

Juro

The modern contract handbook:

Future-proof your contract management



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Contracts are changing.



Richard Mabey is the CEO and co-founder of Juro. Previously, he was a Corporate and M&A lawyer at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and worked with LegalZoom.

Contracts are pretty simple. Or, at least, they should be. Two or more parties get together to assign some rights and obligations. They agree, and then they have to abide by that agreement. If something goes wrong, everyone can look back at the contract to find out what they promised.

The process used to involve little more than people, pens, pencils and some paper. In the thousands of years that contracts have formed the basis of all commerce and business, some things have hardly changed at all, but some have changed radically.

The complexity of contracts has increased – digital licensing agreements across multiple streaming platforms, for example, or complex financial derivatives contracts, present a real challenge to drafters.


Similarly, the volume and frequency of contracts is unrecognizable. A high-growth technology business growing at multiples annually might go from managing ten contracts a month to several thousand.

Contract process, badly managed, can quickly become a significant roadblock – the statistics illustrated below, from the IACCM, tell their own story.

Like almost every other business process, making the move to digital technology, rather than a paper-and-pen approach, is transformative when it comes to efficiency, speed and cost.

Despite these advances, there's still much confusion about what contract management really means today, what it can do (and what it can't), and how each phase of the contract lifecycle has been affected by the move to a data-driven world.

That's why we wrote this guide: together with a range of expert authors, we have broken down the contract lifecycle into its constituent stages and taken a look under the hood to find out what the process actually means today – and how it can be improved. And of course, before you even think about process, make sure you're adhering to Ken Adams' principles and getting the fundamental building blocks right. It's a privilege to be able to share Ken's insights in this guide.

As always, I'm immensely grateful to all our contributors for their time and insights, and I hope you enjoy reading this guide as much as we enjoyed putting it together. 



92%
of contract work
goes on **process**,
not legal work

Tech can't solve bad drafting: six lessons from Ken Adams



Ken Adams is a writer and speaker on contract drafting. As the author of *A Manual of Style for Contract Drafting*, he's the leading authority on the building blocks of contract language.

“The ubiquity of copy and paste for generations has meant there’s a disconnect between what people think is in contracts, and what’s actually in them”

All the innovative new software in the world is useless to you if the fundamentals of your contract drafting aren't in place. These six lessons can set you on the right track.

1. The legal industry has a problem.

Contract language remains a huge problem – the overwhelming majority of contracts are built with blocks that don't make sense. The ubiquity of copy and paste for generations has meant there's a disconnect between what people think is in contracts, and what's actually in them. I see a lot of cluelessness out there as a byproduct of the copy/paste machine.

People rely on boilerplate, but there are a lot of misconceptions built into that. I like to think that my work has helped draw attention to an alternative, clearer, more modern kind of drafting, and the reaction has been enthusiastic enough to suggest that there is a demand for it.

We have a good idea of what clearer, more functional drafting looks like. But we need to make it accessible – it's not realistic to tell people that we've given them guidelines and they have to get on with building everything new themselves. We need to work on bridging the gap to give people greater access to better contract drafting. They will have a hard time achieving it without help.

2. The most common mistakes persist.

The traditional prose of contracts is dysfunctional. *A Manual of Style for Contract Drafting* contains 600 pages covering all sorts of issues, some of them big, some smaller. But the net cumulative effect of addressing all the sources of dysfunctional prose has a big impact. Common issues include:

- Working with defined terms
- Eliminating redundancy
- Using long strings of words, instead of what you need to accomplish your goals
- Inappropriate verb structures, exemplified by the overuse of the word 'shall'

There are many more, including archaic practices like putting words and phrases in all caps, and the ludicrous outdated vocabulary that stubbornly lives on. And ambiguity manifests in many different ways in a contract, leading to confusion, which leads to fights and litigation.

The starting point to begin to change this is realising that something doesn't make sense. What you do next depends on the context and what role you're playing. If it's your draft, you can fix everything. If it's the other side's draft, you focus on what might create confusion and what doesn't reflect the deal as you understand it.

“Ambiguity manifests in many different ways in a contract, leading to confusion, which leads to fights and litigation”

3. Contracts need brevity.

Whatever you need to say, say it as clearly and concisely as you can. You might think that some small glitch can't cause a problem, that it would be pedantic to insist on fixing it, but I regularly encounter instances where, because of the circumstances, small glitches can end up throwing a spanner in the works.

4. We must break the copy/paste machine.

Everyone who starts in the legal profession starts with a blank slate. They're then indoctrinated: people will do what they have to do to please their bosses. Traditionally this has meant that you draft contracts by copy-and-pasting, and what is dysfunctional soon looks normal to you. You've been co-opted into a dysfunctional system.

That process is still the norm, but I like to think there's a growing constituency that is aware of better alternatives. Spreading the word is a big part of what I do. Whether that's individual by individual, or law firm by law firm, change comes one decision at a time. Becoming conscious of the current dysfunction is a good first step – that allows you to take the next step, the more challenging step, of breaking from the herd and doing something about the dysfunction.

5. We must fix the language to fix the process.

I got into the language side of things because I thought contract drafting should be a commodity process, but that can't happen without clear and consistent prose we can rely on. Otherwise, we'd just be automating dysfunction.

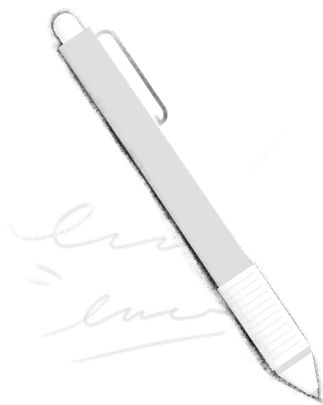
We need automation as an alternative to copy-and-pasting. It's not realistic to expect everyone to dutifully rehabilitate contract language on their own. Automation offers us a way to scale up optimal language and optimal substance. But automation will require that we put contract drafting in the hands of contract-drafting specialists, leaving everyone else to focus on doing the deal. Language and process are linked together – rehabilitating the process will help fix contract content.

6. New to drafting? Live by these two principles:

1. **Don't trust anything.** Don't assume that just because language came from some prestigious law firm that it will make sense, because everyone is riding the copy-paste train. I've routinely dismantled contract language from impeccable sources. That's the bad news.
2. **Anyone can take command of contract language.** That's the good news. You don't have to be a lawyer to do this – in fact, there's very little that's purely legal about contracts. With a bit of study and some semantic acuity, anyone who does deals can be an informed consumer of contract language. I'd like to see responsibility for contract language being a function of your competence instead of whether you're a lawyer.

My book isn't for the faint-hearted, but if you deal with contracts it's a good entryway into learning contract language. You can have greater control of language than people with great credentials who are just riding the copy-and-paste train. The first step to gaining control is to understand the building blocks of contract language. After that, you have a whole other challenge—understanding what to say in your contracts, as opposed to how to say it clearly and effectively. But take one step at a time!

Learn more at adamsdrafting.com. The 4th edition of *A Manual of Style for Contract Drafting* is available [here](#). 



In a nutshell: what is contract management software?



JARGON BUSTER

Contract lifecycle: The entire period for which a contract is relevant. For example, if a contract covers a two-year subscription, then when this date arrives and the contract is no longer in force, it has reached the end of its lifecycle. You can use alerts and reminders to manage renewals and avoid missing key dates.

eSignature: the ability to sign a contract digitally, on a computer, tablet or smartphone.

Integration: the ability of contract software to work in conjunction with other software. For example, a salesperson might use an integration to create a contract directly in Salesforce, which integrates with the contract management platform.

Negotiation: different parties to the contract suggesting and accepting changes to the document in real time. Traditionally this would be done offline, which risks data loss.

Redlines: the process through which changes are made to a legal document, in a way that's visible to subsequent users.

Template: users of contract management software often create templates for the most common documents they need to create/automate.

Versioning: the ability to look at previous versions of a contract before it was agreed.

Contract management software is used to manage the creation, negotiation, amendment, signature and data analysis of legal contracts. It allows companies and people to create, collaborate on and manage contracts faster and more efficiently, while reducing risk.

Who uses it?

Legal teams

Contracts and lawyers are the best of friends. Law firms and in-house legal teams use contract management software to generate and manage documents on a daily basis.

HR teams

The human resources departments of large companies produce a high volume of documents related to the hiring of employees and contractors, often relying on lawyer-approved templates. HR teams typically want their solution to integrate with the systems they use every day, like Greenhouse and Workday.

Sales teams

Salespeople hate anything that gets in the way of closing deals, so they'll often use a contract management solution to generate contracts quickly, rather than having to ask legal to create contracts for them. Sales users prefer solutions that integrate with the software they work in every day, like Salesforce.

Procurement teams

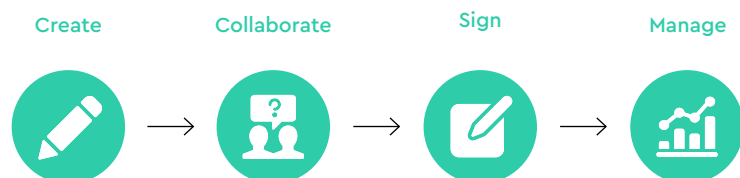
Company procurement functions typically manage large volumes of vendor contracts. This involves tasks like the processing of supplier terms, seeking approval from other business teams, and – once documents are signed – keeping tracking of their renewal dates.

Finance teams

Finance teams typically need visibility into contracts to reconcile them with billing, as well as to generate accurate revenue expectations for their business. Contract management software can facilitate this kind of transparency.

What does it do?

Modern contract management software manages each stage of the contract lifecycle.



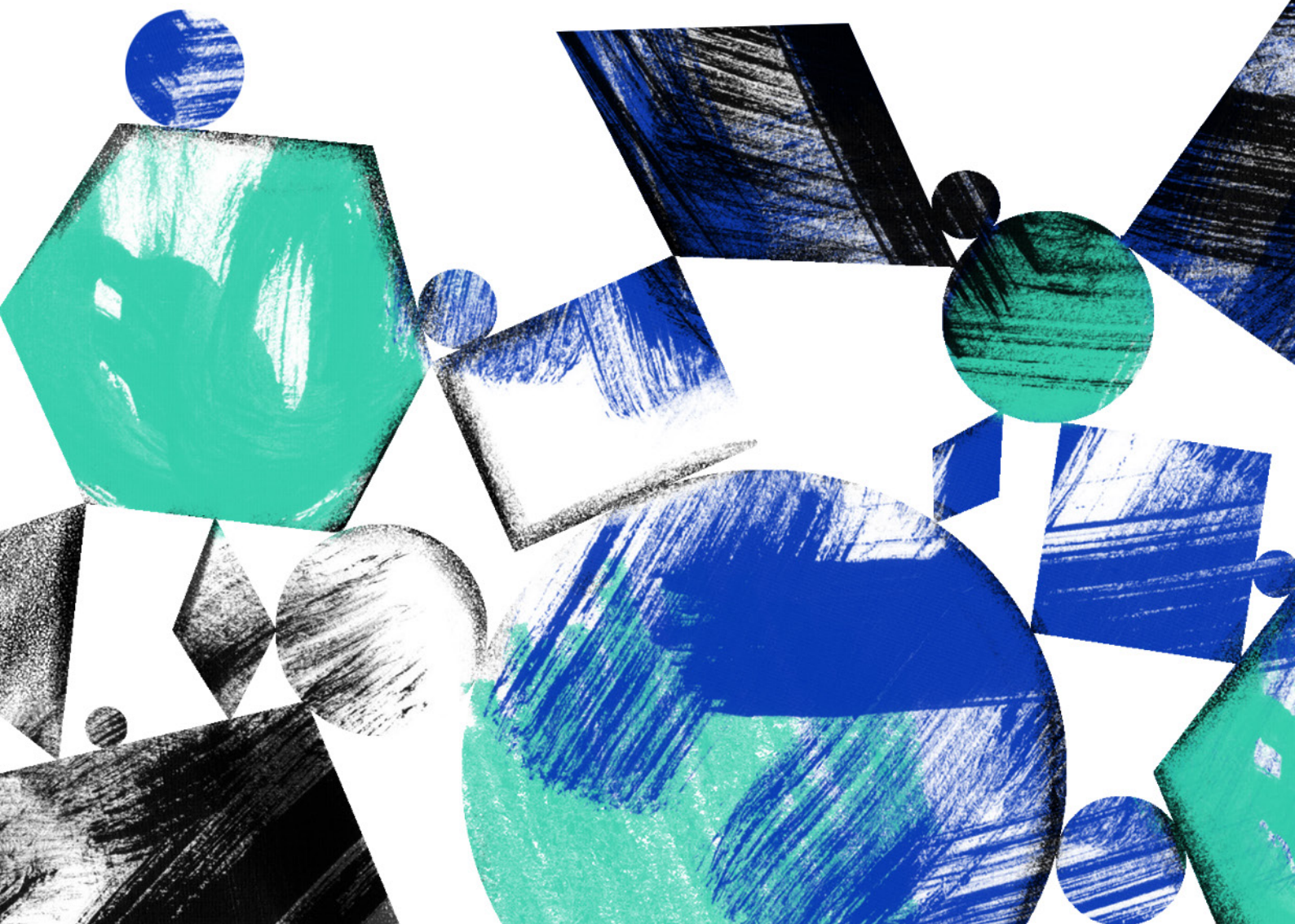
Read on to explore each stage of the lifecycle in-depth. [📖](#)

Create

Long gone are the days when your only option to create a contract was to ask a lawyer to do it for you. In today's fast-paced business environment, both emerging high-growth businesses and large enterprises might find themselves generating thousands of new contracts a month.

Visual and informational design have increasingly made contracts a proving ground for innovative ideas, as part of an industry-wide recognition that legal design can help to make legal processes and documents more human for everyone. Ask yourself: when you create contracts, are you doing so with a focus on the actual end-user of the contract? Or are you perpetuating a world where contracts are exclusively by and for lawyers?

In this section: we catch up with five of legal design's most inspiring thinkers to hear their takes on how to create contracts that actually work for real people. Then we specifically focus on how to structure your documents to make it more likely that you'll actually secure a signature.



Legal design: the experts speak

The popularity of legal design has increased significantly in recent years, with stakeholders across a range of industries waking up to the importance of putting end-users first. We caught up with some of legal design's leading lights to find out more.



Margaret Hagan is the Director of the Legal Design Lab at Stanford University and a lecturer at Stanford Institute of Design.



Helena Haapio is a contract coach with Lexpert Ltd and a member of the advisory council of the IACCM.

"Contracts are first and foremost for clients. Users who aren't lawyers should be the main concern when drafting a contract. From their perspective, what's a contract for? It's for securing the business objectives and performance that the parties expect. The templates, style guides and preferences that transactional lawyers use to make their job easier are really useful for those lawyers; but who cares about the lawyers?"

Clients are the reason contracts exist, not lawyers. But behind those clients, there are stakeholders from finance, HR, project management and operations management. There are technical, financial and implementation concerns to consider, as well as legal. The legal team is a key piece of the transactional puzzle but it's just one piece – alongside the boilerplate documents, language and templates, there's deal-specific information and considerations that come from the business, with managers and engineers assigning and designing roles.

Business users want usable contracts that achieve the maximum operational efficiency, with reasonable risk allocation, at an acceptable cost. They need to know what the contract requires them to do, where, and when. Your lawyers' eyes might see a contract as legally perfect, built on such nuanced and sophisticated language as to be a work of art; but if the business users are bamboozled by dense jargon and complexity, the contract is failing in its primary duty."



Stefania Passera is an information designer specializing in contract design and legal design, helping private and public organizations make their contracts and documents user-friendly, clear, and effective.

"Most legal documents out there don't engage users, and don't communicate why they should care about the information they contain, nor how they can use that information to their advantage. In B2B contracts there's been a growing demand for this kind of redesign, as it is in the interest of the parties to avoid disputes and collaborate more easily.

Lawyers feel their duty is to limit the risk for the customers, and there's an implicit assumption that simply adding more words to these documents will lead to the desired behaviour. But just having words dumped there doesn't ensure compliant behaviour.

We need to reach a point where the burden isn't all on the readers, who are just made to read lengthy documents because they have to. As citizens, consumers and professionals, people simply don't have the time to engage.

Digital media allows us to use layered information, visual interfaces, and other formats that make a lot of sense when you're communicating digitally. We need to adapt to the medium and to users' expectations, and not be anachronistic – by failing to do so, we don't take advantage of the expressive opportunities offered by new media."



Marie Potel-Saville is the founder and CEO of Amurabi, an innovation by

design agency, that makes law accessible, actionable and engaging. Marie believes in human-centric innovation, and aims at systemic change. She also leverages legal design to enhance access to justice through pro bono projects.

"Complex contracts that are hard to negotiate are an area that is ripe for legal design. The difficulty with such documents is the technical detail buried in them, which often induces lengthy negotiations. Worse, the terms often go unimplemented once the contract is signed because the business people simply do not understand it.

Instead, take a design approach to help you structure the contract according to the needs of the user, rather than just following the order of the legislation. Make sure you ask and answer the question 'how do we want this contract to "live" – i.e. be implemented', rather than only focusing on termination or litigation."



Lieke Beelen is the founder of Visual Contracts, a platform for lawyers and

designers to learn and apply legal design thinking with the aim of improving access to justice in a more human-friendly way.

"Businesses are more and more aware of how beneficial it is if your employees are happy – productivity and success usually follow in the end. If you create contracts that are easier to understand and bring the company values in dealing with employees through in those contracts, this can be a catalyst to driving business growth, economic growth, and employee happiness.

To make your contracts accessible, avoid dense text, bad structure and layout and small fonts. Make sure there's differentiation between titles and paragraph, and enough white space. Summarize the complex parts in infographics, or even using navigation; and as far as the language itself goes, avoid using too much legalese.

The use of visual contracts is related to proactive and preventive lawyering, which is centred around collaboration; that's different from the typical approach of drafting defensively, caveating hugely and protecting risk. It's a shift in mindset that is hard to achieve, but really valuable commercially, because it builds open communication, trust and collaboration, which is essential to innovation and success."

Find out more about legal design at blog.juro.com. 



Create contracts in seconds

What is the legal name of the other party?

JURO LIMITED
00000001

JURO ONLINE LIMITED
00000002

JURO PROPERTY LTD
00000003

JURO TRAVEL LTD
00000004

THE JUROR GROUP LIMITED
00000005

JURO

Continue

Create with Juro

Juro lets you use a Q&A flow to create contracts. Users answer a series of questions relating to the particular template, which then populate the contract with relevant information, like names of parties, dates, signatories, and so on.

This enables business teams to self-serve, as the legal team can define the Q&A's parameters at a template level. This means that if a user wants to create (for example) a standard NDA or sales contract, they can use the Q&A to self-serve the document in seconds, safe in the knowledge that the contract's framework is watertight as per the legal team's stipulations.

Designing for yes: how to create contracts people want to sign



Verity White is a Legal Counsel and automation coach at Telstra, Australia's

largest telecoms and tech company, where her work simplifying contracts has saved hundreds of hours of lawyer time. One recent contract design project was a finalist in the Legal category of the 2019 [Clear Communication Awards](#). Follow Verity at [Checklist Legal](#).

If contracts are the lifeblood of commerce, then it's important to keep things flowing quickly – so what can you do to create contracts that people will be happy to sign?

There are two main factors in contracts that create friction and get in the way of a faster signature. These are:

1. People having to re-read things that aren't clear; and
2. People struggling to find what they need.

Working together, these are a terrible combination – if you can't get through a document and understand it the first time you read it, or the second time, it creates bad feeling and slows down the process. That's annoying with any document, but with a contract it's especially painful because both parties are absolutely committed to getting the right result. This friction is a problem for lawyer and non-lawyer alike – if a lawyer struggles to find or explain the key terms to a client, it creates bad feeling and likely slows down the process. Fortunately, there are proven steps you can take to remove that friction and make a signature more likely.

Processing fluency

Assuming that what the contract is selling is good, and there's someone who wants to buy, the first thing to focus on is simply to make things seem easy. 'Processing fluency' is a concept in cognitive neuroscience and psychology whereby if something seems easy to process, people are more likely to think it's true. In contracts this is an important principle to follow if you're hoping for a signature – if you have a contract that's set out to be easy to understand, then people will feel higher levels of trust, and be more willing to engage both with the document and the party that gave it to them.

There are lots of elements that go into improving processing fluency. Lots of organisations are focusing on a better user experience with legal documents by creating guides to their contracts, which is a great step forward; but wouldn't it be great if the contract itself performed that function? Try to structure the contract so it makes sense and take advantage of that 'processing fluency' factor to make it easier for users to navigate through and ultimately agree to the contract's terms.

“If there are terms that you're happy to concede on most of the time, why not soften those terms as a matter of course to increase the speed of signing?”

Create a strategy for points you'll concede

If your aim is to have the shortest possible cycle from draft through to signature, then you need to regularly examine the history of negotiation for that template or contract type. If there are terms that you're happy to concede on most of the time, then why not soften those terms as a matter of course to increase the speed of signing?

One problem that holds back legal teams in this area is that often there exists no overarching strategy around these points, which is an obvious project for a business to pursue to remove friction. Align with colleagues on the concession levers that strategically you're comfortable pulling, and you'll have an easier time getting contracts from draft through to signature quickly.

“Don’t leave it up to counterparties to hunt through the document for information that you know is important to them”

Use a ‘key details’ table

As a junior lawyer working on documents, I often noticed that much of the really important information that changes between contracts would be buried somewhere in the text. I’d have to take a deep dive into the contract to find it and ultimately change it, hunting through the whole document to find the 20% of elements that are used 80% of the time.

If, instead, you can put that important content in a key details table and easily show it to your client or customer up front, it makes things much easier to implement down the track. The key details table is great from a speed perspective, as it helps you to make faster decisions. Another key benefit is that as we move to increase our use of automation and machine learning, documents with these clear and defined data structures are faster for computers to learn from. The easier it is to teach the algorithms, the faster we can get the benefits of having done so.

The golden rule: the ‘reverse-sandwich’

You can see this in action frequently in agreements that sell products. In such an agreement you might have an exclusivity arrangement – one of the most crucial clauses in the contract – but so often it’s buried in the middle of the agreement. That might be the critical piece of information as to whether a party signs quickly or doesn’t, but to get to it you have to wade through paragraphs of filler and low-value content.

Instead, pull it to the front of the document, right at the top, and make it quite clear that it’s a yes/no element. Don’t leave it up to counterparties to hunt through the document for information that you know is important to them. Don’t make it hard for a paralegal, or a machine learning algorithm, to find it.

This is where the ‘reverse sandwich’ concept comes in. A sandwich has all its good stuff in the middle – the tasty bits that everyone wants, the things that make it different from other sandwiches – but it’s all hidden by bread. Often, contracts are the same. Instead, put the important stuff at the beginning or at the end and put the filler in the middle – the ‘reverse sandwich.’ That’s my golden rule – if something’s really important, put it at the beginning, or in a schedule at the end. Don’t bury the best bits between bread.

Remember your audience

Lawyers can sometimes forget that they’re often clients too. We encounter contracts as consumers, and they can be incomprehensible: for example, house sale contracts are extremely complex and the opposite of user-friendly. Those documents are intimidating, with so much money on the line, and they’re hard to understand. Lawyers must keep in mind that to many people, legal documents are scary, and they don’t need to be. If you’ve passed the bar then you’re prepared, and paid, to deal with that – but it’s a mistake to expect everyone else to be able to read contracts in the same way. Normal people don’t look at a long, complicated contract and treat it like a bedtime story. Intimidating contracts will just take longer to get to yes.

If we think of contracts instead as task-based, there to do a job – whether that’s managing relationships, facilitating a sale, and so on – that makes us think about contracts in a different way. Write for your audience: if it’s a legal audience that’s fine but if they’re not, you’ll need to take a different approach. Focus on the purpose of the contract, whether that’s a transaction, protecting IP, or whatever it might be, and work from there to make it as easy as possible for both parties to secure the outcome they need.

Don't automate an inefficient process

If you don't do the hard work in making your contracts simple and frictionless, then when you automate them you'll simply automate and scale an inefficient process, making a small problem much bigger. Automation undoubtedly offers huge benefits in time-saving, user experience and collaboration, but it's a mistake to jump in before your contracts are the best they can be.

Before you start automating, do some benchmarking. Compare your agreements to others and get the basics right around plain language and readability. These factors will speed up your contract lifecycle and negotiation time at the base level, so when you automate, you can be sure that the efficiencies you found scale too. Automation isn't just a tool to cut costs and put pressure on headcounts: instead we should focus on how it can enrich the contracting process and improve customer experience, which will ultimately lead to parties getting to signature faster.

Ask more of your counsel

The final lever you can pull in order to make faster signatures more likely is to challenge your colleagues and providers to do the same. Have your internal collaborators refreshed their agreements lately? Could they put their most recent learnings about deviations from standard terms into practice? Similarly, if an outside firm handles your most important documents, when was the last time they created more value for you? Redesigning contracts is an intellectual challenge that good lawyers should be excited to engage with – grappling with this issue can have a positive commercial impact for everything, if you focus on designing to get to yes. 📄





Collaborate

There are any number of reasons why a contract might need several people to work on it. It might be a complicated set of terms and conditions that needs an experienced lawyer to craft the wording of a high-value clause. Or it might be a contract that affects several parts of a business: a technology supplier agreement, for example, could touch IT, legal, procurement and compliance. Those teams and individuals might be in different offices, or different countries, making it difficult to get them all in the same room.

The next level of collaboration is external. Lawyers used to mark up pieces of paper with red pencils to negotiate contracts; nowadays 'redlining' can happen in real time on collaborative documents within your contract management platform. Doing this in-browser is much more efficient and faster than repeatedly editing, printing, scanning and couriering documents around town ad nauseam. Modern businesses require a genuine contract collaboration platform that everyone can use.

In this section, we focus on two core aspects of contract collaboration: preserving data throughout the contract negotiation process, and using approval workflows to get documents to signature faster.

How to capture and use contract collaboration data



Pavel Kovalevich
is the CPO and
co-founder of
Juro. His previous
experiences include software
engineering, technology strategy
and entrepreneurship.

“The most obvious way to capture and retain collaboration data is to stop creating unstructured data, and instead use a machine-readable editor to create your contracts”

Every stage of the contract lifecycle creates data. And at every stage, traditional contract processes lose, mislabel and discard that data. Fixing this could transform legal process forever.

The default currency for contracts, with almost 100% market penetration, is a product that was never designed for legal documentation: Microsoft Word. People create drafts in Word, often by copying and pasting parts from old documents, and then make tracked changes, bouncing around between different versions via email. At some point, everyone's happy and the document becomes a PDF.

This PDF jumps into various email chains until it's printed, signed and scanned, or perhaps signed electronically with a tool like DocuSign. It's then saved on a shared or personal drive, where it sits pretty much forever.

There are lots of problems with this process: it's hard to collaborate, it's inefficient, it takes a long time and version control is difficult. But a key problem, that only increases as time goes on, is data loss.

In the process described above, almost none of the data on contract collaboration is retained:

- If suggestions are made over email about edits, that data doesn't make it to Word
- If edits are tracked as changes in Word, that data doesn't make it to PDF
- Time-to-signing data and new version data doesn't make it to the shared drive

Generating all this collaboration data, only to discard it throughout the process, is a huge waste of lawyer time and expertise. The main reason why so much data is lost throughout this traditional workflow is that the data generated in static Word and PDF files is unstructured. Key fields like dates and signatories aren't tagged with metadata, so when the document passes to a new system, that system can't differentiate between important and less important information.

This makes it almost impossible to have a genuine audit trail of a legal document's journey from inception to agreement. Who made which edits, when, why, and how – all of this is either never captured or lost along the way. Without data to identify problem clauses and negotiation bottlenecks, they are almost certain to reappear next time.

Machine-readable contracts

There exist excellent AI contract review products out there that can structure your unstructured data. They can 'read' old contracts and offer some level of automated tagging, bringing structure to the collaboration data that's been mismanaged. However, data that was lost is not recoverable; and more than this, if your problem is that collaboration data is unstructured, then creating more unstructured data and buying a solution to structure it for you is an odd way to solve it.

The most obvious way to capture and retain collaboration data at all stages of the lifecycle is to stop creating unstructured data, and instead use a machine-readable editor to create your contracts. When the document receives approvals, or is amended internally, or viewed and negotiated externally, the metadata that captures all these changes, stakeholders and events is created and stored.

If the platform in question also offers signing and contract management, then there's no need to move the contract to Word, PDF or email. However, if the contract was

“Without structured data, your ability to search contracts will begin and end with the file name and the modified/created dates”

created from structured data, then users have that option, because the document is rich enough in insight to carry useful data from system to system.

The impact for your bottom line

There are two immediate advantages to your business of this approach:


1. Analytics


With negotiation data preserved and captured, you can get real-time insights on your contract workflow's efficiency. Which templates typically lead to the longest contract lifecycle? Which clauses usually block signing? Which business colleagues make the most edits? How do approval rates change over time? Analytics will enable you to answer these questions, not only to improve your processes, but to be accountable to your colleagues in other teams.

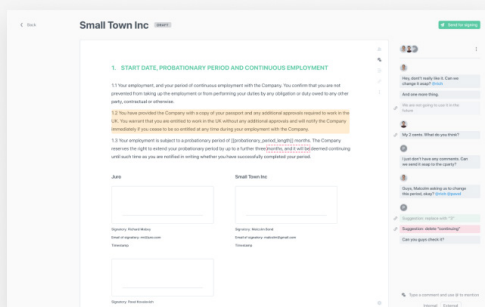
2. Search

Search might seem like an unsexy feature, but a powerful search mechanism can have a huge impact when it comes to response times and efficiency. If your contract data is properly structured, users can search for documents via team members, dates, company names, clause titles – even using free text queries. Without structured data, your ability to search contracts will begin and end with the file name and the modified/created dates.

These factors can both have an impact on your bottom line: more efficient collaboration is likely to lead to faster results, better alignment from stakeholders, and transparency across the business into legal's workload. It also creates a feedback loop that will make your team, and your systems (if they incorporate machine learning), smarter. The more contracts data you can collect, analyse and action, the better your ability will be to make decisions about deviations from standard terms, negotiation positions, and so on.

The business world as a whole is aware of the benefits of retaining structured data, and a shift is underway towards dynamic documentation, created in-browser, often collaboratively. This is what Google Docs has looked to solve in relation to Microsoft Word, and next-generation providers like Notion and Coda are taking other legacy document formats like Excel and making them collaborative and data-rich too. Legal is a long way behind the curve, and running out of excuses as to why that's the case. By embracing contracts data now, you could be future-proofing your legal team for decades to come. 

 **Fast, simple negotiation and collaboration**



Collaborate with Juro

Juro's machine-readable editor was custom-built from the ground up for contracts. Its canonical document model represents any codified business relationship (a contract) in three layers:

1. The visual representation layer
2. The data layer
3. The logic layer

Using Juro's editor, built for JavaScript Object Notation (JSON), you can create contracts as structured data that's never lost or discarded during the contract lifecycle. Get in touch if you'd like to try it for yourself.

Approvals: how legal can reduce friction (but keep control)



Alex McPhie is
Juro's director of
customer success.
He works with
Juro's customers to help them
get maximum value from their
contract collaboration platform.

The content and management of contracts in a business almost always sits with legal – but that doesn't mean lawyers need to draft and review every document and template.

It's an unwritten rule in business: don't enter into agreements which don't have legal approval. That's a position none of us can afford to be in, and the risk of either entering into an agreement full of legal risk, or missing a commercial opportunity because legal dragged its feet, is huge.

Despite this, many businesses struggle with both the initial roll-out and then the enforcement of an appropriate approval process. This is hardly surprising, given the wide range of stakeholders involved and often required to approve any given agreement. Through working with our customers on their contract workflows, we've identified some of the key challenges around legal approvals. Here's what we've learned about overcoming those challenges, and making approvals work for your business.

Implementation: building your approval workflow

1. Take the time to map out the full contract process

Getting a handle on the true picture of your document's likely journey might be hard, but it's essential. From the point of requirement to a fully signed document, map out the route your document needs to take, detailing where legal approval is required. This can be a lengthy process – set time aside for the business and legal teams to nail it down together. Collaboration is key – ensure you use and work through current examples of legal approval workflows to foster a team-wide agreement and get everyone on the same page.

2. Be mindful of other approvers in the business

Colleagues in commercial, finance and data security teams might also be key parts of the approval workflow. Make sure you include their approvals in your planning. In our experience, approvals tend to start with commercial teams, then finance and data security, before legal steps in at the end. This ensures that there are no further changes to the document from external parties, and it ensures that lawyers retain ultimate ownership of the contract.

3. Communicate and get help

Other teams in the business that deal with processes, like procurement or operations, might have insight to add – make sure you communicate with them and draw on their expertise. They may have learned something on a previous deal that becomes relevant to your current situation.

“Colleagues in commercial, finance and data security teams might be key parts of your approval workflow – make sure you include their approvals in your planning”

How complex is too complex?

The approval process doesn't need to be complicated to be robust. It can be tempting to try to implement a legal approval process that gets you from 0–100 in one attempt, but this is often a mistake. Complexity can lead to paralysis while teams consider multiple designs, without ever actually implementing anything.

“Contracts are ultimately a legal process, and the legal system of record should be the best source of truth for them”

Instead, start with a simple approval flow, gather feedback on its advantages and disadvantages, and iterate with additional approvals if you feel they're needed. If your new process starts out more complex than the old one, it has no chance of being adopted quickly.

Legal vs commercial approval

It's likely that commercial teams will have their approval processes within other business systems of record. Sales teams might manage approvals with Salesforce, and HR with Workday, Greenhouse or Prescreen. This can cause uncertainty where legal approval is concerned – should approvals live in HR systems, or contract management systems, or something different entirely? How do we know which takes precedence?

In our customers' experience, it's best for legal approvals to sit within contract management systems. Contracts are ultimately a legal process, and the legal system of record should be the best source of truth for them. This allows for better organisation of files across different teams, without legal losing sight of the end-to-end process. If your contract management system integrates with your other systems of record, then take advantage of data sync capabilities to make sure you have a true picture, wherever you look.

How to be a workload weightlifter

Lawyers are not islands. Teamwork applies to legal processes too. We often see customers implement approval processes across the entire team, to avoid one member of the team drowning under approval work, and help with workload transparency. Many of the legal teams we work with leverage shared inboxes – or even #contracts Slack channels – to deal with requests.

This technique works well at Juro too, with inputs from whoever is given the responsibility or has time, as appropriate, to manage incoming requests. Teamwork is the best way to ensure everyone has an equal responsibility to manage the legal approval workload.

Finding the right balance

Creating a balanced and optimized workflow that ensures approval is granted by the correct person, without compromising on speed and efficiency, is tough – it's the efficiency sweet spot that every team is looking for. But it's not impossible – we've seen this work best in situations where legal and business teams come together, with legal empowering the business to make the right decisions, but keeping control beyond a certain level of risk.

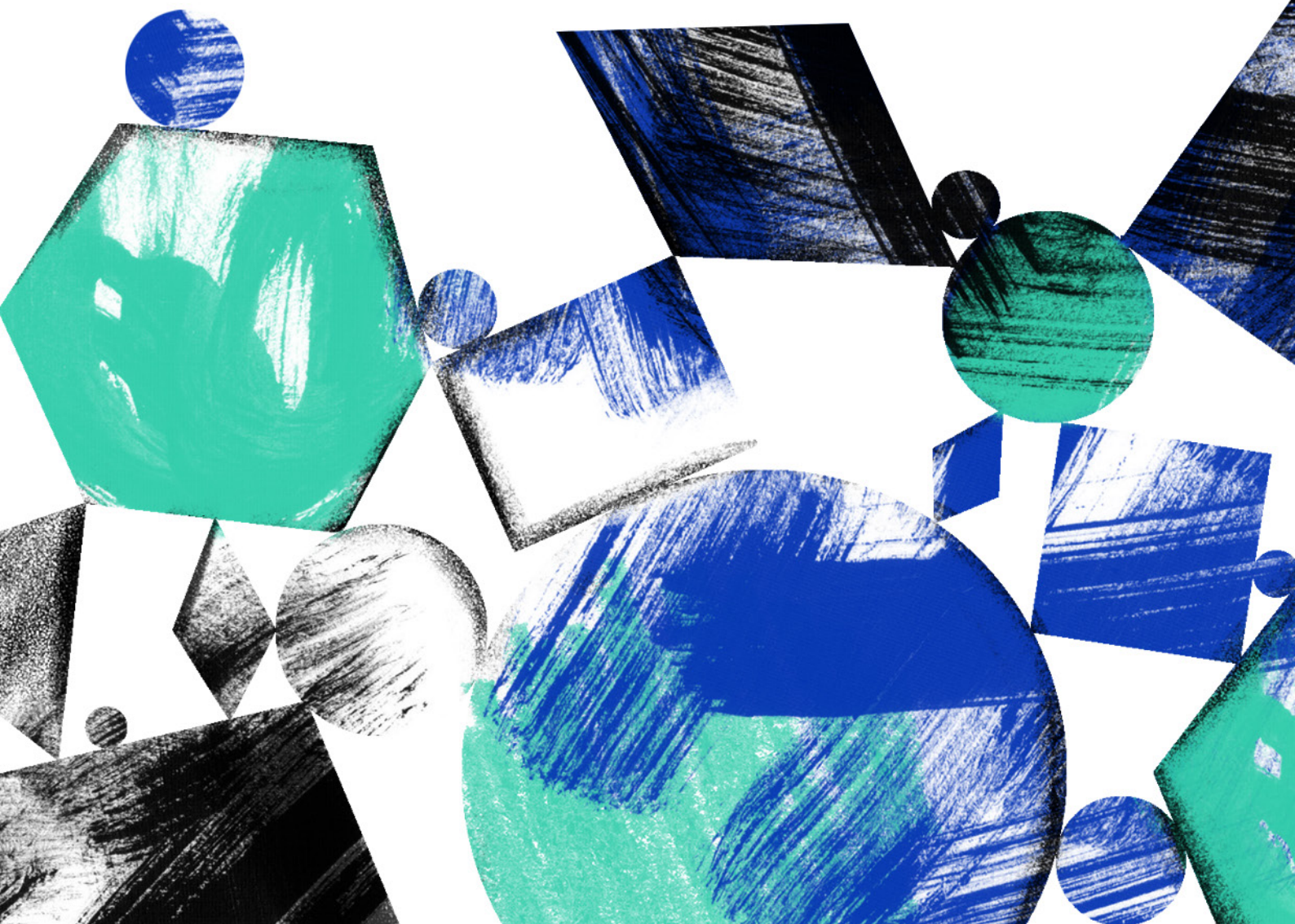
For example, some Juro users set their approvals at a template basis, but with supplementary approvals delegated to contract authors and tracked by an audit trail. This gives freedom to users, but keeps legal in the loop, with a detailed audit trail if any questions arise.

The risk if you don't create a frictionless process is that you're stuck with a bureaucratic and restrictive process, causing internal relationships to deteriorate, which can impact the business overall. If approvals become too restrictive, then commercial colleagues will find a way to circumvent them. But if you find the right balance of control and enablement, then legal can stop being a blocker, and truly become a partner for growth. 📖

Sign

Putting pen to paper and signing on the dotted line is what it's all about. Thankfully, the pen and the paper are no longer necessary. eSignature lets us take the most pivotal moment of agreeing terms and digitize it, and dozens of countries around the world have embraced it. But which ones, and what are the requirements? Does it work on mobile? And how does a device-agnostic contract workflow *really* work in practice?

In this section we dig into the specifics of eSigning, and we take a look at a real-life mobile-enabled contract workflow, by exploring a case study with City Relay, who managed to accelerate their contracts process by 87%. Read on to find out how.



Is eSignature globally recognized?



Josephine Hanschke
is customer success
associate at Juro.
Prior to joining Juro
she was a lawyer at Noerr and
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer.

eSignature has widespread adoption in fast-growing businesses, enabling legal and commercial teams to agree terms without pen and paper. But what's the current state of play regarding recognition of eSigning around the world?

According to P&S Market Research, the e-signature global market will exceed \$9bn by 2023. Despite this growth, there's still a reluctance in some markets to fully adopt electronic signing.

Digital-first

The advantages of eSigning are obvious and go far beyond the environmental benefits that come with cutting back on paper usage. eSignatures are transmitted instantly, rather than needing to be printed then scanned and couriered or posted.

They can be gathered on a variety of different devices – computers, tablets and mobile phones, for example. They exist in a digital format that can be encrypted and stored securely in the cloud or on-premise, rather than in hard copy, vulnerable to loss, damage or destruction. According to Forbes, "businesses achieve 70 – 80% efficiency improvements after removing manual processes to adopt digital technologies like electronic signature solutions."¹

For these reasons, eSigning has proliferated across much of the world, and many regulatory authorities have given it their blessing. At the highest level, eSignature provides the same legal standing as a handwritten signature as long as it adheres to the requirements of the specific regulation it was created under. These regulations vary across the world, from eIDAS (electronic identification, authentication and trust services) for the EU to the eSIGN Act & UETA framework in the US, amongst many others.

It's important to note that despite eSignature's growing popularity, it's yet to become standard in every country. Several countries across the Middle East and Asia don't currently support eSignature, either due to a reluctance to adopt, or because they follow a different legal structure that cannot account for the validity of e-signatures.

“eSigning has proliferated across much of the world, and many regulatory authorities have given it their blessing”

eSignature: advanced or qualified?

Various different levels of eSignature exist, and different jurisdictions pitch their regulatory requirements at different levels.

Advanced eSignature (AES)

At this level of eSignature:

- The signatory can be uniquely identified
- The signatory must have sole control of the key that was used to create an electronic signature
- The signature itself should be able to identify potentially-tampered data
- If the data has been tampered with, the signature must invalidate itself

¹ https://www.forbes.com/forbesinsights/adobe_e-signatures/index.html

Qualified Electronic Signature (QES)

The QES has higher requirements introduced by the EU and Switzerland. It's difficult to challenge the authorship of a statement signed with QES. Under this standard:

- The signature must be created using a QSCD (Qualified Signature Creation Device)
- Signing issues a qualified certificate, to validate the agreement

eSigning in the EU

eIDAS (electronic identification, authentication and trust services) is the regulation that sets out the standards for eSigning across the EU. It entered into force in September 2014. According to eIDAS:

- an advanced electronic signature (AES) shall "not be denied legal effect and admissibility as evidence in legal proceedings"
- The QES standard is defined as an even higher standard for eSignatures. Article 25 (2) states that a QES carries the same legal value as a handwritten signature.

Electronic signatures can be considered to be in wide use and generally adopted in Europe. Some jurisdictions still have irregular requirements, but these tend to be the exception rather than the rule.

eSigning in the US

The two most relevant pieces of legislation regarding eSignature in the US are the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce (ESIGN) Act and the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA).

ESIGN Act

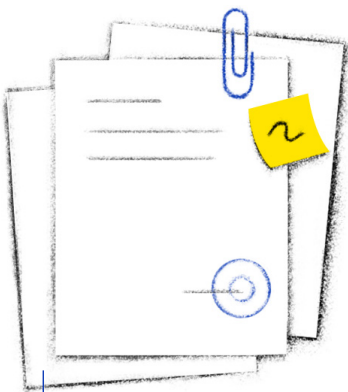
The ESIGN Act sets out that electronic signatures and records should be accorded the same legal status as ink signature and paper records. The ESIGN Act applies to federal law and pre-empts inconsistent state law, unless the state in question adopted UETA without amendment.

UETA

UETA harmonizes state law with respect to the validity of eSignatures. It has been adopted by 47 states, with the exceptions being New York, Washington State and Illinois, who have adopted their own e-signing statutes to recognize eSignatures.

Electronic signatures are widely adopted and valid in the US, as long as certain core concepts are present, including intent to sign, consent to do business electronically, association of signature with the record, and record retention.

The rest of the world has a multitude of laws governing eSignature, but the direction of travel indicates widespread adoption both now and in the future. For more information on eSignatures and their validity and enforceability around the world, visit the IACCM's website at www.iaccm.com. 



Businesses can achieve up to **80% efficiency improvements** after adopting electronic signature solutions

Source: Forbes

Mobile-first contracting: a case study

“It’s a massive advantage to us that people can read and sign on their phones – no printing and scanning required”

87%

faster contract creation

72

templates across 2 teams

465

contracts created in a year



Onboarding time reduced from

15 minutes to 2

Since 2018, Juro has worked with City Relay to create a mobile-friendly contract process to enable their rapid growth. This case study explores how we achieved a seamless workflow between mobile and desktop platforms.

City Relay is a property management company that uses platforms such as Airbnb and Booking.com to help people short-let their properties. They free homeowners from the lengthy process of short-letting their homes by providing services for property management. City Relay operates across three different locations in London with over 50 employees.

The challenge: manage contracts without wasting time

City Relay handles a variety of contracts, from short-let contracts and tenancy agreements to HR documents. As a result, contracts were increasingly hard to manage and this had a significant impact on time spent in contract creation and amendment.

“It’s very difficult to make edits when you have a huge variety of contracts, in different formats, on different platforms,” explains Harriet Taylor, Director of Sales and Marketing at City Relay. “Our contracts vary depending on length of stay, commission, location, and other factors, so we needed a solution that was efficient and collaborative,” she explains. “It took fifteen minutes to generate and send our contracts with our former platform. We’re growing quickly as a business, so our HR manager needs to be able to generate contracts much faster than that – a mobile-friendly platform would be ideal.”

The challenge impacted both HR and sales teams. City Relay had to increase the speed of the onboarding process, finding a way to balance several daily meetings with contract requirements. Allowing documents to progress through from creation to signature, regardless of the device on which they were being viewed, was key. “We needed to save time, more than anything. And that’s where Juro came in.”

The solution: less time, more contracts

After discussions with Juro’s sales and customer success teams, City Relay adopted Juro as their contract collaboration platform in 2018, covering both sales and HR. The immediate reaction from users was “a massive sigh of relief,” says Harriet. “Juro simplified all our processes. The team were thrilled with the outcome.”

MOBILE-FRIENDLY: “Our sales team can send and sign contracts from their phone during their walk from one meeting to another! It’s a massive advantage to us that people can read and sign on their phones – no printing and scanning required.”

CENTRALISED: “We have all our templates in one place, on Juro’s platform, where we can make amends and send them out in a fraction of the time. We have a quicker onboarding process now – from 15 minutes down to 2 or 3.”

COLLABORATIVE: “We get a lot of feedback on our contracts so it’s important to have that flexibility towards a quick and open flow of communication. The comments feature is excellent in assisting with that and allowing for clear-cut discussion.”


“With all our templates in one place, we can make amends and send them out in a fraction of the time”

The results: time saved, usage doubled

The team enjoy the upgrades to their contract workflow and how easy Juro is to use. Additionally, the approach towards creating various contracts and negotiation with hosts is much more dynamic: “the comments facility makes it easier for our hosts, simplifying the process for them and saving both parties a lot of time,” says Harriet. Commenting functionality also works on mobile, reducing the barriers for contract parties to collaborate and ultimately sign.

Integrations are also a popular feature: “we use the Slack integration, so signed contracts go directly into our sales channel – we can have a mini-celebration every time we sign a new deal. Everyone knows where we're at in terms of our success as a business, which is useful as we grow.”

City Relay has doubled their usage of Juro since the initial purchase, with several teams now using the software. “The long-lets and B2B teams are both using it, as contract volume increases. Juro's customer success team has been incredible in supporting this expansion.”

City Relay discovered a platform that met all their demands, enhanced their contract workflows, and made mobile-first contracting a reality: “We saved so much time – we'd absolutely recommend Juro to anyone looking to ease their contract processes.” 

Juro for sales: get to yes faster



“It makes creating and managing customer contracts at scale an absolute breeze”

Sharief Abdel-Hadi
Sales team, Nested

Get reps closing

Customers typically close 30% faster with Juro's integrated, intuitive platform.

Effortless set-up

Lightning-fast onboarding and implementation means you only need to focus on closing.

Reliable data

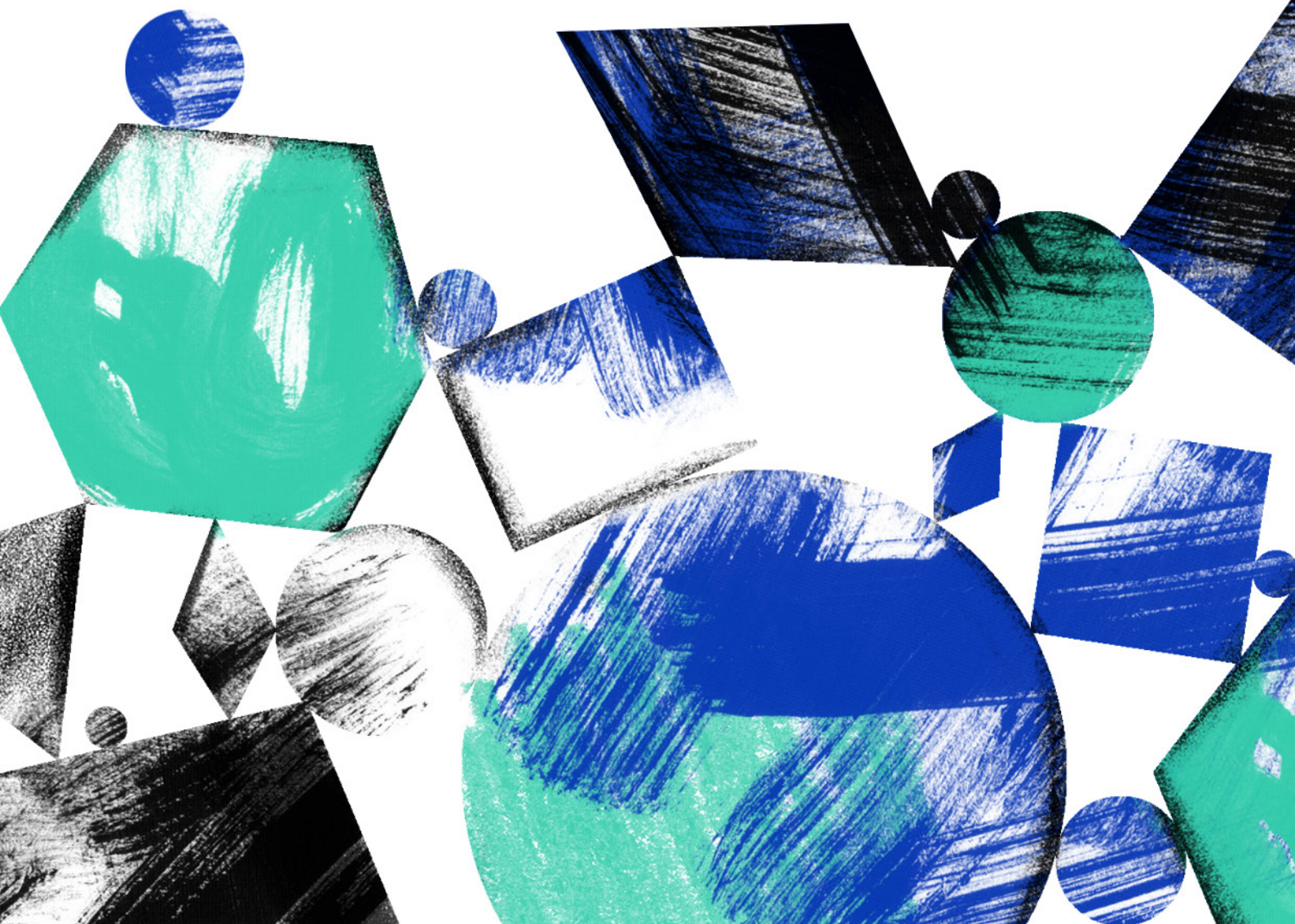
Never lose track with a 2-way Salesforce integration so contracts data is always in sync.

Manage

No more filing cabinets.

Cloud-based contract management systems offer a huge range of features for legal and business teams to manage their documents: storage and foldering, renewal reminders, heatmaps and analytics and many more. The huge growth in prominence of legal operations as a discipline is driving lawyers' ambitions to become data-driven ever higher. If your contract collaboration platform lets you retain and surface your data then your ability to learn from contracts and become more efficient will increase significantly – if you leverage your data the right way.

Similarly, integrating the creation and management of your contracts with the systems of record that other business functions use is a great way to become both a friend and an enabler to the business. The time when contract management was a legal silo, devoid of transparency, is over – read on to find out how to make an integrated, data-driven workflow a reality.



The 7 best contract metrics to track – and why you need to start



Lucy Bassli is a former Deputy General Counsel and Head of Legal

Operations. She now consults with corporate legal departments on contracting operations, spend management and legal operations. Her passion is contracts and bringing efficiencies into legal. Find out more at innolegalservices.com.

It seems like every legal department has the ambition to be data-driven. But how do you get started and what should you track?

Contract data can raise something of a chicken-egg conundrum: do you need technology in place to get the data, or do you need the data to justify getting the technology? The truth is that you don't need technology to start tracking at all. In reality, we mostly still live in a world of manual process. That's good news: it means that when it comes to contract data, you're free to get started any way you possibly can.

1. The basics: how many contracts, and what kind?

Any lawyer should be able quickly to answer how many contracts they process in a given period. It's no longer acceptable for the answer to this question to be anecdotal, or imprecise, or 'it depends'. These metrics are the bare minimum, and there's no excuse not to have them. It's a common crutch to say that you don't have the data, so you can't be data-driven. Without this data you can't answer basic questions from the business, and that is not a good experience for the business. Start with a spreadsheet and just do it.

2. Turnaround time

Every legal department at some point faces the perception that they 'take too long'. Even if they don't, there is a high likelihood that the business sees it differently. Sometimes their complaints are unwarranted and unfair, and at the other end of the spectrum it can be a real problem that gets escalated to the C-suite.

Tracking turnaround time is the way to dig into this, and identify the problems that cause friction in your workflow. As soon as you start to track this, it has the potential to become a negotiation battleground between the business and legal, or even outside counsel, who may be the ones slowing things down. Turnaround time has several sub-categories:

i. Response time

One of the most common complaints legal faces is that it's a black hole into which business colleagues have no visibility. If someone sends a document to legal for review, did legal do anything with it? When? Did they even receive it? Tracking your initial response time is the quickest way to resolve this complaint. A simple confirmation email acknowledging receipt goes a long way, and a track record of those acknowledgements being sent in a timely manner will go a long way.

ii. Time to first and final drafts

The time that elapses between a legal team receiving the necessary information to begin work and the creation of a first draft is a key indicator of efficiency in legal operations. After this, the time that passes between lawyers receiving feedback and input from stakeholders, and the arrival of the final draft, is a useful benchmark. Knowing how quickly work progresses from the very first iteration to final draft is management information you can't ignore.

“Awareness of the fully loaded contract cost is a fantastic tool to help you make a business case for additional headcount, or for using an ALSP for future similar transactions”

“In a high-growth SaaS environment, tracking deviations can be crucial - if reps are deviating from standard terms around breach notifications, that’s critical information”



3. Cost per transaction

As your legal function becomes more mature, you might start to track cost per transaction, which is a really interesting number to share with your stakeholders. This figure is one concrete way that legal can show genuine input to the bottom line of the company.

Cost per transaction could be based on internal costs: calculating the fully burdened time of the legal team's members who were involved in the process, for example. If you're outsourcing, then an awareness of the fully loaded cost is a fantastic tool to help you make a business case for additional headcount, or for using an ALSP for future similar transactions.

4. Simplicity and readability

We started out this guide with Ken Adams' take on contract readability, and the great news is that there are mechanisms in place to measure this. If you're working in Word, you can use the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level to monitor your team's improvements in simplifying contracts. If complexity and a lack of readability are causing contracts to take a long time, then this metric can help you to work out what needs to change, whether that's formatting, vocabulary, numbering and lists, or any other useful technique to make your document more readable.

Smart legal teams also measure the readability differences between their different lawyers. Some drafters like to linger on every word, whereas some will never use 20 words when 5 will do. Focus on achieving consistent readability across the team and you'll drive efficiency in contracts across the department.

5. Dollar value

Some legal teams cater for their specific risk appetites by tracking the dollar value of a contract and setting thresholds at which legal does and doesn't need to be involved. This lets the decision-makers of a legal department make it clear if business colleagues are flooding legal with contracts that don't need their input. This metric can help you to show that a policy needs to exist and be enforced, and to encourage people to take responsibility. It's as much about operational capacity as it is about risk mitigation.

Being able to track the overall value of a contract also allows you to segregate your contracts into buckets: if in a given month you have ten contracts worth less than \$20k, and three worth more than a million, then how would the business want you to prioritize them? By understanding your pipeline you can understand and maximize its value to the business. Of course, value is only one consideration of risk assessment, and there are many other factors that go into prioritizing legal resources, but it does serve as a very helpful objective standard for certain types of transactions.

It can be hard to measure value when it comes to contracts that aren't defined by empirical data and dollar values. One way to handle this is to tag and categorize them during intake. That might be a manual task, or you could use a smart inbox and create rules to help create those workstreams.

6. Obligations

Similarly, whether to make legal responsible for monitoring expiration dates or other post-execution operations is a philosophical decision for each legal function. If the legal team wants to take ownership of it, that's one thing; if the business wants legal to babysit supplier deadlines, that's quite another. Making sure the business stays on top of expirations and terminations could be hugely valuable, but the question is whether manually looking up dates is a good use of lawyer time or not. Technology might be able to help with the heavy lifting here.

7. Inside your contracts: deviations

Flagging deviations from your standard terms is always valuable. Getting insight and metrics from inside the document is labor intensive, but that's where technology can play a key role, and there are lots of systems making great progress with their document review capabilities. In a high-growth SaaS environment, for example, tracking those deviations can be crucial – if reps are deviating from SLAs, or standard terms around breach notifications, then that's critical information to track. Focus on what's important to your industry and keep your eye on the top four or five elements within contracts that you need to monitor. Beyond that, it can quickly get too big a task to handle. Anyone you ask will want their specific area of concern tracked. Pick wisely.

Tracking and acting on these metrics can make a massive difference not just to a legal team's performance, but to the business itself. However, the uncomfortable truth is that most legal teams are a long way from building that sophisticated understanding of their data.

Broadly speaking, the market divides into three. In the first group, some legal departments still think everything's fine. They're firm in their belief that they're professionals, they know what they're doing, the nature of their work is hard to predict and the C-suite will just have to live with it.

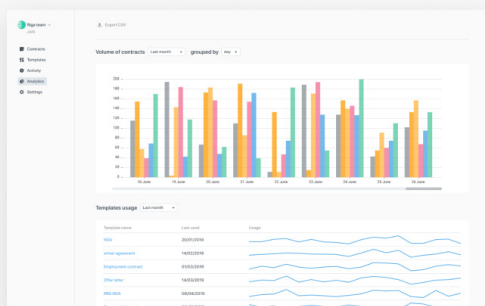
In the middle group are the legal professionals who find themselves in that frustrating place where they know they need to do something, but they're not sure where to start. This group, along with those who are starting to explore and try the basics, is by far the biggest group.

The final group are the early adopters: those departments that are seizing the initiative, managing the change, and making sure it's ingrained in the philosophy and DNA of the attorneys. That might be because they're innovators and leading the charge themselves, or it might be because the demand from the business for actionable insight is high and non-negotiable.

Whatever their motivation, this is the group with the best decision-making ability, the best understanding of its own efficiency, and the biggest potential to truly add value to the business as a genuine strategic partner. By starting at the beginning and building data from the ground up, every legal department can join them – they just need to start somewhere. [📄](#)

juro

Best-in-class analytics



Track with Juro

Juro's unique, custom-built machine-readable editor means that all your contract data is preserved and tracked. Unlock the insights from every stage of your contract workflow with our comprehensive analytics stack. Track contract volumes, time from creation to approval and signing, and even export your metadata to analyze in your system of choice. Get in touch to find out more.

Why you need to integrate contracts with the business' systems of record



Raul Balchin-Qais

is senior account executive at Juro. He works with

Juro's existing and future customers to help them create frictionless contract workflows and enable collaboration between business teams.

It's a key question for any business trying to make their processes frictionless: how do you make contracts work seamlessly with your other key systems?

Legal teams might be the people who 'own' contract in the business, but more often than not there are other key stakeholders in the process: sales, HR, operations, finance, procurement, to name a few. The question of how to reconcile legal's key work product – contracts – with the systems that other teams live in is a question many of our customers tackle every day. Whether it's Salesforce for commercial teams, Greenhouse for hiring, Workday for HR or Sage for finance, contracts need to find a way to talk to other systems.

There are obvious benefits to integrating contracts with your other systems of record:

- It's efficient and it saves time;
- It ensures consistent, secure storage of documents; and
- It helps legal teams to showcase the value they can provide, through collaborative contract management.

Through working with our users to integrate with their systems of record, we've learned about the key benefits of making contract workflow seamless across platforms. Here are the top five advantages we typically see when contract management is integrated with other business solutions.

1. Stay comfortable

Your colleagues use their systems of record every day. They know them back to front. Forcing them to learn a new system, just so they can align with your contract process, is likely to lead to friction – or worse, discontent. If they find it too onerous they might go rogue and start creating contracts outside of your preferred workflow, using the old systems they've grown comfortable with. Instead, integrate your contract process with their systems of record, so creation and signing can be accomplished within the platform they already trust.

2. End the back-and-forth

Contracts govern your most important business relationships, but they're not an end in themselves – they shouldn't distract from a business team's main job. For example, sales teams working in Salesforce want to spend less time worrying about managing contracts, and more time (perhaps all their time) closing deals. Hiring teams should spend their time finding the right people to grow the company, without having to worry about manually managing contracts on the side. An integrated contract process should let people concentrate their efforts in the right place – not in document management.

3. Enable transparency

Transparency into contracts is always a concern for businesses of any size, particularly if the company is scaling and contract volumes are increasing month

“Forcing colleagues to learn a new system, just so they can align with your contract process, is likely to lead to friction – or worse, discontent”

“Let your integrated systems handle the information sharing - don't leave the proper communication of your contracts at the mercy of human error”

on month. By integrating between your systems of record, you can create transparency through automation. Rather than manually sending documents to relevant stakeholders at different points in the contract process, let your integrated systems handle the information sharing for you, with relevant metrics about documents' progress being tracked and surfaced in native dashboards.

Don't leave the proper communication of your contracts at the mercy of human error - integrate them with other systems of record to make sure the right stakeholders automatically have access to completed documents as and when they need it.

4. Get that data

Synchronizing data between systems of record is crucial if you're aiming to be a genuinely data-driven business. Configuring this properly removes a whole load of risk from the process, as human error is largely mitigated, and saves you time fixing issues like duplication and incomplete records.


We see the value in this for our customers, most powerfully when contracts data live-syncs with Salesforce - once an opportunity's effective date is updated in Salesforce, this is reflected automatically in the contract. Again, this minimizes the risk of human error and keeps legal and commercial teams on the same page.

From discussing with customers, we've learned that the best method would be to synchronize relevant data from different teams - for example, for sales contracts, linking pricing and quote lines, or employment contracts, linking start dates and employee details. Don't leave the accuracy of such key details to chance - let your systems do the heavy lifting on your data.

5. Use low-maintenance systems

Integrating any two systems together can be time-consuming. Asking IT colleagues to devote their time to your legal tech stack is seldom easy. The easiest way to avoid the frustration this can bring is to choose a system that's adaptable to various requirements, easy to configure, and easy to maintain. Push your vendors on the ease of configuration of their platform, and ask for information on the time-to-value that customers with a similar use-case to you often achieve.

We sometimes see adverts for legal technology systems promising that you'll see some value within six months - this doesn't seem like anything to boast about, given the growth pressures that many businesses face. Make sure the systems you're exploring match your expectations when it comes to implementation timelines.

In a business world increasingly dominated by SaaS products, it's unavoidable that contracts will have to integrate with the various platforms that act as systems of record for different teams. Keep these points front-of-mind as you consider integrations and you'll create a smarter, faster, more collaborative contract workflow for you and your colleagues. 



Companies House



API

Integrate with Juro

Contracts should live where you do. Whether you use Juro in legal, sales, HR or operations, our stack of integrations ensures Juro works seamlessly with the tools you use every day. Get in touch to find out more.

Post-signature: connected contracts



Peter Hunn is the founder of Clause.io, a connected contracting platform that aims to enable 'smart contracts' through the use of various technologies.

Getting a contract from first draft to signature is the main focus of many contract stakeholders. But what happens after you get to yes? The founder of Clause.io sheds some light on the future of contracts.

Why is it a problem that contracts are usually static files?

The current management of the contract lifecycle mainly focuses on what happens pre-signature. That's a solved problem in many ways, and there are lots of great tools there – for creation, editing and collaboration, as well as eSignature and execution – everything up to and including signature.

The problem is that all of that process is aimed towards creating a static record of an agreement at a particular point in time. The obvious analogy is a stopped watch, but that's at least accurate occasionally. With a static file the future will almost always diverge from that record reflecting that particular moment in time.

What we're trying to do at Clause is to enable you, at least in part, to be able to add in Smart Clause® templates to your agreement that respond to external events and can give you a degree of 'statefulness'. By that I mean we can see what impact events have had on the current state of the agreement.

So, for example, if a penalty is due based on the price of a commodity that has since changed, we don't have to calculate that penalty manually based on a PDF. If you take a templated sales agreement as an example, that typically has a provision with stipulated dates by which certain actions have to take place and penalties, whether that's in the form of compounded percentages, prices amounts, and so on. We can connect that data up to an external API – for example, Royal Mail or Fedex – to draw that data into the document and make it up-to-date.

The IACCM in 2012 released research finding that the average basic sales document, without much lawyer time being involved, costs around \$7000 to manage, and most of that is process. That has to change.

There are three principal technologies that are relevant:

1. The "API economy" – organizations increasingly have public APIs, to which contracts or contracting systems can be connected.
2. The explosion of IoT devices that allow us to get data from the physical world; for example, temperature and humidity data, which can be relevant for supply agreements. Perishable commodities are a relevant use case there – so if certain pharmaceutical products are required by regulations to be held in certain conditions regarding temperature and humidity, then contracts can be updated based on that incoming data; and
3. Blockchain and cryptocurrency, which may change the nature of financial transactions.

“IACCM research found that the average basic sales document, without much lawyer time being involved, costs around \$7000 to manage, and most of that is process”

“The issue is that lawyers aren’t really the end user of contracts; they’re using technology to serve clients’ purposes, not their own”

What are the barriers to widespread adoption of smart or ‘connected’ contracts?

There are two main types of barrier. The first is the education piece: getting people to understand what this technology can do. If we take lawyers as cohort, they may not be immediately aware of why this technology is useful to the ultimate end-user, from a contract management an administration perspective. They’re not necessarily the direct target of this technology.

The issue is that lawyers aren’t really the end user of contracts; they’re using technology to serve clients’ purposes, not their own. They care about connectivity where it improves their service offering, whether that be in new services for their clients such as administering and reviewing stateful agreements or where connected contracts are a necessity, such as in the digital assets space. It’ll take some time to educate everyone sufficiently.

Secondly, once you’ve got past the educational hurdle, there are the practical barriers. Once you’ve explained that it’s something that can add value, either to a lawyer or a corporate, the next step is the practical one – how do I actually implement this?

The impediment there is that although today we have tools that can make contract management easy, or at least easier, then adding a layer of machine-readable logic into a natural language entity (the contract) represents another layer of complexity. And it’s in the domain of the developer community, rather than for lawyers to solve – creating that overlap, and making it seamless (through what’s commonly called legal engineering) is important – fostering the growth of legal engineering as an industry will be crucial for success.

Making it easy to add executable logic into agreements and demonstrating that there are huge backend benefits to the frontend ‘cost’ is critical. We think we are firmly on that path. These barriers will fall away – connected contracts are an inevitability.

Visit [Clause](#) to find out more. 

Conclusions



Richard Mabey
is the CEO and
co-founder
of Juro.

**“Removing friction
and creating a
contract workflow -
from end-to-end - that
works for everyone
is not just possible,
but essential”**

Technology can't solve bad drafting. That much is beyond doubt, and I'm grateful to have Ken Adams – perhaps the world's leading authority on the building blocks of contract language – in this guide, to emphasize the importance of getting the fundamentals right.

However, it's also true that there is a lot of contract pain that technology *can* solve - as long as that technology is deployed smartly, collaboratively, and in response to a well-understood problem that needs to be solved. Contract workflow and contract management affect teams across the business, in almost every business imaginable, and yet research consistently shows us that people are dissatisfied with that process. The IACCM puts the figure of disgruntled contract users at 83%. We can and must do better.

Removing friction and creating a contract workflow – from end-to-end – that works for everyone is not just possible, but essential. When we create contracts, let's not reinvent the wheel each time: use plain language Q&A flows to guide users through to watertight templates. Follow legal design principles to make your documents accessible to your audience. And if securing a signature quickly is the goal, then don't bury your key points in the middle of the document – surface them in a key details table to make things move faster.

When it's time to collaborate, don't waste time jumping between systems that are unwilling and unable to allow data to flow between them. If you can, make contracts machine-readable from the get-go, meaning you can collaborate more easily and learn while you do so. If your contracts need to navigate stakeholder approvals, map out a process that keeps legal in control, but empowers business users to move quickly too. Integrate with the business' systems of record wherever you can.

When terms are agreed, don't put pen to paper – eSignature was invented (and widely adopted) for a reason. Put finger to touchscreen and sign on the move, and find the kind of efficiencies and time savings that City Relay did when they created a frictionless workflow with Juro. And when your focus turns to contract management, make sure you're capturing enough data to make smarter decisions, unblock those bottlenecks, and perhaps enable a future where contracts become connected.

Ultimately, we need to remember that contracts are agreed at the happiest points in the life of a business: closing a deal, hiring an employee, agreeing a partnership. Dissatisfied contract users should be the exception, not the rule. I hope our insights, and those of our contributors, into each stage of the contract lifecycle (and beyond) can go some way towards helping to make contracts the start of something great – instead of the end of something painful. 📄

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If you'd like to learn more about how Juro helps to make contracts faster, smarter and more human, contact us at hello@juro.com or follow us at blog.juro.com and [@GetJuro](https://twitter.com/GetJuro).




The contract collaboration platform.



B I U    H¹ H²  



1. Contracts don't have to be hard.

1.1 Legal contracts are agreed at the *happiest* times in your business' life. Our purpose-built editor helps you build contracts in ~~minutes~~ seconds, keeping your **data in sync** and making contracts faster, smarter and more human.

1.2 With Juro you can ~~negotiate~~ collaborate on documents, set up **reminders** for key contract deadlines and even create conversational forms to speed up contract creation.


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+

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Juro is a contract collaboration platform. Juro helps high-growth businesses like Deliveroo, Reach plc and Skyscanner to save up to 96% of time on contracts and generate AI-enabled insights. Juro is backed by Point Nine Capital, Seedcamp and the founders of Transferwise, Indeed and Gumtree.

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