

Will disruption make us better?



Disruption isn't new – it just feels that way. The wheel, the printing press, even electronic land registration were disruptions to the status quo. What's different this time? The relentless pace and the wide breadth of transformation. As we have all observed, change is constant and is taking place in all areas of our professional and personal lives.

Research shows that anxiety is at unprecedentedly high levels in our youth. The normal stress of entering the workplace for the first time is now increased by the weight of not knowing if a career choice will even exist upon graduation, let alone be one that is fulfilling. Plus, any failures are more public by being amplified instantly over the digital infoway.

The integration of technology may mean that different skills increase in value. Qualitative as well as quantitative skills; emotional paired with intellectual abilities; contextual along with logical skills may be what gives one a leg up in a world of disruption. Facts are easily available and quickly retrieved – now delivering services and results faster and cheaper is upending not only our profession but our world.

The legal community is grappling with challenges and opportunities and even though there is pain in growth, a more accessible, efficient future is beckoning us all. In terms of the legal profession, we've seen incremental updates. Many of these updates are outlined in our feature article entitled "Perspectives on the future of law: How the profession should respond to major disruptions." What will be the big win from these changes? Perhaps, increasing affordability for clients which could lead to more people having access to the services of a professional advocate.

Continuing to be open to new ideas and new approaches will keep the journey interesting, challenging and always improving. Some changes will be keepers while others may turn out to be the Betamax of our profession. The challenge will be knowing which is which.

Kathleen A. Waters
President and CEO