



# The Survey of Client Service Performance for Law Firms

*The BTI Client Service A-Team*

2004



prepared by

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**B T I**

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

*About The Survey of Client Service Performance for Law Firms:*

<i>The BTI Client Service A-Team</i> .....	I
Nominated by Clients — The True Test of Performance .....	I
The A-Team Is a Substantial Accomplishment .....	I
Clients Define the Key Activities That Drive Superior Relationships .....	I
The Best of the Best: The BTI Client Service 30 .....	II

## Which Law Firm Is the Best Performing Overall

<i>Best Performing Law Firms</i> .....	1
Smaller Law Firms Stand Out; Mid-Sized Law Firms Blend In .....	1
<i>Which Law Firm Is the Best Performing Overall</i> .....	3

## How Clients Define a Best Performing Law Firm

*Defining the Best Performing Law Firm:*

<i>Superior Client Service and Top Value</i> .....	5
Superior Client Service Makes Your Law Firm Stand Out with Clients .....	5
Value Takes on a Premium .....	7
Responsiveness .....	7
Deliver Results: Best or Otherwise .....	7
High-Quality Work .....	7
Breadth of Service .....	8
Other .....	8

## Which Law Firm Provides the Best Client Service

<i>Best at Client Service: Shake-Up at Corporate Clients</i> .....	9
<i>Which Law Firm Provides the Best Client Service</i> .....	11

## Key Factors Driving Client Relationships: The Best of the Best

<i>17 Activities that Drive Superior Client Relationships</i> .....	14
Client-Driven, Client-Defined Attributes .....	15



**B T I**

## **Table of Contents**

### **Key Factors Driving Client Relationships: Financial Rewards**

<i>Client Focus: The Key to Superior Financial Rewards</i> .....	17
Best of the Best at Client Focus .....	18
Leaders of the Best at Client Focus .....	18
Law Firms Cited as Best at Client Focus .....	18
<i>Commitment to Help Clients Boosts Client Retention</i> .....	20
Best of the Best at Commitment to Help .....	21
Leaders of the Best at Commitment to Help .....	21
Law Firms Cited as Best at Commitment to Help .....	21
<i>Differentiator of Kings: Understanding the Client's Business</i> .....	23
Best of the Best at Understanding the Client's Business .....	24
Leaders of the Best at Understanding the Client's Business .....	24
Law Firms Cited as Best at Understanding the Client's Business .....	24
<i>Providing Value to Clients Boosts Your Value</i> .....	26
Best of the Best at Providing Value for the Dollar .....	27
Leaders of the Best at Providing Value for the Dollar .....	27
Law Firms Cited as Best at Providing Value for the Dollar .....	27



## Table of Contents

### Best at Bolstering the Case for Loyalty

<i>Breadth of Services: Boosting Business and Client Retention</i> .....	29
Best of the Best at Breadth of Services .....	30
Leaders of the Best at Breadth of Services .....	30
Law Firms Cited as Best at Breadth of Services .....	30
<i>Target Clients' Top Priorities: Advise on Business Issues</i> .....	32
Best of the Best at Advising on Business Issues .....	33
Leaders of the Best at Advising on Business Issues .....	33
Law Firms Cited as Best at Advising on Business Issues .....	33
<i>Regional Reputation = Local Knowledge</i> .....	35
Best of the Best Regional Reputation .....	36
Leaders of the Best Regional Reputation .....	36
Law Firms Cited as Best Regional Reputation .....	36
<i>Unprompted Communication Bolsters Client Loyalty</i> .....	38
Best of the Best at Unprompted Communications .....	39
Leaders of the Best at Unprompted Communications .....	39
Law Firms Cited as Best at Unprompted Communications .....	39
<i>National Resources Respond to Client Needs</i> .....	41
Best of the Best at Bringing Together National Resources .....	42
Leaders of the Best at Bringing Together National Resources .....	42
Law Firms Cited as Best at Bringing Together National Resources .....	42



**Best at Activities Necessary to do Business**

*Back to Basics: Keeping Clients Informed* ..... 43  
Best of the Best at Keeping Clients Informed ..... 45  
Leaders of the Best at Keeping Clients Informed ..... 45  
Law Firms Cited as Best at Keeping Clients Informed ..... 45

*Legal Skills Abound* ..... 47  
Best of the Best Legal Skills ..... 48  
Leaders of the Best Legal Skills ..... 48  
Law Firms Cited as Best Legal Skills ..... 48

*Clients Expect Quality Products* ..... 50  
Best of the Best at Quality Products ..... 51  
Leaders of the Best at Quality Products ..... 51  
Law Firms Cited as Best at Quality Products ..... 51

*Dealing with Unexpected Changes Essential* ..... 53  
Best of the Best at Dealing with Unexpected Changes ..... 54  
Leaders of the Best at Dealing with Unexpected Changes ..... 54  
Law Firms Cited as Best at Dealing with Unexpected Changes ..... 54

*Handling Problems a Minimum Requirement* ..... 56  
Best of the Best at Handling Problems ..... 57  
Leaders of the Best at Handling Problems ..... 57  
Law Firms Cited as Best at Handling Problems ..... 57

*Clients Demand that Law Firms Meet Technical Specifications* ..... 59  
Best of the Best at Meeting Technical Specifications ..... 60  
Leaders of the Best at Meeting Technical Specifications ..... 60  
Law Firms Cited as Best at Meeting Technical Specifications ..... 60



**B T I**

## **Table of Contents**

### **Best at Activities Critical to the Best Clients**

<i>The Paradox Box: Anticipating the Needs Valued by the Most Attractive Clients</i> .....	61
Best of the Best at Anticipating the Client's Needs .....	62
Leaders of the Best at Anticipating the Client's Needs .....	62
Law Firms Cited as Best at Anticipating the Client's Needs .....	62
<i>Going Global: High Value to a Select Group of Clients</i> .....	64
Best of the Best at International Capability .....	65
Leaders of the Best at International Capability .....	65
Law Firms Cited as Best at International Capability .....	65
<i>Consistency in Most Arrogant Brand</i> .....	66
Law Firms Cited as Being the Most Arrogant .....	67
Other Law Firms Cited as Being Arrogant .....	67



## Table of Contents

### The BTI Client Service 30

<i>The BTI Client Service 30: Raising the Bar for Client Service</i> .....	68
The BTI Client Service Score .....	68
<i>Raising the Bar: Highest Client Service Score Jumps 54.2%</i> .....	69
<i>Jones Day at the Top</i> .....	69
<i>Pacesetters, the Best 3 Year Performance</i> .....	69
<i>BTI Client Service 30</i> .....	69
1. Jones Day .....	70
2. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom .....	71
3. Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw .....	72
4. Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz .....	73
5. Sullivan & Cromwell .....	74
6. Latham & Watkins .....	75
7. Sidley Austin Brown & Wood .....	76
8. Hale and Dorr .....	77
9. Clifford Chance .....	78
10. LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae .....	79
11. Hogan & Hartson .....	80
12. Simpson Thacher & Bartlett .....	81
13. Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison .....	82
14. Foley & Lardner .....	83
15. McDermott, Will & Emery .....	84
16. Baker & McKenzie .....	85
17. Shearman & Sterling .....	86
18. Winston & Strawn .....	87
19. Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi .....	88
20. Faegre & Benson .....	89
21. Morgan, Lewis & Bockius .....	90
22. Davis Polk & Wardwell .....	91
23. Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld .....	92
24. Briggs and Morgan .....	93
25. Hunton & Williams .....	94
26. Katten Muchin Zavis Rosenman .....	95
27. Fulbright & Jaworski .....	96
28. Dorsey & Whitney .....	97
29. Dechert .....	98
30. Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly .....	99



## Table of Contents

### Performance by Law Firm Size

<i>Law Firm Performance on the Key Client Service Attributes</i> .....	100
<i>Best at Client Focus</i> .....	101
<i>Best at Commitment to Help</i> .....	102
<i>Best at Understanding the Client's Business</i> .....	103
<i>Best at Providing Value</i> .....	104
<i>Best with Breadth of Services</i> .....	105
<i>Best at Advising on Business Issues</i> .....	106
<i>Best in Regional Reputation</i> .....	107
<i>Best at Unprompted Communications</i> .....	108
<i>Best at Bringing Together National Resources</i> .....	109
<i>Best at Keeping Clients Informed</i> .....	110
<i>Best Legal Services Skills</i> .....	111
<i>Best Quality Products</i> .....	112
<i>Best at Dealing with Unexpected Changes</i> .....	113
<i>Best at Handling Problems</i> .....	114
<i>Best at Meeting Technical Specifications</i> .....	115
<i>Best at Anticipating Client Needs</i> .....	116
<i>Best in International Capabilities</i> .....	117



**B T I**

## **Table of Contents**

### **About the BTI Consulting Group**

<i>The BTI Consulting Group, Inc. — Who We Are</i> .....	118
<i>Additional Insights from BTI Publications</i> .....	119
Investment Banks and Their Law Firms:	
Client Service Performance and Market Dynamics .....	119
What Clients Pay Law Firms: BTI's Billing Rate Reference for the Legal Services Industry 2003 .....	119
Strategic Review and Outlook for the Legal Services Industry .....	119
The BTI Client Service All-Star Team for Law Firms 2004 - Coming Soon .....	119
<i>Key Services to Help Our Clients</i> .....	120
Strategic Market Research .....	120
Consulting .....	120
Private Briefings .....	120
<i>Private Briefings</i> .....	120
<i>Index to Individual Law Firms</i> .....	121
<i>A Note About Law Firm Size</i> .....	134
<i>Terms of Use</i> .....	135

**B T I**

## Introduction

### **About The Survey of Client Service Performance for Law Firms: The BTI Client Service A-Team**

BTI developed *The Survey of Client Service Performance for Law Firms: The BTI Client Service A-Team* to single out those law firms who stand out from the pack in the client's mind. The BTI Client Service A-Team performs better than their competitors in the client service arena. These firms have differentiated themselves from the competition through client service.

The ultimate success of a law firm depends on its relationships with its clients. Good client relationships lead to business growth and increased revenue; poor client relationships stymie growth and can eventually lead to failure.

This is particularly true in light of our research that shows that Fortune 1000 companies are largely dissatisfied with their law firms. Only 26.5% of companies believe that their primary law firm is best at client service. Just 30.3% recommend their primary law firm. Clients tell us that their outside law firms are doing just enough to get by — most are simply meeting expectations, and very few are exceeding them.

#### *Nominated by Clients — The True Test of Performance*

BTI interviewed almost 200 corporate counsel at Fortune 1000 companies throughout the U.S. about their outside law firm relationships and how they buy legal services. During these interviews, BTI probed corporate counsel about a broad range of issues. Our research focuses strongly on client satisfaction, client relationships, law firm management strategies and client needs. This report targets clients' views on individual law firm performance — which law firms the clients believe are the best. These questions were entirely open-ended and all client responses were recorded verbatim, giving you the most accurate and client-based assessment possible about how law firms are really doing.

#### *The A-Team Is a Substantial Accomplishment*

The most important judge in all aspects of law firm performance — the client him or herself — decides which firms are the best. Given that the majority of corporate counsel tell us that they are not satisfied with the client service they receive from their outside law firms, being nominated as the best law firm in one or more of the categories is a noteworthy achievement. We heartily congratulate all firms that were nominated.

#### *Clients Define the Key Activities That Drive Superior Relationships*

As part of our exclusive research, we asked general counsel to delineate the attributes, activities, factors and behaviors that drive client relationships. These 17 factors together drive client relationships. These factors include not only tangible, basic skills like legal services, but also many of the intangible ones, including client service, business advice, quality work products and commitment to help. Our research shows that it is these intangible elements of a client's relationship with her outside law firm that truly add value and build long-lasting relationships. We asked clients about these elements to draw out the many layers of good law firm performance and to identify which law firms are making the kind of client-oriented outreach that truly drives success.

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## Introduction

- ◆ Overall Best Performing Law Firm
- ◆ Client Service
- ◆ Client Focus
- ◆ Proving Commitment to Help
- ◆ Providing Value for the Dollar
- ◆ Understanding the Client's Business
- ◆ Breadth of Services
- ◆ Helping to Advise on Business Issues
- ◆ Unprompted Communication
- ◆ Regional Reputation
- ◆ Bringing Together National Resources
- ◆ Keeping the Client Informed
- ◆ Legal Skills
- ◆ Dealing with Unexpected Changes
- ◆ Providing Quality Products
- ◆ Handling Problems
- ◆ Meeting Technical Specifications
- ◆ Anticipating the Client's Needs
- ◆ International Capabilities

And to inquire about the other side of the coin, we also asked clients which law firm they think is the Most Arrogant.

### *The Best of the Best: The BTI Client Service 30*

The BTI Client Service 30 identifies the cream of the crop of the Client Service A-Team. These are the 30 firms with the highest overall score, based on the client nominations detailed in this report. We score every firm mentioned by clients using our proprietary ranking method of key client attributes. The rankings reflect not only how frequently firms are mentioned, but also the nature of the attributes for which they are cited and how valuable they are to clients. Firms that are nominated by clients for strategic, high-value client service attributes receive more credit than those cited for less differentiated and lower value attributes. Firms that score at the top of The BTI Client Service 30 have truly differentiated themselves in the eyes of their clients.



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## About the BTI Consulting Group

### *The BTI Consulting Group, Inc. — Who We Are*

The BTI Consulting Group (BTI) is a Boston-based market research and management consulting firm with over 20 years of experience. The BTI Consulting Group offers the most compelling research, analysis and insights to our clients with one goal — *compelling, superior results and outcomes for our clients.*

BTI boasts the largest, independent knowledge base of client needs, satisfaction and loyalty in the world for service firms. BTI's insight is based on more than 5,000 interviews with key buyers of professional services at the world's largest and best-run companies. BTI prides itself on direct, no-nonsense delivery of critical, high-impact insights that help our clients improve their performance.

BTI has worked with our clients from their earliest initial efforts through virtually every stage of their client and practice development process. We understand how our clients can and will use the insights, data and analysis we provide; and we help our clients anticipate issues and accelerate the process. We can provide discrete components or entire client-focused protocols. Our breadth of experience and research delivers both short-term and long-term tangible, lasting value.



## About the BTI Consulting Group

*Additional Insights from BTI Publications*

### ***Investment Banks and Their Law Firms:***

#### ***Client Service Performance and Market Dynamics***

The first of its kind, BTI's *Investment Banks and Their Law Firms: Client Service Performance and Market Dynamics* provides a valuable perspective into the unique spending habits, buying patterns, needs and expectations of the world's most demanding legal services clients: investment banks. Based on in-depth, individual interviews with over 60 corporate counsel and business leaders at 21 of the largest global investment banks, *Investment Banks and Their Law Firms* details client needs and expectations, delineates core and growing practice areas and pinpoints which law firms serve as primary providers. Find out how to tap into this \$2.4 billion market — and which law firms stand out for their superior client service performance, by name.

### ***What Clients Pay Law Firms:***

#### ***BTI's Billing Rate Reference for the Legal Services Industry***

*What Clients Pay Law Firms: BTI's Billing Rate Reference for the Legal Services Industry 2003* is an unparalleled tool to compare your rates to the rates that clients actually pay. This unrivaled report is based on more than 2,600 individual data points gleaned directly from clients representing more than \$27 billion in legal spending. Never-before published data reveals how to benchmark your hourly rates against the rates Fortune 1000 clients pay their law firms, by: Practice, Industry, Geography and Staff Level. Use this analysis to see how to price yourself in pitches, negotiate with the facts, test your rates across major practice areas, plan for new practices and avoid pricing yourself out of a client.

### ***Strategic Review and Outlook for the Legal Services Industry***

BTI publishes the highly acclaimed *Strategic Review and Outlook for the Legal Services Industry*. This definitive guide to the legal services industry reveals subtle and not-so-subtle shifts in management strategies, decision-making processes and organizational structures. Based on more than 180 open-ended, unstructured interviews, *The Strategic Review and Outlook 2004* provides a bird's-eye perspective of the entire legal services industry—analyzing what the market wants, identifying how customers pick and manage their vendors, and highlighting key changes in the market...before they happen.

### ***The BTI Client Service All-Star Team for Law Firms 2004 — Coming Soon***

A report on law firms and individuals who have been nominated by their clients because they provide superior service. In this exclusive BTI Client Service All-Star report, based on hundreds of interviews with Fortune 1000 corporate counsel, clients identify the individual lawyers that provide the best client service — by name.



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## About the BTI Consulting Group

### *Key Services to Help Our Clients*

In addition to our publications, BTI works with the world's leading professional service firms and companies to help them in all aspects of their client relationships. BTI brings our vast understanding of clients from unparalleled research with over 6,000 professional services clients, and our experience helping clients develop large-scale, long-term, high-value relationships.

BTI offers the following key services for law firms:

### *Strategic Market Research*

- ◆ Client Satisfaction Surveys
- ◆ Practice Awareness and Measurement
- ◆ Client Needs Assessment
- ◆ Rate and Fee Studies
- ◆ Partner and Associate Surveys
- ◆ New Market Assessments
- ◆ Best Practice and Benchmarking Studies
- ◆ Competitive Analysis
- ◆ Due Diligence Support
- ◆ Strategic Research

### *Consulting*

- ◆ Key Client Strategies
- ◆ Client-Focused Business Practices
- ◆ Strategic Business Planning
- ◆ Advanced Business Development Training

### *Private Briefings*

BTI also offers private briefings both in person and via the web. Chock full of client-based insights, experience and facts, we draw from our research, experience and other resources to provide provocative, constructive insights to help you boost client satisfaction, increase client retention and improve your performance. We can tailor our briefing to include specific feedback on your firm.



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Abbott, Simses & Kuchler	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 39, 51
Akerman, Senterfitt & Eidson	65
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 30, 33, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 68, 92
Alston & Bird	36, 48, 51, 54, 57
Anderson, Levine & Lintel	27, 51
Armstrong Teasdale	36
Arnold & Porter	11, 24, 33, 62
Aronberg Goldgehn Davis & Garmisa	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 45, 54, 57, 62
Baker & Daniels	3, 11, 33
Baker & Hostetler	30, 33, 36, 42, 48, 65
Baker & McKenzie	3, 14, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 68, 85
Baker Botts	3, 30, 33, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 57, 67
Balch & Bingham	3, 11, 21, 24, 27, 30, 36, 45, 51, 54, 57, 60
Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll	18, 36, 39
Barnes & Thornburg	36
Bartlit Beck Herman Palenchar & Scott	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65
Bass, Berry & Sims	27, 33, 62
Bialson, Bergen & Schwab	18, 27



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Bilzin Sumberg Baena Price & Axelrod	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65
Blake, Cassels & Graydon	11, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 42, 45, 48
Blank Rome	39
Boies, Schiller & Flexner	67
Briggs and Morgan	11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62, 68, 93
Broad and Cassel	18, 24, 36, 45, 48, 54, 62
Brown Raysman Millstein Felder & Steiner	39
Bryan Cave	3, 11, 18, 21, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67
Buchanan Ingersoll	24, 27, 45, 62
Burch, Porter & Johnson	27
Burke & Mayer	18, 27, 36
Butler Rubin Saltarelli & Boyd	11, 18, 21, 27, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft	30
Cahill Gordon & Reindel	11
Calfee, Halter & Griswold	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62
Cantey & Hanger	11, 21, 27
Carpenter, Bennett & Morrissey	27
Chadbourne & Parke	11, 24, 39, 45, 62
Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton	11, 39, 67



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Clifford Chance	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 78
Cooper & Walinski	11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 57
Cooper, White & Cooper	27, 33, 45
Coudert Brothers	67
Covington & Burling	24, 27, 30, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 57, 62, 65
Cravath, Swaine & Moore	3, 11, 18, 30, 42, 51, 62, 65, 66, 67
Crivello, Carlson & Mentkowski	11, 18, 21, 27, 48, 51
Crowell & Moring	3, 11, 39, 45, 57, 62
Darby & Darby	3, 11
Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg	3, 18, 21, 24, 33, 36, 45, 48, 51, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67
Davis Polk & Wardwell	3, 11, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 69, 91
Davis Wright Tremaine	27
Debevoise & Plimpton	11, 18, 21, 30, 33, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 62, 65
Dechert	18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 68, 98
Dewey Ballantine	48
Dinsmore & Shohl	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 33, 36, 39, 45, 51, 54, 57, 62



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Dorsey & Whitney	11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62, 65, 68, 97
Drinker Biddle & Reath	18, 21, 27
Duane Morris	67
Dykema Gossett	36
Ellis, Carstarphen, Dougherty & Goldenthal	11, 18, 21, 27, 39, 54, 60, 62
Epstein Becker & Green	21, 27, 36, 39
Faegre & Benson	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 67, 68, 69, 89
Fenwick & West	3, 18, 24, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 54, 57, 62
Fisher & Phillips	11, 21, 30, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 57, 62
Fleischman and Walsh	3, 11
Foley & Lardner	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 68, 83
Ford & Harrison	3, 27
Fowler White Boggs Banker	36
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer	65
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson	67
Frost Brown Todd	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62
Fulbright & Jaworski	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 67, 68, 96



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Gardere Wynne Sewell	36, 57, 67
Gardner, Carton & Douglas	27
Gibbs & Bruns	3, 11, 18, 21, 45, 48
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher	21, 39, 42, 48
Gowling Lafleur Henderson	27
Gray Cary Ware & Freidenrich	21, 39, 45, 51
Gray, Harris & Robinson	27, 39
Greenebaum Doll & McDonald	18
Hale and Dorr	2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 68, 69, 77
Hallett & Perrin	11
Haynes and Boone	11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 36, 39, 48, 51, 54, 57
Haynsworth Baldwin Johnson & Greaves	18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62
Heller Ehrman White & McAuliffe	21
Helms Mulliss & Wicker	18, 21, 30, 39, 45, 62
Herbert Smith	27
Hermes Sargent Bates	27
Hinckley, Allen & Snyder	30
Hogan & Hartson	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 68, 80
Holland & Hart	30, 33, 42, 48, 65
Holland & Knight	24, 36, 39
Holme Roberts & Owen	27



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Howrey Simon Arnold & White	33, 39, 51, 65
Hughes & Luce	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 33, 39, 45, 54, 57, 60, 62
Hunton & Williams	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 42, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 68, 94
Husch & Eppenberger	18, 27, 36, 54
Hyman, Phelps & McNamara	21, 24, 27, 33, 39, 45, 54, 57, 60
Ireland, Stapleton, Pryor & Pascoe	27, 39
J.D. Page	3, 11, 21, 27, 36
Jackson Lewis	48, 51, 57, 60
Jackson Walker	3
Jenkins & Gilchrist	11, 24, 30, 33, 45
Jenner & Block	21, 57
Jones Day	1, 3, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70
Jorden Burt	27
Juneau Law Firm	18, 27, 36
Kaplan, Strangis and Kaplan	11, 33



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman	18
Katten Muchin Zavis Rosenman	11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 68, 95
Keesal, Young & Logan	39, 57, 62
Keker & Van Nest	36
Keleher & McLeod	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 33, 48, 51, 57, 60
Kelley Drye & Warren	3, 11, 18, 21, 27, 33, 39, 45, 48, 51, 57, 60
Kenyon & Kenyon	11
King & Spalding	18, 21, 24, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 54, 57, 62
Kinney & Lange	60
Kirkland & Ellis	18, 21, 24, 42, 45, 48, 51, 66, 67
Kirkpatrick & Lockhart	33, 60
Latham & Watkins	3, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 69, 75
LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 79
Lightfoot, Franklin & White	21
Littler Mendelson	11, 21, 24, 39, 54
Locke Liddell & Sapp	36



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Lord, Bissell & Brook	18, 21, 27, 33, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65
Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw	3, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 72
McCarter & English	45
McDermott, Will & Emery	3, 11, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 62, 68, 84
McGuireWoods	3, 11, 18, 21, 27, 30, 36, 42, 45, 48, 51, 57
McKenna Long & Aldridge	3, 11, 18, 24, 33, 39, 42, 45, 51, 57, 60, 65
Michael Best & Friedrich	24, 36, 62
Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy	3, 11, 18, 22, 24, 27, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62
Miller & Chevalier	48, 60
Minter Ellison	3
Moore & Van Allen	22, 45, 54
Morgan & Finnegan	57
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius	3, 11, 22, 24, 28, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 68, 69, 90
Morrison & Foerster	18, 28, 30, 42, 45, 57, 67
Munger, Tolles & Olson	3, 11, 22, 24, 28, 33, 37, 48, 51, 57
Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg	11, 24, 37, 48, 51, 54, 62



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Nixon Peabody	3, 11, 22, 30, 33, 45, 48, 57, 60
Ogden Newell & Welch	24
O'Melveny & Myers	11, 18, 22, 24, 30, 37, 42, 48, 51, 57, 65
Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly	3, 11, 19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 37, 45, 48, 54, 57, 65, 68, 99
Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe	3, 12, 22, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt	19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 42, 46, 48, 54
Parker, Poe, Adams & Bernstein	65
Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler	3, 12, 19, 22, 24, 30, 33, 37, 42, 46, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker	30, 42, 57, 60
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison	3, 12, 18, 22, 24, 30, 33, 37, 39, 42, 46, 48, 51, 57, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 82
Perkins Coie	37, 39, 42
Pillsbury Winthrop	3, 12, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 39, 42, 46, 49, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65
Piper Rudnick	3, 12
Porter Wright Morris & Arthur	25, 37, 62
Potter Anderson & Corroon	54
Powell Goldstein Frazer & Murphy	12, 33, 62
Proskauer Rose	42



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Quarles & Brady	19, 25, 30, 33, 37
Reed Smith	19, 25, 37, 46
Richards Layton & Finger	28, 40, 46
Rider Bennett	25, 42, 65
Robertson, Freilich, Bruno & Cohen	3, 19, 28, 46, 49, 51, 54
Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi	3, 12, 19, 22, 25, 28, 30, 33, 37, 40, 42, 46, 49, 51, 54, 57, 60, 62, 65, 68, 88
Robinson & McElwee	22, 58
Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson	37, 49, 51, 54, 58
Roetzel & Andress	22, 51, 54
Ropes & Gray	25, 30, 33, 37, 51, 67
Salans	65
Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg	40, 62, 65
Schiff Hardin & Waite	19, 22, 25, 40, 58, 62
Sedgwick, Detert, Moran & Arnold	19, 42
Seyfarth Shaw	40, 67
Shearman & Sterling	3, 19, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 40, 42, 46, 49, 51, 54, 58, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 86
Shutts & Bowen	3, 19, 22, 25, 37, 46, 54, 58
Sidley Austin Brown & Wood	3, 11, 19, 22, 25, 27, 30, 34, 36, 39, 42, 46, 49, 51, 54, 58, 60, 62, 65, 67, 68, 69, 76
Sills Cummis Radin Tischman Epstein & Gross	34, 37, 49
Silver, Freedman & Taff	3, 12, 19, 22, 25, 28, 40



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Simpson Thacher & Bartlett	3, 12, 19, 22, 30, 33, 40, 42, 45, 49, 51, 54, 58, 60, 62, 68, 81
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom	1, 3, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71
Smith & Duggan	3
Smith Moore	42
Snell & Wilmer	12, 19
Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal	3, 12, 19, 22, 25, 28, 46, 49, 54, 58, 62
Squire, Sanders & Dempsey	3, 22, 25, 28, 62, 65
Steptoe & Johnson	12, 19, 67
Stinson Morrison & Hecker	67
Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young	19, 22, 25, 28, 30, 34, 37, 40, 42, 46, 49, 51, 54, 58, 60, 62
Stroock & Stroock & Lavan	28, 46
Sullivan & Cromwell	2, 3, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 24, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 65, 66, 67, 68, 74
Susman Godfrey	28, 40, 54
Sutherland Asbill & Brennan	4, 12, 19, 22, 25, 28, 30, 34, 37, 40, 42, 46, 49, 52, 54, 58, 62, 65



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Taft, Stettinius & Hollister	40
Tashjian & Padian	22
Thelen Reid & Priest	12, 19, 22, 39, 46, 54
Thompson Hine	19, 30, 34, 37, 42, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60, 63, 65
Torys	37, 40, 67
Troutman Sanders	67
Vidas, Arrett & Steinkraus	37
Vinson & Elkins	25, 31, 34, 36, 58, 63, 65, 67
Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease	4, 12, 19, 22, 25, 28, 34, 37, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60
Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz	4, 12, 14, 15, 18, 22, 24, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 45, 48, 52, 54, 57, 60, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 73
Ward Norris Heller & Reidy	12, 19, 28, 49
Warner Norcross & Judd	34
Weil, Gotshal & Manges	4, 19, 22, 34, 37, 42, 46, 49, 55, 58, 63, 65
Weston Benshoof Rochefort Rubalcava & MacCuish	25
White & Case	4, 19, 25, 28, 34, 42, 46, 63, 65
Whiteford, Taylor & Preston	55
Wildman Harrold	22
Wiley Rein & Fielding	19, 34
Williams & Connolly	25, 46



## Index to Individual Law Firms

Williams Mullen	65
Willkie Farr & Gallagher	58, 65
Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering	19, 22, 25, 28, 52
Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati	19, 22, 31, 37, 40, 52, 60, 63
Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker	4, 12, 42
Winston & Strawn	4, 12, 19, 21, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 42, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60, 63, 67, 68, 87
Womble Carlyle Sandridge and Rice	25, 28, 34, 37, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60, 67
Wyatt, Tarrant & Combs	37



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*The BTI Client Service A-Team 2004*



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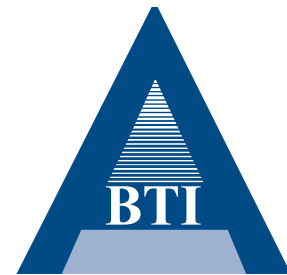
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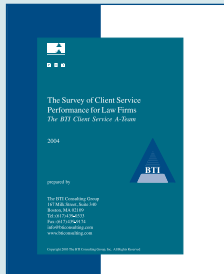
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