

Management partner of the year

WINNER

Peter Martyr

Norton Rose

Turned a fading firm into a top performer

When Peter Martyr took the reins as chief executive of Norton Rose in 2002, it could charitably be described as a fading giant. The firm was limping behind all those other top-ten firms that it thought itself superior to, both in terms of profitability and market standing.

Martyr's manifesto was to properly align and make effective the firm's international network, and he has delivered convincingly on that promise. Credited with turning Norton Rose's fortunes around, notably by restructuring the equity, Martyr also introduced the 'headlights' programme, setting out the five key areas in which the firm would focus, with the idea that all the firm's lawyers would develop an in-depth understanding of these sectors.

Clients saw it as more than a marketing exercise and fortunes changed. Most importantly, Martyr convinced the firm to keep its international ambitions, even though its global strategy had become something of a joke in the late '90s.

Martyr's attention to making the firm's international network more profitable has paid big dividends. Norton Rose emerged as one of the top three performers for organic growth in the *LB100* last year, with revenue growth up by 27% and PEP up by 23%, and it was also the first year in which the majority of its turnover was generated outside London. It is no coincidence that Martyr won a third term as chief executive this year with morale at the firm at an all-time high.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

STEVEN DAVIS

Dewey & LeBoeuf

In the year since the Dewey & LeBoeuf merger was sealed, Davis has worked extremely hard to galvanise the firm at a time of global economic crisis. Beyond

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the logistics behind the largest-ever combination of two New York firms, Davis was also instrumental in attracting high-profile lateral hires, overseeing new office launches in the Middle East and closing other, less profitable ones. All this plus a reinvigorated London practice are compliments to Davis's tough yet expansive style.

MARK DAWKINS

Simmons & Simmons

Dawkins is recognised as a strong strategist, and his plan of targeting individual partner and assistant performance has enhanced the firm's bottom line significantly, improving morale at the same time. Under Dawkins' stewardship, the firm's PEP rose an impressive 22% to £647,000, closing the gap on rivals Lovells by £15,000. When Dawkins took over in 2005, PEP was just over half that.



Norton Rose's Peter Martyr (centre) with Challenger representative Ranald Munro from Chubb Insurance

CLINT EVANS

Barlow Lyde & Gilbert

Evans' arrival has been cited as a major factor in stemming the flow of partner exits and significantly bolstering team spirit throughout the firm. His no-nonsense yet inclusive approach has rejuvenated the firm in a short space of time, which has been very visible on credit crunch-related disputes. He has been successful in delivering what the Barlows partnership wants, as well as what it needs: change.

PÁDRAIG Ó RÍORDÁIN

Arthur Cox

High-profile Ó Ríordáin wins plaudits from all corners. Having taken up the position aged 37 in 2003, he has successfully combined his role in maintaining Arthur Cox's position as a pre-eminent Irish player with major external appointments. The most recent and telling example of this was when he was personally instructed by the Irish government to advise on its response to the banking crisis.

DAVID SYED

Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe

A key player in engineering the 2008 tie-up between Orrick and German firm Hölter & Elsing, regarded as one of the strongest law firm mergers for some time, Syed is widely noted as the brains behind the firm's impressive European expansion. Since joining the firm's Paris office from Watson, Farley & Williams, Syed has helped France become the jewel in Orrick's European crown.

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