**Embracing AI in the Legal Sphere: A Necessity, Not a Choice**

[A person in a black robe

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JAN 5, 2024

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[[A close up of a keyboard

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If there was any lingering doubt about the pervasive role of AI and generative technologies in our professional lives, Microsoft's recent move to integrate an AI button into their keyboards should dispel it. This is not just a fleeting trend; it's a clear signal of a future where generative AI is seamlessly woven into nearly every product we use, especially in the practice of law.

As lawyers and judges, the temptation to view AI as a distant, abstract concept may be strong. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that AI is not just a passing fad. We must recognize that the genie is out of the bottle and that AI will reshape the landscape of numerous industries, including our own, over the next few years. Microsoft's addition of an AI button to its keyboard is a testament to the increasing integration of AI in everyday tools, heralding a future where AI's presence is ubiquitous.

For the legal profession, this evolution brings both challenges and opportunities. The shift towards AI-enhanced tools is not just about adopting new technologies; it's about fundamentally rethinking how we approach our work. AI has the potential to make the justice system more efficient, effective, and accessible, but it requires us to be proactive learners so we can understand its capabilities and limitations. We cannot bury our heads in the sand.

Furthermore, the ethical implications of AI in law are significant, which is another reason why we must engage with these technologies not just as users, but as informed critics. It is important that we understand how to harness AI in a way that upholds the principles of justice and fairness. This means grappling with questions of bias, transparency, confidentiality and accountability.

The integration of AI into legal practice is not a question of if, but when. The recent development by Microsoft should serve as a wake-up call for the legal community. It's time for us to move forward, embrace these changes, and actively participate in shaping how AI transforms the justice system. By doing so, we can ensure that these technologies are used in a manner that benefits lawyers, litigants, and the broader system of justice.