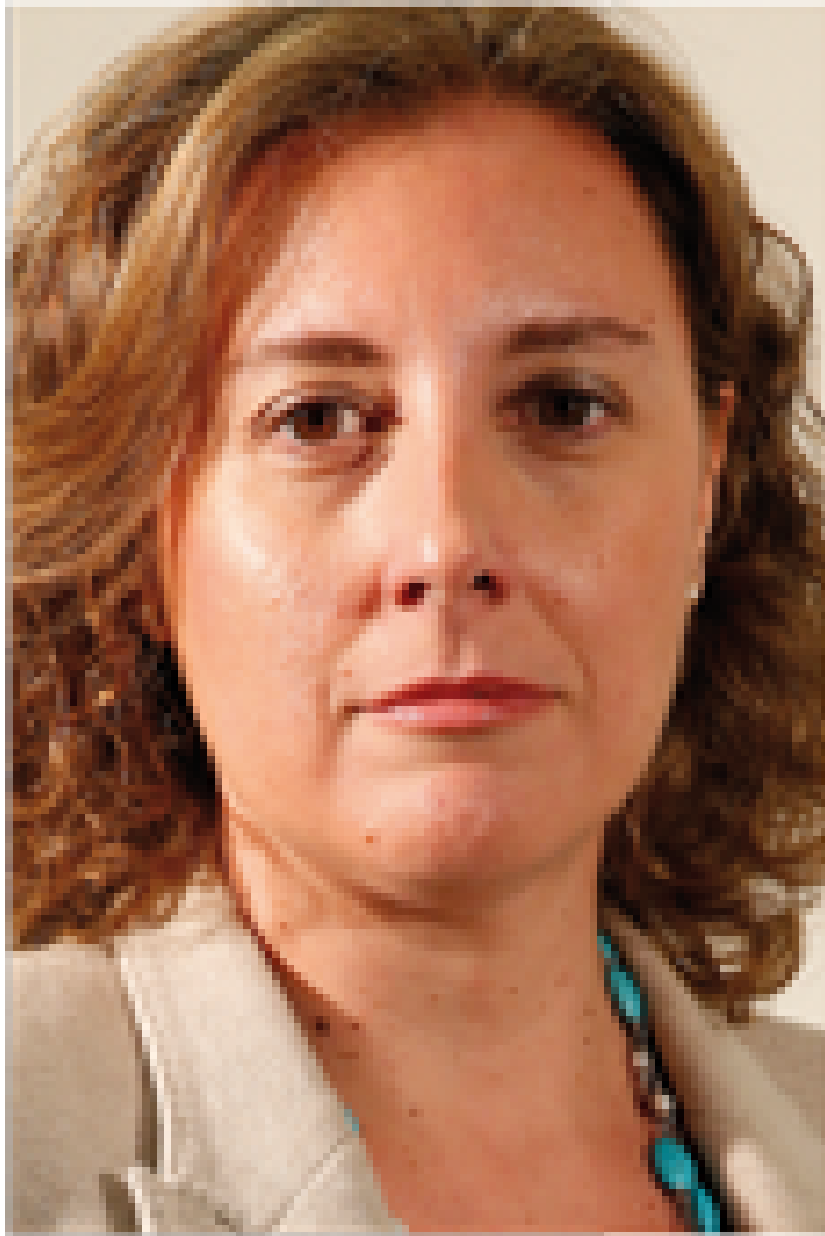


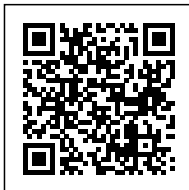
KEEPING IT IN-HOUSE - CANON PORTUGAL

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Doing legal work in-house helps build good relationships with clients, though litigious matters are always outsourced to 'business-oriented' law firms, says Begoña Barberá

As a general rule, Canon España likes to keep all its commercial legal matters in-house. "One of our

main objectives is to build strong enduring business relationships with both internal and external customers and, therefore, we prefer to keep in-house all the commercial matters, including drafting, review and negotiation of contracts," says Begoña Barberá, corporate counsel in Canon España's legal department and lead lawyer at Canon Portugal. "We work in partnership with businesses so we can understand their objectives and needs in order to provide them with the required legal support with a business oriented and flexible approach."

However, Canon does have a group of preferred firms to which it does outsource some work. But the firms it selects must have an in-depth knowledge of Canon's business while also being prepared to give the company certainty with regard to fees. While Canon España's legal budget has remained the same despite the economic crisis, the company is striving to improve efficiency and ensure that it strictly adheres to the set budget.

The Canon legal department provides advice on general legal matters to the company's three business units – Consumer Imaging Group, Business Imaging Group and Production Print Group – as well as its supporting departments, including human resources, finance, marketing, ICT and supply chain. These matters include commercial contracts, mergers and acquisitions, data protection, marketing and intellectual property.

The legal department also advises the company on how to achieve its business objectives in a compliant way. "In this regard, we implement the relevant policies and train employees in a broad range of legal matters, including competition law, data protection, anti-corruption, anti-bribery and entertainment and gifts," Barberá says.

Outsourcing litigation

However, Barberá acknowledges that there are times when the legal department needs to use external law firms. "We outsource specific matters where we are not specialised and, consequently, where we need additional expertise," she says. "We also outsource litigation, as we do not have enough in-house capacity to handle court proceedings and we prefer to focus on commercial matters."

Barberá says Canon has a number of preferred firms, though she declines to name them for "confidentiality reasons". She adds: "We want to work with high quality law firms that are able to provide the requested legal advice with a business-oriented approach and in a timely manner as we frequently work with tight deadlines." Barberá says Canon expects the law firms it works with to invest time in getting to know the company's business in order to provide "clear and customised advice". She states: "We also expect that they take into consideration the impact of their advice on Canon's business."

Clarity on fees

Certainty on legal fees is also a key consideration for Canon. "We expect from them (law firms) clarity in terms of fees and, consequently, we have agreements in place with the external firms we work with," says Barberá, who spent 14 years at Madrid-based Carvajal Abogados prior to joining Canon in 2005. She adds that Canon's legal budget has "remained stable", though acknowledges that the legal department is conscious of the need to keep the budget under control. To this end, Barberá says the department has taken measures to increase its efficiency despite the fact that it still does the same type of work and its workload has not decreased.

Barberá says the legal department is monitoring the changes to the Intellectual Property Act because of the impact of copyright levies regulations on Canon's business. Meanwhile, the new Spanish Criminal Code is also of great interest because it will have an impact on internal compliance processes.

Opportunities for growth

With economic conditions improving, the department has a key role to play in growing the business, according to Barberá. "It seems that the economic situation is slightly improving, so we hope that next year Canon will have opportunities for growth in all business areas, especially in business

services, medical imaging products, professional imaging (photo and broadcast) and production print," she says. Barberá adds that the legal department needs to develop the tools to contribute to, and facilitate, this growth and transformation "in close cooperation with the business and complying with the relevant regulations".

Begoña Barberá is corporate counsel in Canon España's legal department and lead lawyer at Canon Portugal