

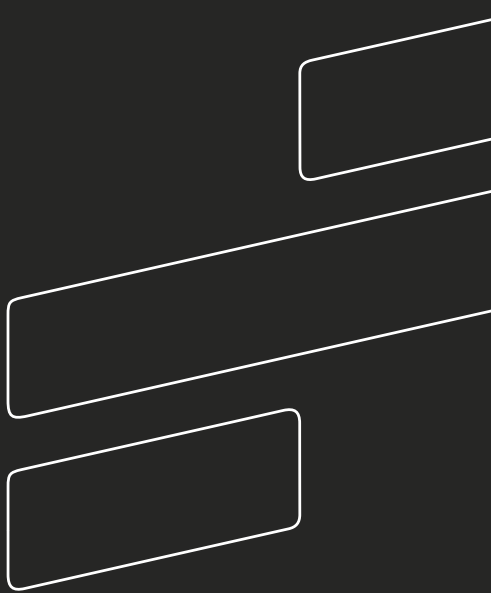
Modern Discovery Requires a Modern Operating Model

A Lineal Discovery Program



WHAT'S INSIDE

Explore why the future of discovery depends not just on AI and technology, but on the operating model that enables them to deliver measurable legal and business value.



Why the Practice of Law Requires an Operating Model

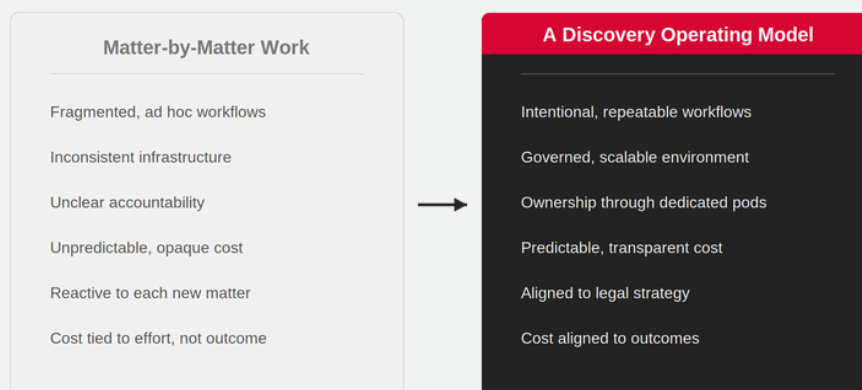
Lawyers still deliver legal advice. That has not changed. The identification and evaluation of relevant facts, followed by the application of legal judgment applied to those facts, remains the foundation of effective advocacy and sound counsel.

What has changed are the systems that generate, govern and mine the data that holds those facts. The ascendancy of AI in legal has, and will continue to have, a profound impact on how law is practiced.

Modern legal matters involve volumes and variety of electronically stored information that were unimaginable even a decade ago. Potentially relevant ESI (Electronically Stored Information) is generated in more ways and in more disparate systems than ever before. Communications occur across email, collaboration platforms, mobile devices, and enterprise systems. Data volumes grow continuously, and the complexity of preserving, collecting, and analyzing that information increases alongside it. At the same time, courts, regulators, and in-house counsel expect discovery to be executed with increasing levels of transparency, defensibility, and cost discipline.

This dynamic is not unique to legal. Across every major technology shift (cloud computing, cybersecurity, SaaS, and data analytics), organizations have not struggled because the technology failed. They struggled because their operating models failed to keep pace. Tools were adopted quickly, but workflows, governance, and execution models lagged behind. The same pattern is now emerging in discovery.

THE SHIFT TO A COORDINATED DISCOVERY MODEL



The shift from matter-by-matter work to a coordinated discovery operating model.

These pressures have led to a common but incomplete conclusion: that getting discovery right is primarily a technology challenge. Despite the many technological advances in the industry the proverbial 'easy button' has not emerged.

Technology is certainly essential. Platforms such as RelativityOne provide the infrastructure required to manage modern discovery data at scale. Analytics, artificial intelligence, and automation have expanded the ways legal teams can identify relevant information and prioritize review. This industry has spent more than two decades building or buying better discovery technology. But Legal is unique.

The constraint was never access to technology. It is the ability to operationalize it effectively. ***Legal advice has become a technology-enabled service.*** Handling modern discovery functions at scale requires coordinated infrastructure, disciplined workflows, integrated expertise, and governance capable of supporting matters across jurisdictions, data types, and timelines. Without those operating structures, even powerful technology platforms can produce inconsistent execution, unpredictable costs, and unnecessary risk, particularly if left to the whims and inconsistent forces of matter-by-matter work.

Law firms and legal departments will not fall behind because they lack access to technology. They will fall behind if their operating models fail to evolve and stay aligned to legal strategy and outcomes.

The Discovery Operating Model

"No race has ever been won in the first corner; many have been lost there."

— Garth Stein, *The Art of Racing in the Rain*

Discovery rarely fails because of a single decision. More often, problems emerge gradually through misalignment, fragmented workflows, inconsistent infrastructure, or unclear accountability. One matter runs in one Relativity instance. Another lives somewhere else. Three different review teams make three different privilege decisions. Nobody intended to create inconsistency. But over time, these gaps accumulate into rising costs, slower execution, and loss of strategic advantage.

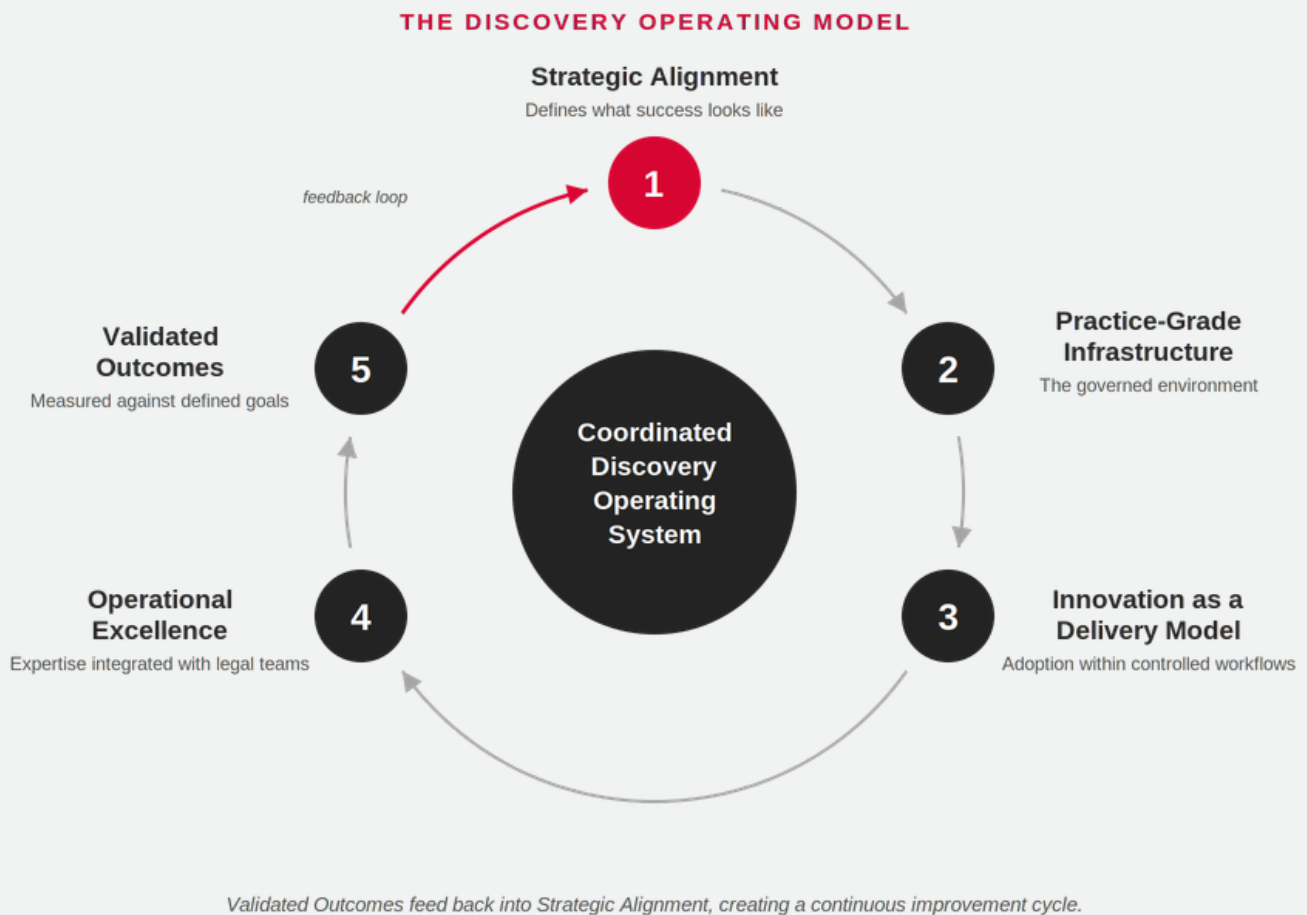
This is the practical consequence of operating without a defined model.

Successful discovery programs therefore require more than skilled attorneys and capable technology platforms. They require an operating model designed to coordinate how discovery is executed across matters, teams, and data environments.

This model must be intentional, repeatable, and adaptable by design. It must align strategy, infrastructure, innovation, execution, and measurement into a cohesive system that evolves as legal and technological demands change.

A modern discovery operating model rests on five core capabilities:

1. Strategic Alignment ensures discovery execution supports legal and business objectives.
2. Practice-Grade Infrastructure provides the governed environment required to manage data, workflows, and cost at scale.
3. Innovation as a Delivery Model enables the adoption of new technologies within controlled, defensible workflows.
4. Operational Excellence integrates expertise, workflows, and legal teams to deliver consistent results.
5. Validated Outcomes measure performance against defined objectives and create a continuous improvement cycle.



The five capabilities form a coordinated operating system for discovery, one that supports legal strategy rather than reacting to it.

Strategic Alignment: What Does Success Look Like?

"Strategy without execution is hallucination."

— Thomas Edison

Every successful discovery program begins with a clear definition of success. Strategic alignment ensures that discovery execution is grounded in the objectives of the legal organization it supports.

This requires more than general goals. It requires clearly defined outcomes, measurable KPIs, and a shared understanding of what the program is expected to deliver. What are the priorities? Which metrics will define success? Where should discovery create advantage beyond basic execution?

For some law firms, discovery may function as a profitable practice or firm discovery provider subsidiary. In this model, discovery execution must support advocacy while also generating revenue by improving matter economics, differentiated service, and driving repeat business through client satisfaction.

For other firms, discovery may operate as a shared infrastructure supporting litigation, investigations, and regulatory practices. Here the goal is to support practices with value-added services across matters, including discovery consulting, operational matter support, faster case response time than external resources, and standardized workflows. The financial model may be more based in cost recovery.

Corporate legal departments approach discovery from a different perspective. For in-house teams, discovery programs are often designed to increase efficiency and capacity within internal compliance teams, reduce risk, manage outside counsel spend, and improve visibility into legal exposure across the enterprise. Increasingly, legal departments also seek to use discovery data and analytics to inform broader strategic decision-making. When discovery is owned and coordinated at the enterprise level, it begins to generate compounding value through insight, scale, and reusable legal assets.

Although objectives differ, the principle remains consistent: discovery execution must be aligned to the goals of the organization it serves, with clearly defined and measurable outcomes tied to cost, risk, speed, and strategic value.

Practice-Grade Infrastructure: Building the Discovery Environment

"Systems run the world."

— W. Edwards Deming

Discovery does not operate effectively as a service. It operates as a system.

To deliver consistent, defensible outcomes at scale, organizations require more than a review platform. They require a practice-grade discovery environment: one that is reliable, configurable, and capable of operating across jurisdictions, data types, and matters without fragmentation.

At the center of this environment is RelativityOne. It provides the secure, scalable foundation required to manage modern discovery data. Within RelativityOne, legal teams can ingest, process, analyze, review, and produce large volumes of electronically stored information while maintaining enterprise-grade security and compliance.

However, RelativityOne is the core platform, not the complete operating environment.

Lineal extends this foundation by designing and operating a dedicated Lineal Cloud environment around RelativityOne. As a true value-added reseller, Lineal does not simply deploy the platform. It enhances the platform with integrated tooling, infrastructure, and workflow orchestration designed for high-volume, data-driven discovery.

A practice-grade discovery environment is designed to persist beyond any single matter. Infrastructure, workflows, governance, and reusable legal intelligence are retained as organizational assets rather than recreated for every engagement. Each new matter benefits from the experience, configurations, and operational knowledge developed before it.

Reusable legal intelligence encompasses far more than technology configurations. It includes validated workflows, review logic, quality control processes, templates, automation, and institutional knowledge, together with matter-specific intelligence such as privilege designations, privilege actor information, custodian profiles, coding decisions, productions, AI utilization, timelines, costs, and other operational metrics. At the program level, it also encompasses financial performance, resource utilization, workflow analytics, benchmarking, and continuous operational insights that improve execution, forecasting, and decision-making across future matters.

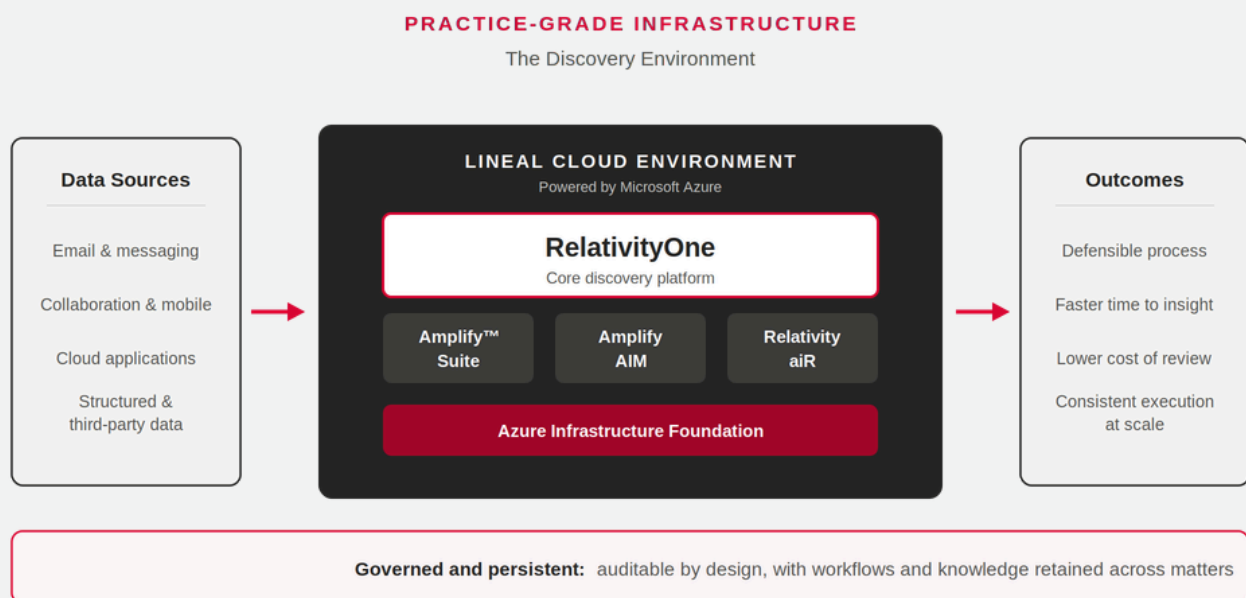
This environment combines infrastructure, governance, workflow orchestration, scope management and reusable intelligence into a single operating environment built for global scale, flexible configuration, and consistent execution. It includes:

- Dedicated Azure infrastructure, providing isolated, scalable compute and storage for data processing, analytics, and AI workloads
- Secure data ingress pipelines, enabling controlled and auditable data movement
- Orchestrated workflows that connect ingestion, processing, analysis, and review into a continuous system
- Embedded governance controls for chain of custody, access management, and auditability

Within this environment, Lineal's Amplify™ Suite and Amplify AIM (Automated Information Management) introduce a layer of intelligence and orchestration that extends the capabilities of RelativityOne.

Amplify enables early data triage, reduction, and contextual analysis, surfacing meaningful patterns and prioritizing high-value information earlier in the discovery lifecycle. Amplify AIM further coordinates workflows across the environment, integrating analytics, automation, and process control.

Relativity's aiR capabilities operate directly within this model, introducing generative AI into the review process. Together, Amplify and aiR create a layered approach in which data is continuously refined, from ingestion through analysis and into review, reducing volume, accelerating insight, and improving consistency.



The Lineal Cloud: a persistent, governed environment with RelativityOne at the core, extended by the Amplify™ Suite, AIM, and Relativity aiR.

Equally important are the operational controls embedded within the environment. These include standardized workflows across matters, defensible chain-of-custody management, and real-time visibility into data volumes, progress, and cost.

When designed and implemented correctly, this infrastructure absorbs the inherent complexity of modern discovery. It allows legal teams to operate within a stable, repeatable, and scalable system, one that can be configured to meet the specific needs of each matter without sacrificing control or consistency.

The result is not simply a more capable platform. It is a practice-grade discovery environment that supports consistent execution, global scalability, and more informed legal decision-making.

Innovation as a Delivery Model: Technology Alone Is Not Enough

"What we've done to encourage innovation is make it ordinary."

— Jeroen De Flander

Innovation has become a defining feature of modern discovery. Advances in analytics, machine learning, and generative AI have significantly expanded how legal teams identify relevant information, prioritize review, and develop case strategy.

However, the presence of new technology does not, by itself, improve outcomes.

In practice, many discovery programs struggle to translate innovation into measurable value. Tools are introduced, but workflows remain unchanged. Review models continue to rely on linear, document-by-document approaches, and financial structures reinforce legacy behavior by tying cost to effort rather than outcomes.

The result is predictable: technology is layered onto existing processes without fundamentally improving them.

A modern discovery operating model takes a different approach. Meaningful innovation requires coordinated change across three dimensions: technology, workflow, and commercial model.

First, workflows must evolve. AI and advanced analytics are most effective when paired with data-centric approaches that prioritize early insight and reduce unnecessary review. Techniques such as contextual batching, group-based decision-making, and iterative feedback loops shift discovery from a linear process to a dynamic system that improves over time.

Second, commercial models must support adoption. If innovation increases cost uncertainty or remains tied to hourly effort, legal teams are less likely to embrace it. Predictable, outcome-aligned pricing, such as defined spend or controlled per-document models, removes this friction and enables adoption at scale.

Third, technology must be applied within a governed and repeatable framework. Platforms such as RelativityOne provide the foundation, with capabilities like Relativity aiR enabling AI-driven review within a secure and auditable environment. However, value is not created by the platform alone, but by how it is orchestrated within the operating model.

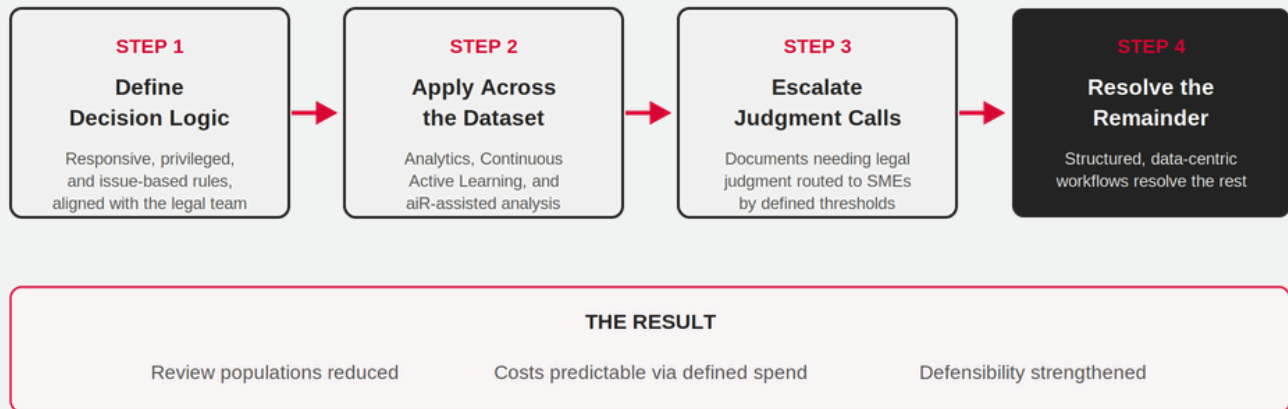
Innovation, therefore, is not the introduction of new tools. It is the integration of technology, workflow, and commercial structure into a new way of working.

Lineal's Amplify™ Review provides a clear example of this model in practice. Built on RelativityOne and incorporating Relativity aiR for Review, Amplify Review combines early data triage, structured categorization, and a workflow where subject matter experts are engaged where legal judgment creates the greatest value, by validating decision logic, resolving edge cases, and continuously improving the review model rather than reviewing every document individually.

Rather than applying document-by-document review across an entire dataset, Amplify Review begins by defining the decision logic that governs categorization: responsive versus non-responsive, privileged versus non-privileged, and issue-based classification. That logic is aligned with the legal team and applied systematically across the dataset using analytics, Continuous Active Learning, and generative AI-assisted analysis.

Documents requiring legal judgment are escalated based on defined thresholds. The remainder are resolved through structured, data-centric workflows. This shifts review from a linear, labor-driven process to a controlled system where legal expertise is applied proportionally and deliberately.

HOW AMPLIFY™ REVIEW WORKS



Amplify™ Review applies legal expertise proportionally: judgment calls escalate to SMEs while structured workflows resolve the rest.

Because Amplify Review operates within a persistent discovery environment, review intelligence does not end when a matter closes. Decision frameworks, validated workflows, quality controls, operational metrics, and other reusable legal intelligence can inform future engagements, allowing review programs to become progressively more efficient while maintaining defensibility.

The impact is measurable. Review populations are reduced before large-scale attorney review begins, costs become predictable through defined spend models, and defensibility is strengthened through transparent, auditable workflows.

In this model, innovation is not treated as isolated experimentation. It is embedded into the delivery framework, introduced in ways that are measurable, repeatable, and aligned with both legal objectives and financial expectations.

Sustainable innovation is therefore not measured by how quickly organizations adopt AI. It is measured by how effectively they operationalize legal judgment within repeatable, governed workflows. When technology, expertise, commercial alignment, and reusable legal intelligence operate together, innovation becomes a durable operating capability rather than a series of isolated technology projects.

Operational Excellence: Integrating Expertise With Legal Teams

"Technology is not what we seek, but how we seek."

— Gerd Leonhard

Technology accelerates discovery. Execution determines whether that acceleration produces value or risk.

Reliable discovery execution requires more than access to skilled professionals. It requires a coordinated operating model in which expertise is embedded, aligned, and accountable to the legal objectives of each matter.

Discovery cannot operate as a detached service function. Its effectiveness depends on integration with the legal team, working as a single, coordinated unit rather than as separate stakeholders.

At Lineal, this integration is delivered through embedded, multidisciplinary teams that operate in alignment with client objectives. These teams include forensic specialists responsible for defensible data identification and collection, analytics experts who structure and interpret large datasets, project managers coordinating execution, and review strategists guiding document analysis.

Rather than operating as external support, these teams function as an extension of the law firm or corporate legal department, aligned to case strategy, responsive to changing priorities, and accountable for outcomes.

This model is supported by a global delivery structure with centralized management, ensuring consistency of execution across jurisdictions and matters. Operating from teams across five continents and 11 data centers, Lineal provides follow-the-sun support that enables continuous progress on time-sensitive matters without sacrificing control or quality.

To maintain accountability and continuity, work is organized into dedicated pod structures. Each pod is responsible for defined scopes of work and remains consistent across the lifecycle of a matter or program. This ensures ownership, reduces handoffs, and preserves institutional knowledge and key legal data for reuse as matters evolve.

The result is a delivery model where expertise is not applied generically, but integrated deliberately, bringing the right SMEs into the right decisions at the right time.

When executed effectively, this approach allows discovery to operate as a coordinated system aligned with legal strategy. It enables faster response to changing case dynamics, improves consistency across matters, and strengthens defensibility through disciplined execution.

Operational excellence therefore reflects not only the strength of the technology platform, but the structure, integration, and accountability of the teams executing the work.

Validated Outcomes: Measuring What Matters

"What gets measured gets managed."

— Peter Drucker

The ultimate purpose of a discovery operating model is not simply to execute tasks efficiently. It is to deliver measurable results aligned with the objectives defined during strategic alignment.

Validated outcomes provide the mechanism for determining whether those objectives are being achieved, and where they are not. They establish a continuous feedback loop that allows discovery programs to adapt, improve, and remain aligned with evolving legal and business priorities.

Success is not measured in a single dimension. It is evaluated across a range of outcomes tied directly to organizational goals.

Financial outcomes may include improved matter economics, reduced outside counsel spend, and greater predictability in discovery costs.

Risk-related outcomes may include stronger defensibility, improved auditability, and increased regulatory readiness.

Strategic outcomes may include deeper insight into case evidence, improved visibility into enterprise risk, and a stronger role for legal teams in broader business decision-making.

Equally important, validated outcomes expose gaps and inefficiencies. Where performance falls short, the model is refined: workflows are adjusted, assumptions are challenged, and execution improves.

Validated outcomes do more than measure success. They ensure the operating model remains active, responsive, and continuously improving, rather than static or reactive.

An Operating System for Legal Practice

The future of legal services is and will remain rooted in legal advice and advocacy. Lawyers will continue to interpret facts, apply judgment, and guide clients through complex disputes and investigations.

What has changed is the environment in which that advice is formed. Modern legal matters generate greater volumes of data, more complex communication patterns, and higher expectations for transparency, defensibility, and cost control.

Supporting effective legal practice in this environment requires more than capable tools. It requires disciplined, scalable systems that manage complexity while enabling legal strategy.

Discovery operating models provide that framework. By aligning strategy, infrastructure, innovation, execution, and validated outcomes, discovery shifts from reactive, matter-based work to a coordinated, scalable capability that improves insight, control, and outcomes.

This is not a technology challenge alone. It is an opportunity to build a more effective operating model for legal services.

Organizations that embrace this approach gain clear advantages: improving consistency and flexibility, while strengthening defensibility, and delivering greater financial and legal asset value from their data and legal workflows.

In doing so, they will not only enhance their current practice but help define how legal services evolve as AI continues to reshape the industry.

Build a discovery operating model with Lineal.



lineal.com

Data-Centric eDiscovery
and Managed Services.

Want more insights like this?

Subscribe to Our Monthly Newsletter

Get first access to more things like this!

GET MORE TODAY

