

NEWS RELEASES

PUBLISHED: MARCH 6, 2026

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Husch Blackwell Launches Transformation Office to Drive Strategic Plan, Names Joanna Penn Chief Transformation Officer

National law firm Husch Blackwell today announced the creation of the Transformation Office, a new firmwide division that brings innovation, data science, artificial intelligence and transformation functions under unified leadership to accelerate technology adoption and drive process change at scale.

Led by newly appointed Chief Transformation Officer Joanna Penn, the Transformation Office will coordinate innovation, technology, and process improvements across the firm to ensure Husch Blackwell's strategic priorities translate into measurable outcomes for clients and its people. Prior to this appointment, Penn led the firm's Integrated Client Services team where she managed all aspects of business operations, strategic planning, financial management, and talent development. In addition, she oversaw project management, providing business support and oversight for consulting services and innovation initiatives across the firm.

The establishment of the Transformation Office is the latest step to position the firm for continued growth and scale. It follows last year's restructuring of the firm's senior leadership team and establishes enterprise-level accountability to accelerate execution of the firm's newly approved strategic plan.

"Our new strategic plan calls for transforming the client experience through a continuous pursuit of innovation, exceptional service, and a people-first culture. As our firm continues to grow, we must ensure our operating model scales with us so we can achieve those goals. The Transformation Office is designed to help us do that," said Jamie Lawless, Chief Executive of Husch

Blackwell. “Joanna will work closely with firm leadership and clients to redesign our operating model, processes, and capabilities and help turn our strategic vision into reality.”

The Transformation Office brings together existing teams and will be organized around three core verticals: practice innovation, strategic delivery, and data science and AI. This structure is designed to enable faster decisions, more consistent execution, and greater impact across the firm.

Among its primary objectives, the office will build on the firm’s current footprint through strategic lateral hires and enhance key practice areas to further support clients’ needs and goals. The Transformation Office will also spearhead firmwide AI tool adoption, reduce non-legal administrative burdens through technology and process optimization, and pilot innovative legal workflow and pricing models across the firm’s practice areas.

“Transformation is more than continuous improvement – it’s about delivering entirely new ways to create value for our clients and for our firm,” Penn said. “AI and data science are not standalone initiatives; they are accelerators of transformation. By using data-driven insight, our team will help the firm anticipate industry trends, modernize how we deliver legal services, and ensure our strategic plan is not just a document, but a roadmap that every team and every individual can use for their daily work.”

Prior to joining Husch Blackwell, Penn served as U.S. Director of Business Development for a multinational firm. She is an advisory board member of the Thomson Reuters Institute’s AI & Future of Legal Practice program, a participant in the TRI/NCSC AI Policy Consortium on Law & Courts, and a speaker at the ABA Associate Deans Conference on the Future of AI and Legal Education. She received her B.A. from Indiana University and her J.D. from its Maurer School of Law.