
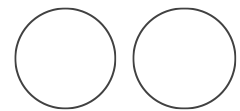




"It's all about the data" - AI-Ready Data: How Microsoft Purview Prepares Your Law Firm For the Future

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By: [Andrew Keller](#)

The legal landscape is rapidly evolving, with artificial intelligence (AI) poised to revolutionize how law firms operate. From automating document review to predicting case outcomes, AI offers unprecedented opportunities for improved efficiency, enhanced decision-making, and better client outcomes. However, the success of any AI initiative hinges on one crucial factor: *data*. AI algorithms thrive on high-quality, well-organized, and accessible data. Without it, even the most sophisticated AI tools will fall short.

With law firms beginning to realize the massive undertaking of data governance and quality for AI enablement, Microsoft Purview has the potential to provide a comprehensive framework that prepares your firm's data for the age of AI. This article will examine Purview's capabilities – and flag some of its potential pitfalls – for firms looking to adopt a cohesive data strategy.

The High Stakes of Data Management

Law firms are awash in data – client files, emails, contracts, case documents, research, and more. This “knowledge”, if properly harnessed, can be a goldmine for AI applications. But raw, unstructured, and poorly managed data is a liability, not an asset. Purview is a powerful solution that can act as the governance foundation to begin bringing order and clarity to your data estate.

The regulatory landscape is shifting, and client information management and audit requirements via OCGs are becoming more demanding. Combine these pressures with the desire to quickly leverage AI technology benefits, and firms find themselves with a complex risk challenge. If properly implemented, Purview can help in preparing your data for AI applications by ensuring that it is properly classified, labeled, and governed. This readiness can accelerate the deployment of AI solutions and enhance their effectiveness.

Data Governance: The Foundation for AI Success

Data governance is the bedrock upon which AI readiness is built. Effective governance ensures that data is discoverable, understandable, protected, and trustworthy. For law firms deploying Purview, this translates to several key benefits:

- **Data Discovery and Classification:** Purview automatically scans and classifies data across the firm’s entire data estate, identifying sensitive information like client details, privileged communications, and restricted content. This is crucial for both regulatory compliance, client requirements, and AI development. AI models need to be trained on relevant data, and Purview makes it easy to find and access the specific datasets needed for different AI applications while restricting visibility of protected content. Purview's labeling capabilities offer significant benefits for law firms by enabling precise data classification and protection. Sensitivity labels allow firms to classify data based on its content, sensitivity, or business value. This classification helps in applying appropriate protection settings, including DLP, encryption and content markings, ensuring that sensitive information is secure and compliant with regulatory requirements. Additionally, labeling facilitates better data management and governance by making it easier to identify, track, and control access to sensitive data across various platforms and devices. By leveraging Purview's labeling capabilities, law firms can enhance their data protection strategies, improve compliance, and maintain client confidentiality.
- **Data Mapping and Lineage:** Understanding where your data comes from and how it flows through your systems is essential for both data quality and AI development. Purview provides a clear map of your data landscape, showing its origin, transformation, and storage locations. This is vital for AI because it allows you to trace the data used to train your models, ensuring accuracy and identifying potential biases.

If an AI model produces unexpected results, data lineage helps you pinpoint the source of the issue.

- **Data Cataloging and Metadata Management:** Purview creates a centralized catalog of all your data assets, complete with rich metadata that describes the data's content, context, and quality. This makes it easy for data stewards and AI developers to find and understand the data they need. Instead of spending countless hours searching for relevant datasets, they can use Purview's catalog to quickly identify the right information, accelerating the AI development process.
- **Data Security:** Purview's Data Security Posture Management (DSPM) provides visibility into data security risks and offers controls to protect sensitive data. This is particularly important in the era of AI, where data security is heightened.

Unlocking the Potential of AI in Law Firms

By providing a robust foundation for data governance, Microsoft Purview can empower law firms to unlock the full potential of AI. With AI-ready data, law firms can:

- **Automate Routine Tasks:** AI can automate tasks like document review, legal research, and contract analysis, freeing up lawyers to focus on more strategic and complex work.
- **Improve Case Outcomes:** AI can analyze historical case data to identify patterns and predict case outcomes, helping lawyers make more informed decisions.
- **Enhance Client Service:** AI-powered chatbots can provide clients with instant answers to their questions, improving client satisfaction and accessibility.
- **Gain a Competitive Edge:** Law firms that effectively leverage AI will be better equipped to compete in the increasingly competitive legal market.

Purview Challenges

When considering Microsoft Purview for data management within a large, complex firm, it's crucial to acknowledge the potential pitfalls and challenges. Purview is broad in its functionality and use cases, and as such, it is positioned to be a jack-of-all-trades, master-of-none. Here are some key considerations:

eDiscovery Requirements:

- Law firms have stringent eDiscovery obligations. Purview's eDiscovery capabilities must be robust and defensible. Limitations in areas like deduplication, indexing of certain file types, and redaction reliability can pose significant risks. Most large firms are utilizing high end eDiscovery tools which have significantly more capabilities.

- The ability to handle large volumes of data and complex search queries is essential, and Purview's performance in these areas has been a point of concern.

Integration with Existing Systems:

- Large law firms often have a patchwork of legacy systems and specialized legal software. Integrating Purview seamlessly with these systems can be complex and time-consuming.

Performance and Scalability:

- Handling the massive data volumes generated by large law firms requires a scalable and high-performance data management solution.
- Concerns about Purview's throughput limitations and performance with large datasets have been raised.

Cost:

- Microsoft Purview's cost can vary significantly based on factors like data volume, data sources, and the specific features used. The new pricing model, which went into effect on January 6, 2025, shifts the focus to a pay-as-you-go approach for data governance features.
- There are additional charges for governed assets and data management activities. Key areas where costs are incurred include data map population, data map enrichment, data map consumption, and the use of Data Governance Processing Units (DGPIUs) for data health management.
- With a large data estate and real time scanning, costs can quickly add up.

In conclusion, while Microsoft Purview offers valuable data management capabilities, law firms must carefully assess its limitations and challenges, particularly in the context of eDiscovery and compliance. Purview offers many capabilities to enhance data governance, but it should be viewed as one tool in the toolbox and not a silver bullet single solution. Working with a qualified consultant can help firms overcome these challenges to fully leverage Purview's great potential for AI enablement. thrive on high-quality, well-organized, and accessible data. Without it, even the most sophisticated AI tools will fall short.