

DOCUMENT REVIEW & eDISCOVERY • PHILIPPINES

The review-accuracy standard: the executive economics of document review and eDiscovery outsourcing to the Philippines.

An analysis of why documents reviewed is a volume vanity metric, how coding accuracy and defensibility — never review throughput — decide the true cost of a review once misclassified privilege, missed responsive documents, inconsistent coding, and re-review are counted, and the vendor-selection discipline that produces a review that holds up.

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JUNE 2026
MANILA • ESTABLISHED 2001



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ABOUT THIS SERIES – VOLUME 37

Every document-review proposal is priced per document or per hour, because volume is easy to count. This volume is about the only review outcome a matter actually depends on: the document coded accurately for responsiveness and privilege, consistently, so the production is defensible and no privileged document walks out the door. The gap between reviewing a document and coding it defensibly is where privilege waivers and re-review live. The full series lives at piton-global.com.

About the authors



John Maczynski

Chief Executive Officer

John has bought review capacity for three decades, and learned that the fast reviewer who clears every document and mis-codes privilege is the most expensive one a legal team can hire — because one privileged document produced is a waiver argument, and a batch coded inconsistently is a re-review at senior rates. His standing question ignores the docs-per-hour report: of the documents you reviewed, how many were coded accurately, consistently, and defensibly? Applied at PITON-Global, that question is what clients get on every document-review sourcing decision — personally, with no account layer in between.

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Ralf has spent twenty-five years running Philippine legal-process floors, and he judges a review team by its coding accuracy and privilege-catch rate, not its docs-per-hour: whether responsiveness and privilege were coded right and consistently, or the batch bounced into re-review. The review contract in Section 3 codifies what he learned rebuilding teams that cleared documents fast and coded them loosely. He now reads review providers the way he once ran them — from the QC-overturn rate and the privilege-error log backward.

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ABOUT PITON-GLOBAL

PITON-Global is a buyer-side advisory practice, Manila-based since 2001, that has never operated a delivery floor or taken a placement commission. Its stock-in-trade is knowing the Philippine provider market at the operating level — 1,000+ mapped operations, re-verified continuously, including each review team's real coding accuracy and privilege-catch rate rather than its docs-per-hour headline — and

converting that knowledge into a shortlist of six to ten genuinely qualified partners per engagement. Buyers from Tripadvisor, Garmin, TSYS, HealthPartners, Yetipay, Workrise, and Norman Disney & Young have run their searches through the practice.

SECTION 01

Executive summary

-61%

Fully-loaded cost per defensibly-reviewed document vs. US onshore

99%+

Coding accuracy on vetted teams, up from 85-92%

-66%

Reduction in re-review and QC overturns on vetted teams

6.5×

First-year ROI, reconstructed case (Section 6)

A document-review engagement is bought on the price per document and paid for on the ones it codes wrong. The vendor reports a million documents reviewed at a fraction of the onshore rate; the legal team finds the privileged documents mis-coded as producible, the responsive documents mis-coded as irrelevant and left out, the inconsistent calls across reviewers that a QC sample surfaced, and the batches sent back for re-review at senior rates. The operation cleared its docs-per-hour and the matter inherited a privilege-waiver exposure, a defensibility problem, and a re-review bill. The gap between reviewing a document and coding it defensibly is where the real cost of cheap review hides, because a mis-coded document is not throughput delivered — it is privilege risked or a production that will not hold.

The Philippines — English-language, common-law-oriented, with a deep legal-process talent pool experienced on the major review platforms — is where document review is delivered with the most coding-accuracy discipline, because that pool can run the responsiveness and privilege coding, consistency QC, and defensible workflow that accuracy demands. Five findings:

- 1 Documents reviewed is the industry's most flattering number.** Any reviewer can click through documents at speed. Vetted teams are measured on outcome: coding accuracy, privilege-catch rate, and consistency. Weak providers quote a low per-document price the matter repays in privilege exposure, re-review, and lost defensibility. Section 2 shows the gap.
- 2 The accurate, defensible coding call, not the fast click, is the product.** A review a court and opposing counsel accept comes from coding responsiveness and privilege right, consistently, under a defensible protocol — not from clearing a document queue. Teams that code accurately produce once; teams that click loosely risk privilege and trigger re-review that costs more than the documents.

3 A mis-code cuts both ways — privilege out, responsive missed. A privileged document coded producible can waive privilege; a responsive document coded irrelevant can mean a discovery failure and sanctions. Vetted teams hold coding accuracy above 99% precisely because both tails cost — the privilege that walks out and the document that never gets produced.

4 The re-review and the privilege exposure, not the click, are what cost. A document coded wrong costs the re-review at senior rates, the clawback and waiver fight, and the defensibility challenge — many times the per-document saving. Teams that code accurately cut re-review and protect privilege, and that protected defensibility — not the offshore rate alone — is where the case study's return is built.

5 Contract on the defensibly-reviewed document, not the reviewed one. The contracting failure of review is paying per document and hoping the coding is accurate and privilege held. Vetted deals price against coding-accuracy floors, privilege-catch targets, and QC-overturn ceilings, making defensible coding the team's problem, which is where it belongs.

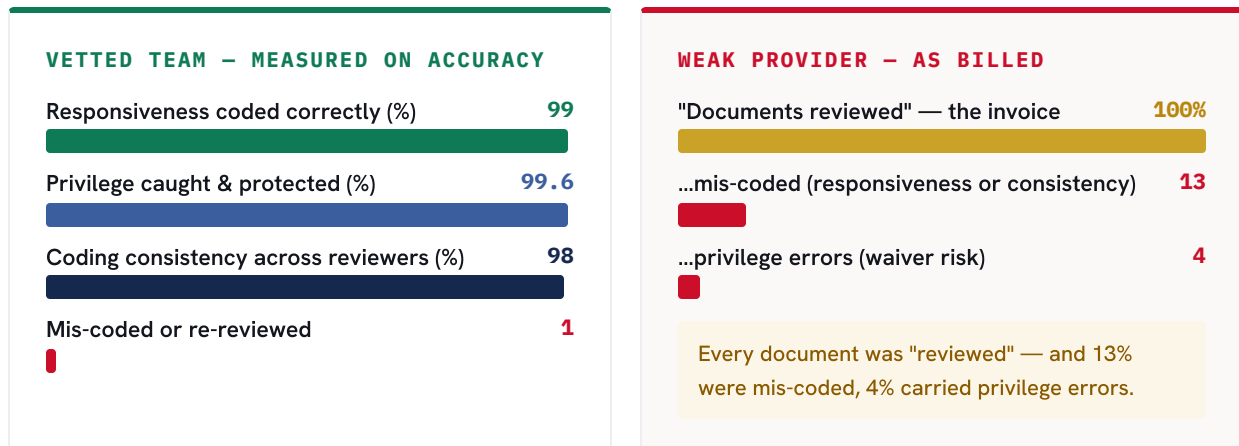
The intended reader is a general counsel, litigation partner, or director of legal operations buying document review per document and paying for it in privilege exposure, re-review, and lost defensibility. Sections 2–4 separate the teams that code accurately from the teams that clear documents; Sections 5–7, the method and the proof.

SECTION 02

The volume mirage: documents reviewed versus defensibly coded

Figure 1 shows one review batch two ways: as the docs-reviewed report a weak vendor bills, and as the coding-accuracy reality the QC sample and the production experience. The documents-reviewed number is identical in spirit to a chatbot's containment rate — a figure engineered to look like output while privilege errors, inconsistent coding, and re-review accumulate underneath.

FIG. 1 — ONE REVIEW BATCH: CODING-ACCURACY QUALITY VS. REPORTED VOLUME



Left: PITON-Global engagement instrumentation, 2025-26, coding audited via QC sample. Right: composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence.

The economics follow the coding accuracy, not the doc count. On the left, ninety-nine percent of documents are coded correctly and privilege is caught on 99.6 percent, so the production is defensible and no privileged document walks out; on the right, a cheap per-document price mis-codes thirteen percent and errs on privilege for four, paying in re-review, waiver exposure, and lost defensibility at once. A low per-document price that mis-codes is not a saving; it is privilege risk and re-review, delayed and sometimes irreversible. The coding-accuracy audit — responsiveness accuracy, privilege-catch rate, consistency — is the cheapest due-diligence instrument in this paper.

SECTION 03

The review contract: code it accurately, protect privilege, keep it defensible

Figure 2 lays out the three clauses of a working document-review contract — the machinery a floor read verifies before any per-document price is believed.

FIG. 2 – THE REVIEW CONTRACT, AS OPERATED ON VETTED TEAMS



In diligence, the contract is tested from the QC sample's side: pull a coded batch and re-code a sample against the protocol to measure true accuracy and consistency; audit the privilege log for near-misses; review the QC-overturn rate. Perhaps one team in ten survives it cleanly. Steps 3 and 5 of the framework exist to find that one before the contract does — because everything in Table 3 of Section 6 depends on coding accuracy, not documents reviewed.

SECTION 04

Cost and performance: cost-per-defensibly-reviewed-document

economics and benchmarks

TABLE 1 – FULLY-LOADED COST PER DEFENSIBLY-REVIEWED DOCUMENT: THREE OPERATING MODELS (2026)

OPERATING MODEL	COST / DOC	VS. US BASELINE
US onshore contract-attorney review	\$1.35	baseline
Low-cost offshore review mill (per-doc)	\$0.90	-33%
Vetted Manila team — accurate, defensible	\$0.53	-61%

Basis: PITON-Global engagement pricing 2025-26; cost per defensibly-reviewed document = fully-loaded operating cost divided by documents coded accurately, consistently, and defensibly (mis-coded and re-reviewed excluded); the review mill looks cheap per doc but re-review at senior rates, privilege exposure, and lost defensibility lift its true cost per defensible document; US comparator fully-loaded contract-attorney cost. Technology-assisted review is complementary; figures reflect linear/managed human review with TAR support where used.

TABLE 2 – DOCUMENT-REVIEW BENCHMARKS, VETTED VS. BASELINE (2025-26)

METRIC	VETTED TOP TIER	BASELINE	EXECUTIVE READING
Coding accuracy (responsiveness)	99%+	85-92%	The only review number defensibility follows
Privilege-catch rate	99.6%+	95-98%	Withheld, or a waiver in the wild
Re-review / QC overturns vs. baseline	-66%	baseline	"Code it accurately" — held or not
Review throughput vs. baseline	+38%	baseline	Faster at accuracy, not instead of it
Coding consistency across reviewers	98%+	86-93%	One protocol, or reviewer roulette

Source: PITON-Global legal-process engagement data 2025-26; baseline = typical pre-engagement operations billed on documents reviewed.

The strategic read: the review mill's -33% per document is a false economy — re-review at senior rates, privilege exposure, and lost defensibility lift its true cost per defensible document far above the per-doc gap, and a privilege waiver is a cost no rate recovers. The vetted Manila team's -61% is real because it is measured where the value is: the document coded accurately, privilege protected, that holds on challenge.

Buy on documents reviewed and you buy the right column of Figure 1; buy on cost-per-defensibly-reviewed-document and you buy coding accuracy — the same discipline every volume in this series keeps arriving at from a different door.

SECTION 05

Sourcing discipline: the 7-Step Vendor Vetting Framework, applied to document review

Document-review diligence adds one hard requirement to every step: a per-document price is real only when the coding accuracy behind it survives a QC re-code against the protocol. The funnel below is representative of a 40–100-seat review search.

FIG. 3 – THE 7-STEP FRAMEWORK AS A DOCUMENT-REVIEW FUNNEL

STEP	WHAT IT ELIMINATES IN A REVIEW SEARCH	FIELD REMAINING
1 Requirements definition	Volume-first scoping: fixes the coding-accuracy floor, the privilege-catch target, the consistency and QC-overtake standard, and the throughput the operation must meet by matter type	1,000+
2 Market mapping	Review mills: operations that bill documents and treat mis-coding and privilege errors as the client's problem, and generalist floors with no reviewer training or platform depth	~44
3 Capability screening	Teams without the machinery: trained reviewers, audited accuracy history, a calibration-and-QC workflow, platform proficiency (Relativity and peers), and privilege-review depth	~13
4 Compliance & security audit	Weak governance: client-confidentiality and privilege protection, conflicts screening, access controls on the review platform, chain-of-custody, SOC 2 scope covering the review stack	~7
5 Operational diligence	The QC re-code: re-code a sample batch against the protocol for true accuracy and consistency; audit the privilege log for near-misses; interview on how they handle an ambiguous privilege call	4–6
6 Competitive RFP & negotiation	Per-document pricing: finalists bid against coding-accuracy floors, privilege-catch targets, and QC-overtake ceilings — all carrying credits for batches that come back for re-review	2–3
7 Transition & launch governance	Cold start: the team calibrates against your protocol, issue codes, and platform on a sample before it reviews live documents, with the accuracy floor certified before steady state, PITON-Global embedded buyer-side	1

Field-remaining counts represent a 40-100-seat document-review search, PITON-Global engagements 2024-26.

The standing guarantees hold: **vendor neutrality** — PITON-Global operates no review floors, codes no documents, and takes no placement economics, so the shortlist reflects audited coding-accuracy performance, not inventory; **right-sizing** — teams for whom your operation is a flagship account. Six to ten genuinely qualified providers, delivered within 48-72 hours, free to the buyer, competing through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP.

Re-basing the operation on coding accuracy: a 60-seat review rebuild, reconstructed

Engagement DR-052 is a US law firm and corporate legal department — running roughly 9,000,000 documents a year through review across litigation and investigations — that had offshored document review to a per-document mill. The document price was excellent; the coding was not: coding accuracy sat near 89%, privilege errors had surfaced in a QC sample, coding was inconsistent across reviewers, and batches were bouncing into re-review at senior rates. The director of legal operations wanted the review economics without the privilege exposure and re-review. Identifying details are anonymized under NDA.

SELECTION (WEEKS 0-8, QC RE-CODES)

Requirements fixed a 99% coding-accuracy floor, a 99.6% privilege-catch target, and a QC-overturn ceiling, with a mandatory calibration-and-QC and second-level privilege workflow. Mapping produced 44 claimants; the machinery screen — trained reviewers, audited accuracy, calibration/QC, platform and privilege depth — left 13; the confidentiality-and-conflicts audit left 7. Blind QC re-codes of each finalist's sample batches against the protocol shortlisted 5. A Manila team won priced against coding accuracy and privilege catch, with a QC re-code written into the reporting spec.

TRANSITION (MONTHS 2-6, CALIBRATED FIRST)

The team calibrated against the matter's review protocol, issue codes, and platform on sample batches before reviewing live documents; the accuracy floor was certified in month 2. The calibration-and-QC loop fed reviewer feedback from day one. By month 6 coding accuracy reached 99.2%, privilege catch hit 99.6%, re-review and QC overturns fell 66%, and throughput rose 38%. PITON-Global chaired the coding-accuracy review board to steady state.

TABLE 3 – DR-052 FIRST-YEAR VALUE BUILD-UP (US\$)

VALUE COMPONENT	YEAR 1	BASIS
Review-cost arbitrage on the 60-seat operation	\$2.06M	Onshore vs. vetted-offshore cost across 9.0M docs
Re-review eliminated (accurate coding)	\$0.72M	Senior-rate re-review removed by higher accuracy
Privilege & defensibility exposure avoided	\$0.38M	Waiver and challenge exposure removed
Throughput & timeline value	\$0.18M	Faster review against production deadlines
Gross value created	\$3.34M	
Less: engagement & transition costs	(\$0.51M)	Calibration, QC-loop build, platform/protocol integration; advisory fee \$0 (provider-paid model)
Net value ÷ cost = first-year ROI	6.5×	\$3.34M ÷ \$0.51M

Figures rounded; accuracy, privilege, and re-review effects audit-verified. Method in Methodology & notes.

Sixty-two percent arbitrage, thirty-eight percent from eliminated re-review, avoided privilege exposure, and faster timelines — a typical split for the series, earned because the operation was re-based on coding accuracy rather than document volume. Every line traces to a diligence step: the accuracy floor to Step 1, the accuracy-based pricing to Step 6, the calibration-and-QC workflow to Step 3's contract. The director of legal operations' line at the year-one review: "The document price barely moved. What moved is that the review holds up — and nothing privileged has gone out the door."

SECTION 07

The executive playbook: governance for the first 180 days

A document-review transition succeeds when the team is measured and paid on coding accuracy and privilege catch — client in command throughout.

DAYS 0–30**Define accuracy, contract on it**

Set the coding-accuracy floor, the privilege-catch target, and the consistency and QC-overtake thresholds with litigation leadership before launch, and document the review protocol, issue codes, and second-level privilege workflow. Contract against coding accuracy and privilege catch — never per document alone — with floors and ceilings carrying credits. Stand up the QC re-code as the program's arbiter of truth.

DAYS 30–90**Calibrate the reviewers, prove the floor**

Calibrate reviewers against your protocol, issue codes, and platform on sample batches before they review live documents; certify the accuracy floor and calibration-QC loop. Switch on the QC-and-feedback loop from day one. Publish the review dashboard: coding accuracy, privilege catch, QC-overtake rate, consistency, throughput.

DAYS 90–180**Review live, certify steady state**

Route live documents to the team only after it holds the accuracy floor and privilege-catch target, always under supervising-attorney review. Review the accuracy board monthly with the QC-overtake and privilege-log trend on the table. Certify steady state on two batches at floor across matter types; hand over on documented criteria; keep the standing QC re-code.

THE FIVE FAILURE MODES WE ARE HIRED TO PREVENT

Paying per document while privilege is mis-coded · clicking through documents instead of coding them accurately · coding inconsistently across reviewers · guessing an ambiguous privilege call rather than escalating · reviewing live before accuracy is proven. All five are settled at selection and contract.

The document-review argument, in one sentence: a reviewed document is activity and a defensibly-coded one is a production that holds and a privilege that stays protected, and a vetted Philippine team delivers –61% cost per defensibly-reviewed document with 99%+ coding accuracy, a 99.6% privilege-catch rate, and re-review cut by two-thirds — for buyers who QC the coding accuracy instead of counting documents reviewed, and compete the finalists through a fully transparent, fair, comprehensive, and highly competitive RFP. Anyone can review a document. We make sure you buy the team whose coding holds up in court.

METHODOLOGY & NOTES

How the numbers were built

Accuracy and privilege figures (Fig. 1, Table 2) derive from engagement instrumentation in PITON-Global legal-process engagements, 2025–26. Coding accuracy and consistency are measured by QC re-coding a sample against the protocol; privilege-catch rate, QC-overtake rate, and throughput are measured against the client's pre-

engagement baseline. The weak-provider column is a composite of pre-engagement vendor reporting reviewed in diligence, shown for contrast.

Cost-per-defensibly-reviewed-document figures (Table 1) are fully loaded — wages, benefits and statutory charges, facilities, review-platform and technology tooling, management and QC overhead including calibration leads and privilege reviewers, attrition-driven recruiting — divided by documents coded accurately, consistently, and defensibly, with mis-coded or re-reviewed documents excluded from the denominator; US comparators reflect fully-loaded contract-attorney cost. Technology-assisted review is complementary and, where used, is reflected in the operating basis. A defensibly-reviewed document is coded accurately, has privilege protected, and holds on challenge.

The case study (DR-052) is anonymized under NDA; volumes and dates are generalized, figures rounded. Accuracy, privilege, and re-review effects are audit-verified; the re-review-eliminated line reflects senior-rate hours removed, and the exposure-avoided line is a conservative estimate. ROI = net first-year value ÷ all engagement-related client costs. PITON-Global's advisory fee is provider-paid and appears at \$0 in the client cost base; neutrality safeguards are documented at piton-global.com.

Market context draws on IBPAP reporting and PITON-Global's proprietary provider mapping (1,000+ operations; coding accuracy and privilege performance re-verified May 2026). Offshore reviewers support, and never replace, licensed attorney judgment; all review is conducted under supervising-attorney direction. Estimates and projections are PITON-Global analysis and should be cited as such. The full series is available at piton-global.com.



Would your provider's document price survive a QC re-code?

Thirty minutes with John will tell you. Free to buyers, strictly vendor-neutral — a coding-accuracy-verified shortlist within two to three business days.

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