DiliTrust
Where **Legal** Leads

# **Your Legal Front Door** Is Only As Good As What's Behind It

***4 questions to test your approach and what needs to be behind it***

MATTERS | WHITE PAPER

# Your Legal Front Door Is Only As Good As What's Behind It

DiliTrust · November 2026

A sales director forwards an email with "urgent" in the subject line. Someone from procurement catches a lawyer at the coffee machine. The CFO's assistant sends a Teams message about a subsidiary contract. By Friday, the legal team has answered most of them, but nobody can say how many there were.

This story is often told from in-house teams. Requests arrive from every direction, and Legal has no view of its own workload, let alone a way to show the business what it handled.

The way the business reaches Legal is changing. This paper examines what a legal front door actually needs across both the channel and the data that supports it. Additionally, this paper provides a 4 question test for any approach, including the tools already in use.

> *"A request is where the need for that data starts. It's not where the data lives."*

**63%**

of CLOs expect flat headcount in 2026

ACC 2026 CLO Survey

**86%**

of GCs see Legal as a significant contributor; only 17% of C-suite agree

Thomson Reuters 2026

**60%**

of legal departments will use AI-driven intake by 2029

Gartner, May 2026

# Contents


Why the front door matters now 4

A request tells you who asked and why. The answer needs more 5

“Isn’t a shared mailbox enough?” 6

4 questions to ask of your front door 7

Frequently asked questions 8

About DiliTrust 9


**KEY FINDINGS**

- → 63% of CLOs expect headcount to stay flat in 2026; operational efficiency is their top priority (ACC 2026 CLO Survey).
- → Only 23% of legal departments score high on digital readiness. Gartner treats data quality as a prerequisite for AI intake to work (Gartner, Aug 2025).
- → By 2029, 60% of legal departments will use AI-driven intake systems that handle half of requests without human intervention (Gartner, May 2026).
- → A shared mailbox, ticketing tool, or AI agent alone cannot close the gap: the solution requires intake backed by entity, authority and contract data that Legal already holds.

# Why the front door matters now

Legal teams are being asked to do more with the same people. In the ACC 2026 Chief Legal Officers Survey, 63% of CLOs expect headcount to stay flat, and operational efficiency is their top priority (53%). The perception gap is just as real: according to the Thomson Reuters Institute 2026 report, 86% of GCs see Legal as a significant contributor to the business, but only 17% of the C-suite agree.

The way the business reaches Legal is about to change too. Gartner predicts that by 2029, 60% of legal departments will use "AI-driven intake systems that capture all requests and answer one-half of those without human intervention."

Answering half of all requests without a lawyer only works if the data is right. AI can draft, review and summarize legal work in seconds. What it can't do is tell you whether it's right. AI models keep getting better and harder to tell apart, enabling companies to switch between them as they improve. So the difference comes from what surrounds the model: the data it works from. A request is where the need for that data starts. It's not where the data lives.

Whoever owns that entry point shapes how the business reaches Legal. If Legal doesn't own it, the business will find another way in, including through tools Legal never approved.

**THE PERCEPTION GAP**

**86%**

of GCs say Legal contributes significantly to the business

Thomson Reuters Institute 2026

**17%**

of the C-suite agree

Thomson Reuters Institute 2026

# A request tells you who asked and why. The answer needs more

A request carries a name, a question and maybe an attachment. Often it doesn't even say which entity or which contract it's about.

To answer it well, a lawyer needs what the request doesn't contain. Who has signing authority for this subsidiary? Which board resolution approved the deal? Who signed it off, and when? What did we agree with this supplier last time?

That information already exists. It sits in the contracts, entity records and board decisions the legal team manages every day. It's just rarely within reach when the request lands, or kept current enough to rely on. So one person becomes the bottleneck everyone emails about signing authority. The contract waits, and so does the deal behind it.

> *"A front door built on top of scattered data just moves the queue somewhere more visible."*

**23%** of legal departments score high on digital readiness, according to a 2025 Gartner survey.

Gartner treats data readiness (accessible, high-quality and routinely maintained) as a prerequisite for AI intake to work.

# “Isn’t a shared mailbox enough?”

A shared mailbox can be part of the process, but tools have their limitations.

### A shared mailbox

| WORKS WHEN | THE LIMIT |
| --- | --- |
| Works until volume spikes. | Requests slip, nobody knows who picked what up, and there’s no data to show the CFO what Legal handled this quarter. |

*The channel can stay. What needs structure is what happens after the email arrives.*

### A ticketing tool

| WORKS WHEN | THE LIMIT |
| --- | --- |
| Knows who asked and when. | It doesn’t know which entity the request concerns or who can sign for it. That’s legal data: IT service desks weren’t built to hold it. |

*Structure without context isn’t enough for legal work.*

### An AI intake agent

| WORKS WHEN | THE LIMIT |
| --- | --- |
| Can answer some requests on its own. | “An agent that can execute ten steps… can also propagate an error across ten steps.” (Artificial Lawyer, Sep 2026) |

*Automating on top of unreliable data just makes mistakes faster.*

# 4 questions to ask of your front door

Before choosing a tool, test any approach against these 4 questions:

1. **Does it meet people where they already write?**
   If the business has to learn a new process, it will keep emailing your lawyers directly.
2. **Can Legal own and track every request?**
   Every request has an assigned owner, priority, status and record of what was submitted.
3. **Does the request lead into the work?**
   A question that becomes a matter or touches a contract should move into that work without being retyped.
4. **Is the data yours?**
   The requests, decisions and documents your team builds up should stay under your control, auditable and portable, separate from whichever AI model you use this year.

---

**Intake in DiliTrust Matter Management** is built around the first three. The business emails a dedicated legal address, no account to create. Each email becomes a structured request, and the sender gets a confirmation. Legal assigns it, sets priority and status, and replies from the same thread. Attachments can be saved to contracts; a request that turns into real work becomes a matter.

On the fourth question: No model training is performed by DiliTrust without the customer's consent. Our model partners do not use customer data to train their models, and customer data is not shared across clients. Intake is included in Matter Management, and your admin activates it under the Requests menu. DiliTrust also covers your entities and delegations, and your board meetings and resolutions.

**Book a demo →** **Discover Intake →**

# Frequently asked questions

### Q1 What is a legal front door?

A legal front door is the entry point the business uses to ask the in-house legal team for help. It works when Legal can see, own and track every request that comes through it, and when each request connects to the work that follows, such as a matter or a contract.

### Q2 Is a shared mailbox enough for legal intake?

At low volume, sometimes. As requests grow, a shared mailbox loses track of who owns what and leaves no data on what Legal handled. Most teams keep email as the channel, where people already write, and add structure to what happens after the email arrives.

### Q3 What information does Legal need to answer a business request?

More than the request contains. Beyond who asked and why, a lawyer often needs to know which entity is involved, which contract applies, who has signing authority and which board decision covers the deal. That information usually sits in the legal team's own contract, entity and governance data.

### Q4 Can AI answer legal requests without a lawyer?

Gartner predicts that by 2029, 60% of legal departments will use AI-driven intake systems that answer half of requests without human intervention. That only works when the AI draws on current, reliable legal data. On top of scattered or outdated data, automation repeats errors faster.

### Q5 How does Intake work in DiliTrust Matter Management?

Business users email a dedicated legal address, no DiliTrust account needed. Each email becomes a structured request and the sender gets a confirmation. The legal team assigns it, sets priority and status, replies from the email thread, saves attachments to contracts and can create a matter from the request. Intake is included in Matter Management and activated by your admin.

**The front door decides how the business experiences Legal. What stands behind it decides whether Legal can answer and prove it did.**

# About DiliTrust

DiliTrust is the Legal Operating System that in-house legal and governance teams use to run their work. It keeps a company's entities, contracts, matters and board decisions, and the documents behind them, accurate and under the legal team's control. Their people and Lini, DiliTrust's AI, work from that same data within each capability. Built in Europe, where legal and governance standards are among the most demanding in the world, DiliTrust serves 2,500+ organizations in 60+ countries.


**WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS GUIDE**

**We'd love to hear from you!**

Visit our website to download more content like this or get in touch with our team to discover our suite.

**Visit dilitrust.com →**

DILITRUST


**DiliTrust. Where Legal Leads.**

© 2026 DiliTrust | All rights reserved | PUBLIC