

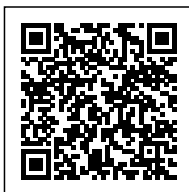
INDIVIDUALS DEFEND YOUR INTERESTS, NOT LAW FIRMS - COCA-COLA

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The driver of decisions to outsource is based on the professional excellence of specific individuals, rather than the brand of a law firm, says Sergio Redondo

When Sergio Redondo took over as Head of Legal for Coca-Cola Iberia, he was faced with the task of starting from scratch. "But while it has its difficulties, it also allows you to freely build a team and a strategy," he explains.

Redondo began by growing his team, and revising their panel of external law firms. At that time they were relying heavily on external support, but he wanted to identify exactly who they would use for which purpose. Rather than using 'law firms', he focuses on 'individual legal contributors'. "No law firm defends a situation – an individual does. And while I take into account the law firm, that isn't the driver of my decision."

For Redondo, his external lawyers need to think of themselves as part of the in-house team and operate with the same mindset. And he doesn't like the onus of the word 'no'. "I prefer those that look for solutions rather than questioning whether or not they are comfortable with the Company's proposal."

Life begins here

Following a Masters in Law at IE Business School, Redondo went straight in-house to IBM. There he worked in the recovery department, the highlight of which was undertaking the receivership of Galerías Preciados – now El Corte Inglés.

A year later, however, his boss at IBM was hired by Airtel, now Vodafone, and Redondo went with him. "When we arrived it was just us – there was literally nothing done, not even the rental agreement of the office! You name it we had to do it from scratch to having a Corporation in an extremely short period of time."

It was a challenging time, he says, and that's where he really evolved as a lawyer. Redondo was subsequently appointed Legal Director and grew the legal department to a team of 20.

After seven years, the call came from Coca-Cola that was looking for a Head of Legal, which Redondo accepted and where he has been for the past 13 years.

The Coke side of life

Redondo relies on his three person in-house team, outsources on a case-by-case basis, and has a panel of 'go to' lawyers that he uses.

In Spain, for labour he uses Ignacio Campos at Gómez-Acebo & Pombo who he describes as very pragmatic, and with a great capacity to think like the client. For competition, he goes to Rafael Allendesalazar at Martínez Lage, Allendesalazar & Brokelmann Abogados. "His team are able to support the advice that a company of this size demands, even though the law firm is a boutique." Antonio Sánchez Montero at Ramón y Cajal is who Redondo turns for corporate matters, and when the need for litigation support arises he relies on Alfonso Iglesia and Antonio Hierro at Cuatrecasas, Gonçalves Pereira.

For Portugal, Redondo relies on the in-house legal department of their bottler– Coca-Cola Iberian Partners – led by Carla Castro under the leadership of Isabela Pérez Nivelá. For external support he turns to Nuno Libano Monteiro at PLMJ, who he credits as showing excellence in many areas of practice, as well as Miguel Castro Pereira at Abreu Advogados for litigation. "He's a fighter and has done an outstanding job of building relations with Coca-Cola." When he needs a very sophisticated opinion or a new approach he uses César Bessa Monteiro at pbbbr, or António Raposo Subtil, among others.

You can't beat the feeling

Two drivers of everyday business for Redondo are relations with the Health Authority and ensuring the business is fully compliant regarding any competition or tax matter.

The Company already has compliance programmes throughout all aspects of the business and many policies in place. Fortunately it is all running seamlessly, he says, and the policies they have designed and implemented are working in such a way that they are being net exporters of policies to subsidiaries worldwide. "When it makes sense to implement a programme, it's senseless to start from scratch elsewhere when we have already done the thinking and the work. And this sharing

system works vice versa with our colleagues in other territories."

Redondo is excited for the year ahead. "There some exciting projects in the pipeline are – but I can't talk about them!" What he can say is that the real secret formula of Coca-Cola is that, after all these years, the company is still capable of coming up with projects and challenges that really make him relish coming into work each day.

Sergio Redondo is General Secretary and Head of Legal at Coca-Cola for Spain and Portugal