a software that allows an organisation to manage their expenditures and see the different areas of their focus and operations.
Split Contract	This is a type of contract wherein there two or more different types of contract which can be separated if need be.
Structured Data	As the name suggests, this refers to data in a standardized format enabling efficient and easy access and understanding.
Subject Matter Expert	As the name suggests, a person who is experienced and knowledgeable in their field of focus, making them a subject matter expert.
Supervised Learning	It is a type of machine learning that uses labelled datasets for its algorithms.

Tt

Technology Assisted Review (TAR)

As the name suggests, this refers to utilizing the benefits of technology for review tasks. This is generally used in reference to document review.

Terms of Service (ToS)

The stipulations and conditions that are applicable to the service being provided.

Third Party Applications

These are applications or services that are part of the service provider's service but are not owned or controlled by the service provider.

Tokenization

It is a mechanism of digital security whereby sensitive elements of information are turned into non-sensitive elements by means of a token.

Treacherous computing

It is a program designed to make the system not follow the commands given by its user. This is generally used by software owners to restrict the use of the software by the users in certain manners.

Triage

It is the assessment and assignment of priority and importance of tasks/elements.

Trusted computing

This refers to all the elements in a computing system that make it a secure environment for operations including its hardware, software, operating system, security controls etc.

Uu

Uberisation of Legal Services	It is the easy availability of efficient and affordable legal services in the market through smart use of modern technology.
Uniform Domain Name Dispute-Resolution Policy (UDRP)	It is a dispute resolution process addressing disputes related to domain names established by Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

United States Patent and Trademark Office	The US government agency dealing with patents and trademarks.
Unsupervised learning	This is a type of machine learning that learns from unlabeled data.
User-centric	This is the approach of a product to ensure that the intended user finds the product useful and helpful to the highest possible degree.

Vv

Variational autoencoder (VAE)	It is a neural network architecture in the world of artificial intelligence that processed data and produces it in a newer representation.
Vendor Management	As the name suggests, it is the method of managing vendors of an organisation. This is made easier with technological intervention with features like automatic alerts, tracking etc.
Vendor Portals	It is a feature on vendor management softwares that allow access to vendors to see details related to their operations with the user of the vendor management software.
Versioning	It is the practices of maintaining different versions of a document/software with all related information about the document/software's version duly recorded.
Virtual Law Firms	It is an entirely online law firm with no specific office address with teams working out of their own preferred locations, connected and operating smoothly and efficiently through the help of technology.

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Virtual Reality	This refers to the stimulation of human senses – sight, hearing and touch – through the use of technological equipment that is interactive and responsive.

Ww

Wiki	It is an open share system of information whereby anybody can add or edit the information.
Workflow	It is the steps and stages that a task generally follows and completes in order to reach its culmination. With technology, workflows are more convenient to manage and track progress of.
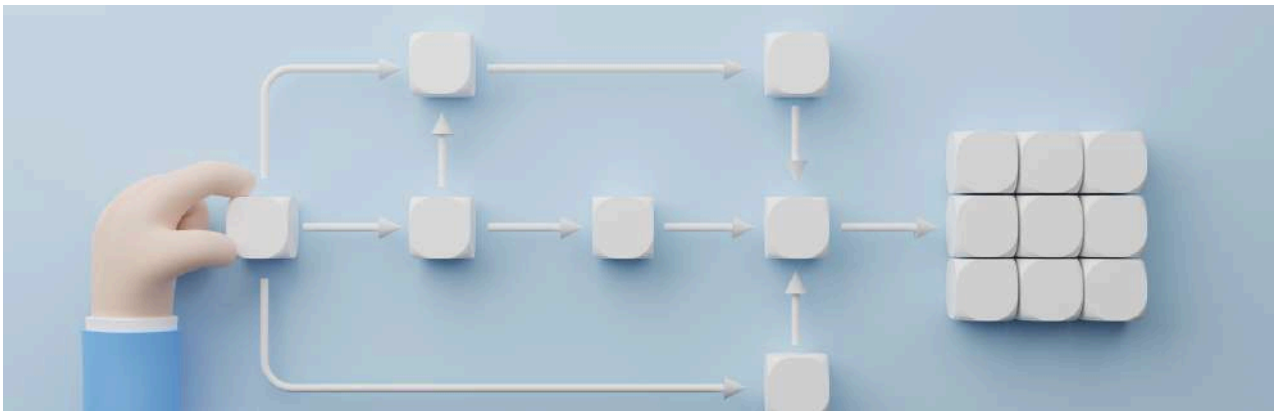
Zz

Zero-Day Vulnerability	It is a vulnerability that is essentially a security flaw in a system which allow for risk or attacks to occur easily. It is the requirement of efficient software management to identify and mitigate such vulnerabilities timely.

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