

# The 2021 Wolters Kluwer Future Ready Lawyer

Moving Beyond the Pandemic

SURVEY REPORT



## Amol V. Bargaje

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### **What changes made during the pandemic will stay?**

We are hoping to see a permanent increase in the percentage of early adopters of new tech—influencers—within organizations. There will be a return to some pre-pandemic rituals such as in-person meetings and the associated travel. Of course, the degree, speed, and permanency of those meetings, that travel and a broader “return to the office” will depend on how reliable the vaccines and the resulting immunity are. But even when we are “out of the woods” on COVID-19, we are expecting that organizations will do more than pay lip service to the idea of continuing to work from home to some extent. Over the past year, we have seen that remote work and virtual collaboration are possible.

### **To move from survive to thrive following the crisis – what are the three most important things law firms can do. What are the three most important things corporate legal departments can do.**

Law firms should keep the momentum going on adopting innovative processes and technologies; this is key to delivering and continually enhancing client services. Firms should partner with their clients’ legal departments to connect with and serve their internal stakeholders e.g., sales, HR, IT etc. Firms should also continue to be flexible about remote working to retain and attract talented, diverse lawyers and staff.

Legal departments should continue to formalize and standardize their processes to be responsive to their business’s changing needs. They should continue to stay abreast of the latest legal landscape by leveraging their outside counsel. Legal departments should incentivize their outside counsel to adapt efficient solutions, e.g., artificial intelligence, document automation, e-signature platforms etc.

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### **Where do you think AI will have the greatest value/ impact for lawyers going forward? What other “top” technologies do you see as critical to legal professionals’ current / future success?**

Artificial Intelligence, merged with data analytics, will help lawyers perform more expansive, and yet more detailed due diligence, and enhanced drafting capabilities. AI will enable data-driven insights that will help accurately “predict” issues early on, which will be the next frontier for legal services.

Although not a “top” technology, mobility and interoperability of the systems lawyers use, will be critical to the legal professionals’ success.

### **What did you see as the key attributes / characteristics of resilient organizations through the crisis so far?**

Two things that are necessary to handle *any* crisis: agility and adaptability. Agility requires a mastery of the underlying processes in place at an organization. Without a certain level of expertise in well-defined and practiced processes, it is difficult for an entire team to adjust quickly in a time of crisis. Adaptability is, in essence and as trite as this may sound, the ability to think outside the box to quickly find a solution to an unforeseen problem.