

# US Law Firm of the Year

## WINNER

# ROPES & GRAY

Maurice Allen; Mike Goetz

*Defying the critics in emphatic style*

When Boston-based Ropes & Gray launched in London in 2009 through the hire of high-profile office co-managing partners Maurice Allen and Mike Goetz, many said the project was doomed to failure. Three years on and the firm has answered the critics emphatically. The London team has already grown to more than 60 fee-earners, with the firm scoring a swathe of very impressive lateral hires from its competitors operating at the top of the legal market, including Matthew Judd from White & Case in 2012.

Employing a clear and effective strategy, the firm has been very successful in building a capability geared towards advising the new sophisticated investor base that has been replacing financial institutions as alternative sources of funding, as liquidity from banks dries up. This has resulted in a number of new client wins for Ropes & Gray on the ground and seen the London office land roles on a raft of high-profile instructions. The last three years have been undeniably successful for Ropes & Gray in London, particularly at a time when transaction levels are significantly down, law firm profits are taking a hit and headcount is being cut.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### DECHERT

Jason Butwick

Dechert opened in Almaty, Chicago, Dubai, Frankfurt and Tbilisi, while London – the firm's third largest office – welcomed hires that included a three-partner white-collar and securities litigation team from DLA Piper, led by Neil Gerrard.

### KING & SPALDING

Garry Pegg

In the last 18 months, King & Spalding's international practice has added 19 new partners, with seven of those in London. The firm's global English law offering has also gone up a gear thanks to the hire of partners including William Charnley in corporate from Mayer Brown.

### LATHAM & WATKINS

Nick Cline

This global juggernaut shone in another impressive year of international dealmaking, including the

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(L-R) Mike Goetz from Ropes & Gray with Martin Piers of Hudson Legal

first major corporate debt restructuring in Saudi Arabia. Latham also continued to prosper in international energy work.

### LOCKE LORD

Roger Abrahams

Locke Lord opened in London with a bang in 2012 when it hired a team of seven partners from Salans to spearhead a move into finance, litigation, corporate and restructuring work.

### MILBANK, TWEED, HADLEY & McCLOY

Russell Jacobs

Millbank has never been a firm to rush into lateral hires, but with five new additions to its London office in 2012, it now has 21 partners and 60 associates in the City, an increase of 33% in just 12 months.

### MORGAN LEWIS

Peter Sharp

Morgan Lewis transformed its international network and capabilities in 2012, in part a result of the hire of large segments of the former London, Moscow, Almaty and Beijing offices of Dewey & LeBoeuf.

### PAUL HASTINGS

Ronan O'Sullivan

The firm enjoyed another year of international success, which saw the London office work on the first new money euro commercial mortgage-backed securitisation since 2007.

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