

ALB HOT 100

A wealth of lawyers have set newsrooms abuzz in their pursuit of excellence, in one of the most challenging years for legal sectors seen across the Asian region.

Now in its sixth year, *ALB's* **HOT 100** aims to provide an – admittedly subjective – overview of the personalities of the past year. We list those who have performed outstandingly in their field, or courted controversy and turned heads.

After all, winning the game is not always the be all and end all – it's the style, poise, and class with which you play that also counts. This list is intended to entertain, not offend, and certainly is not a definitive guide to the industry.

Please enjoy this year's *ALB* **HOT 100**.

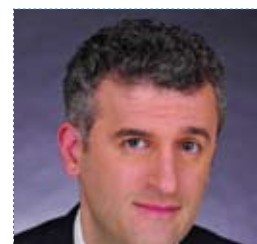
THE STRATEGISTS

Foresight, business acumen and a measure of cunning are the traits of lawyers profiled in this category. Meet the names behind some of the watershed events in the industry this year.



Name: Andrew Grech
Title: Managing director
Firm/Company: Slater & Gordon
Location: Australia

Why hot: Grech's Slater & Gordon legal practice remains the only law firm in the world to have listed on a stock exchange. Specialising in commercial law, the Australian firm's growth since its IPO in 2007 provides a model for other legal firms who are looking to follow in the same path.



Name: Ken Siegel
Title: Tokyo managing partner
Firm/Company: Morrison & Foerster
Location: Japan

Why hot: The downturn has proved to be fortuitous for some, and MoFo's Tokyo office is among them. Not only is it rumoured to be one of the most profitable of the firm's offices worldwide, but its headcount has substantially increased over the past year. This has come on the back of a number of high-profile deals for blue chip clients, including Fujitsu, Hitachi and Toshiba.



Name: Lindsay Esler
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Deacons Hong Kong
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Esler sealed lucrative Lex Mundi membership for the firm earlier this year as it goes about cementing its position as the island's premier domestic law firm. Unfazed by the decision of Deacons Australia to partner instead with Norton Rose, Esler, says there are no similar plans in the work for the firm in HK, at least for now.



Name: Nicola Wakefield-Evans
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Mallesons Stephen Jaques
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: In an industry where glass ceilings are conspicuous, Wakefield-Evans can be widely commended for being among a rare few to have broken through it. Wakefield-Evans has also built the profile of the Australian-based firm to a level where it is rivalling US and UK firms, for a share of the most lucrative China-related work.



Name: Hwang Ju Myung
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Hwang Mok Park
Location: Korea

Why hot: One of the Korean legal industry's most prominent figures, Hwang splits his time managing the expansionary firm while sitting on the board of Korea Telecom. Korea's first in-house counsel for Gulf Oil, he helped the firm secure a merger with boutique firm Hanseung Law Firm. HWP is widely considered as one of the firms nipping at the heels of the larger firms in the market.



Name: Sam Farrands
Title: Head of Asia major projects & infrastructure
Firm/Company: Minter Ellison
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: One of the region's leading lawyers in projects and PPPs, Farrands is considered the brains behind the firm's recent acquisition of boutique construction firm Cordells.



Name: Kim Byoung Jai
Title: Senior partner
Firm/Company: Lee & Ko
Location: Korea

Why hot: Kim told the Korea Times "no matter who will come, we are ready to beat them all," a clear indication that his firm is ready for a good old-fashioned scrap. The firm has been upping its market aggressively over the last few years, acting on more of Korea's most prominent transactions. It will no doubt pose a strong rival for leading firm Kim & Chang in the years ahead.

THE QFLP LICENSEES



Name: Austin Sweeney
Title: Herbert Smith
Firm/Company: Singapore managing partner
Location: Singapore

Why hot: A winner in the firm's management reshuffle, Sweeney was duly installed as the Singapore office's managing partner. With its newly-issued QFLP license in arm, Sweeney will be leading an office that is widely considered to be head and shoulders above other international firms in dispute resolution matters across southeast Asia.



Name: Philip Rapp
Title: Singapore managing partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: Singapore

Why hot: With the government introducing new measures to develop Singapore's legal sector, Rapp will be at the vanguard of change. He will lead the Magic Circle firms' operations in the newly-QFLP licensed Singapore office and oversee the India desk. The firm plans to cement its large footprint in the region by dipping into the local employment market.



Name: Jeff Smith
Title: Head of Asia energy and infrastructure
Firm/Company: Norton Rose
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Another of the Lion Nation's new QFLP licensees, Smith told *ALB* that the granting of the license was more than just a "pat on the back" for foreign firms in Singapore. Keep an eye out for Norton Rose to build its practice in the staple areas of energy and projects in the year ahead.



Name: Doug Peel
Title: Singapore managing partner
Firm/Company: White & Case
Location: Singapore

Why hot: There's no doubt about where the QFLP license fits into this firm's Asia strategy – India. Peel forms a core part of White & Case's India team. According to a number of industry insiders the firm is said to be on the brink of sealing a 'best-friends' alliance with one of the subcontinent's largest firms.



Name: Kenneth Aboud
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Allen & Overy
Location: Singapore

Why hot: After being granted a QFLP license last year, A&O broke away from JLV partner Shook, Lin & Bok to establish its footprint in Singapore. Aboud led a team that worked on a groundbreaking deal in the Indonesian Islamic finance sector – the Republic of Indonesia's inaugural global US\$650m sukuk. The deal will likely serve as a precedent for future Islamic bond issues.



Name: Abdulaziz Al Bosaily
Title: Local partner
Firm/Company: Clyde & Co
Location: Riyadh

Why hot: After breaking away from its alliance with DLA Piper – which only lasted six months – his independent law office found a new ally in Clyde & Co and is set to capitalise on the increasing number of cross-border disputes arising in the Gulf region at the moment. Al Bosaily works in the Middle Eastern corporate and financial services group.



Name: Samantha Bradley
Title: Hong Kong managing director
Firm/Company: Withers
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: As the first onshore law firm to launch in an offshore jurisdiction after entering the BVI earlier this year, there is no doubting that Withers is a trailblazer. Bradley heads up another of the firm's newly opened offices (in Hong Kong) which services the legal needs of Greater China's increasing numbers of high-net worth individuals.



Name: Simon Marchant
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Freshfields
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: After having this position vacant for three years, Freshfields appointed Marchant to the position of Asia managing partner earlier this year, saying that the time was right to reinstate the role as the attention of investors turns to the Asian region for growth opportunities and investment.



Name: David Wang
Title: Shanghai managing partner
Firm/Company: Paul Hastings
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Wang's nine years with the firm paid off this year after he ascended to the position of Shanghai office chair, where he replaced incumbent Mitchell Dudek. Wang has previously practiced in the Los Angeles and Hong Kong offices before relocating to Shanghai. He will be responsible for rebuilding the firm's China practice, after layoffs in the region.



Name: Jyoti Sagar
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: J Sagar & Associates
Location: India

Why hot: In a period where the whole world seems to be watching India, Sagar has responded by growing his firm from mid-tier in size, to one of the largest law firms in India. As part of this process, the firm recently acquired boutique outfit M&C Partners, increasing its operations in Bangalore.



Name: Chew Seng Kok
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Zaid Ibrahim
Location: Malaysia

Why hot: Chew has ambitious plans to grow Malaysia's largest law firm. After opening new offices in Vietnam and Dubai over the past year, Chew says his firm will be looking to compete with "the international big boys now."



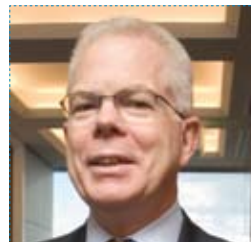
Name: Aloysius Wee
Title: managing partner
Firm/Company: Dacheng Central Chambers
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Wee announced that his firm had struck up an alliance with China's largest firm, Dacheng, to target clients looking to expand into India and China in July this year. In becoming the first law firm to build a strategy around this niche – but rapidly growing – area of practice, the firm became the fifth joint law venture in the Lion city.



Name: Dang The Duc
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Indochine counsel
Location: Vietnam

Why hot: Duc's decision this year to forge an alliance with Hanoi's Leadco was a crafty move in a developing legal market. Duc is making all the right moves for the three year old firm. It most recently advised on the widely publicised SEAF Blue Waters Growth Fund debt investment deal.



Name: Robert Milliner
Title: Chief executive partner
Firm/Company: Mallesons Stephen Jacques
Location: Australia

Why hot: Ever the active hiker, Milliner has overcome many peaks this year – after climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, he has been reappointed as Mallesons chief. He scooped the pool at the recent *ALB* Australasian Law Awards, taking home the coveted "managing partner of the year" award and the "corporate/M&A deal team of the year" award.



Name: Clive Cook
Title: Managing principal
Firm/Company: Baker & McKenzie
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Cook's appointment as Baker & McKenzie's chairman of its Singapore office and member firms in Malaysia and Indonesia, is part of the US leviathan's plans to reinvigorate its Asia strategies. Keep an eye out for Baker's to become even bigger in the region in the coming years.



Name: James Harris
Title: Local managing partner
Firm/Company: Lovells Lee & Lee
Location: Singapore

Why hot: As the Singapore head of one of the three remaining joint-law ventures in the Lion Nation, the firm's strategy for Singapore deserves recognition. Under the auspices of its alliance with Lee & Lee, Lovells now has the southeast Asian power and projects market cornered.



Name: Matthew Laight
Title: China managing partner
Firm/Company: Bird & Bird
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Quashing rumours that the alliance forged with Singapore firm ATMD was not because Bird & Bird was unsuccessful in its attempt to obtain a QFLP in the Lion City, a very busy Laight had to also facilitate the expansionary firm's launch in Shanghai last October.



Name: Ashley Gunning
Title: Corporate and investment funds group head
Firm/Company: Walkers
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Charged with increasing the offshore firm's footprint in Singapore, Gunning also leads its investment funds and corporate group. Two finance lawyers have been brought in to boost the new Singapore office, and the firm will no doubt be using this as a stepping stone into the Indian market.



Name: Don Boyd
Title: Chief executive partner
Firm/Company: Deacons
Location: Sydney

Why hot: The merger between Deacons Australia and Norton Rose, while certainly not a merger of equals, couldn't be more significant. Boyd was the first to do what other Australian firms were delaying, as a base for pushing into Asia. He forged a strategic plan in 2006 which may have yielded the merger with Norton Rose—but will it work?



Name: Zili Shao
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Linklaters
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: It has been a comparatively easy step-up to Shao's position as the firm's new Asia managing partner, replacing the outgoing Giles White. Having already headed the firm's Greater China practice since 2003, his appointment is a clear indication of where the firm will be looking for growth.



Name: Cui Ligu
Title: Managing partner
Firm: Guantao
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Cui Ligu is leading the international expansion strategy, with Guantao forming an alliance with Hong Kong firm Jackson Woo & Associates. A new Xiamen office is also up and running, developing the firm's international trade and shipping practices, as well as facilitating economic ties between the mainland and Taiwan.



Name: Wang Li
Title: Chief global managing partner
Firm: Deheng Law Office
Location: Beijing

Why hot: At the helm of Beijing-headquartered DeHeng, one of the country's largest law firms and a reputable and trusted advisor to many large state-owned and private enterprises, is global managing partner Wang Li. The M&A practice is headed by Wang, and has posted a stellar performance for the first half of 2009. It was involved in five major deals, valued at US\$19.1bn.



Name: Robert Lee
Title: China managing partner
Firm: Diaz Reus
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Robert Lee, the partner-in-charge of Miami-headquartered Diaz Reus's Shanghai office, sees opportunities in the increasing activity and trade between BRIC nations, particular China's interest in natural resources in Latin America, Russia and the Middle East. He is working closely with the firm's offices in these markets to help Chinese clients achieve their goals.



Name: Bernd Stucken
Title: Managing partner for Greater China
Firm: Salans
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Salans is known for its strengths in emerging markets and the former USSR countries. Under the management of Bernd Stucken, the firm has grown its China presence significantly in the past few years. Salans opened its Beijing office in 2008 and recently established an office in Hong Kong. To steer the China offices through the present challenging times and sustain growth, Stucken has decided to shift the firm's practice focus from advising on FDI, M&A and investment in real estate, to restructuring, arbitration and outbound M&A.

MOVERS & SHAKERS Are you moving in-house, back into private practice, joining the competition or just generally on the way up? Here are some of the more remarkable legal practitioners seen in this category over the past 12 months



Name: Desmond Ong
Title: Singapore managing director
Firm/Company: Eversheds
Location: Singapore

Why hot: One of two Eversheds lawyers to make our list this year, Ong's move from DLA Piper to head up the firm's Singapore office is as high-profile as we've seen in 2009. Expect a number of his DLA Piper colleagues to follow him once Eversheds settles into its new home in the Lion City. Was his departure the reason DLA Piper missed out on a QFLP license?



Name: Nick Seddon
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Eversheds
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: One legal practitioner to benefit from the collapse of international player Heller Ehrman, Seddon, with all his management experience, was quickly scooped up by the UK-based Eversheds to lead its operations in Singapore and Hong Kong.



Name: Shibeer Ahmed
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Baker Botts
Location: Dubai

Why hot: As Lovells' Dubai office managing partner, Ahmed was widely credited as being one of the biggest reasons behind the firm, which was without peer in the Gulf for Islamic finance. However, Ahmed surprised many in May this year by moving across to Baker Botts's global projects practice, to work under managing partner David Emmons.



Name: Zia Mody
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: AZB & Partners
Location: India

Why hot: It's been an extremely busy year for the impressive Mody. After securing a 'best friends' alliance with Clifford Chance, the firm swallowed Bangalore boutique Anup Shah – in addition to taking home two trophies at the ALB Southeast Asian Law awards: for its involvement in Nomura's acquisition of Lehman's assets in Asia and as the "India deal firm of the year".



Name: Chris Wyman
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: London/Mumbai

Why hot: Wyman leads Clifford Chance's India team, relocating to Mumbai earlier this year to tighten the firm's relationship with its Indian best friend, AZB & Partners. Certainly this is one to watch, as impetus for the long-awaited liberalisation of India's legal market gathers pace.



Name: Abhishek Saxena
Title: Co-founding partner
Firm/Company: Phoenix Legal
Location: India

Why hot: The ambitious Saxena left with two other partners from Trilegal to create Phoenix Legal in October last year. The firm's bevy of high-profile clients, along with its work on some of the subcontinent's most prominent transactions, has drawn the attention of many, notably Lovells, who reportedly courted the firm for a 'best friends' agreement. This was denied by both parties.



Name: Celia Lam (+ Marc Harvey)
Title: Joint China managing partners
Firm/Company: Linklaters
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Elevated to head up the magic circle firm's operations in Greater China earlier this, both Celia Lam and Mark Harvey have a hard task ahead of them. Competition among the international firms in the Asia region will reach new heights as Asia comes out of the global financial crisis.



Name: Martin David
Title: Singapore managing partner
Firm/Company: DLA Piper
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Replacing Desmond Ong who left for Eversheds, David was recruited from Linklaters in October. He looks to rebuild a Singapore office that has been decimated by lawyers departing and a number of layoffs. DLA was "disappointed" to have been one of the international firms to miss out on a QFLP license in December 2008, but will reapply in the next round in 2010.



Name: Charles Liang
Title: Executive partner
Firm: Run Ming
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Previously the general counsel for Alstom in China, Liang decided to return to private practice and has chosen Beijing-based Run Ming, a new but fast-rising firm. He has extensive experience in FDI, M&A, international technology transfer and commodity trade, dispute resolution, and key areas of law related to the operations of multinational corporations in China.



Name: Andrew Lui
Title: Managing partner HongKong
Firm/Company: Salans
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: We should have known something was up when Lui was lured from Pinsent Masons last year to head Salans' new Hong Kong office. Two months after announcing the Hong Kong opening, the once-rival firms announced they were partnering up in a strategic alliance.

Name: Paul Maher
Title: London chairman
Firm/Company: Greenberg Traurig & Maher
Location: London

Why hot: The man credited for the merger with Mayer Brown and JSM has had an eventful year, to say the least. After being snubbed in Mayer Brown's management reshuffle, Maher left the firm – only to re-emerge to spearhead Greenberg's new London office as chairman, thus becoming a named partner.

Name: Kerry Gleeson
Title: General counsel
Firm/Company: Inctec Pivot
Location: Australia

Why hot: Gleeson beat four other prominent lawyers to win the In-House Lawyer of the Year award at this year's ALB Australasian Law Awards. The former Blake Dawson lawyer managed the major acquisition of Dyno Nobel and coordinated financing arrangements with lenders for Inctec.



Name: Liu Jiqing
Title: Head of international practice
Firm: Deheng Law Office
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Former resident partner and chief representative of Baker & Daniels' Beijing office, Liu has joined Qingdao-headquartered Deheng to lead its international practice group in Beijing. Qualified to practice law in the US, he has been practising in China for more than 10 years. His practice mainly focuses on China-related cross-border investment, M&A and international trade.



Name: Melli Darsa
Title: Founding partner
Firm/Company: Melli Darsa & Co
Location: Indonesia

Why hot: Widely regarded as one of the most astute and entrepreneurial practitioners in Indonesia, Darsa has built her firm into a genuine player in the country's legal arena after she made her breakaway from Hadinoto, Hadiputranto and Partners in 2004.



Name: Li Xiaoyang
Title: Senior partner
Firm: Kirkland & Ellis
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Although it's rare for Jun He's senior partners to depart, the firm lost its Beijing senior partner to US firm Kirkland & Ellis at the end of 2008. Li is now a senior Chinese corporate partner in Hong Kong, representing PE funds, international and domestic public and private companies in M&A transactions and other complex corporate matters in China.



Name: Nish Shetty
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: Singapore

Why hot: As partner, Shetty has a large task ahead of him. Picked up by Clifford Chance from its former JLV partner WongPartnership in early August, he has been charged with launching the firm's Southeast Asian disputes resolution practice. Watch for the firm to dip into local talent pools across the region to add to its 40-strong SE Asia disputes team.

Name: Jiang Zhipei
Title: Senior counsel
Firm: Fangda Partners
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Jiang Zhipei, the former chief justice of the IPR Tribunal of Beijing's Supreme People's Court, has decided to continue his legal career with Fangda Partners as senior counsel, following his retirement from the court after 18 years on the bench. Jiang is one of the most distinguished experts in intellectual property law. In his pursuit of a judge's career, Jiang participated in China's IPR law system reform and handled numerous IPR cases.

Name: Martin Hu
Title: Founding and managing partner
Firm: Martin Hu & Partners
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Martin Hu left Boss & Young, which he founded in 1999 with other partners, to start anew. Determined to build a local firm with international management structures producing a consistently high standard and quality legal services, Hu created the boutique firm that bears his name. Most of his clients followed him, as he is an experienced and reputable lawyer providing corporate and M&A legal services to multinational clients.



Name: David Matthews
Title: General counsel
Firm/Company: Fonterra
Location: New Zealand

Why hot: Matthews manages the team that won the New Zealand In-House Team of the Year award at this year's ALB Australasian Law Awards. The team has handled the San Lu affair and worked on debt raisings, including the A\$800m retail debt issue.



Name: Greg Terry
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Blake Dawson
Location: Indonesia

Why hot: One of a handful of high-level lawyers to move from in-house to private practice this year, the former Morgan Stanley chairman decided to go to Australian firm Blake Dawson's Indonesian office, citing increasing transactional activity in the region and the chance for new challenges, as the reasons behind his move.



Name: Srinivas Parthasarathy
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Allen & Overy/Trilegal
Location: Mumbai

Why hot: Being in a similar position to Clifford Chance's Chris Wyman (above), Parthasarathy, a capital markets partner, will be charged with strengthening relations with "best-friend" firm Trilegal. He relocated from the Singapore office to Mumbai earlier this month.



Name: Sammy Li
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Paul Hastings
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Li has been touted as the very model of a modern-day lawyer. A networker without peer, he will tap resources at his previous post at Morgan Stanley to drive the firm's burgeoning capital markets practice to new heights. Certainly he is one to watch as Hong Kong's equity markets spring back to life.

Name: Rajeev Duggal
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Skadden
Location: Singapore

Why hot: In another high profile lateral hire, former Citi lawyer Duggal rejoined the firm he left to take up his in-house posting. He will work as the assistant general counsel and deputy co-head for Citi's M&A legal department and the MD and GC for the Asia pacific of all of Citi's retail businesses.

THE STATESMEN

Displaying gusto, gravitas and a touch of charisma, these are the men and women who have made their mark by leading their firms, companies and practice groups through the global financial crisis.



Name: Toru Ishiguro
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Mori Hamada & Matsumoto
Location: Japan

Why hot: The charismatic Ishiguro returns to our Hot 100 this year. One of the faces of Mori Hamada's banking and finance practice, he was a finalist for the coveted lifetime achievement award at this year's ALB Japan Law Awards. Ishiguro also played a large part in the firm taking home both the "M&A/corporate team of the year" and the "Japanese deal firm of the year" awards, the latter which was shared with fellow Big Four firm Anderson Mori & Tomotsune.



Name: Cyril Shroff
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Amarchand & Mangaldas
Location: India

Why hot: A very vocal opponent of the move towards Indian legal market liberalisation, Shroff made headlines this year for converting his firm – the country's second biggest by headcount – to a full lockstep model. This change is what many in the field are heralding as the beginning of the modernisation of India's legal services market.



Name: Jai Pathak
Title: Asia Pacific partner-in-charge
Firm/Company: Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher
Location: Singapore/LA

Why hot: The charismatic former Jones Day partner was snatched up by Gibson Dunn, along with three of his colleagues (Emad Khalil, John Viverito and Saptak Santra) to launch the firm's Singapore office. An India expert of high renown, Pathak will undoubtedly be looking to extend the firm's footprint and has said that offices in Greater China are also on the cards.



Name: Peter Charlton
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Anointed as the magic circle giant's new Asia MP last year, Charlton is faced with the task of seeing the world's biggest law firm through the downturn. He has made inroads into the closed Indian legal services market in 2008, with the announcement of a 'best-friends' relationship with Indian firm AZB & Partners.



Name: Azmi Mohd Ali
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Azmi & Associates
Location: Malaysia

Why hot: Ali has grown his firm steadily this past year with new work and international appointments, and is now one of the region's leading firms specialising in Islamic finance. One of the few Malaysian lawyers to be on the record for liberalisation of the country's legal market, Azmi says it will lift standards across the board and will see his firm "emerge tougher and more creative" as a result.



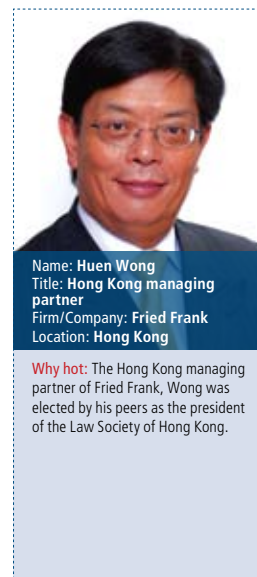
Name: Vincent Connor
Title: Head of Asia Pacific/
 Hong Kong
Firm/Company: Pinsent Masons
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: After making the bold move from Scotland to China in 2007, Connor took up the top post as Asia Pacific head of operations. Under his rein the firm has grown from 40 lawyers to 65 today, recently sealing an alliance with Salans. This will give Pinsent's unprecedented access to the lucrative Eastern European markets.



Name: Poh Lee Tan
Title: Head of Asia Pacific regional chairman
Firm/Company: Baker & McKenzie
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: In November 2008 Tan was elevated to the coveted position as Baker & McKenzie's chairman of Asia-Pacific operations, after a three-year stint on the firm's executive committee. Tan is certainly one to watch as she goes about building the already well-known brand in Asia. Keep an eye on the firm as one of the first into the soon-to-be liberalising legal markets in India and Korea.



Name: Huen Wong
Title: Hong Kong managing partner
Firm/Company: Fried Frank
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: The Hong Kong managing partner of Fried Frank, Wong was elected by his peers as the president of the Law Society of Hong Kong.




Name: Hiroo Atsumi
Title: Managing Partner
Firm/Company: Atsumi & Partners
Location: Japan

Why hot: As a nominee for the prestigious lifetime achievement award at this year's ALB Japan Law Awards, Atsumi leads what is considered to be one of the most promising domestic law firms in Japan. The firm has a corporate practice that is hot on the heels of the more established firms in Japan.



Name: Som Mandal
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: FoxMandal Little
Location: India

Why hot: A year after launching the business in London, Mandal is now focusing his efforts on the LPO market. FoxMandal's outsourcing division has grown rapidly over the past twelve months and it aims to capture more of the market in the West, as more clients face credit squeezes.



Name: Rajiv Luthra
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Luthra & Luthra
Location: India

Why hot: While firms in the US are doing the opposite, under Luthra's management the Indian firm has received kudos for paying bonuses and increasing salaries. The firm is also looking to introduce a lockstep system this year, and topped the legal advisory leader board for project finance deals closed in the first half of 2009.



Name: Paul Mitchard QC
Title: Head of Europe and Asia arbitration and litigation
Firm/Company: Skadden
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Although Mitchard was not the first to transfer from London to Hong Kong this year, the move was by far the most high-profile. Relocated to launch the firm's arbitration and dispute resolution practice in the region and signal its commitment to Asia, Mitchard's appointment is sure to have a seismic effect on the complexion of Hong Kong's ADR market. Watch out for the usually conservative firm to dip into the lateral hire market over the coming months.



Name: Zhang Xuebing
Title: Managing partner
Firm: Zhong Lun Law Firm
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Zhang Xuebing has been appointed as president of the Beijing Lawyers Association, replacing Li Dajin who stepped down at the end of his three year term. Zhang will leverage his experience managing one of the country's largest law firms. The Beijing Bar Association is the country's largest bar association, with over 18,600 members.



Name: Lv Hongbing
Title: Chief executive partner
Firm: Grandall Legal Group
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Hongbing hasn't had much time to rest after he stepped down as the president of the Shanghai Lawyers Association in April 2008, raising its profile domestically and internationally. He was appointed vice president of the All China Lawyers Association six months later, which will strengthen the capacity of the nation's legal professions across the board.



Name: Wang Ling
Title: Managing partner
Firm: King & Wood
Location: Beijing

Why hot: With King & Wood continuing to cement its position as a leading PRC firm, Wang Ling keeps playing a pivotal role. In what has turned out to be a very challenging year for most international firms, King & Wood has established a New York office and completed the merger with its long-time Hong Kong associate firm, Arculli Fong & Ng.



Name: Rafael Morales
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan
Location: Philippines

Why hot: As the immediate past president of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association, Morales is considered one of the 'go-to' lawyers for projects, infrastructure and M&A work in the Philippines. The firm's M&A team acted as Philippine counsel for the GMR-Intergen financing and acquisition, recognised in the SE Asian deal of the year at this year's ALB SE Asia Law Awards.

Name: Wang Zhongde
Title: Managing partner
Firm: Dacheng
Location: Beijing

Why hot: The vision that Wang Zhongde has for Dacheng Law Office is gradually becoming a reality, just as he has planned. This year, Dacheng has – for the first time – taken over King & Wood to become the country's largest law firm by headcount. It is now also the largest firm in Asia with more than 830 lawyers across 28 offices.

Dacheng's expansion overseas marks the firm entering into a new phrase. So far this year, the firm has opened four offices in Taiwan, Singapore, Paris and Los Angeles, and has formed new strategic alliances with other foreign firms.

In the near future, Dacheng plans to expand its global reach further by adding additional offices in New York and other parts of the US, and continue to pursue its goal of becoming a leading home-grown global law firm.

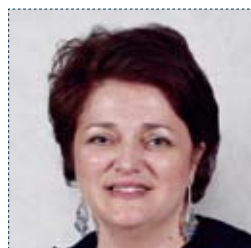
THE EXPERTS

Technically brilliant and encompassing superior legal skills in existing and emerging areas, these are the lawyers who have operated at the vanguard of change in the profession



Name: Philippa Stone
Title: Partner, co-head – equity capital markets
Firm/Company: Freehills
Location: Australia

Why hot: Crowned as the ALB Australasian Law Awards 'Australian dealmaker of the year' for 2009, Stone has advised on some of the hottest deals of the year, including the US\$15bn Rio Tinto rights issue. She has helped cement the firm's position at the top of the M&A leader boards throughout the year. Stone also manages the equity capital markets team at Freehills, which jointly won the 'ECM deal of the year' at the same awards ceremony.



Name: Connie Carnabuci
Title: IP/IT practice head
Firm/Company: Freshfields
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Arguably one of the region's busiest intellectual property lawyers, Carnabuci has developed one of the region's leading IP practices. Her work includes advising clients such as Alibaba.com and Bally, and more recently on the intellectual property aspects of the MAN Group-Sinotruk acquisition.



Name: Rupert Li
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: Beijing

Why hot: There's arguably no bigger name in Asian dealmaking than Rupert Li. He was Clifford Chance's lead lawyer advising China Development Bank for the financing of Chinalco's \$21bn bid for the failed acquisition of a stake in Rio Tinto, among other high profile deals. Li's expertise earned him a nomination as a finalists in ALB China's International dealmaker of the year award.



Name: Pattie Walsh
Title: Head of Asia employment
Firm/Company: DLA Piper
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: It was some long-overdue good news for DLA Piper in Asia when it announced the hire of Pattie Walsh to head up its China employment practice. Widely regarded as one of the best, if not the best, employment law practitioners in the region, Walsh also brought her associate, Alison Smith, along with her to DLA.



Name: David Bateson
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Mallesons Stephen Jaques
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Bateson leads one of the firm's multi-award winning building and construction teams in Hong Kong. While he is considered a 'go-to' lawyer for disputes, Bateson is quickly building a high profile in other areas, namely international arbitration, where he, along with fellow partner Paul Starr, are said to be the nucleus of a formidable team.



Name: Peter Hodgins
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Clyde & Co
Location: Dubai

Why hot: The Islamic insurance specialist was the mastermind behind the alliance with Al Bosaily in Riyadh. While this is a niche area, it remains an extremely profitable part of the practice. As a former DLA Piper lawyer who worked with Al Bosaily, Hodgins was instrumental in sealing the firms' affiliation.



Name: Xu Jiali
Title: Founding and managing partner
Firm: Longan
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Xu Jiali has gained a reputation as one of China's best IP practitioners, through his handling of a wide range of patent, trademark, and copyright cases. Xu, who heads the firm's IP practice group, is the first postdoctoral scholar in IP law in China and the only doctoral instructor to date. He has been involved in many landmark cases – three which were selected as the 100 typical IPR cases since China's reform and opening up, by the Supreme People's Court in 2009.



Name: Nick Norris
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Skadden
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: In a year where global M&A volumes have plunged, Norris has stood out. He was the firm's lead partner on deals such as Coca Cola's proposed US\$2.5 bn takeover of China Huiyuan and the US\$1.9bn privatisation of PCCW Ltd. Norris is this year's winner of the ALB SE Asia Law Awards insolvency & restructuring Deal of the Year, for the Nomura-Lehman Brothers (Asia) acquisition.



Name: Xu Shouchun
Title: Senior partner
Firm/Company: V&T
Location: Beijing

Why hot: As a highly regarded lawyer for capital markets and securities matters, he has advised on a large number of IPOs, listings, share placements, restructurings and transfers of Chinese companies at home and abroad. Xu was appointed to the first issuance examination committee for the newly launched Shenzhen Growth Enterprise Board by the China Securities Regulatory Commission.



Name: Malcolm Moller
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Appleby
Location: Mauritius

Why hot: With Mauritius remaining the most favoured onward-offshore destination for investment into India and Africa, there is sure to be a rush to the tropical island in the near future as India relaxes its foreign investment rules. Appleby, under Moller's leadership, seems to have this market cornered at the moment, with its nearest rival on the island, Conyers, still some way off, according to industry experts.



Name: Jimmy Yim
Title: Managing Director of litigation & dispute resolution
Firm/Company: Drew & Napier
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Yim leads a legal team at Drew & Napier that reclaimed the ALB award for 'International arbitration law firm of the year' and for the sixth straight year, the 'Commercial litigation firm of the year'. His success representing multi-million dollar corporate clients over the years is widely noted in the industry.

Name: Yao Jun
Title: Chief legal officer
Firm/Company: Ping An Insurance
Location: Shenzhen

Why hot: Yao Jun, the former partner of Commerce & Finance Law Offices, is regarded as a high achiever and exemplary of the in-house legal profession. With his outstanding technical skills, business understanding and industry experience, Jun has assisted Ping An Insurance in pursuing its growth strategies and controlling its risks domestically and internationally. He was appointed secretary of the board in October 2008, and continues to serve as the head of legal.

Name: Akiko Kimura
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Anderson, Mori & Tomotsune
Location: Japan

Why hot: Winner of the 'Japanese deal maker of the year' award at this year's ALB Japan Law Awards, Kimura is widely considered the first stop at the firm for mega-deals. He was the lead partner on both Mitsubishi UFJ's mega global offering, and joint lead counsel on Kyocera's JP¥43.7bn acquisition of Sanyo's mobile phone business.



Name: Paul Ng
Title: Global head of aviation
Firm/Company: Stephenson Harwood
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Stephenson Harwood pulled off one of the most high-profile lateral hires this year, after snaring asset finance specialist Paul Ng from Freshfields to lead its global aviation practice. Known as the 'low-cost carrier king', because he is said to be the counsel of choice for low cost carriers like AirAsia and LionAir, watch for Ng to build a market-leading practice.



Name: Jeanette Chan
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Paul Weiss
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: As the 'go-to' lawyer for anything TMT, IT and private equity-related in Greater China, Chan and her fellow partner Jack Lange lead one of the strongest M&A outfits in the region. Chan and the firm are noted for their expert carriage of the most complex deals – for example, the US\$1.13bn Ericsson – Nortel assets acquisition.



Name: Oliver Agha
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Agha & Shamsi
Location: Abu Dhabi

Why hot: Agha made the headlines earlier this year for leaving his high-profile position as head of DLA Piper's global Islamic finance practice, to launch his own firm. Agha & Shamsi is believed to be the world's first Shariah-law compliant legal practice.



Name: Nick Gall
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Gall & Lane
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Gall parted ways with fellow founding partner of Laracy Gall, Damien Laracy, earlier this year, to go an establish Gall & Lane and the timing, it seems couldn't be better. Dispute levels across the region have seen a marked increase. The firm's alliance with White & Case is designed to pick up the work emanating out of the expected storm of insolvencies.

Name: Joseph Bevash
Title: Hong Kong managing partner
Firm/Company: Latham & Watkins
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: The firm's Hong Kong managing partner and head of its project finance practice in Asia, Bevash has advised on a number of high-profile deals, all of which are noted for their complexity and sophistication. The ALB 'Singapore M&A deal of the year' award for Lion Power Holdings-Senoko Power financing & acquisition, is one example of his work.

Name: Michael Han
Title: Co-head of China ACT practice
Firm: Freshfields
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Michael Han, a newly promoted partner based in Beijing, is now co-heading the firm's China antitrust, competition and trade practice (ACT) with partner Nicholas French in Beijing and partner Connie Carnabud in Hong Kong. Before joining the firm, Han worked with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (now the Ministry of Commerce). He has extensive expertise in the competition and regulatory aspects of China-related FDI and cross-border M&A transactions.



Name: John Chrisman
Title: Australia and India practice head
Firm/Company: Dorsey & Whitney
Location: Australia

Why hot: Chrisman heads the newly launched Sydney office of US firm Dorsey & Whitney and is considered an expert on the subcontinent. The idea of an office in Australia to target Asia is all part of the plan, says Chrisman, and we're all watching to see just how fruitful it will be.



Name: Theodore Paradise
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Davis Polk
Location: Japan

Why hot: Winner of the 'International dealmaker of the year' at this year's ALB Japan Law Awards, Paradise was the firm's lead partner on deals like Visa's IPO, Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group Perpetual Preferred Securities Offering. Recently advised on Citi's sale of its Nikko Asset Management Business to Sumitomo.



Name: Charles Duan
Title: Founder and managing Firm
Firm/Company: Duan and Duan Law Firm
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Shanghai's renowned lawyer, Charles Duan, has made international headlines for his involvement in the high-profile Rio Tinto bribery case. He will represent Australian citizen Stern Hu, general manager of the Rio Tinto sales team in Shanghai, before the court, defending him against allegations of illegally obtaining commercial secrets and receiving bribes from officials. This is a case that has raised tensions between Australia and China.

Name: Andrew Lim
Title: Co-head of corporate M&A
Firm/Company: Allen & Gledhill
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Lim is one of Singapore's top tier M&A advisors, having accepted the firm's 'Singapore deal firm of the year' award at the ALB SE Law Awards this year. Lim has worked on such high-profile deals as the US\$1bn acquisition by PetroChina of the Singapore Petroleum Company, among others.

SHINING LIGHTS

These practitioners have distinguished themselves in a particular field of expertise – whether it be as a forerunner in a particular legal arena, holding a significant appointment or serving the interests of the public and community

Name: Zhu Xiangyang
Title: Lawyer
Firm: Lantai
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Zhu Xiangyang has become the first Taiwan resident permitted to practise law on the mainland, following the Ministry of Justice's April 2008 announcement allowing Taiwan residents to sit the mainland judicial exam and become PRC-qualified lawyers. As a regulatory requirement, he can be granted a certificate to be an officially PRC-qualified lawyer, after taking a one-year internship in a law firm. Zhu is currently working as a trainee lawyer in Beijing's Lantai Law Firm.

Name: Ahmad Kusayer
Title: Director of Middle East
Firm: Zhonglun W & D Law Firm
Location: Beijing/Riyadh

Why hot: Ahmad Kusayer has played a key role in the establishment of Zhonglun W&D's Middle East practice group and the branch office in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia. He manages the development of the Riyadh office and the firm's Middle East practice group, which provide legal services to both Chinese clients doing business in the Middle East, and clients from the Middle East investing in China. Zhonglun W&D is the first PRC firm to successfully establish a presence in the Middle East region.

Name: Li Changqing
Title: Lawyer
Firm: George Wu & Partners
Location: Beijing

Why hot: Li Changqing is one of the first lawyers to test the country's new *Anti-Monopoly Law* for issues relating to abuse of dominant market position. He represented Tangshan Renren Information Services in a court case against internet search giant Baidu for alleged antitrust violations. Although a verdict is yet to be handed down by the court, the case is heralded as one of the earliest high-profile antitrust private litigation matters run in the country.

Name: Yan Yiming
Title: Founder and managing partner
Firm: Yan Yimin Law Firm
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Yan Yiming, a Shanghai lawyer well-known for his expertise in securities law and his track record of taking on public-interest cases, has again raised his profile internationally. Shortly after the government announced its CNY4tr stimulus plan, Yan made requests with the Ministry of Finance and NDRC to make public the detailed expenditure of the hefty stimulus package. His reasons were public concern with possible fund misuse, corruption and the effect on macroeconomic control.

Name: Gary Locke
Title: Secretary of Commerce of the United States
Location: Washington, D.C.

Why hot: Gary Locke, the former co-chair of the China practice at US firm Davis Wright Tremaine (DWT), has returned to public service as the Secretary of the Department of Commerce of the United States. Locke joined DWT in 2005 after two successful terms as the Governor of the State of Washington. His leadership of the firm's China practice has been instrumental to DWT's growth and success in the region.

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