

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Delivering a compelling offering

Executive Committee member Heather McDevitt explains our progress on delivering a compelling offering as part of our 2025 Strategy.



CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Delivering a compelling offering

In the words of one of our clients: 'Legal expertise is necessary, but it is no longer sufficient'.

It's a statement that sums up how client expectations have changed during increasingly competitive, uncertain times.

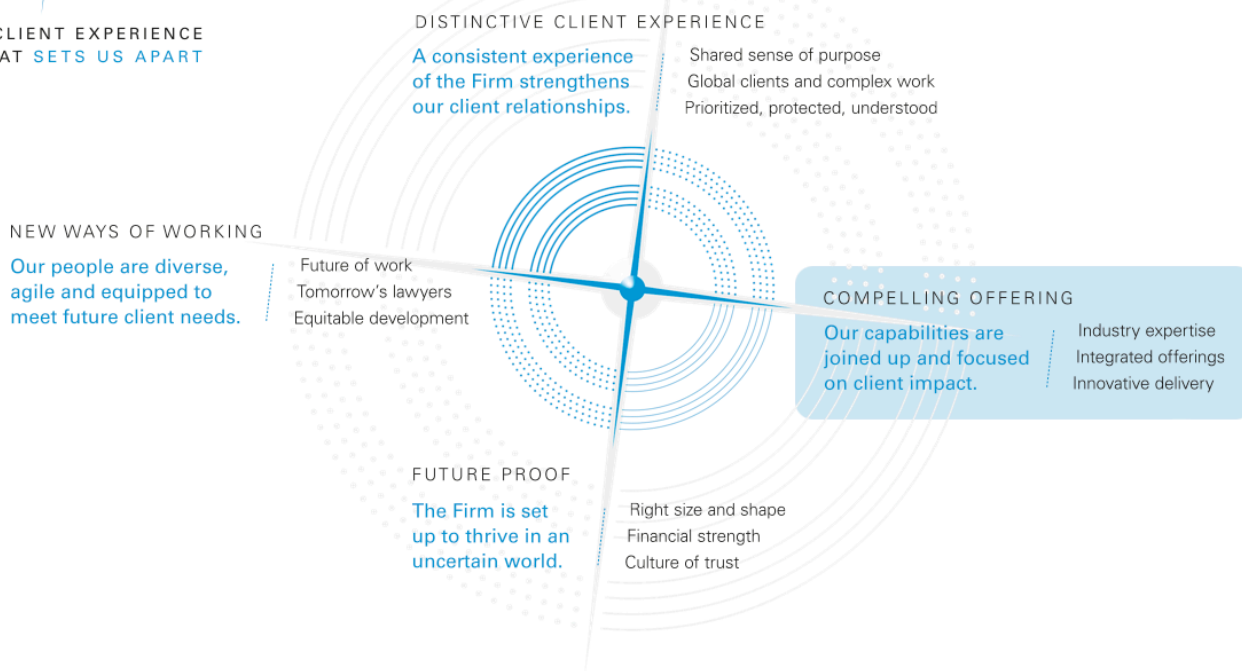
That's why our 2025 Strategy was so well timed. It challenges us to do much more – to aspire to deliver a more compelling offering for our clients.

A compelling offering demands that we blend our capabilities in a way that our clients value, and that sets us apart from other firms.

To achieve this, the Firm identified two priority areas that our clients told us matter to them: industry expertise and innovative service delivery.

Task forces, made up of partners, associates and business services professionals, were set up for both areas to help us focus our efforts. They've since made recommendations to the Executive Committee on actions we could take to deliver a more compelling offering. For innovative service delivery, the Firm has established an Innovation Committee following the work of the task force.

Let's take a quick look at what's been done so far.



Industry Expertise

In our discussions with clients, they regularly tell us they value and need lawyers who fully understand their business and industry.

That's why we established our global industry groups more than 10 years ago, because we appreciate that our industry groups can organize our many capabilities – across practices and regions – and deliver them to our clients in a joined-up way.

Today we have 10 industry groups covering the vast majority of our clients' industries, including three recently established groups for Consumer & Retail, Sovereigns & Public Sector and Infrastructure, Transportation & Logistics.

Following on from the success of these industry groups, our task force recommended that all of our lawyers would benefit from being part of an industry group, just as everyone today is part of a practice and office. We think this is important for a couple of reasons.

First, doing this will help our lawyers better understand how market events are impacting their clients in a given industry.

Second, being part of an industry group helps each of us to expand our network within the Firm, accelerate our development and support our growth as better advisors to our clients, which will ultimately set us apart.

For example, I am a commercial litigator and as such, I've worked closely with other litigators throughout the Firm. For many years, I also have served many clients in the Pharma industry. In fact, I am the former head of our Pharma Industry Group.

Because of my work in this industry, I have connected with many lawyers in other practices who are working with Pharma clients. This has greatly expanded my network within the Firm.

Finally, we want to make sure our people have regular access to industry trends and perspectives. Many of our industry groups already hold 'industry academies' on topics that are important for lawyers practicing in the relevant industry.

We will also be publishing 'Industry in Focus' – a regular collection of trends that our groups have identified with analysis of the relevance of these trends to our practices. These efforts should ensure that our lawyers are developing deeper industry expertise and know where to go for industry experts when they need them.



“A compelling offering demands that we blend our capabilities in a way that our clients value, and that sets us apart from other firms.”

Innovative service delivery

When it comes to innovative service delivery, again it starts with what clients tell us. Our clients now regularly press us for detail on how we can be more innovative in delivering our work. At most major pitches, we are asked how the Firm uses legal project management, knowledge management, research and practice technology to provide more effective and efficient services.

For example, we recently won a place on the panel for Anglo American, the mining giant. The pitch team included Dee Tamlin, Head of Legal Project Management, and Judith Olloh, a senior associate in our EIPAF group. Both Dee and Judith are members of the Innovation Committee. They spoke on how the Firm uses practice technology and legal project management to drive new ways of delivering our services.

All our lawyers need to embrace innovative ways of delivering our services. How are we going to do this? First, we have set up the Innovation Committee to drive change but also to be a place where new ideas can be gathered and assessed.

In addition to the Committee, we have established a new role called innovation managers. These are positions staffed by our existing BD, LPM and Practice Technology teams, who benefit from common training. They will be working across of number of areas.

First, the Firm is asking every practice to set up an Innovation Champions Team – a group of 5-10 partners, associates and business services people. The Innovation Committee and innovation managers will work with each team to identify pain points in client service delivery and potential ways to address them. Each team will also drive communications within the practice on innovative solutions.

We are looking to have Innovation Champions Teams in every section established by the end of the year. Today we have five sections up and running – Americas EIPAF, Americas Debt Finance, EMEA Competition, EMEA Capital Markets and Asia Pacific Banking & Capital Markets.

There are another 10 practices currently assembling their teams and getting ready to start on their innovation journey. The video accompanying this article will explain more about how Americas Debt Finance is piloting a new approach to practice innovation.

In addition, the Innovation Committee is also responsible for looking at new ideas and whether the Firm should invest in these new ideas.

There are three main areas that the Committee is looking at:

- A new way for us to manage our many local counsel around the world that we rely heavily on to execute complex cross-border deals and litigations
- A better way to find precedents which is a key pain point for almost every practice; and
- The opportunities and risks of ChatGPT and other generative AI tools for our Firm

We are currently running pilots of a couple of different AI tools, both using ChatGPT. And we expect to start pilots for the local counsel tools and precedent search in the next few months.





A more compelling offering

These are just a few of the things we're doing to bring a compelling offering for our clients.

If we can consistently combine our unrivalled global expertise with the best in innovative service delivery and razor-sharp knowledge of our clients and industries, we can truly deliver a client experience that sets us apart.