

Acritas Insight Report

ADVISORY BOARD AND PANEL
2012 ONLINE ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSION SERIES



The Impact of Procurement on the General Counsel Role

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On 10 May 2012, Acritas hosted a web seminar on 'The Impact of Procurement on the General Counsel Role' for its Advisory Board members and Sharplegal respondent panel.

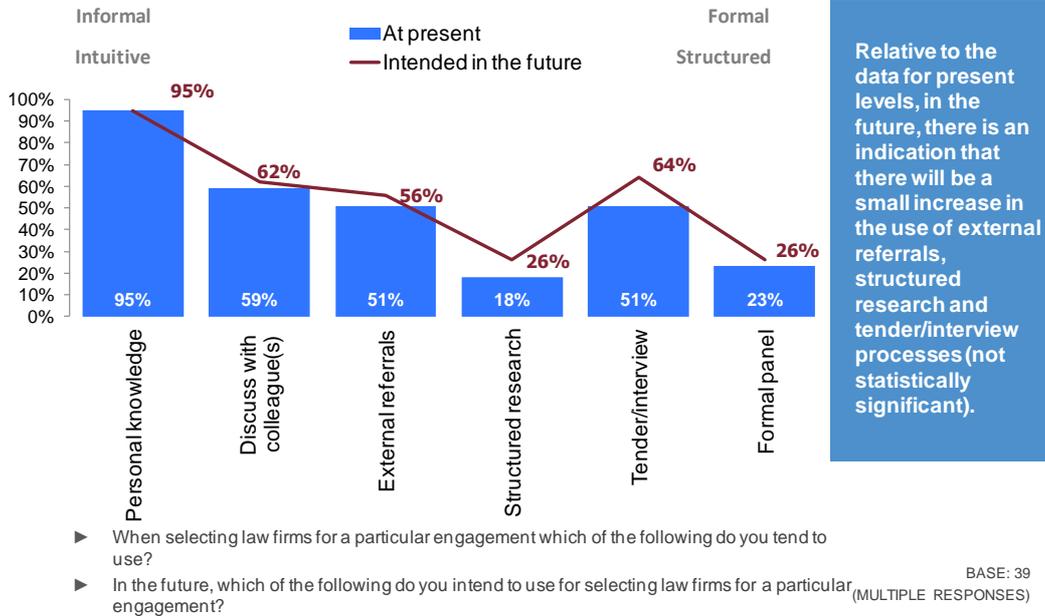
Over 23 attendees from around the world dialled into the call, comprising a combination of in-house counsel and procurement professionals (from companies including Asos.com, Canadian Pacific, Carillion, Chartis Europe, Diageo, Dole Food Company, Lloyds Banking Group, Phillips and Visa Europe) as well as law firm leaders from Baker & McKenzie LLP and Norton Rose LLP.

Robin Woodstock, Senior Procurement Manager (Professional Services) at Royal Mail Group Procurement, co-chaired the discussion. Robin has almost two decades of legal procurement experience spanning a range of sectors, and works closely with general counsel to improve the effectiveness and efficiency with which legal procurement is managed.

Having recently surveyed leading corporate counsel from around the world on law firm procurement, Jo Styles of Acritas shared the exclusive results of the [online in-house survey 'Sharplegal 2012 – law firm procurement'](#) during the discussion. The major themes and points discussed are provided in this summary document.

Formality of the selection process

Research suggests that the majority of respondents currently take a more informal position to select law firms; using personal knowledge and discussion with colleagues are the most commonly cited processes used during law firm selection.



Survey findings show that in today's in-house legal community over half of the respondents use tenders/interviews which is where procurement potentially comes into play.

There is an indication that in the future, informal processes will be employed to a very similar degree; personal knowledge will remain the most commonly used process during law firm selection thus will continue to be a key tool when judging a law firm's quality and ability. The research indicates that discussions with colleagues and usage of external referrals also look to remain at similar levels in the future; while there will be slight rises in the usage of structured research and formal panels in the future.

The process which could experience the greatest increase in uptake in the future, according to the research, is tenders/interviews. This finding is somewhat probable; in the future, economic conditions are likely to continue to be tough and there is pressure on departments within companies to not only be efficient, but also numerically demonstrate this efficiency across functions within companies. Formalised procurement processes, like structured research and tendered processing, can help to demonstrate efficiency efforts to the concerned internal departments, such as business and finance, in a comprehensible way. At the same time, legal teams will receive increased support from these internal departments.

Because the usage of such structured processes in law firm selection provides advantages such as internal credibility and accountability, increased uptake of these processes in the future is an unsurprising trend.

To continue reading this report you will need to complete Acritas' Sharplegal survey.

Sharplegal: What is involved?

The survey is conducted by phone. Your interview will take approximately 10 minutes to complete, depending on the length of your answers. Your responses will be gathered in line with the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct ie Acritas will keep your individual answers strictly confidential and they will not be forwarded to any third party without your permission.

Take part

To schedule a convenient time to be interviewed please contact Michelle mnesbitt-burrell@acritas.com or call +44(0) 808 1783020

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