

Last Word: Global vision

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As part of our Global 100 survey, top lawyers share their thoughts on the global market

Craning forward

‘Real estate was a surprise; I anticipated a slowdown, but there’s still a lot going on. From my office window, I can see ten cranes in the West End – it’s remarkable how much development is underway. This is probably why the larger law firms have had a good year: the strong practice areas have stayed robust, and even the quieter ones have had enough work to keep them busy.’

Simon Levine, global co-chief executive, DLA Piper



‘To use a mountain biking analogy: coasting downhill might be fun in the moment, but when you reach the bottom, you’re lower than where you started. Climbing uphill is a grind, but it’s what gets you further.’ *Ira Coleman, McDermott*

Double-edged motherboard

‘In the legal industry, one of our biggest challenges is also one of our greatest opportunities: AI.’

Anthony McCusker, chair, Goodwin

Supply and demand

‘We’re seeing a growth in demand, and the prediction is that this will continue.’

Lee Ranson, co-chief executive, Eversheds Sutherland

Longer horizons

‘It’s always important to look beyond the immediate, look beyond this year. I try to religiously set aside time to focus on those longer horizons.’

Kim Koopersmith, chair, Akin

Wolf of Y’all Street

‘We compete on Main Street, Wall Street, Wall Street South in South Florida and Y’all Street in Texas!’

Richard Rosenbaum, executive chair, Greenberg Traurig

Reaching higher ground

‘To use a mountain biking analogy: coasting downhill might be fun in the moment, but when you reach the bottom, you’re lower than where you started. Climbing uphill is a grind, but it’s what gets you further.’

Ira Coleman, chair, McDermott Will & Emery

London calling

‘London’s generally a bit more buoyant than people thought it would be four or five years ago. There was a lot of Brexit-related doom and gloom that doesn’t seem to have come to fruition. There’s still a lot of work in London, particularly big-ticket work.’

Chris Caulfield, London partner-in-charge, Baker Botts

Lawyerball

‘It’s gotten fairly transactional and algorithmic in the market. We try to look more qualitatively. Some partners just make other partners better, whether it shows up in data or not. Identifying those partners and compensating them for the things they do well, and encouraging them to do more – that’s the trick.’

Jon Van Gorp, chair, Mayer Brown

The kids are all alright

‘It’s great to see the younger generation coming through, full of energy and enthusiasm. It’s clear that many people are still eager to join our profession, which is a great sign for the future.’

Duncan Weston, executive partner, CMS

Class act

‘There has been a huge wash of cases in class actions recently, largely funded in competition but also in areas like financial services and sustainability.’

Deborah Finkler, managing partner, Slaughter and May

The big AI challenge

‘The challenge is to ensure AI enhances, not replaces, our ability to provide tailored legal advice.’

Yvette Ostolaza, chair, Sidley Austin

The recipe for global success

‘What are the ingredients for being in the global elite? It’s the quality of clients, quality of the work you’re doing for them and the quality of your talent.’

Justin D’Agostino, global chief executive, Herbert Smith Freehills

AI at the centre

‘We as a law firm are incredibly excited about AI. It’s already at the centre of what we do. We’ve seen a huge uptick in work, and it’s touching everything – regulatory, corporate, dealmaking, litigation, all of it, and for all our sectors, particularly tech.’

James Hargrove, partner and member of the board, Orrick