



IA-PRAGMA

AI Prospective Synthesis

Discussion Summary

A civil litigation lawyer registered at the Perpignan bar for about twenty years, practising in a small firm on civil disputes — private litigation, liability, neighbourhood conflicts, contracts — the user came with a direct question: is AI noise or a real issue for his practice? His current use of ChatGPT is limited to downstream rephrasing and occasional upstream exploration of leads, without ever entrusting the substance of a case. His reservations concern the reliability of outputs, client data confidentiality, and more fundamentally the conviction that judgement, nuance and responsibility form the irreducible core of the profession. The conversation gradually shifted the question from the tool itself to a more structural issue: the economic visibility of a lawyer's value in an environment where visible tasks are becoming commoditised. His personal conclusion — that the phenomenon is "*subtler and more insidious*" than simple replacement — marks a clear shift from his initial question.

Forecasts

In the **short term**, pressure remains diffuse: some clients already arrive with AI-generated answers and an implicit expectation of lower costs, but the phenomenon is not yet widespread, and peers oscillate between denial and efficiency-seeking. In the **medium term**— two to five years — it is the firm's economics that will be affected first: cases with a repetitive template, where margins rest on the volume of documents produced, will see their perceived value erode as tools make these tasks look trivial to clients. In parallel, the time spent deconstructing ill-founded certainties that clients will have built via AI — that "*assembly of notions*" already observed — will become a growing and hard-to-bill burden. In the **longer term**— five to ten years — the viable core of practice will concentrate on cases with substantial factual, emotional and strategic depth. But this viability is conditional: if the value of sorting, strategy and reframing remains *invisible* to the client — as is largely the case today according to the assessment made during the discussion — it will also remain *hard to defend economically*, even when indispensable.

Blind Spots

The conversation did not address the **regulatory and ethical dimension** specific to the profession: bar associations and professional bodies will likely be called upon to regulate AI use in practice, and the way these frameworks take shape will have a direct impact on what is permitted, expected or sanctioned — including the confidentiality obligations that already concern the user. Another absent topic is **training and mentoring future associates**: if the traditional learning tasks — research, drafting initial briefs — are absorbed by AI, the way a young lawyer develops judgement becomes a pressing question, including for a small firm considering recruitment. Finally, the **relationship with judges and court operations** was not explored: if courts themselves adopt decision-support tools, this could change expectations regarding the form and structure of written submissions, and therefore the upstream work of a civil litigation lawyer.

Strategic Leads

The first direction to explore is a **clear-eyed segmentation of the case portfolio**, distinguishing those whose value rests primarily on document production from those where judgement and strategy constitute the real contribution — not to abandon the former, but to concretely anticipate where economic pressure will hit. The second lead concerns **making value visible** to clients: considering

how the work of sorting, reframing and strategising — which today happens "*quietly*"— can be made perceptible, whether in the delivery of an analysis, the structuring of a meeting, or the presentation of fees. Third, it would be worth deepening the use of AI as an **amplifier of existing judgement** rather than a substitute, particularly by exploring the processing of the documentary chaos sent by clients — a concrete pain point where several hours are regularly absorbed before even reaching the substance. Finally, engaging in a reflection with peers on the **collective perception of the profession's value** in the face of these changes, rather than leaving everyone to oscillate between dismissal and surface-level optimisation, would be a lever whose effects extend beyond any individual firm.