

# International office of the year

## WINNER

# Gołtsblat BLP

Andrey Gołtsblat

*The launch of a unique Russian practice*



BLP's Neville Eisenberg (centre) with Andrew Webster-Dunn of the IBA

It takes a lot to render an entire market of lawyers speechless, but Berwin Leighton Paisner's spectacular Moscow launch last January did just that.

With much of the market fighting for survival amid the most testing economic conditions since the 1998 Russian financial crisis, BLP pulled off the largest law firm merger the country had ever seen. Its sensational raid on leading domestic firm Pepeliaev, Gołtsblat & Partners saw it recruit nine partners – including renowned managing partner Andrey Gołtsblat – and a further 60 associates.

The move gifted BLP with a ready-made Russian practice – around 90% of the team's clients followed them to Gołtsblat BLP – that looks set to boost firmwide turnover by 10% in its first year. Not only that, but the new office was up and running within one month of signing the deal, as the firm quickly integrated its Russian practice with minimum fuss. The practice wasted no time in pulling major mandates, including work for Mars on the \$23bn acquisition of Wrigley and support of its post-acquisition integration/restructuring.

It is without a doubt one of the most ambitious new office moves of any international firm in recent years, successfully creating a never-before-seen Anglo-Russian operation that is already one of the largest in Moscow.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### BIRD & BIRD MADRID

Javier Fernández-Samaniego

Fast becoming a fly in the ointment among the Spanish legal elite, this office has grown from nothing in 2005 to become a serious contender. Revenues are up 62%, while profits have leapt by an astonishing 97%. An impressive client roster backs up financial gain and a positive working environment.

### EVERSHEDS PARIS

Michael Brown

Eversheds' French practice is celebrating its strongest-ever financial year, with turnover up 37%. The firm has transformed the fortunes of its Paris office in the past three years, turning it from a small regional practice into a flagship international hub.

### LATHAM & WATKINS DOHA

Bryant Edwards

The Doha office has been a notably strong performer for Latham during the economic downturn, attracting a stream of premium mandates in the past year. These include the biggest emerging markets bond offering in history, and the largest public merger ever announced in Qatar. The firm raised eyebrows by launching three Middle East offices simultaneously in 2008 but the Doha

office's client list and standing in the market have put any scepticism to bed.

### MAPLES AND CALDER DUBLIN

Andrew Doyle

Since its high-profile launch in 2006, Maples' Dublin office has been a thorn in the side of Ireland's legal aristocracy. The firm went from strength to strength in 2009, adding more lateral hires and continuing to punch above its weight on big-ticket transactional work, as well as advising major funds. This office is a testimony to Maples' dedication to being a leading onshore player, in addition to its renowned offshore expertise.

### ROSCHIER STOCKHOLM

Axel Calissendorff

A relative newcomer to the Swedish market, Finnish firm Roschier defied critics, who believed it would struggle to gain traction in such a conservative market and could even lose out as referrals from its Scandinavian neighbours dried up. However, by hiring some of the strongest players and progressively winning market share, the critics were silenced.

### VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA & ASSOCIADOS LISBON

João Vieira de Almeida

With rapid growth over the past ten years, VdA has positioned itself well to lead the pack in a transformed legal market. Despite the stream of new entrants and pressure from Iberian alliance firms, VdA's financials and credentials show that the firm remains at the top of its game. Alliances in strategically important jurisdictions, such as Mozambique and Brazil, underline its ambitions.

**Gołtsblat BLP looks set to boost  
BLP's firmwide turnover by 10%  
in its first year.**



The International Bar Association. For lawyers who want to go places.

# In the legal profession, there's only one thing more important than what you know.

Knowing the right people is often crucial but, when you have international clients or clients with international dealings, it can be of great advantage if your friends in high places are also in far-flung places.

As an International Bar Association member, working confidently across international borders presents no problems. You are able to draw on the world's most extensive expertise base to achieve the best possible outcome for both your client and your practice.

IBA membership offers the opportunity to meet, to interact with and to learn from like-minded lawyers and leading practitioners in many jurisdictions, right across the planet. Our membership roll runs to over 30,000 of the world's top lawyers and 190 Bar Associations and Law Societies worldwide.

Whatever your field of specialisation, we can provide you with instant access to a global network of fellow lawyers who are used to applying their local knowledge to the same or similar issues.

The IBA's on-going series of conferences and specialist meetings provides the perfect forum for convivial and constructive networking. Many an international merger or acquisition has been conceived at an IBA meeting and there are more than a few lawyers who say that joining the IBA was probably one of their more astute career moves.

What is more, the ability to market their firm in the right international circles has proven invaluable in many cases.

With membership of the International Bar Association, you can be sure of having all the right friends in all the right places, worldwide.

To find out more about the IBA and the benefits that membership could bring to your firm please contact membership services on:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7691 6868 Fax: +44 (0)20 7691 6544

Email: [member@int-bar.org](mailto:member@int-bar.org) or visit [www.ibanet.org](http://www.ibanet.org).



the global voice of  
the legal profession