

## **Innovative Tier gets larger and larger**

*The continued rise of innovative 'hybrid' model law firms proves that there are now a number of alternatives to traditional bricks and mortar firms - and that clients are liking what they see.*

There is now an acknowledged "hybrid tier" in the Australian legal industry, driven by a small group of innovative firms, that have abandoned the bricks and mortar time based leverage approach, in favour of minimising overheads and enabling flexibility on the part of both clients and lawyers. This expanding tier is thriving.

Bespoke Law, one of the original "hybrid" law firms in Australia, recently announced on 1 October 2012 an integration with KCL Lawyers - a similarly innovative boutique law firm.

Founding Director of Bespoke Law, Jeremy Szwider announced "Our rapid growth and expansion is proof that clients are liking what they see".

Szwider went on to say "I have known Ben Krasnostein (the Managing Principal of KCL) for some time now and as we share similar visions, values and an innovative streak, integrating our practices made good business sense."

Whilst innovation instills fear in some conservative pockets of our profession, Szwider suggests that Bespoke's Outsourced In-house Counsel means that he and other Bespoke Law professionals are able to "truly immerse" themselves in clients' businesses and "ensure that communication, transparency and a relationship with a 'face' remain paramount."

"Our model means that comparatively, we have less overheads and we are able to be a lot more responsive and accessible than many of our competitors. We focus on communicating 'face to face' with multiple parties anywhere at any time and the boardroom and office concepts are easily recreated with the click of a button. We work as in-house lawyers, dedicated to clients' needs, and do so in an outsourced environment."

Soon to be appointed Director of Bespoke Law, Ben Krasnostein commented that, "The development and success of Bespoke Law is a product of the vision and entrepreneurship of Jeremy Szwider. The quality of the legal services delivered by Bespoke Law is second to none and the ability to 'partner' with clients and offer them genuine tailored solutions is what sets this firm apart from traditional legal service providers. The synergies between Bespoke Law and KCL Lawyers will serve to further drive the growth of this innovative and effective business model."

Bespoke Law also counts itself among the few innovative firms providing clients with "value based pricing and a focus on outcomes rather than focusing on time spent and covering overheads". By using a flat structure and offering alternative fee arrangements Bespoke Law has "eliminated the politics and incentive misalignment created by the concepts of a hierarchy and of time based billing, both dear to the heart of the traditional law firm model."

Whilst both Szwider and Krasnostein agree that the Bespoke "hybrid model" isn't about to replace the traditional bricks and mortar approach they insist they now qualify as serious competition. They both remain extremely committed to pushing the boundaries in the legal profession. "The rapid growth of Bespoke Law is in response to the fact that clients and in-house departments are increasingly overcoming their reservations and old fashioned loyalties... and that traditional models are no longer economically viable to keep. Businesses and General Counsel are increasingly looking to use Bespoke Law as an extra arm or extension to their own legal departments rather than increasing their headcount."

Is this part of the 'new normal'? Szwider claims that the increasing adoption of non-traditional legal practices, is definitely an evolutionary step rather than a fad. "The advances in and availability of technology, coupled with the economic environment has pushed the market to be more open to 'alternative' models, and enabled the Bespoke model to thrive."

For more information on Bespoke Law and their business model please visit [www.bespokelaw.com](http://www.bespokelaw.com) or contact [info@bespokelaw.com](mailto:info@bespokelaw.com). You can also contact Jeremy Szwider on +61 (0) 418 988 212 if you would like to discuss.