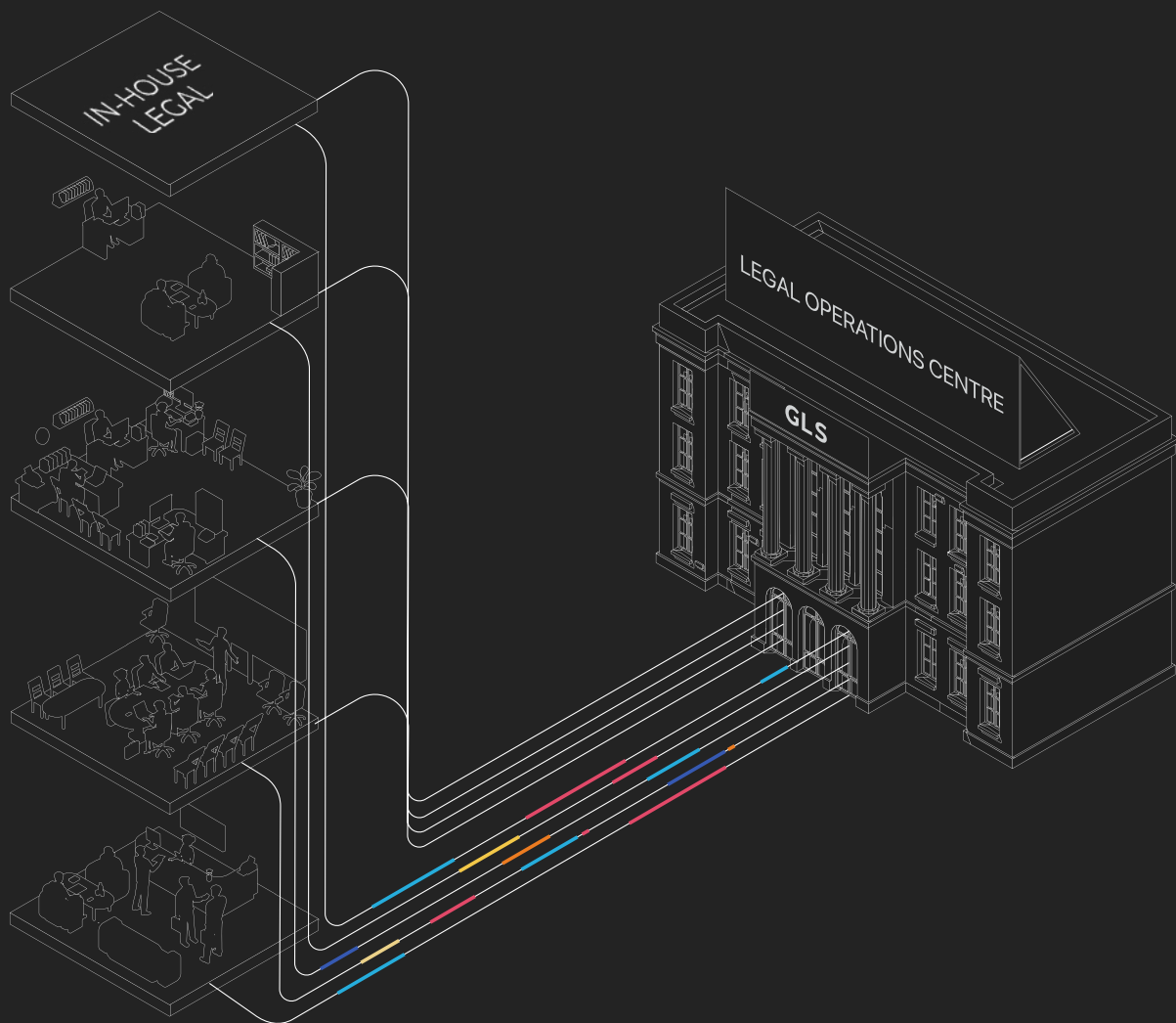


# GLS'S ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LEGAL OPERATIONS

Improving In-House Team Performance



Download the complete version [here](#) to enjoy the full interactive experience.



**Global Legal Solutions®**

By Matthew Glynn  
[www.gls-legaloperations.com](http://www.gls-legaloperations.com)

**This book is dedicated to all those who have suffered the inefficiencies of the legal industry and are motivated to improve things.**

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Be it by AI based contract reviews, contract automation solutions or by architecting high-performance legal teams, GLS Group provides access to world class solutions at a disruptive price point.

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# PART A

## AN INTRODUCTION

*"All in-house legal teams must accept that IHL Transformation is not a "job on top of the job" – it is a big part of "the job"! Being too busy to formulate your IHL Transformation agenda will simply no longer cut it – perpetual transformation is the IHL job."*

# STEPPING UP THE IHL GAME

*"Globally, many in-house legal departments ("IHLs") struggle to meet the rapidly growing legal and compliance requirements of the businesses they serve, whilst they are simultaneously being asked to reduce costs and demonstrate more value."*

Do you know any in-house lawyer that would disagree with the statement above? We don't and we communicate with more than 10,000 in-house lawyers multiple times each month.

One thing is for certain, the way in which IHLs operate needs to adapt – or to be more precise, IHLs need to rise to the challenge of demonstrably achieving **"far more with far less"**.

The future for all IHLs is about evolving into teams that can achieve manifestly more with the resources that they have at their disposal – this process is what we call: **"IHL Transformation"**.

## IHL: THE CURRENT OPERATING REALITY

FEWER RESOURCES

GREATER WORKLOAD

DIGITISATION – THREAT/OPPORTUNITY

NEED TO TRANSFORM



under performing

poor instructions

lack of support

undervalued

client expectations

KPIs

high churn

compliance

inclusiveness

burn out

stagnation

outsourcing

cost control

scope creep

good governance

budget pressure

# THE MOVE TO IHL TRANSFORMATION

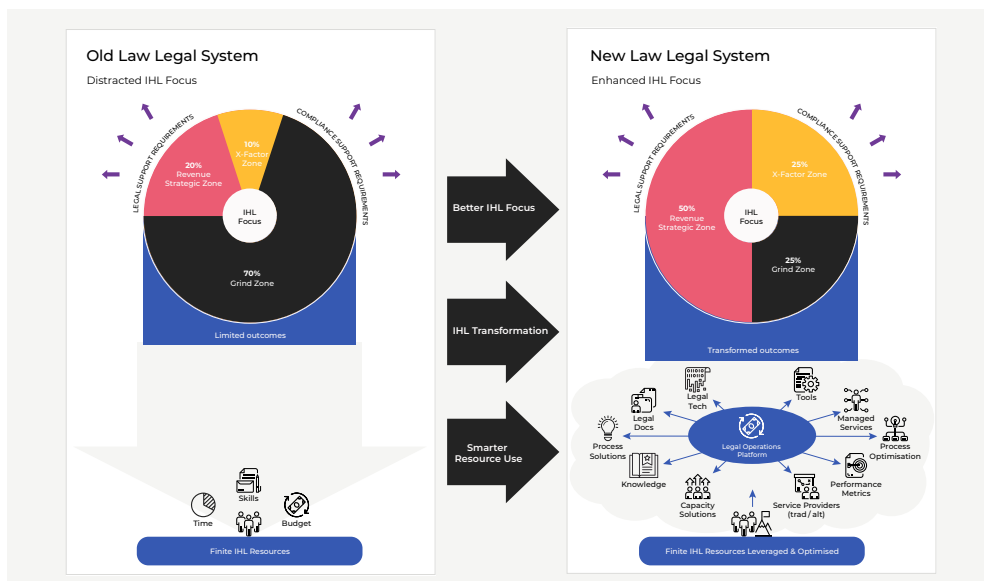
IHL Transformation is the management, deconstruction and re-imagining of how IHLs work so that the “business as usual” (“BAU”) is executed far more efficiently

and thereby leaving far greater capacity for strategic and “business enabling” contributions. (see [Part B: What is meant by “legal operations”?](#))

For IHL leaders, typically experts in the law and department management (i.e. the “Old Law” structures), imagining how technology, data analytics, business process engineering and Millennials might aid IHL Transformation (i.e. “New Law” considerations), is not always easy. As such, this Guide seeks to provide a holistic

overview of how the domain of legal operations works. (see [Part C: The Case For Legal Operations](#)). Moreover, it introduces tools, processes and “coal face” lessons that will help you make your IHL Transformation process far more manageable and efficient.

This diagram depicts what is the goal of this deconstruction and re-imagining of your IHL. The journey to get there is your own unique IHL Transformation.



To start that journey, all that is required is the knowledge of how to effectively and efficiently formulate an IHL Transformation plan and implement it – something that we hope to share with you in abundance in this Guide.

Fortunately, for those IHL leaders eager to undertake an IHL Transformation, the challenge is not nearly as great as it might appear at first glance given:

## SYSTEMIC INEFFICIENCIES:

Much legal industry activity has historically been conducted in such an inefficient fashion that achieving massive productivity gains from existing resources is actually not that difficult.

## LEGAL INNOVATION:

We all now operate in an environment that offers a steady stream of new technologies and innovations that increasingly make substantially elevated IHL performance imminently feasible.

## SELF AUTHORSHIP:

Self-authored change is always more effective – few will know your business and all of its foibles as well as you – and your proactive efforts will be recognised as “initiative”, not corrective action imposed from above.

# OBSTACLES TO IHL CHANGE

Whilst the case for profound change in the legal industry has been overwhelming for well over a decade, our industry has always proved stubbornly change averse.

This generally holds true whether you are an in-house lawyer or in private practice. ([see, amongst others, Part K: 10 Things That Can Sink Your Legal Operations Agenda](#))

The obstacles to change within the IHL community, whilst nowhere near as acute as they are in private practice, are largely centered around the same issues – outdated practices and mindsets, and leadership with vested interests.

Unlike any other industry, the legal industry has generally been rewarded for saying “no” to new efficiency-based initiatives. The vested few best served by “old ways” might say “*don’t fix what isn’t broken*”. Newsflash – it is broken!

Consider this: what would you make of the farmer that uses hundreds of men with shovels to dig a field instead of hiring in an earth mover for a couple of hours? Would you celebrate their wisdom or question their sanity?

As an example, the reluctance to professionalise external legal procurement is one of many examples of the millstones of old-guard IHL leadership. Why has legal procurement proven immune to the global best practices applied by all other procurement functions? ([see GLS on "Performance Managing Your External Legal Counsel"](#))

## SO CHANGE IT WILL BE ...

The global business community desperately needs its IHLs to do far more now than ever before, but sadly the discussion prioritises containment of IHL costs and not enhanced productivity. As such, the IHL community must focus on EFFICIENCY and rapidly catch-up with the rest of the business community.

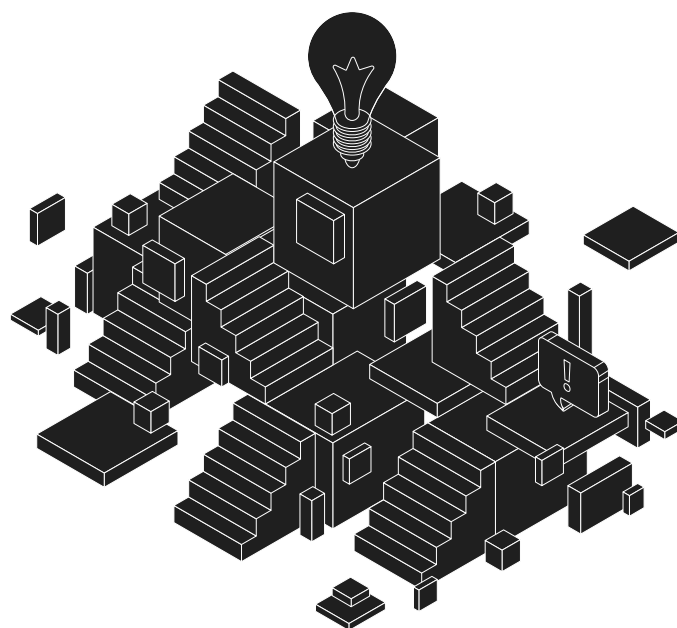


Increasingly, IHLs are being viewed just like “any other department” and are no longer immune from organisation-wide rationalisation and /or efficiency programs/audits. As [The American Lawyer](#) notes “*today’s general counsel are being asked to think like business leaders, not just lawyers.*” In this context – “self-authored” change is clearly preferable. ([see Part C: The Case For Legal Operations](#))

Fortunately, unlike the private practice community, there is no economic incentive binding IHLs to past inefficiencies – the IHL community is far more amenable to change, and is far more aligned with its client (i.e. the business) that demands it.

Imminent danger lurks for IHL leaders claiming to be “*too busy with the day-to-day to find time to plan*”. Such leaders will find themselves falling further behind “peer” departments and competitors that have deliberate plans to focus resources and effort.

So, change it is – either voluntarily, because you know that it is the only way forward – or mandatorily, because it is forced upon you by a business that demands that every business unit demonstrate value and cost savings.



# GREEN SHOOTS OF NEW IHL LEADERSHIP

It is often said that “time fixes everything” – and it will be time that plays a big part in re-charting each IHLs’ course to a much better destination and re-defining highly elevated and verifiable levels of IHL performance.

Demographics are now a key driver for IHL innovation and adoption of legal technology, as “Millennials” increasingly assume IHL control – accepting “*this is the way we have always done it*” is simply no longer an option.

The new generation of IHL leaders are all about clearing away the “white noise” that keeps their IHL from making a positive difference to their business – from working on what is strategic and of true value.

This new breed of IHL lawyer does not need to be convinced of the value that legal technology can bring to operational efficiency – they expect it to be deployed and that it performs like all of the consumer technology they’ve used since birth.

There are increasingly loud voices (e.g. [Daniel Linna](#), professor director of LegalRnD at Michigan State

University) pushing for “legal innovation” to be taught at law schools. IHL Millennials in particular, are ready to embrace the changes needed to not just survive in practice but to thrive and make a truly meaningful impact, because it has never been easier to do so – and it is just what they do.

This is what this Guide is about ([see Part D: Effective Legal Operations](#)) and this Guide is written for those in-house lawyers who want to effect profoundly positive change at a time when transformation is imminently possible.



# TRANSFORMATION IS NOW THE DAY JOB

All IHLs must accept that IHL Transformation is not a “job on top of the job” – it is a big part of “the job”! Being too busy to formulate your IHL Transformation agenda will simply no longer cut it – perpetual transformation is the IHL job.

A key attribute of the New Law IHL is the ability to make sense/use of a constant stream of innovations and new technologies that deliver substantially elevated IHL performance levels and which then quickly become “the norm”.

The “transformation wheel” need not be re-invented for each and every IHL, IHLs need only be aware that new wheels are being invented every day that can help them achieve better, faster, cheaper and safer operations.

New Law IHLs must therefore embrace the implementation of a regular flow of innovation – and bring it all together to deliver constant and empirically verifiable performance improvements. ([see, amongst others, Part I: The Role Of IHL Performance Analytics](#))



# THE QUESTIONS THIS GUIDE ANSWERS...

First and foremost, this Guide helps IHLs understand that the IHL Transformation process need not be an overwhelming endeavor and that there are ready answers to fundamental questions such as:

## 01

How do you make your existing resources perform better?

## 02

How do you objectively assess your current performance?

## 03

What does an optimised legal function look like?

## 04

How can a legal operations focus bring about rapid and fundamentally positive change?

## 05

Where should I start my transformation efforts?

## 06

How do I establish what my priorities should be?

## 07

Is there a logical implementation order for successful transformations?

## 08

How can performance data help my team?

## 09

How can I prevent avoidable missteps?

## 10

How should I approach transformation decision making?

## 11

How can I access the non-legal skills and experience needed to effectively transform?

# THE GLS LEGAL TRANSFORMATION TUBE MAP

Critically, this Guide also introduces you to the [GLS Legal Transformation Tube Map](#), which is a powerful visualisation of an optimally performing IHL team that you can use as a reference to guide your own transformation journey.

The [GLS Legal Transformation Tube Map](#) (see [Part F: The Interactive GLS Legal Transformation Tube Map](#)) is an interactive tool and the most comprehensive depiction of the critical elements of a high performance IHL that has, as far as we can tell, ever been made available publicly. It is, even if we do say so ourselves, ground-breaking!

By being able to see the “entire” picture in granular detail IHL leaders can access a deep array of insights into the current performance levels of their IHL and readily locate efficient focal points for improvement.

The [GLS Legal Transformation Tube Map](#) breaks down the transformation process and its attendant complexities in a way that allows IHLs to visualise, plan and self-author, for their own IHL Transformation journey meaningful and verifiable goals.

# FOCUS ON DEMONSTRABLE OUTCOMES

This Guide explores how IHLs can utilise performance metrics to better demonstrate their value contribution to their business, and create a more powerful platform from which to operate and let their value recognition grow. (see [Part I: The Role Of IHL Performance Analytics](#)).

Performance metrics are becoming critical to every IHL- the objective being to translate the department's goals into measurable units that demonstrate progress and improvement – just like most other business departments.

Simply put, IHLs who succeed in ingraining quantifiable performance management tools into their day-to-day operations will produce impressive short and long-

term results. So this Guide unpacks the fundamentals of IHL performance metrics (see [Part I: The Role Of IHL Performance Analytics](#)).

This Guide will introduce you to a fertile source of performance data, a range of common performance metrics, and demonstrate the enormous insights available to IHL teams that take some simple and small steps to utilise that data.

# THE GLS LEGAL OPERATIONS CENTRE

Through the [GLS Legal Operations Centre](#) you can access 700+ tools, solutions and resources that can support everything from a “one off IHL performance project” all the way through to an entire “IHL overhaul”.

Throughout this Guide, references will be made to resources that are available to help you efficiently implement your transformation plan – this includes free tools, informative white papers and free trial solutions etc. Many of these are also available on the [GLS Legal Operations Centre](#).

# GLS LEGAL OPERATIONS CENTRE

Helping you optimise your in-house legal operations



## Legal Team Management

Performance manage your team



## Service Provider Solutions

Service Provider Solutions



## Team Capacity Solutions

Agile Legal Team Capacity Solutions



## Contracting Function Support

Entire contract function optimisation



## Know How Solutions

Know How Solutions



## Legal Template Solutions

Access the documents you need



## Legal Operation Tools

Essential Legal Operations resources



## Internal Client Management

Manage your internal client better



## Compliance Dept. Tools

Compliance infrastructure resources



## Legal Tech Support

Optimise performance with legal tech

700+ efficiency solutions available. [Click here.](#)

# EMBRACING LEGAL OPERATIONS

IHL leaders must realise that "legal operations" is not just about cost cutting and reporting metrics – it represents an opportunity to elevate the reputation of an IHL within its organisation, and to enable that IHL to work more strategically and effectively.

This opportunity can only be fully seized if i) the IHL Transformation plan is properly framed within the context of the specific organisation, and ii) the goals

of that transformation is properly communicated to the organisation.

To help IHLs deliver the correct messaging, this Guide communicates the foundational aspects of "legal operations" and has a particular focus i) on how to successfully implement legal operations into your IHL, and iii) the benefits of doing so.

## THE IHL FUTURE – EXCITING TIMES

The future of the IHL community is about stepping up and providing unprecedented leadership – which is increasingly possible if we use "**legal operations**" as a strategic tool to put into place a proper platform for IHL leadership.

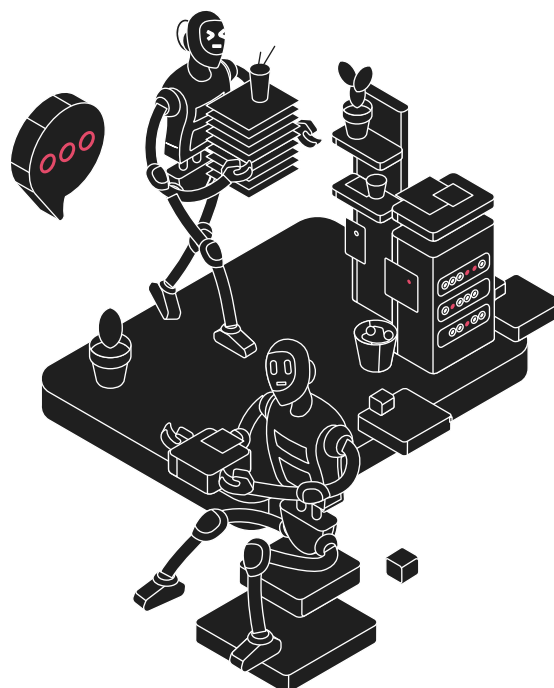
IHLs must respond to recent global turbulence and navigate their businesses into new markets, products and deals, whilst guarding against poor decision making by panicked business leaders and bureaucrats.

Perhaps the IHL community, with all of its power (it controls 60%+ of the revenue of law firms), can demand change that can address this challenge.

[Mark Cohen](#) notes that indeed, IHLs are increasingly seeking alternatives to law firms expect for a "**narrow band of high-value matters that remain predominately sourced to... 'law's one percent'.**"

At the same time, IHLs must help address the biggest failing of the legal industry to date – the fact that most businesses have no consistent access to external legal support at all – something traditional law firms rarely feel is a problem worth solving. ([see Part L: Global Legal Operations Communities](#)).

In the context of such abundant need, it is hard not to argue that the importance of the IHL community will grow manifestly in the years to come. For those with the correct perspective – it has never been a better time to be an in-house lawyer.



# THE GLS LEGAL OPERATIONS COMMUNITY



Finally, as you may have realised, the realm of legal operations, despite its transformative capabilities, is nascent outside of North America – something that we at the GLS Group are trying hard to address.

We hope you find this Guide useful enough, and legal operations appealing enough, that you join our growing legal operations community across Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East and Africa so that we can together address the challenges faced by IHLs globally.

We are not the only people with good ideas but we excel at working with great ideas and getting them to those that need them – so, let's work together – there is plenty to do.

**Law** *Rewritten.*

**WELCOME TO THE GLS GROUP'S ULTIMATE  
GUIDE TO LEGAL OPERATIONS**