The Artificially Intelligent Document: Microsystems' ILTA Session on the Modern Workflow

Microsystems is betting that AI in document review will soon be part of the daily workflow.
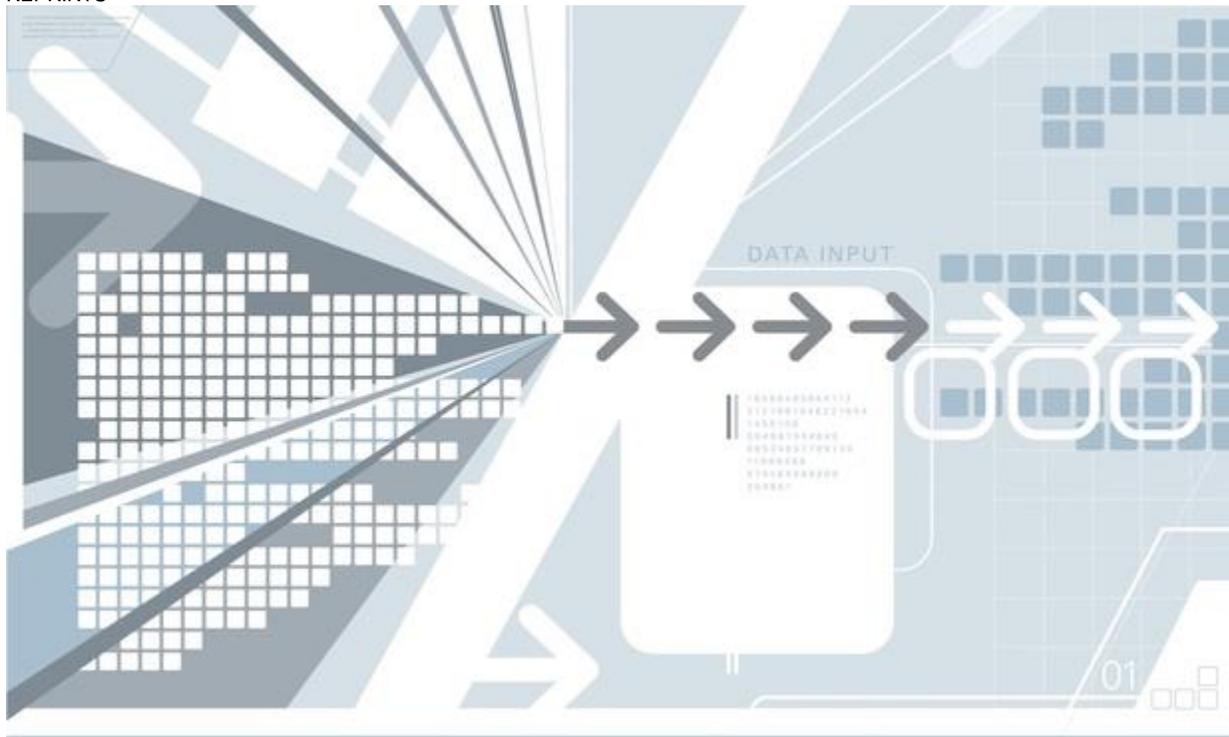
Ian Lopez, **Legaltech News**

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ILTA is the place for hyperbole, yet when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI) in law, players throughout the legal tech space are using the technology to make real change.

Let's for a moment wave away ideas on lawyer robots and the like and instead focus on practical applications of AI technology. In the view of document technology provider Microsystems, it helps to think of AI's application in document review more along the lines of "artificial document intelligence."

Microsystems CEO Stacey Kacek admits that in terms of AI, the "real-world applications of it are still pretty limited," but while putting it into perspective, it's important to consider that the technology is still deployed in many law firms around the world.

Kacek adds that for these law firms, implementing the technology is "about the simplification of the experience" rather than complicating workflows.

To demonstrate the importance of this tech benefit, David Cook, Microsystems vice president of product development, challenged law firm leaders at a breakfast session at ILTA Con 2016 to disable spell-check across the entire firm. If firms were to do so, he asked, what would the real problem be?

"It's probably not a legal issue, a judge would probably overlook it, so what's the big deal? The problem is it's embarrassing, it goes straight to your firm's reputation," Cook says. "It's a criteria for your clients to judge you." Clients don't know the law, but they know how to spell.

Furthermore, in attesting to the additional shortcomings of lawyers in document review, Cook notes that some will often cite sections that don't actually exist, or reuse documents, thereby potentially exposing personally identifiable information from previous transactions for others to see.

"Surprisingly, people have not adopted automatic proofreading as much as they have spell-check," Cook notes. This is where AI comes into play. "A lot of firms here talk about AI," he notes. "The problem with AI is scientists seem to think the wide application of artificial intelligence is to replace a person. It's not."

Cook breaks things down to a simple idea: let the computers do what they do well and let people do what they do well. To this end, he notes that while people are bad at proofreading and repetitive tasks, computers are bad at advocacy. "You have to have some intelligence behind these solutions to make them easy enough and to make them trustworthy," he says.

But technology can be difficult for law firms, particularly when it comes to adoption. Thus, Cook differentiates between AI and artificial document intelligence (ADI), summing the separation up as ADI "making the computer do its part very, very well."

"How can we put this in people's workflow just like spell-check is?" he adds.

With AI in contract review, the potential includes scanning documents for personal identification information such as Social Security numbers and prompts for the ability to encrypt or remove the information. Cook notes that Microsystems technology has a "cross-reference" function that goes through an entire document and adjusts numbering, identifies cross-reference issues, and automates the process.

Microsystems announced on Aug. 16 that this technology will be made available to students at Drexel University School of Law, who will be the first to use Contract Companion for a course on contract drafting.