

SUMMER 2026 AI REPORT

Keep law *human*

How Consumers Feel
About AI in Legal
Services

LEX *Reception*

2026 OnePoll Survey | 6,000 Respondents



People still *prefer people*

Technology has revolutionized how the legal sector operates. Case management is easier, legal work is more efficient, and clients can compare lawyers instantly online. But, when it comes to client service, the results are clear: **people prefer people.**

We commissioned an independent survey with OnePoll, asking 6,000 consumers how they feel about AI in business and legal services, tracking the results since October 2025.

Our latest results show that the preference for people is only getting stronger. Consumers want to **keep law human.**



89%

of people would rather speak to a *real person* than AI when contacting a law firm.

Legal matters are emotional and complex. Clients want empathy, reassurance, and a sense of being understood. AI tools can't replicate these human skills, reinforcing the value of personal connection in law.

💬 When contacting a law firm, would you rather speak to a real person, or AI?

89%

Real person

5% 6%

AI Other



1 in 3

people would *hang up*
if connected to AI.

💬 If you called a business and were connected to AI, would you continue the call or hang up?



Many factors influence whether someone will choose to work with your firm.

Your brand, your reputation, reviews, experience, and your successes. But in a competitive market with high acquisition costs, law firms can't afford to lose a third of their potential client base because of one decision.

57%

say heavy AI use would
decrease their trust.

Trust is at the heart of every lawyer-client relationship. But once lost, it is difficult to rebuild. For law firms that rely on reputation and referrals, the AI-trust trade-off is an important consideration.

 If a business predominantly uses AI for its customer service interactions, how would this impact your trust in that business?

57%

Would decrease my trust

43%

Other

Only 32% of consumers trust an automated AI service to handle their law firm inquiry correctly.

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Clients understand that legal matters carry consequences.

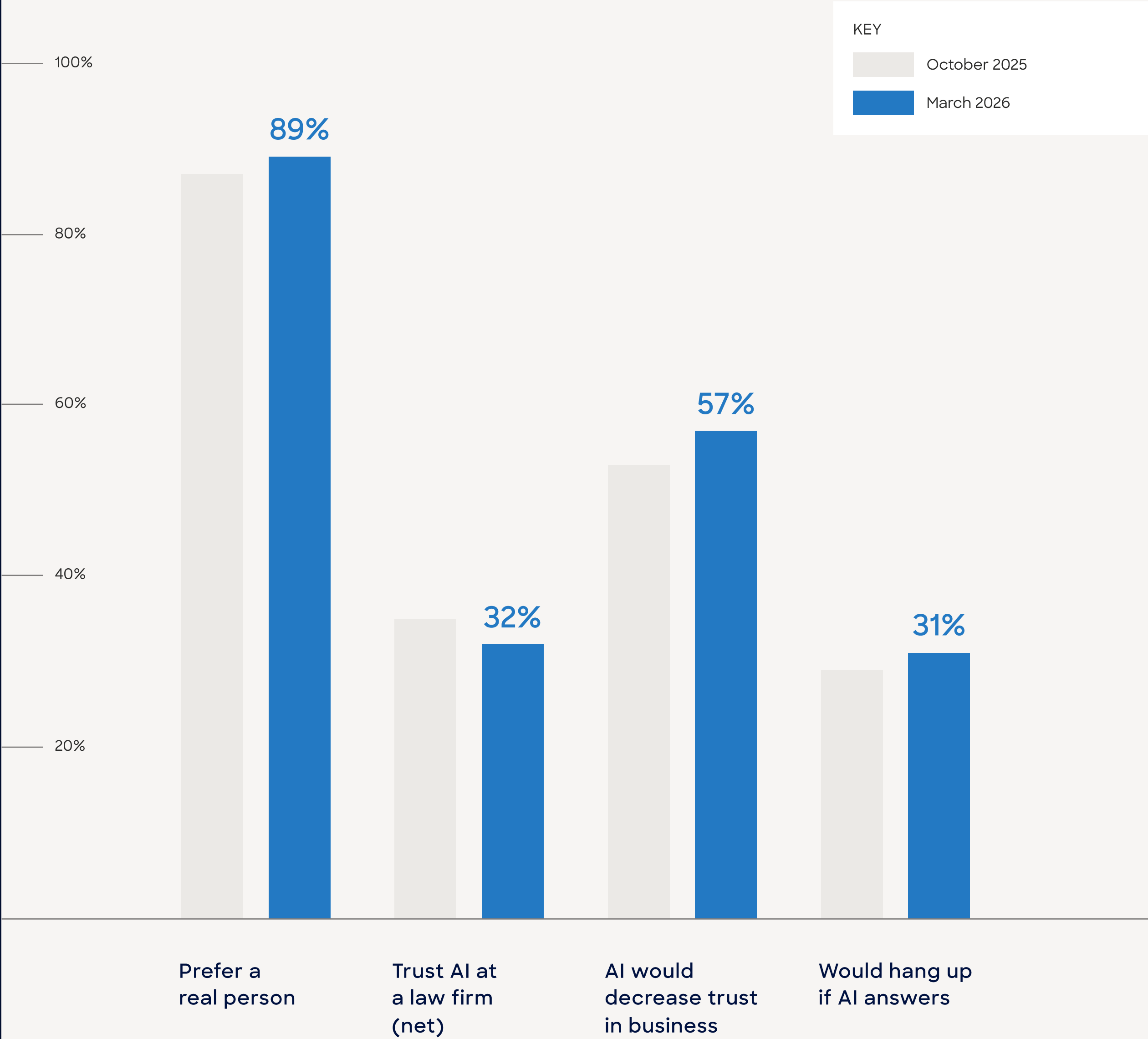
A missed call or a misunderstood message can have a real impact on their case. That awareness shapes how they want to be treated from the very first call.



Humans win, *case closed.*

Between October 2025 and March 2026, preference for human contact at law firms increased and trust in AI use at law firms fell.

2026 OnePoll Survey | 6,000 Respondents



When we asked people what a *real person* answering their phone call signals to them about a firm, three themes emerged.

2026 OnePoll Survey | 6,000 Respondents

39%

said it signals the firm is more trustworthy



45%

said it signals the firm is more professional



58%

said it signals the firm values its customers



Where AI *falls short*

We asked people what they found most frustrating about AI agents.

AI can't understand what I need	53%
AI can't answer my question	49%
AI can't resolve my problem	48%
AI gives inaccurate information	36%
AI lacks empathy	31%

2026 OnePoll Survey | 6,000 Respondents



82%

of people who encountered an AI in client services have asked to be transferred to a *real person*.

Have you ever requested to speak to a real person instead of an AI agent or Chatbot?

82%

Yes

18%

No



70% have done so multiple times.

Repeating details of legal matters several times is frustrating, and for some people even traumatic. Human reception can provide a better start for every case, leading to better outcomes for clients.

2 out of 3 would be more loyal to a firm that uses people – not AI – for all its service interactions.

2026 OnePoll Survey | 6,000 Respondents

Loyalty isn't just repeat business. It's word-of-mouth referrals, reviews, and brand advocacy.



55%

of people are more likely to leave a review after a positive interaction with a *real person*.



Only 8% say the same with AI.

Online reviews remain a vital tool for building trust and attracting new clients. The evidence is clear: genuine, human interactions are what prompt clients to share their experiences. For law firms, this means every first impression is an opportunity to create lasting impact.

 In which of these scenarios are you most likely to leave a review of a business?





LEX RECEPTION AI REPORT

85%

believe firms should clearly indicate when a consumer is interacting with an AI than a person.

81%

consider it an ethical concern if an AI tool claims to be a real person.

55%

more than half call it a "big" ethical concern.

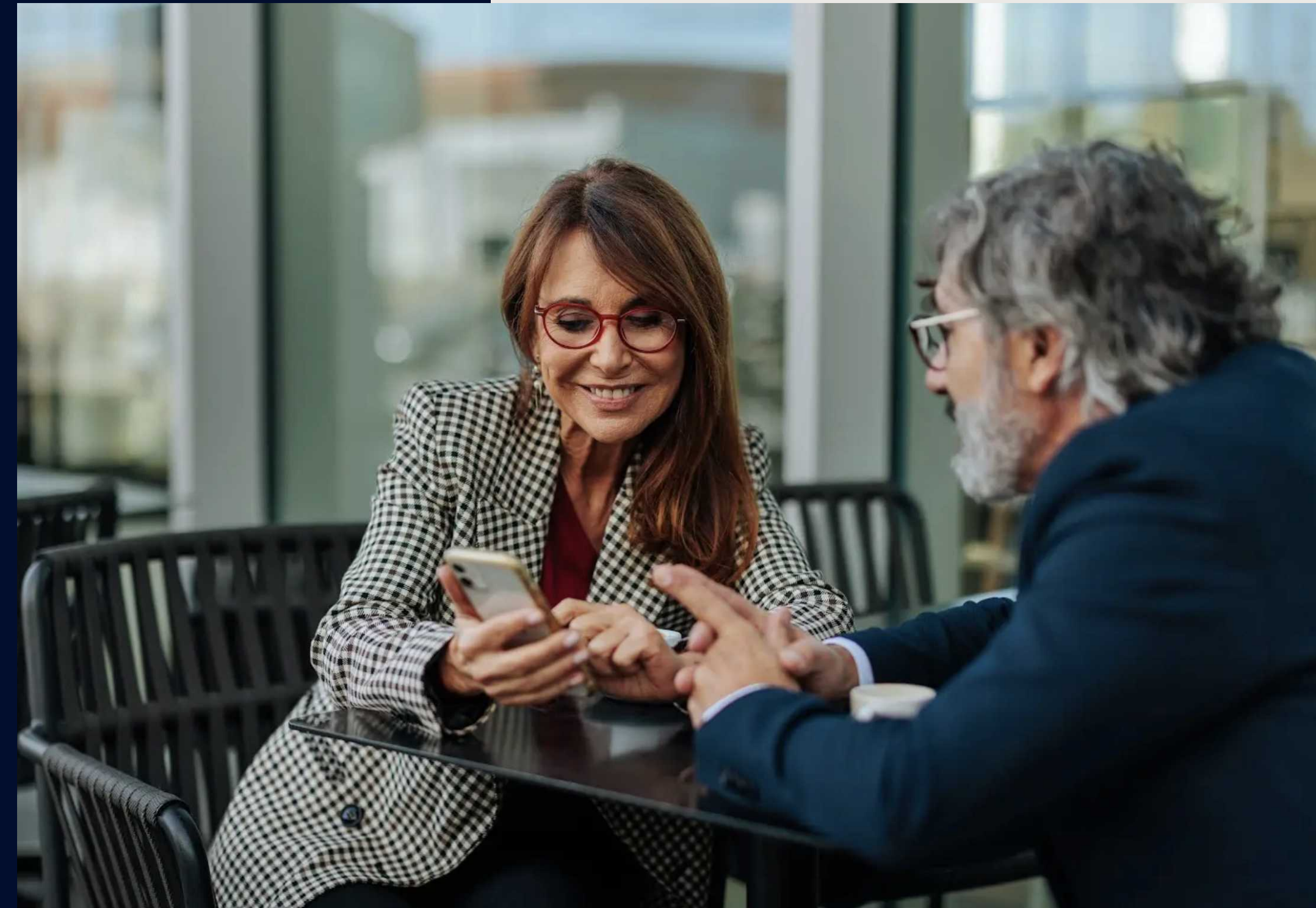


Public expectations are moving faster than regulation, but *the gap is closing.*

Several US states have already enacted laws requiring businesses to disclose when a consumer is interacting with AI rather than a person.

Most of these laws address written chatbot interactions, not phone calls. The requirements differ from state to state.

But the direction is clear. Regulators are steadily moving toward making disclosure a standard expectation.



What these results mean *in practice.*

Human preference is strengthening

01. Across both survey waves, the preference for human contact at law firms is increasing.

Trust in AI is declining

02. Trust in AI at law firms declined from 35% in October 2025 to 32% in March 2026.

The first call still decides the relationship

03. Nearly 8 in 10 people say they are most likely to choose a firm when a human answers the phone.





Firms that choose humans make law more accessible for everyone. By keeping people in the picture, you can help build a hopeful, caring legal profession.

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