OpenAI's Deep Research: In-Depth Reports at Your Fingertips

Written by Louise Donnery

Technology has come so far that chatbots handling basic tasks and answering questions are no longer a novelty. But generating comprehensive, in-depth research reports in minutes? That's something AI hasn't fully delivered—until now.

On February 2, 2025, OpenAI launchedDeep Research, an AI agent built to generate detailed reports on complex topics with remarkable speed. It's already turning heads among economists, researchers, and even legal professionals. But what does this mean for law firms—and how can lawyers use it to their advantage?

In this blog post, we'll cover what you need to know about Deep Research, how it applies to the legal industry, and what it could mean for the future of your practice.

What is Deep Research?

Deep Research scans vast amounts of text, images, and PDFs across the internet—analysing and summarising sources to produce comprehensive reports on virtually any topic. Think of it as a highly efficient research assistant that can complete in-depth analysis in minutes, rather than hours or days.

How does Deep Research work?

Currently, Deep Research is available to ChatGPT Pro users for $200 per month (with plans to expand to other tiers soon).

To get started, select "deep research" from the message composer, and enter your query along with any specific guidelines. For added context, you can even attach text, images, PDFs, or spreadsheets.

Once submitted, Deep Research scours the web, analyses data, and synthesises its findings into a structured report. Users can track progress in real time through a sidebar that displays sources, data points, and updates as the AI works.

The entire process typically takes between five and 30 minutes, allowing you to focus on other tasks while the report is being generated.

Can you use Deep Research for legal work?

Deep Research can be a helpful tool for professionals—but it holds particular promise for lawyers looking to accelerate legal research. With the ability to analyse case law, statutes, regulations, and legal commentary, it can generate concise yet comprehensive reports on specific legal issues.

What sets Deep Research apart is its clear citations and transparent methodology, making it easy to verify accuracy. It's also particularly effective at uncovering niche insights and patterns that might otherwise go unnoticed.

But don't just take our word for it. Here's what lawyer Mitch Jackson has to say about Deep Research's impact on legal strategy:

> ""AI in law isn't just about efficiency—it's about possibility. At our firm, we're using OpenAI's Deep Research to think bigger, strategise smarter, and win in ways others won't see coming. Most lawyers see AI as automation. We see it as a competitive edge. Deep Research analyses rulings, judicial tendencies, and opposing counsel's behaviour—spotting patterns most lawyers miss, in minutes, not days. It doesn't just process data; it predicts disputes, uncovers persuasive arguments, and builds game-changing strategies. Winning cases isn't just about facts—it's about perception, psychology, and knowing which invisible levers to pull. It took me 30+ years to master this. WIth the right approach and prompt, Deep Research can help new lawyers do the same almost instantly. Linear thinking is dead. Deep Research eliminates limits, making us smarter, faster, and ready for what's next. We're using it to predict outcomes, spot unseen patterns (based around trending news and local societal issues), and build strategies that we think will leave opposing counsel scrambling. I even used it to correctly predict the Eagles winning the Super Bowl and, just for fun, posted the 19-page research article on LinkedIn. In my opinion, Deep Research provides lawyers with a new way to think—and we're just getting started.""

What are the risks of using Deep Research?

While the capabilities of Deep Research are impressive, it's important to acknowledge the technology's limitations. Like any AI tool, it can generate inaccurate or misleading information—a phenomenon known as "hallucinations".

OpenAI has noted that Deep Research may struggle to differentiate between authoritative sources and misinformation. It can also fail to express uncertainty when it lacks confidence in its findings.

That said, Deep Research has already proven to be significantly more reliable than many other AI tools. OpenAI's recent evaluation, Humanity's Last Exam—which evaluates AI across a wide range of expert-level subjects—found the model powering Deep Research had a 26.6% accuracy rate (for comparison, ChatGPT-4o scored just 3.3%).

As OpenAI continues to refine the technology, these issues may improve. But for legal professionals, Deep Research should be seen as a tool to augment—not replace—legal professionals' expertise.

The bottom line

With its ability to automate complex research tasks, Deep Research marks another major leap forward for AI. But for legal professionals, AI tools specifically designed for law, like Manage AI, may offer even greater value.

Ready to take your practice to the next level with AI? Download: A Lawyer's Guide to Artificial Intelligence.

About Clio

Clio is the global leader in legal AI, powering legal work across the profession, from law firms of every size to corporate legal teams, government agencies, and courts. Its Intelligent Legal Work Platform unites the business and practice of law, connecting the people, information, and processes behind legal work. Clio's AI brings the context together with legal sources drawn from Clio Library, a growing collection of more than one billion legal documents. Over 400,000 legal professionals in more than 130 countries rely on Clio to run their legal world. Learn more at www.clio.com.