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## CHANGING DRIVERS IN 2021?

This report makes it transparently clear that technology transformation is number one on everyone's agenda for 2021. This isn't a significant deviation from prior years. Rather, the fundamental difference is the compelling set of drivers for transformation.

As firms make those all-important technology decisions, they must ask themselves three questions:

1. Will this change improve client and staff experience?
2. Will this change increase business efficiency and reduce operating cost?
3. Will we increase our profitability sustainably?

The list of priority projects cited is lengthy, but they are all essentially synonyms for automation, optimisation, digitisation, streamlining and budgetary/project planning. One must therefore grasp the sentiment that underlies these priorities. For instance, legal process optimisation equals business efficiency. Systems integration translates to providing the right data at users' point of need.

It's interesting to read the number of references to 'PMS' as a key technology objective at this time, and it would be fascinating to understand the underlying need. Is it to gain financial transparency? Or perhaps to make the firm's lawyers more business-aware? It's also curious that the 'magic wand' section doesn't reflect firms' project priorities. There are no compelling 'enabling' responses that align with what **Briefing** law firms are working on.

WFH has been the biggest challenge and opportunity

for all in 2020. The next question on this topic will concern how we make the tools available as an intuitive part of the legal process and not merely an adjunct.

Covid-19 has spurred serious technology and working practice change for the better. One hopes that it has also created a momentum where the rate of adoption of technology supports the rate of ambition for it. Merely maintaining this new status quo will be unfortunate and a missed opportunity.

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remotely, while supporting process consistency and onboarding the right clients efficiently. Completing 2021's top-five tech priorities are cybersecurity (48%) and client collaboration technology on matters (45%) – more on which later.

Eddie Twemlow, head of IT and operations at Burges Salmon, says: "I see that demand and investment in technology will become even more prominent as the pace of change increases and expectations of technology continue to rise. With regard to the pandemic, we have a programme of work that will ensure we capture those changes to working practices we want to keep, as well as to our support model, to ensure lawyers receive the same degree of technology performance and support at home as they would if they were in the office.

"Our cloud migration programme remains a significant effort for our team and suppliers over the next 12 months, and alongside that we have a continued investment programme in innovation to support improvements to client service delivery. This includes tools to support collaboration with clients, document automation, analytics and data visualisation, as well as automation of other business processes."

Andrew Telling, UK head of knowledge management at Taylor Wessing, adds: "Most of our files and library were online already, but there are