

# You Could Learn a Lot from Deep Blue

In the classic case of John Henry versus the steam engine, I remember as a child watching the chess master Garry Kasparov lose in chess to a machine created by IBM that went by the name of Deep Blue. The human mind, handling at most a few calculations per second, was no match for the millions of calculations that Deep Blue could handle in a few moments. Fast forward 13 years, and [now something different has happened in the chess world](#). Now some chess masters are playing matches where each player brings along their own super computer.



IBM's Deep Blue

Malcolm Gladwell says this has created a completely new game. Now the chess masters don't need to focus as much on calculations- instead they can completely focus on strategy. They can focus on the subtleties and art of Chess that a computer could never comprehend. This is a powerful combination of technology and art, but can it extend beyond the chess world? Can lawyers and other professionals trust computers and "systems" to augment the quality of their work?

The threat is obvious. Take the company Legal Zoom for example. This company IS the machine. They have created over 1 million Wills, Corporations and LLC's, yet they don't offer legal services. They provide forms that can be easily filled out in a decision-tree like fashion. (Think Turbo Tax). This company is killing many family practices because of it's cold, calculated, and mechanical efficiency.

So what is the standard reaction by lawyers to Legal Zoom?

"They don't add any value!"

“No real business person should trust a computer to create your Will or form your company.”

“I am constantly cleaning up the mess left behind from Legal Zoom.”

These lawyers are missing the point. They don't need to defeat Deep Blue. They don't need to kill this powerful machine that could be their ally- they need to embrace it. Lawyers will be able to add far more value to their clients if they can automate certain tasks through software (just as Legal Zoom does), and handle the rest themselves. This may not work for EVERY practice area, but if Legal Zoom or other similar companies are stealing away your market share and turning your legal offering into a “commodity” (I know how other lawyers hate to hear that term.) It may be time to add some computing power yourself.



Deep Blue was a powerful computer, but it would be no match for a comparable computer run with a chess grand master at it's side. Similarly, Legal Zoom would be no match for a savvy attorney with similar technology by their side. The attorneys that figure out how to make that happen will not only survive, but they will be guaranteed to never become obsolete.

*Adrian Dayton is a New York attorney and author of the book [Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition](#). You can join him for his free conference calls Friday mornings at 10:00 AM EST to learn more about building your practice with the help of new technology. [To sign up for these FREE calls, CLICK HERE.](#)*