

National/regional firm of the year

WINNER

DWF

Andrew Leaitherland, managing partner

Impressive financial results and national progress

DWF was an outstanding performer in the *LB100* last year. A healthy 18% boost in revenues up to £70.8m allowed the firm to leap an impressive nine places, propelling the Manchester heavyweight comfortably into the top 50 firms in the country for the first time. Since 2006 the firm's turnover has grown from £33.9m.

Managing partner Andrew Leaitherland's declared goal to crack the top 30 looks closer to becoming a reality. The firm has grown steadily over the past five years with a keen focus on its insurance litigation practice.

In 2010 the firm continued to invest in London, adding former Halliwells insolvency partner Gavin Jones and insurance partner Catherine May from Reed Smith. In recent years the firm has shown a consistent willingness to expand, breaking into the notoriously competitive Leeds market in 2007 and opening a London office in 2008. DWF's focus and drive has ensured that it has become a force to be reckoned with, not just in the Northern market but nationwide.



(L-R) DWF's Paul Berry and Claire Bowler with Michael Greene of the IBA

HIGHLY COMMENDED

BIRKETTS

Nigel Farthing, senior partner; Alistair Lang, chief executive officer

In ten years Birketts has shown a level of tenacity that is difficult to ignore. Since the arrival of Alistair Lang as CEO in 2001, it has evolved significantly. A clear five-year strategy has been key to its success, with the firm on course to make the *LB100* in 2011.

BOYES TURNER

Andrew Chalkley, chief executive officer

This popular Thames Valley firm has been particularly lauded by clients for the excellent quality of its service. Boyes Turner has branched out into new practice areas and has made some impressive lateral

HBJ GATELEY WAREING

Malcolm McPherson and Michael Ward, joint senior partners

HBJ Gateley Wareing enjoyed an impressive year in 2010. The Anglo-Scottish firm reported a record turnover of £49.6m and launched a new office in Manchester. This expanding practice now boasts over 300 fee-earners, including a team of nine that joined the London office in 2010 from Halliwells.

TLT

David Pester, managing partner

This firm's long-term investment strategy is starting to pay off with an extraordinary 45% increase in net income last year. TLT has also shone with a string of key lateral hires from local rivals and major City firms alike and some impressive instructions. Investment in a new London office underlines TLT's progressive approach.

VEALE WASBROUGH VIZARDS

Simon Heald, managing partner

A game-changing merger between London's Wizards Tweedie and Bristol's Veale Wasbrough went live in 2010 and saw the newly formed firm break into the *LB100* with a combined turnover of £20.5m. Some great panel appointments, such as winning a place on the first panel for the London Universities Purchasing Consortium and a number of key hires ensure that this is a firm to watch.

WEIGHTMANS

Patrick Gaul, managing partner

This low-profile firm quietly produces consistently strong results, particularly in a region that was hit hard by the recession. Turnover stands at £56m, 8% up on last year and PEP was up a healthy 26% thanks to strong performances in healthcare and public sector work.

A healthy 18% boost in revenue allowed DWF to leap an impressive nine *LB100* places.

hires in 2010. Its well-established insurance group has also come to the fore, helping the firm achieve continual financial growth throughout the recession.

BRABNERS CHAFFE STREET

Mark Brandwood, managing partner

This firm has gone from strength to strength after its savvy merger with Liverpool's Bremmers Solicitors in 2009. The firm saw revenues increase 7% last year to £31m and maintains solid profitability despite its continued expansion.

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