Thorne Marsden LLP · pricing-capability assessment

Phase 2 Diagnostic companion · seven-dimension capability assessment against the Nascent → Optimised anchor set

Sample output · fictitious firm, figures and findings · Alt-V Law

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> This is the T04 Pricing Maturity Assessment artefact Phase 2 of a Pricing Review produces at the end of week two, before the matter-type diagnostics or the panel-bid stress tests run. It names the firm's pricing capability on seven dimensions, surfaces the gating dimension that constrains everything else, and names the three capability moves Phase 3 must set up. The firm, people and figures below are invented.

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Seven-dimension capability assessment

DIMENSION	THORNE MARSDEN LEVEL	WHAT THIS MEANS
Pricing capability and team	Established	Pricing Lead sits in Finance; three practice-group pricing champions report in with ~0.2 FTE each. No dedicated pricing analyst. Capability holds for standard matter types; breaks on panel bids and novel structures.
Commercial models used	Established	Hourly dominates (~72% of fees); fixed-fee on standard commercial work (~18%); capped on employment and private client; AFA umbrella rarely invoked. The ten-model inventory is understood; six are in active use.
Data and analytics	Emerging	Realisation reports at matter level, quarterly. No live dashboarding; no per-partner realisation visibility; no matter-type profitability curve. The pricing conversation runs on quarterly lag.
Governance and approval	Established	Pricing committee meets monthly; thresholds for partner discretion documented and generally followed. Audit trail on fee quotes above £250k. The weakness is enforcement for low-value matters where discretion is highest and visibility lowest.
Partner behaviour and discipline	Emerging	Partners accept the governance frame on paper; in practice, scope creep on fixed-fee matters absorbs margin at 2-4% per quarter. No consequence model for repeat offenders. Partners do not yet work to the pricing committee's frame day to day.
Client-facing pricing dialogue	Nascent · GATING	No partner-wide script for AI-savings conversations; three partners have had the conversation with their clients ad hoc, with inconsistent outcomes. Panel bid responses still lead with rate cards rather than evidence of value. This dimension gates everything else.
AI-and-pricing readiness	Emerging	The 2025 AI pilot produced an efficiency reading (~25% hour reduction on affected matter types) that has not yet translated into pricing. Pricing committee has not yet taken a position on whether to share, retain, or hybrid the gains.

The gating dimension

Client-facing pricing dialogue is the gating dimension. The firm has adequate capability on five of seven dimensions and emerging capability on two. The one that constrains everything else is the dialogue - because the firm cannot act on its matter-type pricing results, its AI efficiency reading, or its panel bid analysis without the muscle to hold the conversation with the client that any of those three triggers.

This is the pattern the assessment is designed to test for in a mid-tier firm. The analytical layer is adequate; the governance frame exists; the data is readable (if lagged). The missing capability is the one that converts analysis into client position - and the one that no amount of pricing-committee work builds on its own.

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The three capability moves Phase 3 must set up

Each is a specific capability build. All three can run in parallel across the eight-to-twelve-week engagement without exceeding the firm's change capacity.

1. **Build and roll out the four-point client script, across all partners who face corporate GCs.** The script covers the four points plus the role-play, the objection-handling and the decision tree for which structure to propose given the client's own AI maturity. One structured session per practice group, with the Pricing Lead facilitating; ten weeks to full partnership roll-out.
2. **Stand up live realisation and matter-type profitability dashboards.** The data exists in the practice management system; the dashboards do not. The IT and Finance work to assemble them is six to eight weeks. The partner-behaviour move depends on this: the firm cannot hold partners accountable on numbers they cannot see weekly.
3. **Take a formal AI-savings position before the Q1 2027 panel renewal.** The pricing committee needs to decide - with the partnership's endorsement - whether the firm shares, retains, or hybrids the AI efficiency on the panel's matter types. The decision needs the Pricing Engine output across the panel's main matter types and the Panel Bid Economics stress test. Target: formal position by end of week six.

What this does not solve

The Maturity Assessment measures capability. It does not price a specific matter type - the Pricing Engine does that. It does not stress-test a specific panel renewal - Panel Bid Economics does that. It does not build the win-themes for a specific brief - Panel Bid Builder does that. It does not change partner pay - the Partner Pay pillar does that. The point of the assessment is to make the other four engagements credible, by naming what the firm can actually run against them.

The firm, people and figures in this assessment are invented. The seven-dimension pricing-maturity model is Alt-V's T04 template, documented in the companion briefing and the Pricing Review Methodology toolkit (July 2026).

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