

## CASE STUDY



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## Optimizing the practice of law with CoCounsel



**BD&P**  
LAW FIRM

**Robert McLauchlin**  
CIO at Burnet, Duckworth  
& Palmer

Robert McLauchlin is the chief information officer (CIO) at [Burnet, Duckworth & Palmer](#) (BD&P), a Calgary-based law firm with a legacy that spans over a century. Home to approximately 130 lawyers, the firm specializes in banking and finance, business and tax law, litigation, real estate, employment, and a broad range of other practice areas.

As CIO, McLauchlin oversees IT services, records and information management, knowledge management, legal research, and corporate services. With a background as a librarian and archivist, he brings a unique blend

of information science expertise and technological insight — bridging the gap between legal knowledge and the digital workflows that support it.

His job is to empower the firm's lawyers and staff with tools and resources they need to succeed. He believes the firm is on the right path with legal tech from Thomson Reuters. The generative AI (GenAI)-powered skills in [CoCounsel](#), and integrated with [Thomson Reuters® Westlaw Edge Canada](#), and [Thomson Reuters® Practical Law Canada](#) put the firm at the forefront of innovation.

Westlaw AI tools are helping lawyers at BD&P conduct research more efficiently.



### Embracing the responsible use of AI

With the emergence of GenAI, McLauchlin recalls a wave of excitement — particularly around its potential to drive innovation within the legal industry and across the firm. “As the technology matured, we began to see the real efficiencies and competitive advantages it could offer,” he explains.

That realization marked the beginning of the firm’s journey with GenAI. They started with a proof of concept, introducing various solutions to different lawyers across different practice areas and use cases. Today, they’re focused on firm-wide adoption, ensuring that everyone not only uses the technology but also uses it effectively.

### Training is critical

Once the firm committed to CoCounsel, they made foundational and advanced training available to everyone. “The training includes advanced prompting,” says McLauchlin. “Prompting is so vital to getting the results you need when you’re using this type of technology,” he explains. BD&P also regularly reviews usage to identify who is using CoCounsel effectively — to uncover new use cases and share those insights throughout the firm.

### Legal research, summarization, and drafting support

Lawyers at BD&P are increasingly using CoCounsel in diverse and impactful ways. McLauchlin calls Westlaw Edge Canada with CoCounsel “the gold standard” for its ability to expedite legal research — and use natural language queries to synthesize complex information. “You’re no longer relying on a manual process,” he explains. “Instead, we’re leveraging the technology to make better use of the vast resources at our disposal.”

The firm uses CoCounsel for its strong summarization features. Instead of reading every word of a 50-page document, lawyers get clear summaries that highlight key points, helping them focus faster. “It’s also great at quickly building accurate timelines,” McLauchlin adds.

Drafting is another added benefit. Using CoCounsel to generate a skeleton draft saves time otherwise spent searching for and compiling relevant content.

As the technology continues to evolve, it’s helping lawyers at BD&P conduct research more efficiently. “Since many research hours traditionally go unbilled,” says McLauchlin, “using Westlaw’s AI tools allows our lawyers to redirect time toward higher-value, billable tasks that clients are actively requesting.”

### Why Thomson Reuters?

McLauchlin says Thomson Reuters was “the natural choice” for the firm. They’ve been using Thomson Reuters products for years, and he considers them the “authoritative source for legal research and information.” That level of trust now extends to GenAI “with strong safeguards around data privacy and solicitor-client privilege,” he adds.

McLauchlin points to the seamless integration of tools like CoCounsel with Westlaw Edge and Practical Law. This creates an intuitive, one-stop platform that draws from multiple trusted resources.

But what really stands out for McLauchlin is the investment Thomson Reuters is making in innovation and long-term development. “We know it’s going to be an ever growing and advancing technology.”

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