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Chance



Microsoft

Strategic Partnership in Action

Clifford Chance, Epiq Advisory for Law Firms, and
Microsoft Build the Future of Legal Knowledge
Management

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Clifford Chance, Epiq Advisory for Law Firms, and Microsoft: Building the Future of Legal Knowledge Management

"The creation of our new Knowledge Bank is critical to our strategy of delivering the greatest advantage to our clients. Our work with Epiq Advisory for Law Firms and Microsoft allows us to curate decades of firm knowledge in a repository that enables the deployment of AI while respecting client confidentiality. Clients will benefit from the efficiencies and insights made possible by AI and other new technologies but underpinned by real specialist expertise and not just off-the-shelf solutions."

Matt Taylor, Partner, Global Head of Knowledge & Training, Clifford Chance

Executive Summary

Clifford Chance, a global leader in legal services, has set a new standard for knowledge management by partnering with Epiq Advisory for Law Firms and Microsoft to deliver a Microsoft-native, AI-enabled knowledge platform.

Moving decisively away from off-the-shelf solutions, Clifford Chance has built a custom, lawyer-centric platform within its existing Microsoft ecosystem. Delivered in six months, the solution introduces advanced features - such as 'Permissioned Search' - that ensure both knowledge visibility and strict client confidentiality. This strategic initiative enables Clifford Chance to maximize its Microsoft investment, accelerate innovation, and take direct ownership of its knowledge management roadmap and outcomes.

The Challenge

Facing increasingly complex confidentiality requirements and the growing importance of AI-enhanced workflows, Clifford Chance recognized the limitations of generic KM platforms. The firm's leadership identified an opportunity to develop a tailored, future-ready approach - one that would align closely with its operating model, risk posture, and ambitions for AI adoption.

With strategic support from Epiq Advisory for Law Firms and input from Microsoft experts, Clifford Chance committed to building a custom knowledge solution that enables the firm to shape its own roadmap, accelerate innovation, and define how AI augments its knowledge capabilities.

Strategic Decision

Clifford Chance chose to build its next-generation knowledge platform within the Microsoft ecosystem - not just as a technology upgrade, but as a strategic move to align knowledge management with the firm's broader IT, security, and innovation strategies.

By leveraging Microsoft 365, Power Platform, Azure, and Azure AI Studio, the firm delivers knowledge directly into the tools lawyers use every day while retaining full control over the platform's evolution. This approach, developed in close partnership with Epiq Advisory for Law Firms, provides a foundation for continuous innovation, agility, and precision, enabling capabilities tailored to specific practice needs and knowledge use cases.

Our Approach

Epiq Advisory for Law Firms, as Clifford Chance's long-term strategic partner, led the design and delivery of the new platform in close collaboration with the firm's KM, legal, risk, and IT teams, and with direct input from Microsoft's product and AI specialists.

This was a true co-creation process, grounded in real-world legal workflows and shaped through collaborative design workshops. The Knowledge Committee, practice leads, PSLs, and knowledge professionals played a central role in defining requirements, validating prototypes, and ensuring the solution was intuitive and valuable to lawyers from day one.

Despite the initiative's complexity, the platform was delivered on time and at pace, launching firm-wide with over 400,000 documents migrated, reclassified, and summarized to create a AI-ready content set. This curated knowledge base now underpins AI-powered capabilities, enabling generative tools to draw on trusted materials and reducing the risk of hallucinations or content drift. The Epiq Advisory for Law Firms structured, agile approach - combining legal domain expertise, Microsoft platform mastery, and user-centric design- ensured a solution deeply aligned with the firm's ways of working.

"This work demonstrates what becomes possible when a law firm chooses to own its knowledge and AI strategy and roadmap. Partnering with Clifford Chance and Microsoft, we have helped build a Microsoft-native platform that redefines how legal knowledge can be curated, governed, and activated through AI – embedded directly in the lawyer workflow.

Moreover, this solution creates a foundation that liberates Clifford Chance to innovate on its own terms, at its own pace, and with absolute confidence in governance and quality. It is a landmark engagement for us and a clear signal of how transformative, firm-led innovation can be delivered at scale."

Kieron Champion, Managing Director and Advisory Practice Lead, Epiq Advisory for Law Firms

Solution Highlights

The platform is modular, scalable, and fully Microsoft-native, designed to evolve with the firm's needs and support custom, lawyer-centric capabilities. Key highlights include:

- **AI-Ready Knowledge Base:** 400,000+ documents reclassified and summarized, creating a curated content set optimized for AI and ensuring generative tools use only trusted internal materials.
- **Embedded AI Capabilities:** Natural language search, summarization, smart tagging, and generative answers are integrated into daily workflows.
- **Permissioned Search:** An exclusive feature developed by Epiq Advisory for Law Firms that enables lawyers to discover knowledge while maintaining strict access controls governed by metadata-driven permissions aligned with client confidentiality.
- **Microsoft-Native Architecture:** Built entirely within Microsoft 365 and Azure (SharePoint, Power Platform, Graph API, Azure AI Studio), ensuring seamless integration, enterprise-grade security, and alignment with IT strategy.
- **Modular and Extensible Design:** Architected for continuous innovation, allowing new capabilities to be added and tailored to specific practices and knowledge use cases.

Results and Impact

The platform has been enthusiastically adopted across Clifford Chance, with lawyers praising its usability, relevance, and seamless integration into daily work. Early adoption has exceeded expectations, and the solution is generating significant momentum: practice groups and individuals are proactively engaging the KM team with ideas for new features, deeper integration, and expanded content.

This high level of engagement demonstrates the platform's immediate value and its potential to evolve as a dynamic, firm-wide knowledge ecosystem. By delivering a trusted, lawyer-centric solution, Clifford Chance has established a foundation for a more connected, collaborative, and AI-enabled approach to knowledge management.

A Strategic Model for Innovation

Clifford Chance's approach demonstrates how law firms can take control of their knowledge strategy - aligning technology with operating models, risk posture, and ambitions for AI. By building on a trusted platform, collaborating with strategic partners like Epiq Advisory for Law Firms and Microsoft, and focusing on lawyer-centric design, meaningful change can be delivered rapidly without compromising governance, security, or quality.

A Blueprint for the Future

This initiative marks the beginning of a new phase in Clifford Chance's knowledge management journey. By building a Microsoft-native, AI platform tailored to the needs of its lawyers, the firm has created a foundation for continuous innovation, one that can evolve in step with its strategic priorities, client expectations, and the rapid pace of technological change. The platform is already enabling new conversations across the firm about how knowledge is surfaced, shared, and applied, and it is opening the door to further development of custom-built, lawyer-centric capabilities.

The work has also helped redefine what "knowledge" means for the firm, extending beyond traditional legal content to encompass the full breadth of Clifford Chance's experience and expertise and enabling it to serve a wider range of functions across the firm. The platform delivers knowledge in context - aligned to a lawyer's work, role, location, and specific requirements - while drawing from a broader set of sources and formats.

Crucially, it surfaces knowledge directly within the tools lawyers use every day, such as Word and Outlook, eliminating the need for them to seek it out and instead bringing knowledge to them, in the form they need, when they need it.

With a trusted architecture in place, a curated and AI-ready content base, and a collaborative model that brings together legal, technical, and strategic expertise, Clifford Chance is well-positioned to shape the future of knowledge management on its own terms.

"Clifford Chance and Microsoft have a long-standing relationship rooted in a shared focus on innovation and delivering technologies that create meaningful impact for the firm and its clients. From being one of the first global law firms to deploy Microsoft 365 Copilot, to now exploring the use of AI to reimagine how the firm harnesses its valuable knowledge assets, the firm's work with Epiq Advisory for Law Firms reflects Clifford Chance's commitment to leveraging advanced technologies to deliver client value and enhance lawyer productivity."

Paul Barlow, Technology Strategist – Legal Services, Microsoft

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