

Meet Robin AI, the AI copilot helping law move at the speed of business

As part of our quick founder questions series - or QFQs - we spoke to Richard Robinson, CEO and cofounder of Robin AI about leveraging AI to help legal teams move faster, ChatGPT and the importance of ambition.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Before I launched Robin AI, I was a corporate lawyer. Increasingly I came to realise that a huge proportion of my time and that of my colleagues was being taken up by repetitive tasks - reading contracts, researching case law etc and I was spending very little time on really valuable legal advice. After this 'lightbulb' moment, I partnered with Dr. James Clough (Robin AI Co-founder and now CTO) - someone I met during university when we competed against each other in debate competitions. James not only has a Masters and PhD in Theoretical Physics, but is also a software engineer and machine learning expert, and together we created Robin AI.

Tell me about the business - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

Robin AI is building the AI copilot for law, leveraging the latest generative AI technologies to automate repetitive tasks, allowing legal teams to move faster, save money and spend more time strategically. Starting initially with contracts, the Robin copilot can significantly improve the

review process as well as making it easier to track and find information across large signed contract repositories.

We have taken a unique approach that combines a Large Language Model (LLM), Anthropic's Claude, with our proprietary contract data and our own machine learning approach, as well as our team of in-house legal experts so that the copilot can understand contracts to high levels of accuracy. Some of our high-profile customers include magic circle law firm Clifford Chance, impact investor Blue Earth Capital and the investment firm AlbaCore Capital.

How has the business evolved since its launch?

The biggest change since we launched in 2019 has been the explosion into the public consciousness of Large Language Models (LLMs), most famously ChatGPT. This has had two main effects on our business. Firstly, it has massively elevated interest in the application of generative AI in business, including law. Customers across the board are now far more interested in how they should be using this technology. Secondly, we have been able to combine the machine learning work we already had in place and our proprietary contract data with a LLM to really supercharge our product. We were thrilled to be a launch partner for Anthropic's Claude LLM and were able to quickly integrate it into our system.

Tell us about the working culture at Robin AI

There are probably few companies that count both software engineers and lawyers as their two biggest functions. But everyone at Robin AI shares a passion for taking on and solving complex problems and ultimately helping to change one of the world's largest and oldest industries with new technology. It's also been really important to me to

build a diverse team from the outset rather than simply sticking a bunch of diversity targets on our website. We're still a small company, and have lots more to do, but I'm really happy that nearly half (46%) of our workforce are women and 31% are from underrepresented communities.

How are you funded?

Like most startups, Robin AI was a bootstrapped company in its early days. Since then, we've welcomed venture capital and angel investment. In the first half of 2023, we secured \$10.5M Series A funding. This was led by Plural, the VC fund launched by Wise's Taavet Hinrikus and Songkick's Ian Hogarth, and included angel investors such as Monzo founder Tom Blomfield.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

The biggest challenge for us was to build an AI system that understands contracts. LLMs have done an incredible job at reading and understanding documents but they do not understand the terms of contracts specifically. Without this, it would be impossible to achieve the levels of accuracy that any product used by lawyers would need. We overcame this challenge by combining proprietary contract data from over 4.5 million legal documents with our own machine learning techniques so that the LLM would be able to interpret and understand contracts. We also built the capability for customers to load their own playbooks into the system so that when our AI copilot suggests edits to a contract it does so to that customer's individual negotiating approach. And finally, we leveraged our team of 40+ in-house legal professionals to continually review the output of the AI system, providing a feedback loop to train and improve it.

How does Robin AI answer an unmet need?

A recent study we commissioned of General Counsels in the US found that the majority of their legal teams spent between 31 and 40% of their time on routine contract review. That's a significant amount of time. Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) systems have existed for a number of years but their uptake has been limited due to their expense and complexity. Generative AI offers huge potential to support lawyers in a much more seamless and easy-to-use way. Our AI contract copilot can cut the time it takes to review a contract by 82% on average, freeing up time and energy to be spent on more strategic tasks.

What's in store for the future?

Goldman Sachs reported in July this year that 44% of legal tasks could be automated by AI. We at Robin AI believe it could be more and that we're just the company to make this possible. Our vision is to build the AI platform for the legal sector - a service that deeply understands every aspect of the legal function, from drafting contracts, researching case law to explaining legal concepts - our AI will help people tackle every legal task. In doing so, we believe we can make legal work faster, cheaper and more accessible for everyone.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Be ambitious. The most ambitious companies are the hardest to build and finance, but they're also the hardest to replicate or compete with. Ambitious companies attract ambitious talent, ambitious capital and - when they succeed - they make the biggest impact.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

The goal of my daily routine is focused on leading and growing my company. I'm up by 6am every morning to get a head start on the day, going through emails and setting priorities. At the office by 8am, I typically meet with my team to align on key objectives and troubleshoot any issues. The rest of the day is filled with meetings - talking to customers, reviewing product roadmaps, connecting with investors, and coaching my team. I aim to be deeply in tune with our business metrics, understanding what's working well and what needs adjustment. There's always more work than time, so I'm constantly triaging or multitasking.

Richard Robinson is the CEO and cofounder of *Robin AI*.

Article by Richard Robinson