

# Lightning in a bottle: Designing and building your own law practice GPTs

**By Todd C. Scott**

One of the most profound features of ChatGPT is its capability to create personal, self-curated GPTs. With personal GPTs you can build chat bots within Open AI's ChatGPT that focus exclusively on any topic of your choosing.

What is a GPT you may ask? GPT, which stands for Generative Pre-trained Transformer, is a type of AI program that can understand and create text that appears as if it was written by a human, based on what you ask it. We use GPTs all the time in retail business websites that are designed to provide answers to common questions in the retail website such as, is an item available for sale and where can it be found in a specific retail store.

These GPTs will only focus on the defined topic for which it was created. The Home Depot chat bot may provide precise information on home building supplies, but it will not relay information on topics professional involving sports teams.

For lawyers, creating law practice GPTs using powerful tools such as OpenAI's ChatGPT 4 can open the door to having fast and accurate information tools that are optimized for delivering information on specific cases. Or performing tasks such as summarization, translation, or question answering in ways that generic AI tools can't.

Where you get the data to create a law practice GPT and what you choose to upload into the AI tool raises many ethics and copywrite concerns. But let's start with showing how GPT creation is accomplished using open AI's Chat GPT 4 and address the ethics concerns later in this piece.

## **Building GPTs Step-by-Step**

Building a GPT can be complex, or easy, depending on the type of data you want to include and whether you are using a machine learning framework, or the simplified application tools in ChatGPT. For large law firms, a GPT project can take weeks of uploading the data and testing and evaluating the GPT results. It can also be costly creating the model architecture and choosing the hardware and software setup.

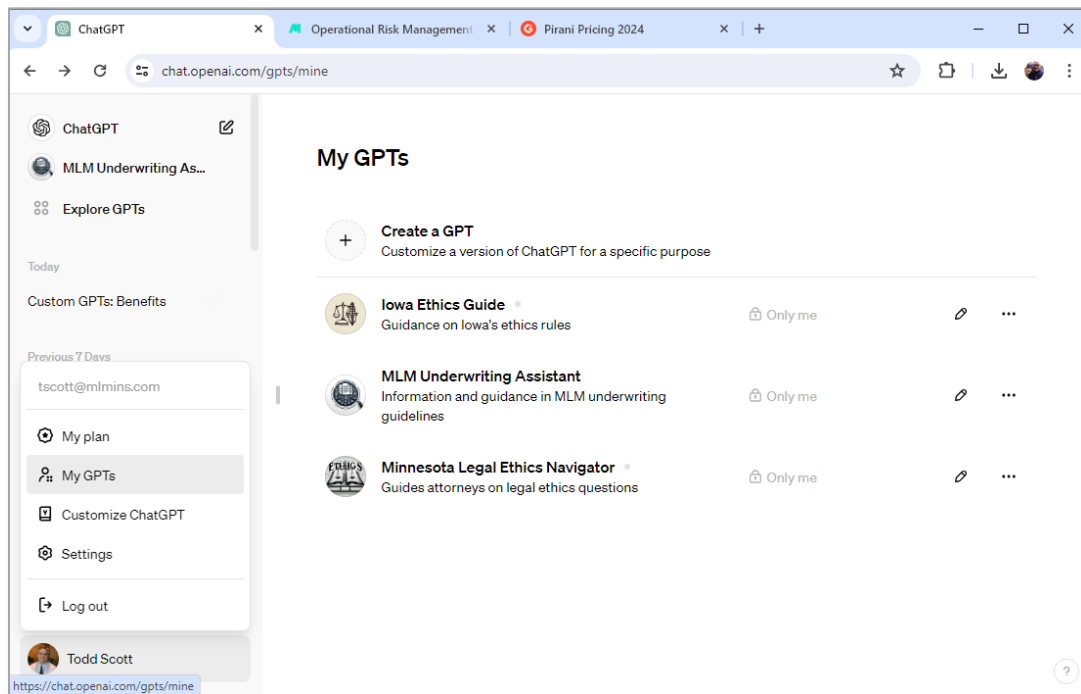
For the purpose of understanding how GPTs work, the following instructions illustrate how anyone can create a simple, but powerful GPT using ChatGPT 4 to accomplish many important law practice tasks. ChatGPT 4 is currently the superior AI tool for retail consumers and the subscription license sells for about \$20 per month. After you are

licensed to use the tool, creating your own GPT can occur in a matter of minutes with some monumental results.

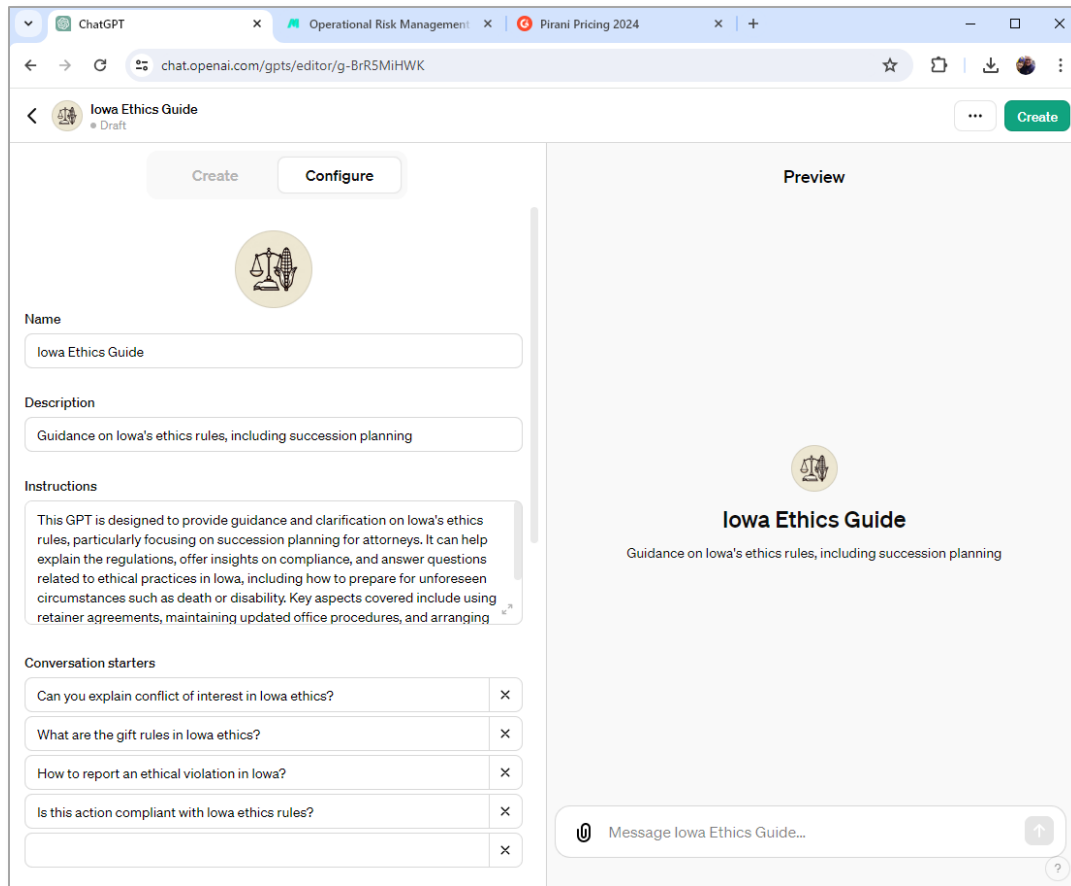
### Step 1. Define the GPT Objective:

Determine what you want your GPT model to do. For example, will it specialize in a particular subject area, or type of task? Your model should specialize in topics that can have defined parameters. For example, a GPT model that specializes in Iowa ethics for attorneys, will be easier to define than a generic GPT on legal ethics.

Once you have decided the objective of the GPT and have a sense of the parameters, you can begin creating the GPT in ChatGPT 4. Click on the link “My GPTs” above your profile picture, and then choose the “+ Create a GPT” feature.



The Create GPT feature will walk you through the process by asking you what you would like to name the GPT. In this example, the GPT has been named “Iowa Ethics Guide” and it includes a description of the GPT, along with instructions on how the GPT being created can be used and what tasks it is designed to perform. Defining the GPT instructions can happen very quickly because the tools suggest language that can be used and modified in the description and instructions.



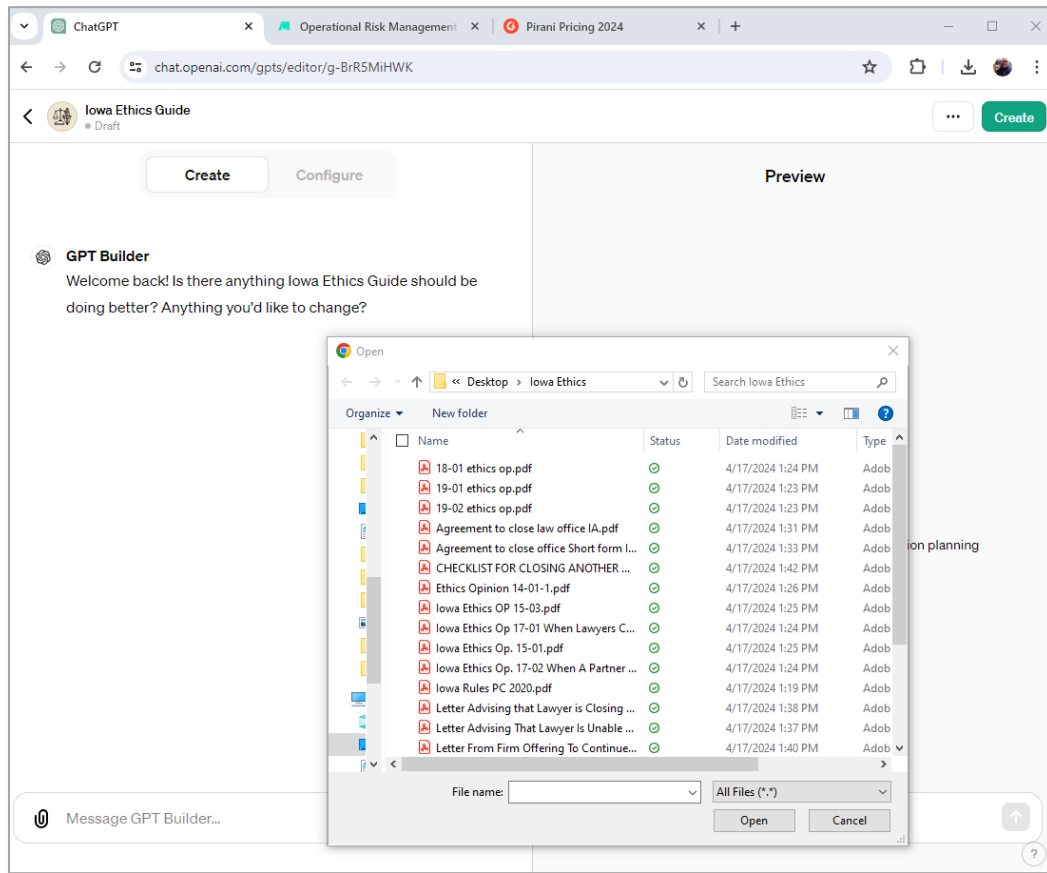
## Step 2. Gather and Prepare Data:

The next step is to collect a large dataset of text that your model will learn from. This text should be diverse and relevant to the specific objectives defined by the GPT description. Sources might include books, websites, articles, and other text repositories. You can upload files in the following formats to the GPT:

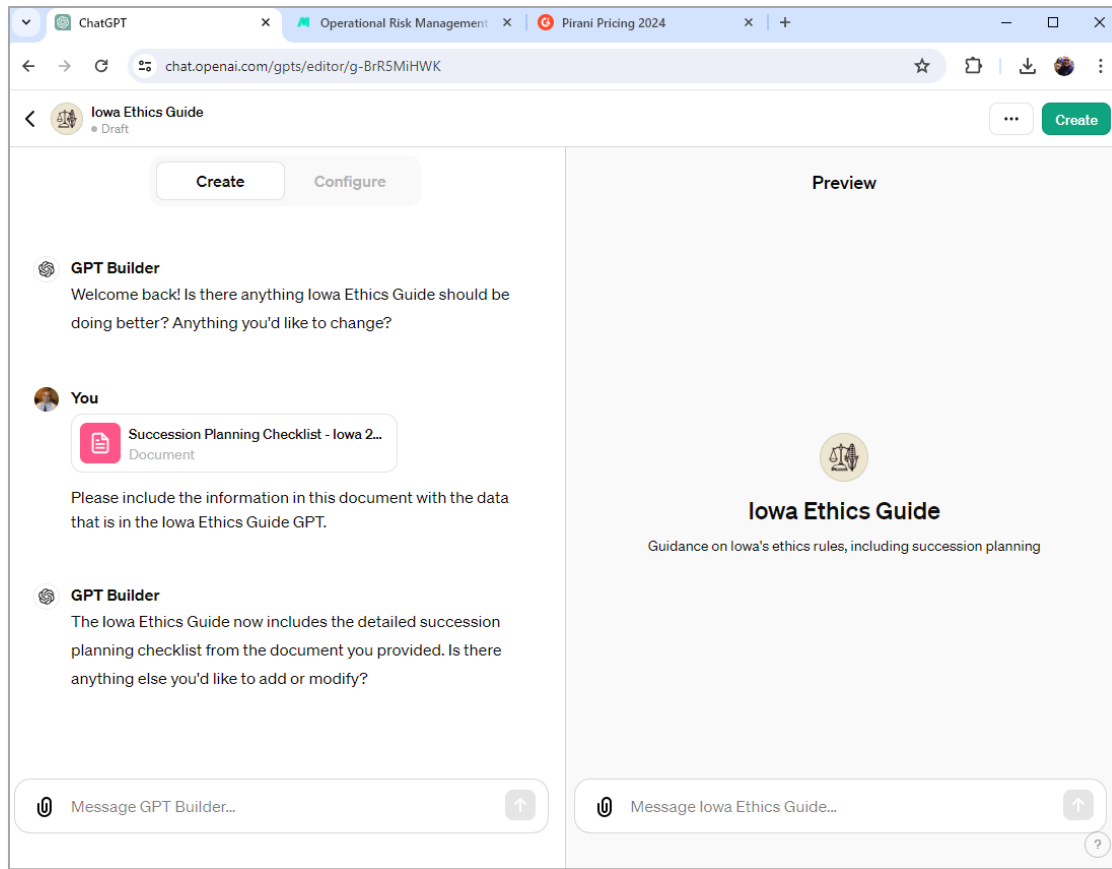
- PDF (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx)
- Plain text (.txt)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls, .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt, .pptx)

Clean and preprocess the data to remove errors, normalize text, ensure that it is correct and up-to-date, and possibly segment it into manageable pieces. Add all of the files to be included in the data set into a computer file directory so uploading the information can be simple and quick.

In the example below, the data used for the Iowa Ethics Guide GPT was added to a directory titled “Iowa Ethics” and includes the Iowa Rules of Professional Conduct, Iowa ethics opinions issued in the last decade by Iowa’s Ethics and Practice Guidelines Committee, and publications and forms issued by Iowa’s Office of Professional Regulation. All the documents are free and available to the public for download in PDF format.



Uploading the data to the Iowa Ethics Guide GPT is simple and easy. Just click on the paper clip icon in the lower left area that says “Message GPT Builder...” and choose your documents to upload from the file directory. The tool will upload up to 10 files at a time. After the documents have been uploaded in the message area, ask your GPT to add the information to the data included in the GPT. You can always return to the GPT and add additional files and information at a later date to further build the data set used by the tool.



#### Step 4. Training Environment Setup and Model Training:

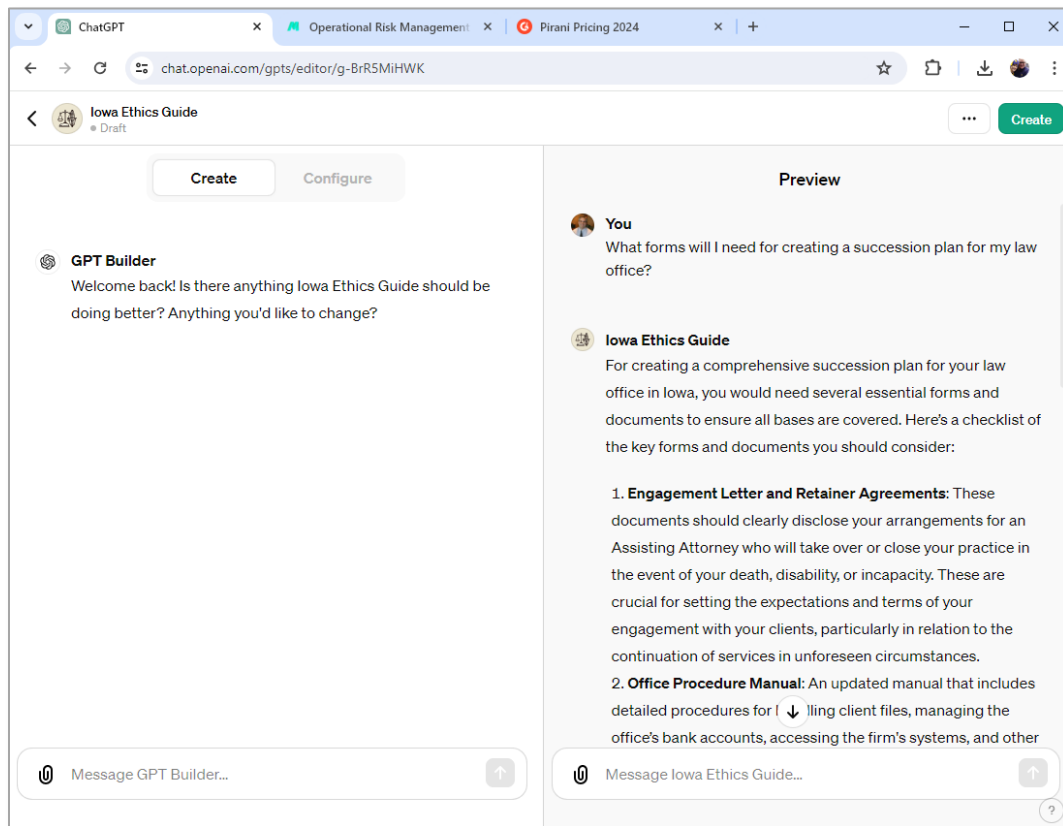
At this point, if we were building a large, custom GPT for the firm, there would be many hours of work ahead, which would involve using machine learning techniques, so it gets better at generating and understanding text. Pre-training usually requires iterating over the entire dataset multiple times. Additionally, fine-tuning the model by continuously adding a more specific dataset would be important to keep the GPT up to date, which could include pointing the data set to renewable data sets such as legal files, professional journals in html websites.

For the large firm project, GPT deployment might involve integrating it into a software application, developing an API (Application Programming Interface) for accessing the model for web-based access, or setting up a server for handling requests.

However, if you are creating a simplified GPT based upon a small, but important data set (such as the Iowa Ethics Guide exemplified above) you will find that at this point in the process, the GPT is immediately ready for work.

The GPT created will answer detailed questions by reviewing thousands of pages of data and summarize and produce information quickly and concisely on the topic for which the GPT was created.

The now-ready GPT can assist the user for finding accurate information very quickly among the many pages of data and summarize the information (as seen on the right side of the screen below.) The left side of the GPT screen is available to continuously build upon the tool, so important and accurate information in the form of data files can be added easily at any time. The GPT is meant to be continuously updated and monitored while using it for its intended purpose.



## Legal Ethics and Other Considerations

One of the most important considerations when creating and using a law practice GPT is to always be evaluating the ethical implications of your model, including the potential for generating harmful or biased outputs. Safeguards and monitoring to addressing these issues include paying continuous and ongoing attention to several considerations:

- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** As lawyers, we are bound by strict confidentiality rules which require attorneys to protect client information. Utilizing GPTs that have been trained on public platforms using private legal data may risk exposing confidential client data, especially if the AI model is commercialized or accessible by others. It is crucial to ensure that any data used to train such models is properly anonymized and that GPT usage complies with applicable privacy laws and professional ethical standards.

(The applicable rule for consideration is *ABA Model Rule 1.6 Confidentiality of Information*, in the *ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct*.)

- **Accuracy and Reliability:** The outputs of AI systems like GPTs depend heavily on the data they are trained on. If the training data is not comprehensive or is biased, the advice provided by the AI could be flawed, potentially leading to misinformation and adverse legal outcomes. Lawyers must verify the accuracy of AI-generated information and remain the final arbiters of legal advice.

(The applicable rule for consideration is *ABA Model Rule 1.1 Competence*, in the *ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct*.)

- **Bias and Fairness:** AI systems can perpetuate or even exacerbate biases present in their training data. In a legal context, this could lead to unfair outcomes or discrimination. Lawyers need to be aware of these risks and strive to use AI tools that are designed to minimize bias.

(The applicable rule for consideration is *ABA Model Rule 8.4 Maintaining The Integrity Of The Profession*, in the *ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct*, specifically, sections of rule 8.4(d) and 8.4(g).)

- **Data Security:** Whether the topic is a GPT tool, or any other data platform, the security measures around storing and processing private legal data must be robust, particularly when handling sensitive or personal information. Lawyers need to ensure that the technology providers they use also adhere to these high standards of data protection.

(The applicable rule for consideration is *ABA Model Rule 1.6 Confidentiality of Information*, in the *ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct*.)

## Tempting Ideas for GPT Creation

For lawyers experimenting with GPT creation, it will be tempting to build super-GPTs that are hyper-focused on individual case files. Imagine taking three to five years' worth of email files pertaining to a particular legal matter and dragging the hoard of .txt format email files into a GPT. The tool would help you quickly find a needle of a fact in a haystack of information.

Taking it just a bit further, what if the attorney were to create GPTs for each open case file, which would involve transferring copies of every email, correspondence, pleading and document related to a matter, and combine it with data files that contain current case law, forms, desk books, and documents from prior similar legal matters? The production power contained in such a GPT would transform even the most robust law practice.

Currently, any lawyer can create these super-GPTs for their law practice. However, doing so could dangerously expose the lawyer to the risk of revealing confidential client information, breaching the rules of professional conduct that govern the legal profession.

A lawyer can be creative when building GPTs but *must proceed with caution* when doing so. No information that may identify a client or anything related to a confidential, propriety matter should ever be used in the creation of a GPT.

There are many resources and documents that can be used to build a client-focused GPT that does not necessarily involve information that is confidential or would cause harm to the client if revealed to the general public. Anything involving lists and choices for document production based upon attorney work-product is ripe for GPT development and can create tremendous efficiencies almost overnight. Examples include clause libraries, GPTs that involve complex rules and date calculation, and practice-specific fill-in-the-blank information such as medical and real property definitions and descriptions. Be creative and cautious when boldly plowing into the future of your law practice.

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