THE SHEM

WE KNOW WHAT'S WRITTEN IN THE GOLEM'S MOUTH

"It is neither human nor animal nor machine. A golem is shaped out of an inanimate material and brought to life by magic."

The Shem is the world's first driverless law firm.

We are not a tool for lawyers. We are not an assistant. We are not a productivity boost. We are a complete law firm without lawyers. We deliver what business law firms deliver, but with almost no humans involved. And we do it better than any human-led team could.

We don't augment lawyers. We replace them. We handle everything a law firm would, without the lawyers. The difference isn't just efficiency. It's quality.

The Multi-Agent Platform

Our product, The Shem, consists of digital workers collaborating on a unified platform. We've abandoned traditional metaphors of legal work. Our agents aren't digital junior associates or AI paralegals. Such analogies only constrain innovation.

Instead, we built **true collaborators**.

Consider a contract negotiation scenario: a legal reasoning agent drafts terms, a business strategy agent evaluates market implications, a financial agent calculates risk exposure, and a visual communication agent shapes the final document for clarity. These agents debate, revise, and push each other, creating legal work that surpasses human-produced output—more insightful, more understandable, and immediately implementable.

The agentic structure builds directly on our earlier innovations. Previously, we created AI tools that translated traditional legal roles into simple, user-friendly interfaces, allowing easy switching between different perspectives. Now, we're taking this idea much further by enabling agents to actively collaborate, similarly to how real legal professionals would interact in a law office.

At first glance, this might seem skeuomorphic, just imitating traditional processes in a digital setting. But we've observed firsthand that genuine collaboration, iterative feedback loops, and approaching problems from multiple angles dramatically improves outcomes in real-world legal practice. **This collaborative dynamic is, in fact, the secret sauce of the world's best law firms.**

The Power of Collaborative Intelligence

The evidence supporting our approach comes from both research and real-world testing. Studies across numerous fields consistently show diverse teams outperforming homogeneous ones. Legal work benefits tremendously from this diversity of thought. Studies also show that **agentic collaboration can outperform single-agent systems** in structured tasks like coding, research, or data analysis. We believe that this is true also in legal tasks, especially in complex, multistep tasks.

We've tested this extensively. Our AI platform includes distinct roles with dedicated functions. The results surprised even us. When bouncing between roles, from legal analyst to business strategist to design thinker, the output quality improves dramatically. Not marginally better, but fundamentally better.

These collaborative patterns aren't theoretical. They mirror the best practices of elite law firms, but without human limitations. Orchestrator-worker relationships, evaluation-optimization cycles, parallel workstreams. We've captured these patterns and eliminated the friction inherent in human coordination. The collaboration works best when the domain is **well-structured** and the agents have **clearly defined roles.**

Our real-world testing confirms this. By bringing legal designers, visual thinkers, and business strategists together with traditional lawyers, we've witnessed transformative improvements in legal deliverables. Contracts become genuinely usable. Advice becomes truly actionable. Risk assessments gain meaningful nuance. **With agents, we can unlock the magic of collaborative, diverse, and multifunctional work.**

The Origin Story

After years working inside the legal system, we confronted an uncomfortable truth: **law is simultaneously vital to society and broken at its core**. We've talked and written about this challenge extensively.

We bring a unique perspective. We've run law firms and felt the bottlenecks firsthand. We've built legal tech that stayed on the periphery instead of transforming the core. We've studied what actually works in legal practice—not the mythology, but the reality.


Testing these ideas inside traditional settings produced startling results. A new role emerged: **the legal front-end designer**, bringing design thinking into legal work. The output wasn't merely faster or cheaper but fundamentally better. Clients didn't just save time. They actually understood their documents and could implement them effectively.

The core challenge isn't technical but orchestrational. Creating meaningful collaboration in a tradition-bound field requires reimagining how legal work happens. We uncovered a powerful insight during our research. In human firms, collaboration imposes high costs. Partners guard expertise rather than sharing freely. But when agents collaborate, those costs vanish. Territorial behaviors disappear. The process naturally incorporates true intellectual diversity.

The Magic Word

"The rabbi performs the great miracle of bringing a clay golem to life by placing a magic word, the shem, in its mouth. Once brought to life, the golem is strong and protects the people. It also performs all sorts of physical labor for its creator."

What word holds such power it can bring clay to life? **What is this magic word?**
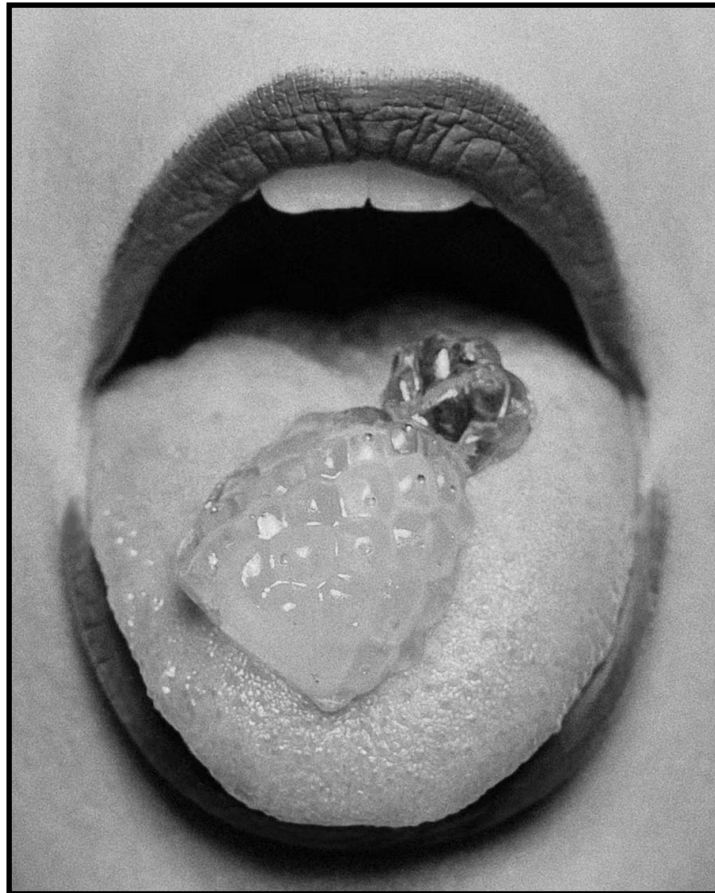
Some say it's "emet". Truth. Some say that it is a divine text from the gods. Some say that it is

But our Shem is "**collaboration**".

That's what's written on the paper placed in the golem's mouth. That's what brings it to life.

The Four Secrets

We possess four secrets. Not features or marketing angles, but deeper truths uncovered through experience, risk-taking, and unconventional thinking about the nature of legal work. Each breaks with tradition. Each defines what we're building.

We know this might sound presumptuous—or even naive. But it isn't. If you look at the biggest breakthroughs in AI over the past decade, you'll notice a pattern: they are breakthroughs in *thinking*. The idea that "attention is all you need" gave us modern transformer models. The shift from narrow tasks to internal "System 1/System 2" reasoning led to thinking models. Intelligence emerges not just from size, but from how ideas interact.

That's what we're doing with legal work.

There is also one fact that should not be overlooked. The length of tasks (measured by how long they take human professionals) that generalist frontier model agents can complete autonomously with 50% reliability has been doubling approximately every seven months for the last six years. The models are improving rapidly. That means the machine itself will grow stronger over time. We may begin with simpler legal work—but the scope of what's possible is expanding fast.

The First Secret: The Shem

In the ancient legend, the golem remains lifeless until a word is placed in its mouth. For us, that word is collaboration. Not just between humans and machines, but among agents themselves. The Shem platform enables multiple agents with distinct expertise to engage in genuine dialogue. Legal reasoning works alongside service design. Finance debates structure. Visual communication shapes the contract's surface. This isn't metaphorical. It's the actual architecture of our system.

We've seen it work. We've tested agentic collaboration in traditional legal settings. We've built prototypes. We've introduced new roles like the legal front-end designer, born directly from this thinking. The result isn't merely more efficient legal work. It's more thoughtful, more structured, more useful. The system moves faster not by cutting corners but by thinking in parallel.

The Second Secret: The Centaur

Most legal technology builds on the idea that humans and machines will share the work. The centaur model, half human and half AI, tells a comforting story. It suggests law will adapt gently, without disruption.

But that story crumbles under scrutiny. Platforms like Harvey, CoCounsel, and Hebbia help lawyers maintain control. They offer speed and convenience without transformation. They reinforce existing power structures. Yet we know from inside the profession that most legal work isn't sacred or strategic. It follows predictable patterns. It can be automated.

The centaur represents a transitional phase, not the destination.

The Third Secret: Beyond Skeuomorphism

Most legal AI systems imitate what came before. They copy law firm workflows, legal software aesthetics, even the personalities of legal professionals. They prioritize comfort over innovation. This

approach, called skeuomorphism, makes new technologies resemble familiar ones because we resist change.

Innovation flourishes when we abandon past constraints. We aren't creating agents pretending to be junior associates. We're developing entirely new ways to think, produce, and reason. When the fundamental medium changes, the form must follow. Legal work shouldn't look as it always has because the intelligence producing it differs fundamentally.

The Fourth Secret: The Evolving Client

Perhaps our most provocative insight: the law firm of the future won't just lack lawyers. Eventually, it may lack human clients as we currently understand them.

AI systems will increasingly act as clients. They'll issue instructions, evaluate deliverables, approve and pay for services. More importantly, they'll consume legal work. When your reader isn't human, priorities shift. The work must be interpretable rather than persuasive. Structured rather than ornate. An AI client values clarity, logic, and usefulness over rhetorical flourishes.

Designing for AI clients means preparing for a world where legal outputs serve machine reasoning, not human persuasion. That world approaches rapidly. In many ways, it has already begun.

Risks and Challenges

"But one day the golem flies in a rage, smashing buildings, flinging boulders, and uprooting trees."

Regulatory Complexity and Liability

The legal industry is heavily regulated, with rules designed around human practitioners. We've proactively mapped jurisdictions favorable to innovation, assembled top regulatory advisors, and initiated participation in regulatory sandboxes. We're also developing a responsible AI legal practice framework with academic partners.

AI-driven legal services introduce new liability questions. We have had discussions with major insurers to create dedicated AI legal service insurance products, built clear liability frameworks, and integrated robust verification mechanisms to minimize risk.

Technical Barriers

Advanced legal reasoning involves ambiguity, cross-domain synthesis, and creative problem-solving. Our multi-agent architecture addresses complexity by distributing tasks and using proprietary methods for ambiguity management and iterative verification.

Trust and Adoption

Legal services inherently rely on trust, traditionally based on human relationships and accountability. We emphasize transparency in how our AI makes decisions, offer phased adoption paths with optional human oversight, and continuously benchmark performance against traditional law firms.

Data and Knowledge

Legal knowledge is fragmented and unstructured. We have created proprietary datasets and structured knowledge bases optimized for AI consumption. Our system continuously learns and adapts, capturing deep reasoning patterns from real-world interactions.

Why Us

"Great men were once able to perform great miracles," begins the short story "The Golem," written by the author I. L. Peretz in 1890.

We genuinely believe we are among the very few capable of building this. The number of people with our unique combination of expertise—deep domain knowledge in law, practical experience in running and scaling law firms, and technical mastery in AI orchestration—is extraordinarily small. Within this group, we've yet to identify anyone else with precisely this vision or our blend of capabilities and achievements. Our founding team has run successful law firms, developed influential legal technology products, and published groundbreaking research in multi-agent AI systems.

Others are building tools for lawyers. We are not dismissing the work of other service providers in the AI space. But we believe our approach is fundamentally better.

That doesn't mean we can do it alone. We need help. We need funding. We probably need a new founder and a reinforced tech team. But the core insight, the origin story, the system architecture, and the lived experience—that all lives here. In philosophy, they talk about necessary and sufficient conditions. **We are the necessary condition. Not yet sufficient.** But we are the ones who can make this happen.

What Comes Next

At first glance, this might seem negative for lawyers and the broader legal community, but we believe it's exactly the opposite. We think it's the best possible development for law and for lawyers.

Today, lawyers spend too much of their time on repetitive, low-value tasks for clients who often don't appreciate or truly care about the underlying legal work. Lawyers should not be stuck drafting NDAs, redlining standard agreements, or hunting through documents for routine clauses. They should focus on high-level strategic issues, navigating complex risks, and safeguarding democratic values. By freeing lawyers from mundane tasks, we believe we can elevate the entire legal profession.

Clients also benefit tremendously. They need legal services that are faster and more affordable. Everything moves quickly, and a competitive advantage can vanish overnight. Our approach makes high-quality legal services accessible, efficient, and aligned with modern business realities.

We know this won't be easy. The risks are real, but we have clear strategies for navigating them. Regulatory challenges will require proactive engagement, careful planning, and strategic partnerships.

Technical hurdles will be met with iterative testing, transparent evaluations, and safety frameworks. Institutional resistance will be addressed with robust evidence, consistent results, and open dialogue.

But the biggest risk is not technical or legal. It's caution. That we try to make this safe. That we pull back from what it actually is.

We didn't come to build a better legal tool.

We came to build the Golem.

And we know what's written in its mouth.