State of Trademarks 2026

Balancing AI Automation and Human Expertise in Trademark Management

Insights from 230+ trademark professionals across corporate legal teams and law firms, exploring how AI is reshaping trademark management while reinforcing the continued importance of human expertise.

AI is Rising. Human Expertise Still Leads.

Trademark professionals are embracing AI, but not at the expense of human expertise. Our findings show a clear preference for AI that augments, rather than replaces, experienced legal professionals.

78% prefer a balanced mix of AI and human expertise

51% are actively exploring AI's potential

64% spend most of their resources on enforcement and dispute management

57% say managing enforcement complexities across jurisdictions is their biggest challenge

78% Balanced AI and Human Expertise

20% Primarily Human Driven

2% Primarily Automated

The Preferred Future: Human + AI

Rather than replacing legal expertise, organizations overwhelmingly see AI as a way to enhance decision-making, improve efficiency and support trademark professionals.

The future of trademark management is collaborative.
Organizations overwhelmingly favor AI that enhances human expertise, rather than replacing it.

Where Trademark Teams Are Today

AI adoption continues to accelerate, with more organizations actively exploring how it can support trademark workflows.

23% are not using AI

26% are actively using AI

51% are exploring AI

Scans this month
23,000 -0.03%

Exploration and experimentation with AI has increased by **10%** compared to 2025.

Enforcement has overtaken trademark search as the primary area consuming a legal team's time and resources.

The Challenges Have Shifted

As trademark portfolios become increasingly global, enforcement complexity has become the industry's biggest operational challenge.

- **57%** Managing enforcement complexities across jurisdictions
- **52%** Budget constraints
- **47%** Early infringement detection
- **32%** Limited monitoring resources
- **15%** Keeping up with regulatory changes

How Legal Teams Use AI Today

Trademark professionals are applying AI across multiple stages of the trademark lifecycle, from searching and drafting to enforcement support.

1. Trademark Search & Clearance
2. Drafting Correspondence
3. Workflow Support
4. Exploration & Early-Stage Experimentation
5. Enforcement Support
6. Translation & Language Support

What's Driving AI Adoption?

Teams are investing in AI to increase efficiency, improve consistency and strengthen trademark protection.

Efficiency – Automate repetitive work and reduce manual effort

Cost Savings – Maximize resources while improving productivity

Streamlined Workflows – Create more consistent, connected trademark processes

Better Decision-Making – Access richer insights to support legal decisions

Faster Infringement Detection – Identify potential risks earlier and respond more quickly

Law Firms vs. In-House Teams

While approaches differ slightly, both groups increasingly recognize the value of combining AI with human expertise.

Law Firms		In-House Teams
58%	Somewhat familiar with AI	46%
26%	Actively using AI	24%
18%	Planning increased AI investment	11%
57%	Prefer a balanced AI and human approach	62%

Despite different starting points, both audiences are converging around the same conclusion:
AI delivers the greatest value when combined with experienced trademark professionals.

5 Key Takeaways

Human expertise remains essential – AI is enhancing trademark management - not replacing experienced professionals

AI adoption continues to accelerate – More organizations are actively exploring and implementing AI than ever before

Enforcement is the industry's biggest challenge – Cross-border enforcement complexity is demanding increasing time and investment

Hybrid workflows are the new standard – The strongest preference is for AI to work alongside legal expertise

Investment in trademark technology continues to grow – Organizations are preparing for a future where AI plays an increasingly important supporting role

Download the Full State of Trademarks 2026 Report

Explore the full report and get industry insights, AI adoptions trends, and trademark management strategies shaping the future of the profession.

To get the full ebook, visit:
corsearch.com/ebooks/state-of-trademarks-2026