



LEGALTECH A POWERFUL TOOL TO ENHANCE HIGH VALUE SERVICES

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Magda Cocco joined VdA in 1994. Head of Practice of Information, Communication & Technology, Magda has in-depth knowledge and experience in the e-communications industry across several jurisdictions, particularly Portugal and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

The legal sector has been many times criticised for being technologically adverse and remaining unchanged at its core. However, the digital disruption and its inherent efficiency-based competition transforming economy and society, together with the entrance of new ground-breaking LegalTech startups in the market has been pushing law firms and in-house teams to reinvent their

operations. Already during the 1970s, software for legal document storage and management, billing and accounting were introduced, while in the early 2010s, with the adoption of data analytics and process automation, LegalTech solutions for due diligence and e-Discovery became more common. The last years, as emerging technologies, especially AI,

are deployed in LegalTech tools, the legal sector has entered into a transitioning phase where more and more law firms and in-house teams are investing in LegalTech solutions to increase the efficiency both of their internal processes as well as of the services and products offered to their clients. The majority of the LegalTech products used are falling in the category of task automation and they usually aim at



enhancing internal processes and optimising solutions offered to clients. From management of human resources and billing tools, to advance knowledge management platforms and contract automation, these solutions allow lawyers to meet the expectations of their clients for increased value, time- and cost-efficiency. As a result, technology now plays an extremely relevant role both in the strategic plans and in the day-to-day activities of law firms.

In VdA we have embraced the opportunities offered by LegalTech to provide high-quality legal solutions to our clients by enhancing our internal processes and, concomitantly, the capacities of our lawyers. We have been using Big Data analytics, automation and AI-powered

solutions for discovery and diligence such as Luminance, for managing judicial and arbitration proceedings, and real-time project management tools that facilitate delegation of tasks and meeting deadlines. As clients are expecting more from their lawyers - more value and a better understanding of their businesses and needs – and are becoming more demanding in what concerns costs, law firms are investing in new technologies that increase productivity and improve competitiveness by enhancing firms' expertise. In this context, knowledge management and integration tools play a major role, capturing lawyers' collective wisdom and enhancing knowledge sharing. Through different processes, systems, and smart collaboration tools law firms

are currently able to identify, save, profile, disseminate, and use prior work and accumulated expertise to solve legal complex challenges taking full advantage of the “collective wisdom and talent” accumulated throughout the years.

The last years in VdA, we have channelled our efforts in developing a knowledge management platform, powered by AI, that allows our lawyers to have access to the latest sources, and, ultimately, provide highly specialised advice to our clients in a time-efficient manner.

The added value of these applications could not materialise without an investment on talent. To ensure that our lawyers can make the most out of these LegalTech tools, we have hired tech-savvy lawyers, irrespective of their area of expertise, have been providing a “*Learning Journey*” (an innovative concept for the continuous development of skills, enhancing knowledge and providing excellent service to our clients), and lastly, we have established key partnerships to design and co-create bespoke legal tech solutions.

As LegalTech solutions become more mainstream, the term LegalTech will be superfluous in the near future, since the use of technologies will be an intrinsic part of the legal services. This will not mean that law firms will start selling to their clients applications or technological solutions. On the contrary, these powerful tools will be embedded in the services provided to create higher value for clients.