

CLEANING UP AROUND THE WORLD - ROS ROCA

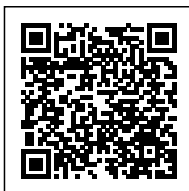
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Joan Xavier Marimón

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At waste management company Ros Roca the focus is towards externalising the provision of legal services but its law firms always have to get the basics right

La empresa de gestión de residuos Ros Roca tiende hacia la externalización de los servicios legales, pero es fundamental que los despachos entiendan sus necesidades y los nuevos retos que trae la expansión internacional, afirma Joan Xavier Marimón, Director de Asesoría Jurídica y Secretario de la Junta.

Ros Roca Environment is a company that likely exists beyond the view of most people yet is fundamental to the healthy functioning of cities; its waste disposal and collection vehicles operating on a daily basis on the streets of countries around the world. Established in 1953 in Tàrraga, (Lleida), initially as a timber and agricultural transport company, Ros Roca is now a global leader in waste management, disposal and processing.

As General Counsel, Joan Xavier Marimón oversees the company's legal operations globally. "The in-house team sits within a 'holding' company type structure but our goal is to be able to advise the business at both the corporate and local level. The growth of Ros Roca in recent years has been incredible but this has inevitably brought significant new challenges, to the business and obviously the legal team."

Beginning with acquisitions in Germany and France in the 1990s, Ros Roca has over the last two decades emerged as a leading manufacturer of urban waste as well as treatment plants. The company remains privately-owned and now has sales or operations in over 70 countries across four continents.

Among the company's major acquisitions in recent years are those of leading waste vehicle manufacturers NH Schörling in Germany, Eurovoirie in France, Dennis Eagle in the UK, Usimeca in Brazil, Farid Ros Roca in Italy, and Resitul in Portugal.

Divided into two major operational divisions, the company has most recently begun to focus its research and development towards new technologies, via Ros Roca Environment, turning waste into energy – electricity and gas – through bio-anaerobic digestion and slurry treatment plants, initially in Spain but also now in Luxembourg, Germany, Austria and Sweden, among other places.

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"Ros Roca is active in countries as diverse as Brazil, Sweden, Germany and the UK. We are commencing activities in Mexico, and looking to increase our operations in the Middle East, in Dubai. Each project and each market brings its own issues that we have to find ways to overcome," says Xavier Marimón.

In addition to manufacturing capital goods that covers the entire waste collection and treatment cycle: truck-mounted compactor collectors; road cleaning machinery and sewer cleaning equipment, in recent years Ros Roca has also developed systems for the treatment of waste through its own R&D programmes.

Having previously practised at PWC and with professional services and advisory firm Auren, Xavier Marimón joined Ros Roca in 2006. His appointment as General Counsel has brought the opportunity not only to build a legal team but also to play a much deeper role in the formation and enactment of the company strategy, he says.

The legal department remains small, with a focus on providing a "global" view of the Group's needs and to manage individual projects.

Domestically, Garrigues is a preferred external provider. But internationally, Xavier Marimón's initial preference is for firms that are well-known in the market and for which he already has recommendations. The focus may originally be on brand names but increasingly he is looking to work with individuals, he says.

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The legal department faces the same budgetary and performance pressures as any other part of the business, he says, and ultimate responsibility for the success of the legal aspects of any operation inevitably lies with the in-house team. The constant challenge is to be able to look ahead beyond the day-to-day.

"The nature of our business and the way we work means that we often initially want someone to hold our hands as we enter new territories. The law firms we use have however to understand our requirements and be willing to demonstrate this in the way they service our legal needs," says Xavier Marimón.

Joan Xavier Marimón is General Counsel of Ros Roca Environment, a Tárrega based company and a global leader in waste management, disposal and processing.

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