# Cleary Gottlieb acquires Springbok AI to strengthen legal tech innovation



Cleary Gottlieb has acquired Springbok AI, a London-based generative AI company, as part of a push to embed advanced data science directly into its legal practice. The move, announced in March, reflects a growing trend of law firms building in-house AI capabilities rather than relying solely on third-party vendors.

Springbok, founded by CEO Victoria Albrecht, is known for its proprietary SpringLaw platform. Its team of 10 AI engineers and data scientists will join Cleary to develop bespoke tools for legal workflows, including AI-powered summarisation, data automation and advanced analytics. Cleary managing partner Michael Gerstenzang said the acquisition distinguishes the firm by enabling it to tailor solutions to the specific demands of legal work.

Ilona Logvinova, Cleary’s director of practice innovation, said the firm is pursuing a dual strategy of developing internal tools while maintaining partnerships with external vendors such as Stockholm-based Legora. She described legal work as fundamentally “document intensive, where words are data points,” making AI central to efficiency and insight.

The move follows sector-wide trends. Simmons & Simmons bought legal engineering company Wavelength in 2019, later using its expertise to create tools that streamline complex reviews such as comparing large volumes of witness statements. Wavelength co-founder Drew Winlaw, now Simmons’ global LLM lead, described such acquisitions as vital for adapting quickly to breakthroughs like ChatGPT.

Demand for AI and data science skills in law is intensifying. Alex Brown, head of technology, media and telecoms at Simmons, described recruitment as “febrile,” with top firms including Freshfields, Linklaters and Slaughter and May hiring for in-house AI teams.

Yet traditional legal expertise remains central. Donna Harris, global director of legal recruiting at Cleary, stressed the enduring importance of legal judgment, leadership and resilience. Dan Hunter, dean of King’s College London’s Dickson Poon School of Law, similarly argued that lawyers should understand AI in practice without needing to be programmers.

Rather than reducing demand for lawyers, AI may expand it. Gareth Stokes, global co-chair of technology at DLA Piper, said automation frees lawyers from routine tasks, enabling them to focus on more complex and strategic work. Douwe Groenevelt, founder of consultancy Viridea, suggested data science expertise will become a decisive competitive edge in recruitment and strategy.

Cleary continues to invest in innovation through initiatives such as ClearyX, a platform combining people, process and technology to reimagine service delivery. The acquisition of Springbok builds on this by embedding AI into day-to-day operations, reinforcing Cleary’s position as a leader in legal tech.

As AI becomes more deeply entwined with legal practice, law firms face the challenge of integrating powerful new tools while preserving the irreplaceable qualities of skilled legal professionals. Those that strike this balance are poised to shape the future of responsible, AI-powered legal services.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.ft.com/content/0b89c694-e481-4e58-b8e5-c63c22a5ff00> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cleary-gottlieb-acquires-springbok-ai-302403010.html> - Cleary Gottlieb announced the acquisition of Springbok AI, a generative AI product development company focusing on technology supporting legal service delivery. This strategic move aims to integrate AI and data analytics into Cleary's workflows, enabling the creation of custom AI-powered solutions. The acquisition includes Springbok's proprietary platform, SpringLaw, and a team of 10 data scientists and AI engineers led by co-founder and CEO Victoria Albrecht. Cleary's managing partner, Michael Gerstenzang, highlighted that this acquisition sets the firm apart from competitors by allowing the development of bespoke AI solutions in-house.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/law-firm-cleary-buys-legal-tech-company-ai-bid-2025-03-17/> - Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton has acquired Springbok AI, a London-based legal technology company specialising in developing AI products for lawyers. This acquisition aims to bolster Cleary's AI capabilities by integrating Springbok's experienced team, including co-founder and CEO Victoria Albrecht and 10 data scientists and AI engineers. The deal's financial terms were not disclosed. Cleary's managing partner, Michael Gerstenzang, stated that the acquisition enables the firm to create custom AI-powered solutions, setting it apart from competitors. This move is considered rare in the legal industry, where firms typically contract with external vendors or develop internal AI tools.
4. <https://www.clearygottlieb.com/news-and-insights/news-listing/cleary-gottlieb-acquires-springbok-ai> - Cleary Gottlieb announced the acquisition of Springbok AI, an award-winning generative AI product development company focusing on technology supporting legal service delivery. The acquisition includes Springbok's proprietary platform, SpringLaw, and a team of 10 data scientists and AI engineers led by co-founder and CEO Victoria Albrecht. Cleary's managing partner, Michael Gerstenzang, stated that this acquisition enables the firm to create custom AI-powered solutions, setting it apart from competitors. The team will form Cleary's AI Acceleration team and develop custom AI builds for practices where workflows benefit from data analytics, AI-powered summarisation, automation in data gathering, and insights on that data.
5. <https://www.clearygottlieb.com/news-and-insights/news-listing/cleary-gottlieb-shortlisted-in-four-categories-at-ft-innovative-lawyers-europe-2025-awards> - Cleary Gottlieb has been shortlisted in four categories at the Financial Times Innovative Lawyers Europe 2025 awards: Innovation in Digital Strategy for the Acquisition of Springbok AI, Innovative Lawyers in Sustainability for advising on the world’s first-ever debt-for-climate-resilience operation, Innovative Lawyers in Responsible Business for pro bono representation of vulnerable individuals on death row in Tanzania, and Most Innovative Law Firm in Europe. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in London on September 18, 2025.
6. <https://www.clearygottlieb.com/news-and-insights/news-listing/cleary-gottlieb-launches-clearyx> - Cleary Gottlieb announced the official launch of ClearyX, a new platform designed to reimagine how legal services can be delivered using innovative combinations of people, process, and project-management discipline, augmented by a range of technologies. ClearyX builds on the firm's long history of fostering innovation and delivering value to clients, including developing the Discovery and Litigation Technology group. The team focuses on growth, particularly in the UK, to support Cleary’s global offices and clients.
7. <https://www.legaltechnology.com/2025/03/17/cleary-gottlieb-acquires-london-founded-product-development-boutique-springbok-ai/> - Cleary Gottlieb announced the acquisition of Springbok AI, a London-founded product development company that launched SpringLaw, a LLM-agnostic no-code solution enabling legal organisations to leverage generative AI to build out practice tool kits. This acquisition allows Cleary to create custom AI-powered solutions in-house, setting it apart from competitors. The team will form Cleary’s AI Acceleration team and develop custom AI builds for practices where workflows benefit from data analytics, AI-powered summarisation, automation in data gathering, and insights on that data.