The 2-week method to measure what AI *really* saves

A simple, honest way for law, accounting and tax firms to find out whether an AI tool earns its place: measure one normal week without it, one with it, and let your own numbers decide.

Week 1

Time your repetitive tasks the way you do them today.

Week 2

Do the same tasks with AI, counting review time.

Decide

Keep what pays, drop what does not.

Free from José Palacios · CorpusProof
Use it with the spreadsheet AI-ROI-Calculator.xlsx

josepalacios.ai · corpusproof.com

PART 1

Why most AI savings claims are unproven

Ask a firm how much time AI saves and you will usually hear an impression, not a measurement. That is not dishonesty; it is how memory works. A task that suddenly takes thirty seconds feels like a huge win. The twenty minutes spent checking the result, fixing a wrong citation or reformatting a table are quickly forgotten.

Vendor figures have the same problem from the other side: they describe someone else's work, under someone else's conditions. Your matters, your clients and your quality standards are different. The only savings figure that should drive a decision in your firm is one measured in your firm.

> **Three things usually go missing from a savings claim:** a baseline (how long the task took before), the review time (checking AI output is part of the task), and the cost (licences, setup and training). This method puts all three back.

PART 2

Week 1: the baseline, without AI

1. **Pick up to 20 repetitive tasks.** Good candidates happen at least weekly and follow a pattern: meeting minutes, client document request emails, contract summaries, invoice data entry, first drafts of research memos.
2. **Assign each task a role** (partner, associate, paralegal or bookkeeper, admin). The role sets the hourly rate the spreadsheet uses.
3. **Time each occurrence** from the moment you start to the moment the output is ready to send or file. A phone stopwatch is enough. Write down the minutes, not a guess at the end of the day.
4. **Count occurrences per week.** If a task happens twice one week and six times the next, note the typical number.
5. **Choose a normal week.** Avoid holiday weeks, year-end closes or a trial that distorts the workload.

Enter everything in the sheet "Baseline (week 1)". Replace the EXAMPLE rows: they are illustrative only.

PART 3

Week 2: the same tasks, with AI

In the second week, the same people do the same tasks with the AI tool. The rule that makes this method honest: **the clock stops when the output is good enough to send, not when the AI finishes writing.**

- **Include review time.** Reading, checking facts and figures, correcting tone and fixing formatting all count.
- **Record errors found** in the AI output. A task that is faster but produces errors you must catch every time carries a risk the minutes do not show.
- **Note the tool used**, so you can compare tools later and cancel the ones that do not earn their cost.
- **Keep the same quality bar** as week 1. Faster work that would not pass your own review is not a saving.

PART 4

The maths

$$(\text{minutes saved} \times \text{occurrences} \times \text{hourly rate}) - \text{tool cost}$$

minutes saved = minutes without AI − minutes with AI (including review)

The spreadsheet does this for every task: it converts minutes per week into hours per month and per year using your working weeks, multiplies by the role's hourly rate and subtracts the monthly cost of your tools. It then shows net monthly value, payback in months on your one-off setup cost, and first-year ROI.

Illustrative example: meeting minutes	Value
Minutes without AI / with AI (incl. review)	45 / 15
Occurrences per week	5
Minutes saved per week (30 × 5)	150
Hours saved per month (150 ÷ 60 × 46 weeks ÷ 12)	9.6
Value per month at an associate rate of 150 per hour	1,437.50

Illustrative figures to show the arithmetic, not a measured result. Replace them with your own timings, rates and tool costs.

PART 5

How to decide

Worth automating

AI saves at least 10% of the time once review is included, errors are rare and easy to catch, and the value saved clearly exceeds the tool's share of cost. Roll it out, write a short instruction for how the task is done with AI, and re-measure in three months.

Not worth it (yet)

AI saves less than 10%, or the task is slower once checking is counted, or errors are frequent. Stop using AI for that task, try a different tool or prompt, or redesign the task first. The spreadsheet flags these automatically.

Rank tasks by value saved per month and start with the top three. A small, proven gain on a frequent task beats a dramatic gain on a task that happens twice a year.

PART 6

Common mistakes

1. **Leaving out review time.** It is the most common reason a saving looks bigger on paper than in practice.
2. **Estimating instead of timing.** Write the minutes down as you go. Memory rounds in favour of the new tool.
3. **Comparing different weeks.** A quiet week against a busy one measures workload, not AI.
4. **Forgetting the full cost.** Licences for every user, setup and training belong in the calculation.
5. **Counting saved time that is not reused.** An hour saved is only worth its rate if it goes to billable or higher-value work.
6. **Pasting confidential client data into tools you have not vetted.** Check your professional duties and the tool's data terms before the test, not after.

Want us to measure it with you?

Book an AI diagnostic at corpusproof.com