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BOULT WADE TENNANT

What our clients said

Deepening our relationships



You gave us feedback. We'll give you action.

We are very proud of our reputation for quality service and approachability. To keep it that way, it's important for us to understand how you feel about the service we give you. With that in mind, we recently commissioned a market research company to interview a sample of our clients.

They were asked a number of questions that covered their needs and how we responded to them, our technical expertise, accessibility, pro-activeness, problem-solving capabilities, fees and overall quality of service. We asked for a completely honest response.

What we found out was illuminating.

The answers gave us genuine insight into what you want from us. Whilst there is a great deal that we are doing right, there are also some areas where we realise we can do better. In light of this we will be implementing some changes across the firm, which focus on four key areas:

- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Consistency of service
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ Transparent invoicing

We are already putting in place ways to improve our service in these areas so you will soon feel the benefit. You will find fuller details of our action plan at the end of this report.

I'd like to thank all of our clients who participated in the survey for the valuable insights you gave us. If you have any comments about this or our services in general, please feel free to contact your relationship partner or me.

We would be delighted to hear from you.

John Wallace Managing Partner
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How the research was carried out

We asked Acritas, an experienced market research company, to carry out the research. They conducted telephone interviews with a selection of our clients with four key objectives:

- To understand what is important to our clients when it comes to IP service providers
- To understand what these clients think of our current service
- To understand what changes they believe will improve their satisfaction
- To establish benchmarks for us to compare ourselves against in the future

The respondents were spread across our five practice groups and drawn from the UK, Western Europe and the US.

“They’re the only ones who I think actually listen to clients... and adapt in a way to suit clients. The fact that they have arranged to have these interviews is evidence of that and is a very positive thing.”

What we found out

First of all we wanted to put our research into context. Understanding your views on the current IP environment and what you found to be your main challenges will inform the services we offer and how we provide them to you.

What are you looking for in an IP attorney?

Of course all our clients' views on this are different, depending on their IP focus. However, the research did isolate some common threads.

Firstly, you expect your IP attorney to have the highest level of both technical and

legal expertise, and to offer commercially relevant advice. This can only come through a thorough understanding of your needs and the place IP has in your business strategy.

Following on from these primary expectations is a desire for availability, responsiveness and pro-activity. In other words, you demand that your IP attorney is someone that you can have a close working relationship with and who will feel ownership of your problems.

Technical and legal expertise

Relationships between attorneys and clients

Selection criteria

In-depth sector-specific knowledge

Commerciality of advice

“

In terms of their response, advice and professionalism, I certainly do feel valued as a customer...they behave as if they are part of the company...a virtual member of the management team.

”

What's it like to work with us?



We're pleased to say that all of our respondents enjoyed working with us. You feel that we are pleasant and easy to work with. Again, when pushed, some of you pointed out areas where we could improve.

Feeling valued

Everyone who answered this question felt valued as a client. In fact there were some very encouraging and positive comments with regards to how this is demonstrated. However, you also told us we need to do more in this respect, such as holding more frequent face-to-face meetings.

Relationships and communication

The relationships that we have with all our clients are good. The overwhelming feedback from our research is that we work well together. You also told us that day-to-day communications generally meet your needs and are flexible enough. However, there is an issue around the communication of fees. Some of you found the systems in place to be good and the clarity of our invoices to be satisfactory, but others raised concerns about the lack of detail in cost breakdowns.

'Satisfaction score' is **8.3** out of **10** and **86%** of the respondents scored **8** or above.

The **Net Promoter Score** calculated by looking at 'likelihood of recommendation' scores is **54%** in a legal market where the sector average* is **31%**

*Source: Acritas

Performance across specific attributes (out of 10)

-  Responsiveness **8.7**
-  Expertise / technical ability **8.7**
-  Accessibility **8.7**
-  Overall quality of service **8.4**
-  Problem solving ability **8.4**
-  Thinking ahead and pre-empting relevant issues **7.6**
-  Fee levels **7.3**

How do we make you happy?

There were four areas where you felt we were very strong.

Competency

You felt that we were highly proficient at what we do, specifically in relation to patent and trademark prosecution, our technical ability, knowledge and work performance.

Relationship management

A good working relationship is crucial and you feel that you have that with us, especially the partners. You also find us pleasant and easy to work with.

Service

It seems that the level of service we provide works well for you. This applies to developing longstanding relationships with our staff, their commercial knowledge, responsiveness, strategy setting, sense of urgency and general availability.

Value for money

Importantly, you appreciate that the advice we give is worth the fees that we charge.

“

Good relationships, they deliver well, they have got very bright people and I think what we get from them is very good quality.

”

What can we do better?

Whilst it is good to know we do most things right, it is more important to know the areas in which we can improve. Our research picked out four areas where, even though we were highly rated, you felt we could still do better.

1. Deeper working relationships

You would like us to be more proactive in the way we work and to have more face-to-face meetings. You would feel happier if you had more exposure to the in-depth expertise of our teams.

2. More transparent finance

You would like greater cost transparency and clearer invoices.

3. Going further with what we offer

You believe that our advice could be more commercial and that we could focus more on problem solving.

4. Enhanced communication

While you are happy with the way we communicate on a day-to-day basis, you would like more interaction on a more general level, including a programme of events or seminars.

“
I have to say, quite honestly, that nothing really stands out as being particularly weak.”

Now that we are in possession of this information, we are starting to put in place ways to make our service even better for you.

Our path to a better service

Our partners, attorneys and support staff are all working together to improve four key areas of our service.

Closer working relationships

Working closer with you means working in harmony with your business strategy. We want to make sure that the services we offer, and the way we provide them, have more of a commercial focus. This way we can provide you with increased business value. In conjunction with this changed emphasis we'll also be: launching an internal client programme; involving more of our team in relationships with clients, not just the partners; holding a programme of tailored seminars and training sessions; and forwarding relevant IP information to you.

Maintaining service excellence

While our service is generally considered excellent, we need to make it even more consistent. With that in mind we will be: creating a service charter to guide our behaviours in the future – our commitment of excellent service to you; revising our appraisal programme to put client service and sector expertise high on the agenda; and developing a 12-month training programme on client service for all attorneys and support staff. We'll also be upgrading our telephone system to make it easier for you to get through to the people you need to talk to.

“

Knowledgeable about our business, very dependable. They are very loyal, they are extraordinarily competent and imaginative at problem solving.”



Our path to a better service (continued)



“
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Improving how we communicate

By creating a more effective dialogue with you we'll be able to keep you up to date with anything new in the IP sector and at Boulton Wade Tennant. To do this we are exploring new ways to communicate with you more regularly and introducing a more consistent written communication style to be used across the firm.

Simplifying fee arrangements

Our research shows that you feel we offer good value. However, that isn't going to stop us looking at ways to achieve even

more for you. To do this we are continuing to promote transparency around fees and offer innovative fee arrangements. Our invoicing system will tailor the formatting of invoices to your specific requirements while internally we will be backing this up with training around delivering value for money and cost control.

These changes are all designed to provide an even greater commercial advantage for your business. To track our progress, our research now provides a baseline against which we can measure how we are doing. This will be invaluable in keeping us on track and in providing you with excellent service for many years to come.

Tell us more

Your feedback is important to us if we are to make sure our service continues to keep pace with your changing needs. If you have anything that you'd like to tell us, please contact:

feedback@boult.com

www.boult.com