

Meet Legislate, the legal technology company automating contract creation and management all under one roof

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Charles Brecque, founder and CEO of Legislate about making contracts machine readable, remaining innovative and disruptive and imminent international expansion.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Legislate is a legal technology company founded in Oxford in 2020. We allow businesses to create and electronically sign all their agreements in one place.

Our software also enables users to extract data from contracts which are automatically aggregated to present key business metrics saving time and money and helping make better business decisions for any scaling company.

What was the catalyst for launching the product?

The catalyst that sparked the launch of the product occurred during my time in business development at a startup, prior to founding Legislate. During my role I discovered we were constantly losing contracts after the negotiation phase due to budget and role changes across our clients. It became clear to me that the creation, negotiation, and tracking of basic

legal contracts was a real pain point for us. The entire process was also resulting in revenue loss for the company.

My goal was to standardise the entire contract lifecycle and develop a solution. I developed a software that would enable users to create, manage, and search lawyer-approved contracts without incurring additional legal expenses.

The reality is I didn't think my idea was a business until I casually mentioned the concept to one of my mentors. He encouraged me to research the idea, check for competition, and confirm that my approach didn't already exist, and everything sort of aligned. He then became our first angel investor and the rest is history.

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

Legislate makes contracts machine readable using our patented knowledge graph technology so that contracts can be created, managed and searched at scale. Our product provides users with the ability to instantly create contracts and collaborate on agreements with teammates and other parties.

We are enabling a new category of smart, open contracts, where the data in the contracts is automatically aggregated to present key business metrics to users, such as the time it takes contracts to complete and how many agreements are at a specific stage of the contracting lifecycle.

And, it's businesses of all sizes - small businesses and early stage founders can get their legals in order from day one, and larger businesses can offer compliance as a service by offering continuous monitoring of the data in contracts.

How has the business evolved since the launch?

Since our launch, we have evolved from closing a pre-seed round of £150,000 from private investors in 2020, to a £1M seed round in 2021, and finally secured £3M in funding in a round led by *Parkwalk Advisors*, *Oxford Capital* investors and several high-profile angel investors in March 2023.

We also obtained patents for our knowledge graph technology in 2022 and in this year, we ranked 49 in TechRound's top 100 innovative startups and tech companies. We were also listed at number 92 in the UK's longest-running index of the 100 most disruptive and innovative small businesses in January 2023.

With the additional funding and continued focus on scaling sales and expanding the client base, our mission is to make contracts machine readable and transform contract management for fast growing companies.

What is your favourite thing about being a founder?

One of my favourite things about being a founder has to be the first hire, or the first customer we sold our SaaS to. Sharing that vision with someone early on is truly rewarding.

Being part of the legal tech industry and solving a key problem for that industry with technology you've developed, all without a background in law, has also been a very unique experience.

Which founders or businesses do you see as being the most inspirational?

Brian Mullins, the CEO of Mind Foundry, has been an inspiration and mentor to me. After being involved in venture-backed technology for most of his career, he landed the CEO role just 4 years ago. He was very encouraging and supportive of my goals and reaching my full potential – he was actually a driving force in me pursuing the early stage business venture that developed into Legislate.

Which other figures in your life inspire you?

I really admire any founder who is working on building a unique product and scaling their business to the next level - and who is happy sharing their knowledge with others. Attending industry events and dinners organised by founders and learning about their journey to securing large funding rounds has been instrumental in driving Legislate to success.

What has been your biggest business failure?

Poor hiring decisions. It definitely felt for some roles we may have hired too fast without taking the time to run a proper interview process to make sure people are a good fit for the company. For this reason, we are now working on building a more effective hiring process to ensure we are hiring the right fit – asking potential hires for achievement examples in their current job and doing proper reference checks.

What are the things you're really good at as

a leader?

I would say one of my attributes is a drive to get things done. Juggling a million and one things often seems the norm as a founder, but I am constantly striving to manage my tasks more effectively and get things done more efficiently.

Which areas do you need to improve on?

I would like to improve my ability to communicate effectively with people in and around the business to ensure all of our values and goals are aligned. I would also like to work on my emotional intelligence to help shape the interactions I have on a daily basis.

What's in store for the future of the business?

We currently operate in the UK, but we will be using the recent funds to double down on UK sales and prepare for international expansion in 2023.

I want Legislate to be the fabric of every single contract both in the UK and around the world.

What advice would you give to other founders or future founders?

Pursue every opportunity that comes your way, as even a loss is a learning. When starting out, you just need to trust the process and get yourself known in your field while always seeking to improve and enhance your product offering. Don't settle for anything less.

And finally, a more personal question! We like to ask everyone we interview about their daily routine and the rules they live by. Is it up at 4am for yoga, or something a little more traditional?

I usually wake up quite early, and attend Barry's bootcamp to get my body and mind moving with high intensity workouts. I recently participated in #hellweek at Barry's and safe to say it was...hell but felt such an adrenaline rush from the intense activity.

Charles Brecque is the founder and CEO of [Legislate](#).

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