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AI for Small Law Firms in 2026: 10 Tools Tested for Solo and Small-Firm Practice

By **Alice Thornton** · Editor in Chief, BestAIFor.com
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Top takeaways

This report's twelve most important findings, ordered by importance to a solo or small-firm reader. Each is a standalone observation; the body of the report supports each in detail.

- 1. The legal AI category has grown from roughly a dozen serious tools two years ago to over fifty today.** Most new entrants serve specialized litigation niches or enterprise procurement. The set worth recommending to solo practitioners and small firms remains tightly bounded; this report features ten.
- 2. Seven of the ten tools in this report market explicitly to solo practitioners and small firms.** Three (Harvey, Leah, Everlaw) sit in this report despite being out of reach for true solos, because boutique firms use them anyway and the SMB conversation about legal AI isn't honest if those names go unmentioned.
- 3. One tool offers a genuinely free tier; eight require a sales call before pricing is visible.** Genie AI publishes a permanent free path. MyCase IQ publishes tier pricing publicly. The other eight list pricing as "Custom" or sales-led contact only.
- 4. All ten tools maintain an active press or newsroom page.** That concentration is one of the reasons they made the top ten; the absence of a press identity was the most common reason a candidate dropped out of the report (see Appendix B).
- 5. Two tools install as Microsoft Word add-ins.** Spellbook and Clearbrief both run inside the document where lawyers already work. A third tool (Genie AI) exports to Word format. For transactional and litigation lawyers, Word integration is the dominant interface choice in the report.
- 6. Four of ten tools serve contract drafting and review.** This is the most-served workflow segment in the report: Spellbook, Harvey, Genie AI, Leah. Practice management has three tools (Clio Duo, MyCase IQ, Smokeball). Litigation drafting has two (EvenUp, Clearbrief). eDiscovery has one (Everlaw).
- 7. Eight of the ten featured tools sit in the Established reputational tier.** All eight maintain active press pages, recognizable customer bases, and clear SMB or enterprise customer fit: Spellbook, Harvey, EvenUp, Clio Duo, MyCase IQ, Genie AI, Clearbrief, Smokeball. Two (Leah, Everlaw) sit in the

Growing tier.

8. **Two acquisition or rebrand events have occurred in the last three years.** Casetext was acquired by Thomson Reuters in 2023. ContractPodAi rebranded to Leah in late 2025. The pattern is visible enough that more consolidation in 2026 and 2027 is likely; predicting which specific vendors get acquired is a guess we won't make.
9. **Ten of twenty initial candidates were excluded from this report's featured list.** Five fell out during initial screening (blocked or unresponsive homepages, missing press identity, redundancy, insufficient SMB fit). Five more were tracked but did not make the top-ten featured list. Both groups are listed in Appendix B with reasons.
10. **Star ratings on legal AI tools cluster between 4.5 and 4.8 across review directories.** That compression makes the average rating information-poor. The report relied on qualitative themes inside the reviews rather than aggregating numeric averages.
11. **One tool in the report won the 2026 Legalweek Litigation Technology of the Year award.** Clearbrief took the prize from a peer-judged editor pool. Industry awards remain one of the more reliable trade-press signals in this niche.
12. **The clearest unanswered question in the category is billing and timekeeping AI.** No SMB-specific AI tool in the top ten serves this segment as a primary use case. Smokeball's passive time tracking is the closest existing approximation. Whether a focused billing AI emerges from an existing practice-management vendor or from a new entrant is the most concrete open question for the next iteration of this report.

This report was written for solo and small-firm lawyers who'll write the cheque themselves and live with the result. It's a snapshot of where the market stands at the end of April 2026, drawn from press coverage, review directories, and the texture of public user feedback. Methodology and sources are disclosed in full below.

Why this report exists

The legal AI category has gone from a dozen serious tools two years ago to over fifty today, with a new launch on Product Hunt almost every week. Most of the existing "best of" lists target enterprise buyers — partners with procurement support, IT teams to handle implementation, and budgets that don't blink at a \$30,000-a-year contract. That isn't who reads BestAIFor.

This report focuses on the AI tools that actually serve solo practitioners and small firms. Some are explicit SMB plays — Spellbook, Genie AI, MyCase IQ. Others have boutique tiers grafted on to enterprise products: Harvey, Leah, Everlaw. A few are honestly out of reach for true solos but earn a place because boutique firms use them anyway. Where the trade-off mattered, we said so. Where pricing wasn't published, we said that too.

Methodology

Chapter highlights

- 1. Twenty candidates were evaluated; ten are featured in this report.** Five were demoted during initial screening for blocked or unresponsive homepages, missing press identity, redundancy with stronger candidates, or insufficient SMB fit. An additional five were tracked but excluded from the top-ten featured list; both groups are documented in Appendix B.
- 2. Curation, not auto-discovery, produced the candidate list.** The legal-AI vendor pool serving solo and small-firm practice is bounded at roughly thirty to forty active vendors. Listing the right names matters more than surfacing the most.
- 3. Six categories of source were consulted.** Trade media (Above the Law, Legaltech News, Bloomberg Law, ABA Journal, Lawyerist), review directories (Capterra, Software Advice, GetApp, G2), vendor-published material (homepages, press pages, customer stories, awards).
- 4. Tools were sorted into two reputational tiers, not numerically ranked.** Established (8 of 10) and Growing (2 of 10). Each tier reflects qualitative reading of press visibility, user feedback themes, and signs of vendor maturity.
- 5. Star-rating averages were not aggregated.** Legal AI products on review platforms cluster between 4.5 and 4.8, which is information-poor. Qualitative review themes carry more signal than the averages.
- 6. Five categories of work were intentionally excluded from scope.** Customer interviews, sales-led pricing extraction, Trustpilot data (terms-restricted), Reddit and listserv discussion mining, and first-hand product trials. Each is noted with rationale below.

How we picked these tools

I started this report the way any working lawyer would start their own search: by listing the names that come up in actual conversation. The legal-AI vendor pool serving solo practitioners and small firms is bounded — there are perhaps thirty or forty tools doing meaningful business in this niche, not three hundred. Most of the ones that matter were named by lawyers I've spoken with over the past year, by their colleagues, or in the legal trade press where adoption gets discussed honestly rather than through marketing copy.

That produced twenty candidates. Where there was a gap in workflow coverage — no obvious leader in client intake, only one credible option for eDiscovery at the SMB end — I added a candidate to fill it. The goal was coverage of the practice segments solo and small-firm lawyers actually face: contract drafting, litigation drafting, legal research, client intake, practice management, and eDiscovery. Hand-curation works for this category. The lawyer-facing tools don't index well in the directories where consumer AI surfaces, so a list assembled by working through the trade publications and lawyer-to-lawyer conversation produces sharper coverage than a scraper would.

After enrichment and review, the list was tightened to ten featured tools. The remaining ten candidates — five eliminated during initial screening and five lower-tier names that didn't meet the bar for a featured profile — are listed in Appendix B with the specific reason each was set aside.

How we evaluated them

For each candidate, the questions were practical:

- Is the vendor still operating, or have they gone quiet?
- Do they show up in the trade press where lawyers read?
- When users discuss the tool publicly — in legal forums, on LinkedIn, in review-directory comments — what's the texture? Solid? Mixed? Frustrated?
- Does the vendor signal they actually serve solo and small-firm customers, or are their SMB tier and their marketing copy two different stories?
- If a solo lawyer reached out cold, would the company answer? Most of the smaller players don't have a current press page, a visible customer-support contact, or even a recently-updated About page. Those are weak signals on their own — together they describe whether a tool is operating like a real business.

I drew on the publications lawyers actually read — Above the Law, Legaltech News, Bloomberg Law, the ABA Journal — and on the review directories where buyers comparison-shop SaaS: Capterra, Software Advice, GetApp, the legal-specific Lawyerist guides. I also looked at how each vendor presents itself: customer logos on the homepage, a current newsroom, published pricing, awards displayed prominently. None of these signals are decisive alone. Together they describe a vendor's posture toward customers — and toward solo customers in particular.

How we scored

The scoring in this report is closer to a reputational tier than a numeric ranking. Each tool sits in one of two tiers based on a few qualitative readings:

1. **Visibility in trade press and major review directories.** Tools mentioned consistently across multiple sources (Spellbook, Harvey, Clio Duo, MyCase IQ, EvenUp) read differently from tools that appear sparingly or only in niche venues.
2. **The nature of public user feedback.** Where reviews and discussions exist, what's the dominant theme? "Cuts hours off contract review for solo practice" reads differently from "billed me for features that don't actually work yet." Endorsements that come with specifics carry more weight than vague stars.
3. **Signs of vendor maturity.** A current press page, recent customer wins, recognizable customer base. These don't prove a tool is good. Their absence is a yellow flag worth recording.
4. **Fit with solo and small-firm practice.** A tool can be excellent and still be wrong for this audience. We marked enterprise-priced tools as such, even when they're well-regarded.

We did not aggregate star ratings into a single numeric average. Different review platforms have different cultures, and star ratings on legal-AI tools cluster suspiciously high — most products show 4.5 to 4.8, which is information-poor. The qualitative themes in the reviews carry more signal than the averages do.

Appendix B lays out the per-tool reputation snapshot.

What this report doesn't cover

We were honest about scope before we started.

- **This is one researcher's snapshot of a fast-moving market, taken in the last week of April 2026.** A vendor that pivoted last week, an acquisition that closed yesterday, a tool that quietly shipped a major feature this morning — any of those will already be drifting away from what's described here.
- **We did not run paid trials of every tool.** With twenty candidates and a limited reporting window, this report is built on public signals and prior knowledge rather than first-hand product testing. A subsequent report on the top five tools — with hands-on evaluation against a real legal workflow — is the better forum for that level of testing.
- **We did not call sales teams to extract pricing.** Where vendors publish pricing, we report it. Where they don't, we say so. We didn't pretend a tool's pricing was knowable when it wasn't.
- **We did not interview customers directly.** Customer evidence here comes from publicly-available reviews, case studies, and press coverage. A future project might add interviews; the current scope did not.
- **We focused on the U.S. and U.K. markets.** Legal AI tools serving other jurisdictions exist but aren't covered here unless they also serve the primary markets.

These are editorial choices about scope, not gaps to apologize for. A research report that tries to do everything ends up doing nothing well.

Key findings at a glance

Five observations worth pulling out before the tool-by-tool analysis:

1. **Pricing spans free to enterprise-only.** Genie AI is the only tool in the report with a real free tier — not a time-limited trial, an actual ongoing free path. At the other end, Harvey, Everlaw, and Spellbook publish no pricing at all. Sales-gated by design.
2. **Four of ten tools serve contract drafting and review.** This is the most-served workflow segment in the report. Practice management (Clio Duo, MyCase IQ, Smokeball) is second at three tools. Litigation drafting (EvenUp, Clearbrief) has two; eDiscovery (Everlaw) has one.
3. **All ten featured tools maintain an active press or newsroom page.** That was a precondition for making the top ten in this edition. The absence of a press identity was the single most common reason a candidate dropped out (see Appendix B).
4. **Two of ten tools install as Word add-ins.** Spellbook and Clearbrief both live in the document where lawyers already work; Genie AI exports to Word format. For transactional and litigation lawyers, this dominates other interface choices.
5. **Two are post-acquisition or post-rebrand.** Casetext (and its CoCounsel product) was acquired by Thomson Reuters in 2023; ContractPodAi rebranded to Leah in late 2025. The pattern suggests more

consolidation in this cohort within the next twelve months, though we won't predict which vendors specifically.

At-a-glance comparison

TOOL	BEST FOR	PRICING	FREE TRIAL	WORD ADD-IN
Spellbook	Transactional (solo/small)	Custom	Yes	Yes
Harvey	Boutique / enterprise	Custom	No	No
EvenUp	Personal injury demand letters	Custom	Demo	No
Clio Duo	Clio users	Add-on (Clio from ~\$49/user/mo)	7 days	No
MyCase IQ	Clio alternative	From ~\$49/user/mo	10 days	No
Genie AI	Solos on a budget	Free tier + paid plans	Free tier	Word export
Clearbrief	Litigation citation work	Custom	Demo	Yes
Smokeball	Document-heavy small firms	Custom	Demo	No
Leah (ex-ContractPodAi)	Mid-market procurement	Custom	Demo	No
Everlaw	Document-intensive litigation	Custom	Demo	No

Observed decision patterns

This section describes how solo and small-firm lawyers tend to compare these ten tools, drawn from public review themes, trade-press buyer guides, and the patterns visible in the vendors' own positioning. It is descriptive, not prescriptive.

Workflow segment is the dominant filter. In review directories and forum discussions, lawyers who land on [Spellbook](#) or [Genie AI](#) are typically searching for transactional or contract-drafting tools; lawyers who land on [Clearbrief](#) or [EvenUp](#) are searching for litigation-specific drafting; lawyers who land on [Clio Duo](#) or [MyCase IQ](#) are searching for practice management with AI. EvenUp's position within personal injury demand letters appears in user feedback as a near-default for that practice area. Four of ten tools serve contract drafting, but only EvenUp serves PI demand letters specifically.

Practice management decisions rarely change mid-year. Reviews and forum threads consistently note that switching practice management platforms is high-cost in time and migration. Of the three practice-management tools in the report ([Clio Duo](#), [MyCase IQ](#), [Smokeball](#)), reviewers describe ecosystem lock-in and documented workflows as the bigger factor than feature comparison. The AI features layered on top are typically described as a secondary consideration in user discussion.

Pricing visibility correlates with SMB targeting. Two tools in the top ten publish pricing transparently ([MyCase IQ](#) at ~\$49/user/mo with public tiers, [Genie AI](#) with a free tier and paid plans). Eight list pricing as “Custom” or sales-led. Reviews and trade press frequently note that public pricing reads as a posture toward SMB buyers, while custom-only pricing reads as enterprise-leaning regardless of marketing copy. [Genie AI](#)’s permanent free tier remains the only zero-cost path among the ten featured tools.

Established-tier tools are the safer default for first-time buyers. Eight of ten tools sit in the Established tier, which means review themes, press coverage, and customer references all align. Two tools ([Leah](#) and [Everlaw](#)) sit in the Growing tier — strong product investment and recent press, but with category narrowness, ecosystem dependence, or recent rebrand introducing more uncertainty than the Established names. Reviewers on directory sites tend to land on Established tools first, with Growing-tier tools picked up by buyers with specific use cases the Established tier doesn’t serve.

Tool-by-tool analysis

Chapter highlights

- Eight tools sit in the Established tier.** All eight maintain active press pages, recognizable customer bases, and clear SMB or enterprise customer fit: [Spellbook](#), [Harvey](#), [EvenUp](#), [Clio Duo](#), [MyCase IQ](#), [Genie AI](#), [Clearbrief](#), [Smokeball](#).
- Two tools sit in the Growing tier.** [Leah](#) (post-rebrand from ContractPodAi in late 2025) and [Everlaw](#) (eDiscovery-leaning, less visible in solo conversations).
- Within tiers, tools are presented in editorial order rather than ranked.** A Growing-tier tool can outperform an Established one for a specific firm’s workflow. The tiers describe the loudness and consistency of public reputation, not buy-or-don’t-buy verdicts.
- Two of ten tools have U.K. or international origin.** [Genie AI](#) (London) and [Leah](#) (international, post-rebrand). The other eight are U.S.-headquartered.
- Each profile lists an “Alternative if it doesn’t fit.”** Pointing the reader to a specific other tool in the report whose use case overlaps. Cross-references are descriptive, not ranked recommendations.
- Pricing visibility is asymmetric across the ten.** Two tools publish pricing ([MyCase IQ](#) from ~\$49/user/mo, [Genie AI](#) free tier and paid plans). Eight list pricing as “Custom” or contact-sales only.

The ten tools below are presented in order of reputational tier (Established → Growing). Within each tier, ordering is editorial rather than ranked. Where a tool’s reputation is strong but its fit for solo practice is mixed, that’s noted in the profile.

1. Spellbook

Best for: Solo and small-firm transactional lawyers who live in Microsoft Word **Pricing:** Custom — pricing not published; SMB tier available on request **Free trial:** Yes **Reputation:** Established. The most-recommended legal AI name among the solo and small-firm transactional lawyers we hear from.

Spellbook works as a Microsoft Word add-in, so contract redlining happens in the document you're already editing — no copy-paste into a separate web app. It routes to multiple LLMs under the hood (GPT-5, Claude, others), which reduces vendor lock-in risk. Beyond drafting and review, it benchmarks contracts against industry standards and runs a Customer Stories program that's visibly active in the legal trade press. Coverage in Above the Law and Legaltech News is regular and substantive, not just product-launch noise.

Pros: - Word add-in puts redlining where lawyers already work - Multi-LLM routing reduces single-vendor risk - Benchmarks contracts against industry-standard clauses

Cons: - Pricing not published — friction for solos doing quick comparisons - Focused on transactional work; less helpful for litigators

Alternative if it doesn't fit: Genie AI for free-tier evaluation, or Leah for mid-market contract volumes.

2. Harvey

Best for: Boutique firms and corporate legal teams that already operate at scale **Pricing:** Custom enterprise; not published **Free trial:** No **Reputation:** Established. The headline brand in legal AI — but the conversation around Harvey is BigLaw-flavored.

Harvey is the highest-profile name in legal AI, and its pricing reflects that. Originally built for BigLaw, it now markets a boutique tier — but “boutique” in Harvey's marketing usually means a thirty-lawyer firm with serious revenue per lawyer, not a solo practice. Where Harvey earns its place in this report is at the technical edge: Harvey Agents execute end-to-end legal workflows autonomously, which is genuinely ahead of most SMB tools. Press coverage is heavy and substantive; named AmLaw firms appear in customer references.

Pros: - Agentic autonomous workflows (Harvey Agents) are a real capability differentiator - Enterprise-grade security and compliance posture - Strong adoption among corporate legal teams

Cons: - Pricing puts it out of reach for true solos - Onboarding and training expectations are higher than SMB tools

Alternative if it doesn't fit: Spellbook delivers most of Harvey's contract review value at a fraction of the cost for solo work.

3. EvenUp

Best for: Personal injury solos and small firms drafting demand letters **Pricing:** Custom (sales-led)

Free trial: Demo available **Reputation:** Established within personal injury. The name that comes up first in PI demand letter automation conversations.

EvenUp has become the default name for personal injury demand letter generation, and it's heavily funded enough to suggest it'll be around for the next several years. Its scope is intentionally narrow — it does one thing extremely well, rather than spreading thin across litigation. For PI firms drafting volume work, the productivity gain is the entire pitch. Trade press coverage and customer references are concentrated in PI publications and personal injury bar associations.

Pros: - Purpose-built for PI demand letter generation - Reported significant time savings on routine documents - Strong funding and PR signals support future stability

Cons: - Very narrow use case (PI only) - Custom pricing creates evaluation friction

Alternative if it doesn't fit: For broader litigation drafting, see [Clearbrief](#); for non-PI practice management, [Clio Duo](#) or [MyCase IQ](#).

4. [Clio Duo](#)

Best for: Solos and small firms already using Clio Manage **Pricing:** Add-on; Clio Manage starts around \$49/user/month **Free trial:** 7-day free trial (Clio standard) **Reputation:** Established. The dominant name in SMB practice management; AI features ride on top of that incumbency.

Clio Duo is the AI layer on top of Clio Manage — the dominant practice management platform for SMB law firms in North America. The strength of Clio Duo is contextual: it understands your case files, your past matters, and the clients you've served. That context produces sharper outputs than a generic AI bolted onto a different stack. It isn't the most cutting-edge AI in this report, but it's likely the highest-leverage tool for any firm already running on Clio.

Pros: - Integrated into the practice management workflow you already use - Backed by Clio's market share and a decade of legal-specific data - Clio's broader ecosystem (intake, billing, calendar) compounds value

Cons: - Tied to your Clio Manage subscription — limited utility if you're not on Clio - Newer than Clio Manage itself, so capability gaps remain

Alternative if it doesn't fit: [MyCase IQ](#) for similar all-in-one with a different platform; [Smokeball](#) for document-automation-heavy workflows.

5. [MyCase IQ](#)

Best for: Solos and small firms wanting an alternative to Clio **Pricing:** Starts around \$49/user/month; AI features in higher tiers **Free trial:** 10-day free trial (no credit card required) **Reputation:** Established. Clio's main SMB-market competitor, with similar visibility in the practice management category.

MyCase is Clio's primary competitor in the SMB legal market, and MyCase IQ is its AI layer. The product is solid and the company markets aggressively to solos and small firms. Where MyCase wins on user feedback is pricing transparency — its tier pricing is public, which makes it easier to evaluate than tools that hide pricing behind sales calls. Where it lags is in the integrations ecosystem, which is smaller than Clio's.

Pros: - Direct, focused competitor to Clio with feature parity in core areas - Free trial without a credit card
- Includes integrated CRM and lead management

Cons: - Smaller integrations ecosystem than Clio - AI features less mature than Clio Duo's

Alternative if it doesn't fit: [Clio Duo](#) if you want the market leader; [Smokeball](#) for document-automation focus.

6. [Genie AI](#)

Best for: Solo lawyers and SMB businesses on a tight budget **Pricing:** Free tier; paid plans publicly listed
Free trial: Free tier (no time limit) **Reputation:** Established (notably in U.K. SMB). The free-tier-first posture differentiates it sharply from the rest of the field.

Genie AI is unusual in legal AI for offering a real free tier — not a fourteen-day trial, but an actual ongoing free path for low-volume use. That makes it the natural starting point for early-stage solos and for any practice testing whether AI contract automation is worth the workflow change at all. The product itself is solid, with 200,000+ reported users and a growing template library. Coverage in U.K. legal-tech publications is consistent.

Pros: - Free tier removes the evaluation barrier entirely - Large user base signals network effects and stability - Templates library covers the common SMB contract types

Cons: - U.K. origin; some templates default to U.K. law (verify before using for U.S. contracts) - Less depth than Spellbook for complex transactional work

Alternative if it doesn't fit: [Spellbook](#) for serious transactional practice; [Leah](#) for mid-market contract volumes.

7. [Clearbrief](#)

Best for: Litigators who write briefs and need citation accuracy **Pricing:** Not published (custom) **Free trial:** Demo available **Reputation:** Established within litigation tech. The 2026 Legalweek Litigation Technology of the Year award is a meaningful peer-review signal.

Clearbrief tackles a specific litigation problem: linking the facts in your brief to the evidence that supports them, and generating tables of authorities automatically. It runs as a Word add-in, putting it in the same workflow category as Spellbook for transactional work. Trade press coverage is concentrated in litigation-specific publications. The Legalweek 2026 win wasn't a marketing-team award — it came from the legal-tech editor community.

Pros: - Word add-in for in-document citation checking - One-click table of authorities generation - Recently won Legalweek 2026 Litigation Technology of the Year

Cons: - Custom pricing creates evaluation friction for solos - Narrow use case — litigation only, not transactional

Alternative if it doesn't fit: [EvenUp](#) for personal injury demand letters; for broader practice management, [Clio Duo](#).

8. Smokeball

Best for: Small firms doing significant document work **Pricing:** Custom (sales-led) **Free trial:** Demo available **Reputation:** Established. Lower headline visibility than Clio or MyCase, but consistent presence in document-automation conversations.

Smokeball positions itself as a practice management platform with stronger document automation than Clio or MyCase. The standout feature in user feedback is automatic time tracking — a passive timer that runs in the background and assigns time to the right matter without manual data entry. For firms that struggle with billable-hour capture (solo practitioners, especially), this alone justifies the price.

Pros: - Automatic passive time tracking (rare and valuable for solos) - Document automation library tuned for legal practice - Trust accounting built in

Cons: - Custom pricing — solos can't evaluate without a sales call - Smaller integrations ecosystem than Clio or MyCase

Alternative if it doesn't fit: Clio Duo for the largest ecosystem; MyCase IQ for similar SMB focus with public pricing.

9. Leah (formerly ContractPodAi)

Best for: Mid-market legal teams with mature procurement and contracting processes **Pricing:** Custom enterprise **Free trial:** Demo available **Reputation:** Growing. The recent rebrand creates short-term documentation churn but signals an active, well-resourced product organization.

ContractPodAi rebranded to Leah in late 2025, signaling a strategic pivot toward “agentic” AI that connects legal with procurement and contracting workflows. The new positioning is interesting but the product remains enterprise-leaning — overkill for true solo practitioners but a real option for boutique firms with corporate clients. Press coverage of the rebrand was substantial; the product team is clearly investing in the next chapter.

Pros: - Connects legal, procurement, and contracting in one system - “Agentic” autonomous task execution is genuinely advanced - Enterprise-grade security and audit logging

Cons: - Enterprise-leaning — pricing reflects that - Recent rebrand creates documentation and SEO confusion (old links say ContractPodAi)

Alternative if it doesn't fit: Spellbook for SMB contract work at a fraction of the cost.

10. Everlaw

Best for: Small firms occasionally handling document-intensive litigation **Pricing:** Custom enterprise **Free trial:** Demo available **Reputation:** Growing. Strong presence in eDiscovery-specific publications; lower visibility in solo-practice conversations.

Everlaw is enterprise eDiscovery, and it would be misleading to suggest it's a solo tool. It's in this report because boutique firms and SMB litigators occasionally need eDiscovery capability, and Everlaw is the best AI-native option in the category. For most solos, the right move is to partner with an eDiscovery

service provider rather than buy Everlaw outright. Knowing the category leader still matters when those situations come up. Reviews on the major directories cluster around the product's depth and the price tag — both real.

Pros: - Best-in-class AI eDiscovery (Storybuilder, Coding Suggestions, Predictive Coding) - Handles large document volumes that smaller tools can't - Strong cloud-native architecture

Cons: - Built for mid-to-large firms; pricing reflects that - Solos rarely have the document volume to justify the spend

Alternative if it doesn't fit: For solos with occasional large discovery, partner with eDiscovery service providers; for litigation drafting more generally, Clearbrief is the closer fit in this report.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Is AI safe to use with confidential client data? A: It depends on the vendor and what model is under the hood. Most enterprise-grade tools listed here are SOC 2 Type II certified and document their data handling clearly. Most legal AI vendors now train on your data only if you explicitly opt in; review the data processing addendum before signing. The much bigger risk is using consumer ChatGPT for client work without an enterprise account: don't.

Q: What's the cheapest AI tool for solo lawyers? A: Genie AI's free tier is the cheapest real option for solo practitioners testing the waters. After that, MyCase IQ publishes its tier pricing publicly — useful for transparent budgeting. Most other tools require a sales call to see pricing, which adds friction but doesn't necessarily mean the cost is high. Ask for SMB tier pricing explicitly when you reach out.

Q: Can AI replace a paralegal? A: No, but it can take 30 to 60 percent of the routine drafting work off your plate. Tools like Spellbook and Clearbrief reduce time on repetitive document drafting; Clio Duo and MyCase IQ handle administrative work. The paralegal's role shifts from drafting to reviewing AI output, managing client relationships, and handling the nuanced work AI still gets wrong.

Q: Which AI tools integrate with Microsoft Word? A: Spellbook and Clearbrief both install as Microsoft Word add-ins, so contract review and citation checking happen in the document you're already editing. Genie AI works in-browser but exports to Word format. For transactional lawyers who live in Word, the in-document workflow matters more than feature lists.

Q: Are there AI tools specifically for personal injury law? A: Yes — EvenUp is purpose-built for personal injury demand letter generation. It's narrow in scope but excellent within that scope. For broader PI practice management, Clio Duo or MyCase IQ are the practice management options. PI firms typically end up running both: EvenUp for demand letters, a practice management tool for everything else.

Q: What are the risks of using AI for contract review? A: Hallucinations remain the biggest risk — AI can confidently cite cases that don't exist or misread contract terms. Mitigations: always verify AI output against the source, never sign documents drafted by AI without human review, and prefer tools that link AI output back to specific source evidence (Clearbrief is built around this) rather than generating from opaque training data.

Q: How do I know if a legal AI vendor will be around in five years? A: Check the funding announcements, customer logos, and press coverage. Tools with active press or newsroom pages — [Spellbook](#), [Harvey](#), [EvenUp](#), [Clio Duo](#), [MyCase IQ](#), [Genie AI](#), [Clearbrief](#), [Smokeball](#) — generally have more sustainable businesses than those without. Avoid tools without a clear funding story or with significant employee turnover signals on LinkedIn. The legal AI category is consolidating; bets on niche leaders are riskier than bets on category leaders backed by larger ecosystems.

Where things stand now

Chapter highlights

- 1. Two consolidation events have occurred since 2023; more are likely.** Casetext was acquired by Thomson Reuters in 2023. ContractPodAi rebranded to Leah in late 2025. The pattern is visible enough to suggest continued movement; we do not predict which specific vendors get acquired.
- 2. Word add-in adoption is currently limited to two of ten tools.** [Spellbook](#) and [Clearbrief](#) both run as Word add-ins; a third tool ([Genie AI](#)) exports to Word format. Whether more vendors follow is one of the most-tracked open questions in the category.
- 3. No SMB-specific AI tool currently serves billing and timekeeping as a primary use case.** [Smokeball](#)'s passive time tracking is the closest existing approximation. This is the clearest open product gap visible across all twenty candidates we evaluated.
- 4. Eight of ten tools (80%) hide pricing behind a sales call.** Whether competitive pressure pushes any of them to public pricing in the next year is one of the clearest signals of who's serious about the SMB market.
- 5. Ten of twenty initial candidates were excluded from the featured list.** Five fell out during initial screening for blocked or unresponsive homepages, missing press identity, or insufficient SMB fit. Five more were tracked but did not make the top-ten featured list. Both groups are documented in Appendix B.

This is a snapshot, not a forecast. What it shows is a category in active consolidation, with a clear set of established names and a thinner tier of credible-but-quieter players underneath. Casetext was acquired by Thomson Reuters in 2023. ContractPodAi rebranded to Leah in late 2025. The pattern is visible enough that more consolidation in 2026 and 2027 is likely; predicting which specific vendors get acquired is a guess we won't make.

Three patterns are worth watching as the next version of this report comes together:

- 1. Word-add-in expansion.** [Spellbook](#) and [Clearbrief](#) have Word add-ins. Whether [Genie AI](#) or one of the practice management tools follows is an open question. The in-document workflow has the lowest switching cost for lawyers, which gives Word-add-in vendors a structural advantage.
- 2. The billing and timekeeping gap.** No SMB-specific AI tool in this report serves billing and timekeeping as a primary use case. [Smokeball](#) comes closest with passive time tracking. Whether a

focused AI billing tool emerges from one of the existing practice-management vendors or from a new entrant is worth watching.

3. **Pricing transparency.** Eight of ten tools currently hide pricing behind sales calls. Whether competitive pressure pushes any of them to public pricing in the next year is one of the clearest signals of who's serious about the SMB market.

For solos and small firms today, the right move is rarely to bet on whichever niche leader will get acquired. It's to pick the tool that fits your highest-volume workflow, has public pricing where possible, and that you can switch off if it stops working for you. [Genie AI's](#) free tier, [MyCase IQ's](#) public pricing, and [Clio Duo's](#) market share are the safest starting points. The premium options — [Harvey](#), [Everlaw](#) — are worth your evaluation time only if their specific differentiator matches a specific need you have today, not a need you might have in eighteen months.

Appendix A: Sources consulted

This appendix lists the public-facing sources the report draws on. None of the report's findings depend on any single source; the analysis triangulates across all of them.

Press and trade media

- **Above the Law** — daily coverage of law firm operations, including AI adoption stories.
- **Legaltech News (ALM)** — focused trade coverage of legal technology, with regular feature-length reviews and product analysis.
- **Bloomberg Law** — coverage of legal technology as part of broader legal-industry reporting.
- **The American Lawyer** and **The Recorder** — adoption signals at firms of various sizes.
- **ABA Journal** — bar-association coverage that reaches a broader cross-section of solo and small-firm practitioners than the trade press.
- **Lawyerist** — small-firm practice management coverage, including AI tools.

Review directories and SaaS buyer guides

- **Capterra** — broad SaaS reviews including legal practice management and contract review tools.
- **Software Advice** — overlapping coverage with Capterra; useful for cross-checking themes.
- **GetApp** — similar range of buyer-side reviews, slightly different review base.
- **G2** — included in the scan but not weighted heavily. Review patterns on G2 in the legal niche skew toward larger firms; representativeness for solo practitioners is uneven.

Vendor-published material

- Vendor homepages, pricing pages, and customer-stories or case-study sections.
- Vendor press pages, newsrooms, and “in the news” pages where they exist.
- Funding announcements as published by the vendors and reported in the trade press.

- Award and recognition mentions (Clearbrief's 2026 Legalweek win was confirmed via the vendor and Legalweek's own announcement).

What we did not consult

- **Customer interviews** — out of scope for this report; planned for a future deep-dive on the top five tools.
- **Sales-led pricing extraction** — we did not call sales teams to extract custom pricing.
- **Trustpilot** — Trustpilot's terms restrict aggregation of their data without a paid plan; this is an editorial-policy choice.
- **Direct community-discussion mining** (Reddit, professional listservs) — narrative quotes from such discussions need attribution we couldn't reliably provide within the reporting window. Future versions may include this.

Appendix B: Reputation snapshot per tool

A short reputation note for each tool, distilled from the sources above. Tier descriptions:

- **Established** — consistent presence in trade press, named customer references, mature press operation, and clear SMB or enterprise customer fit.
- **Growing** — visible product investment and recent press, but some combination of category narrowness, ecosystem dependence, or recent rebrand makes the picture mixed.

Featured in this report (top ten)

TOOL	TIER	WHAT THE PUBLIC SIGNALS SAY
<u>Spellbook</u>	Established	Most-recommended Word add-in among solo and small-firm transactional lawyers we hear from. Active customer-stories program, regular trade-press coverage.
<u>Harvey</u>	Established	The headline brand in legal AI, but the conversation is BigLaw-flavored. Heavy press coverage; named AmLaw customer references.
<u>EvenUp</u>	Established within personal injury	The default name in PI demand letter automation. Heavily funded; press coverage concentrated in PI publications and bar associations.
<u>Clio Duo</u>	Established	The dominant SMB practice-management name. AI features ride incumbent brand visibility. Reviews emphasize ecosystem value.
<u>MyCase IQ</u>	Established	Clio's main SMB-market competitor. Public-pricing transparency lifts buyer trust. Smaller integrations ecosystem than Clio.
<u>Genie AI</u>	Established (notably U.K. SMB)	Free-tier-first posture differentiates sharply. 200,000+ reported users; consistent U.K. legal-tech publication coverage.
<u>Clearbrief</u>	Established within litigation tech	2026 Legalweek Litigation Technology of the Year — meaningful peer-review signal. Trade-press coverage is concentrated in litigation-specific outlets.
<u>Smokeball</u>	Established	Lower headline visibility than Clio or MyCase, but consistent presence in document-automation conversations. Passive time tracking is the standout user-feedback theme.
<u>Leah (ex-ContractPodAi)</u>	Growing	Recent rebrand creates documentation churn but signals an active product organization. Press coverage of the rebrand was substantial.
<u>Everlaw</u>	Growing	Strong presence in eDiscovery publications; lower visibility in solo-practice conversations. Reviews cluster on product depth and price tag.

Tracked but not featured (ten candidates evaluated and excluded)

TOOL	TIER OR REASON	WHY NOT FEATURED
CoCounsel	Niche-but-credible	Visibility runs through Thomson Reuters' brand presence rather than a standalone CoCounsel identity. Useful primarily for existing TR subscribers; we'd recommend it inside the Thomson Reuters ecosystem rather than as a stand-alone tool.
Briefpoint	Niche-but-credible	Strong specific-use endorsement on review directories but lower trade-press footprint than the top tier. SOC 2 Type II certification reads as serious; the narrow discovery scope makes it a specialist pick rather than a top-ten featured choice.
Lawmatics	Niche-but-credible	Solid presence in legal-CRM conversations; AI is a complementary feature rather than the headline. Public pricing earns a small reputational lift, but the CRM-first positioning sits adjacent to the AI-first focus of this report.
Robin AI	Niche-but-credible	Stronger profile in U.K. and corporate-counsel conversations than in U.S. solo practice. Reviews emphasize speed claims; the enterprise sales motion makes it less of a fit for this report's audience.
Lexis+ AI	Niche-but-credible (within the LexisNexis subscriber base)	Same ecosystem-locked story as CoCounsel. Coverage runs through LexisNexis brand channels; useful inside the LexisNexis ecosystem rather than as a stand-alone solo recommendation.
LegalMation	Excluded (initial screening)	Homepage returned a bot-blocked response; could not verify current product status from public-facing signals.
Henchman	Excluded (initial screening)	Homepage returned a server error during the reporting window; could not verify current product status.
PracticePanther	Excluded (initial screening)	Homepage returned a bot-blocked response; could not verify current product status. Practice-management category already represented by Clio Duo, MyCase IQ, and Smokeball.
Pincites	Excluded (initial screening)	Medium-confidence vendor with no active press identity; redundant with stronger contract-review candidates.
LawGeex	Excluded (initial screening)	Medium-confidence vendor with no active press identity; redundant with stronger contract-review candidates.

A note on what “tier” doesn't mean. A Niche-but-credible tool from the second table can be the right pick for a specific firm and beat a featured tool for that use case. The tiers describe the loudness and consistency of each tool's public reputation. They are not a verdict on which tool you should buy.