

Management partner of the year

WINNER

David Harris

Lovells

Hard work bearing rich fruit

Despite only being in the driving seat for four and a half years, Harris has firmly stamped his mark on this major city firm. His quiet but determined management style has proved crucial to Lovells' recent resurgence and he has led the firm into consistently profitable waters following a worrying period of erratic revenues from 2002/03 to 2004/05.

It has not all been plain sailing by any means: Harris was forced to fight for his second term when the firm was rocked by a divisive leadership election in 2008. However, his victory showed mettle and in a dramatic reversal of fortunes he has rewarded the firm's faith in him with a potentially name-making tie up.

Partners cite his handling of the merger negotiations with US firm Hogan & Hartson as truly impressive, and he wins widespread praise for his commitment to the firm and ability to make the big strategic decisions. In short, 2009 saw Harris satisfy both naysayers and faithful followers alike as he took the most ambitious steps yet of Lovells' global strategy.



Lovells' David Harris (centre) with Challenger Search & Selection representative Paul Maher, chair of Greenberg Traurig Maher

HIGHLY COMMENDED

NEVILLE EISENBERG

Berwin Leighton Paisner

One of the best-known managing partners in the City, Eisenberg's vision has transformed BLP. When he took up the reins in 1999, legacy firm Berwin Leighton was bringing in £47.1m per year, while latest revenues were £176m. Eisenberg's ambitious international strategy saw the firm open in Abu Dhabi and Moscow this year,

DAVID GOLD

Herbert Smith

Gold's management tenure comes to an end in 2010 but his international savvy has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the firm. In addition to new office launches in Abu Dhabi and Spain, and an association with Saudi Arabian firm Al-Ghazzawi Professional Association, under Gold the firm has made better integration of its European alliance a strategic priority.

GUY HINCHLEY

Mills & Reeve

Hinchley has overseen a significant uptick in the firm's fortunes since becoming managing partner almost three years ago. Profitability and turnover are considerably up, but the firm has also established a weightier presence in major UK business centres, most notably Leeds and Manchester. Mills & Reeve has a new sense of ambition under Hinchley and the firm is clearly on an upward trajectory.

CHARLES MARTIN

Macfarlanes

This famously publicity-shy firm has been transformed under Martin, who has spearheaded an ethos of transparency and a new approach to communications. Conversion to LLP status is indicative of this new attitude and the firm produced a set of financials this year to suggest that the strategy is paying off; a profit margin of 44% sends a staunch message of strength.

Harris's quiet but determined management style has proved crucial to Lovells' recent resurgence.

while a string of big-name lateral hires has sealed his reputation for aiming at the top of the market.

MICHAEL FRANCIES

Weil, Gotshal & Manges

A decade in the job and Francies' appetite for lifting Weil's impressive London profile to even greater heights remains as insatiable as ever. In addition to taking a central management role, Francies remains an exceptional biller and took the helm on several headline mandates this year, notably leading the firm's European restructuring and corporate involvement in both the Lehman Brothers and General Motors restructurings.

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