

Research and scoring methodology

THE RANKINGS THAT appear in the FT Innovative Lawyers report were all extensively researched by the FT's research partner, RSG Consulting. Based on submissions from law firms and in-house counsel, each innovation was thoroughly assessed for its originality, rationale and impact – including ones not included in the published tables.

Submissions were also assessed by expert consultants and overview commentators in the industry. Several referees were interviewed for every submission. In addition, extensive desk research was carried out throughout the year by the RSG Consulting team to ensure assessment criteria were kept up to date. The result is an in-depth picture of innovative practice across the profession.

Different research approaches were adopted throughout the report, de-

pending on the part of the profession under review. For example, the US law firms in Europe section was not compiled on the basis of submissions but of market research among a long list of 54 firms to arrive at a final top 10. The ranking concentrates on the dynamic expansion of US firms in Europe and, to a degree, depends on the number of independent market recommendations received for each firm from peers, competitors and clients.

In 2008, 600 submissions were received from law firms across Europe, and from legal teams working in top European companies – double the number in 2007. Over 690 telephone and face-to-face, qualitative, in-depth interviews with lawyers, referees and expert commentators were conducted. Qualitative telephone interviews lasted 45 minutes on average.

New developments in the FT report

this year include an expanded legal expertise section, which is subdivided into seven categories, including European public-private projects. In each case, the entries that scored most highly were those from firms whose lawyering was considered genuinely innovative and crucial to the success or failure of the transaction or matter.

The European general counsel section looks at innovation from the view of the in-house lawyer. Again, this ranking was compiled on both submissions received and market surveys for peer and private practice recommendations. The top 10 in-house teams featured in the report were selected by the research team from a number of innovative candidates.

JUDGES

The FT report is accompanied by an awards ceremony that recognises the highest scoring entries in the report. However, there are two awards categories that are decided by a panel of judges. These categories are legal expertise and legal innovator of the year. The judges were required to rank and select a winning entry from shortlists supplied by RSG Consulting. The judging panel consisted of Peter Cornell, managing director, stakeholder relationships at Terra Firma and former managing partner of Clifford Chance; Geoffrey Timms, general counsel at Legal & General; Andrew Durant, managing director at Navigant; Charlotte Butterfield, senior manager at Badenoch & Clark; James Pickford, editor of the FT's Business Life section and chairman of the panel; and Michael Peel, the FT's legal correspondent.

RSG CONSULTING

The FT Innovative Lawyers report is a joint venture with RSG Consulting, a specialist legal research and writing company. A team of five researchers, including RSG's top consultants, spent six months researching the report. Reena SenGupta, RSG Consulting managing director, is a legal consultant and journalist with more than 15 years' experience in the sector. She is an expert at devising rankings for the industry and, since 2001 has been a regular contributor of features on legal matters to the FT. ■

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Firms ranked in the FT Law 50 were scored against the following key performance indicators*

NAME OF INDICATOR	MEANING OF INDICATORS	BANDED POINTS
2008 total score for all entries submitted	Breadth of innovation Firms were scored on every entry they submitted into the 2008 research process, regardless of whether they were ranked in the published FT Innovative Lawyers report	10
2008 total weighted score for ranked entries in the FT report	Quality of entry Firms were ranked by their success in the report as follows: Standout = 4 points Highly commended = 2 points Commended = 1 point	10
2007 total weighted score for ranked entries in the FT report	History Firms' performance in the 2007 report	5
Profits per equity partner, 2007-2008 (PEP) PEP bands** Band 1: £k = 120 to 545 Band 2: £k = 546 to 971 Band 3: £k = 972 to 1,398 Band 4: £k = 1,399 to 1,824 Band 5: £k = 1,825 to 2,250	Success The financial success of the law firm was taken into account, using PEP figures from The Lawyer magazine 2008 and RSG Consulting research. Where law firms did not disclose PEP, a score band estimate was made based on RSG Consulting research	5
Assessment of management commitment and value of innovation in firm	Management commitment Firms were judged on the extent to which innovation was embedded in the business. Using the report research as a basis, RSG Consulting conducted further specific research to make this assessment	20

*The universe of law firms considered for the FT Law 50 consisted of all 82 law firms that submitted entries to the report. The final ranking was based on the total innovation score (out of 50). Tie-breaks were resolved by then ranking firms in order of the total weighted score for ranked entries in the FT report, then the total score for all entries submitted

**Banding was based on the performance of all firms that participated in the FT survey