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## Following ChatGPT Hype, South Florida's Lawyers See Promise in AI Boom

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Artificial Intelligence



Alexander Lugo

### What You Need to Know

- As AI grows, Florida's burgeoning tech scene may promise a future in which local lawyers play a part in the growing space.
- Lawyers will be at the forefront of crafting ethics regulations and laws around AI, aided by already-existing Florida institutions.

With recent reports suggesting Microsoft is looking to invest up to \$10 billion in viral artificial intelligence startup OpenAI, the AI sector is beginning to see a ramp-up in activity. That's big news for Florida, where a thriving tech scene is already driving opportunity in a similarly prospering legal industry.

The increased interest in OpenAI arrives following the buzz from Microsoft's release of ChatGPT. Amid praise for its capabilities, the AI-powered chatbot has raised concerns after it was used to generate school essays that read like they were written by a human. As the technology heralds the anticipated AI revolution and Florida continues to be a breeding ground for tech companies, local lawyers may start seeing the technology become more prevalent in their work, both in terms of client mix and how they practice law.

Tal Lifshitz, a tech-focused lawyer at Miami's Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton, is bullish on Miami's future role in the space.

"People come to where the money is. Miami is where the money is. And a lot of the money has poured into new tech and startups, and there's going to be a lot of that with AI," he said. "I fully expect that it's going to be another kind of booming industry that Miami develops in the next few years."

## Lawyers at the Forefront

As AI continues becoming more prevalent in the legal field, attorneys will have to focus on how to craft rules around AI, Lifshitz said.

Because the technology is so new, he says there's still many questions around the ethics and legality of AI's use, particularly when it comes to lawyers themselves using AI to enhance their craft.

Just this week, a startup that tickets itself as the "first robot lawyer" had to discontinue its "non-consumer legal rights products" because of legal realities. The CEO said he found someone to let him try his bot in an actual court case, but he was allegedly threatened with jail time if he went through with it.

But as questions keep emerging about AI's role in the courtroom, lawyers in the space will be at the forefront of dictating how to go forward with the tech. And those conversations are already taking place in Miami.

University of Miami professor Michael Froomkin has already spent years contributing to the intersection of AI and law. The law professor has published research touching on issues such as how machine-based medical diagnostics might impact medical malpractice law and the legality of robot-induced interrogations, among other topics.

Froomkin is part of an integral cog in Florida's tech scene: local universities and research institutes are widely viewed as incubators fueling Florida's tech sector.

## AI Already Molding Florida

Although Florida may continue to lag behind Silicon Valley, the state hosts a significant technology sector that has it poised to successfully cash in on the coming AI revolution.

“There’s several companies here that their business is based on AI,” said Kevin Levy, leader of the technology transactions team at GrayRobinson. “We are known in Florida for tourism tech, property tech, fintech, crypto, health tech. Those are areas where AI could help.”

For example, UDT, named one of the fastest-growing information technology firms in the U.S. by [Crunchbase](#), was founded and still operates in South Florida.

Since ChatGPT’s launch just under two months ago, the company has had to consider how the technology will disrupt its work with school districts, said Jesus Pena, UDT’s chief experience officer. The technology is already being used by students for schoolwork, raising concerns over how companies such as UDT can help schools minimize cheating among students.

“It’s become mainstream now and it’s disrupting, and confusing many industries,” Pena said.

Beyond trying to find solutions around the downsides of the technology, UDT also wants to help schools use the technology for good, Pena said. And beyond education, AI is widely expected to help boost entire industries.

“When Google became the formal means of finding things, SEO as an industry sprung up,” said Ryan McDaniel, UDT’s VP of business development and cybersecurity. “Organizations anywhere in the country—but also in Florida, South Florida in particular—if they can take advantage of this, they’re simply lowering the barrier of entry into the market, the barrier of discovery to grow more quickly.”

Jacksonville-based Fanatics Inc., a sports merchandise retailer, is already looking into ChatGPT technology to enhance its customer service chatbot, according to [a Wall Street Journal report](#).

## Room to Run

Although AI is advancing rapidly, there’s still a lot of room for improvement. Even with ChatGPT’s impressive innovation, the chatbot often get things wrong. For one example, ChatGPT was asked questions about Florida’s AI sector for this article, but it spit out some inaccuracies.

The robot’s flaws are a sign that substantial work still must be done to perfect the overall technology. And ChatGPT agreed with many of the lawyers interviewed for this article on the opportunities that future growth may present them.

“The emerging AI sector is creating new legal challenges and opportunities for tech lawyers, in areas such as legal guidance, contractual agreements, compliance, litigation, advising startups and Mergers and Acquisitions,” the chatbot wrote.

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