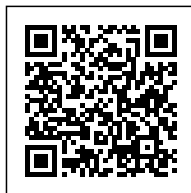


EXPANDING WITH CLIENTS' NEEDS - PBBR

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The growth of pbbbr reflects the expanding needs of clients and the requirement of businesses that their external lawyers must take a broader, more commercial view

Si los despachos quieren recomendar los servicios de otras áreas de práctica, tienen que entender a fondo las necesidades de sus clientes y ser sinceros sobre su capacidad de aportar valor añadido, afirman Pedro Pinto y César Bessa Monteiro, socios del bufete pbbbr.

If law firms are to add value and cross-sell their lawyers' expertise to clients they must first truly understand the full extent of their needs, says Pedro Pinto, Managing Partner of the newly enlarged Lisbon firm Pedro Pinto Bessa Monteiro Reis Branco (pbbbr).

"We do not see size or dimension as critical for clients and in the current environment it is perhaps questionable as a law firm strategy. What our clients tell us is important however, is that the lawyers that work on their matters are technically able, have the necessary experience and understand the

importance of the issues in commercial terms."

The firm, previously called Pedro Pinto Reis & Associados, has expanded to 18 lawyers with the addition of a seven-lawyer led team led by Cesar Bessa Monteiro and Carla Martins Branco from ABBC.

The new arrivals have brought additional corporate finance expertise, to boost the firm's existing commercial, finance and litigation and real estate capability but also added a market leading IP team, led by Bessa Monteiro. In addition, pbbr has also added tax specialist João Marques Pinto as Counsel.

"The combination of lawyers is very complementary, there is very little overlap and this allows us to go to our existing clients with an expanded offering. What we see as important is not extreme specialisation, which is no longer viable in a market like Portugal, but the ability of lawyers to be able to look beyond the minutiae and see the bigger picture," says Bessa Monteiro.

The firm may have changed its image to reflect the new arrivals but a law firm's brand is only ever a reflection of the way in which the lawyers operate, they say. "What is important is that we offer an excellent service, we are responsive, flexible in the face of changing needs and able to be highly creative in order to overcome the challenges that the current economic climate is presenting to our clients' businesses."

In addressing clients' needs, the issue is one of philosophy. "In order to recognise new client opportunities you must be as entrepreneurial as they are. You must offer the comfort that you can bring something extra to their business beyond mere legal know how," says Pinto.