

LAW FIRMS NEED TO BE MORE INNOVATIVE - DELOITTE ABOGADOS

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With businesses in Barcelona doing more legal work in-house, the onus is on law firms to become more creative in the types of services they offer clients

Local companies in Barcelona are expanding their in-house legal teams, a trend that is putting pressure on law firms to offer more innovative legal services, according to Eugenia Jover, senior associate at Deloitte Abogados.

Jover adds that it is more common for such companies to have in-house lawyers who participate in the business' everyday activities. "We perceive an increase in internal legal advisory services at local companies," she says. "They are increasing in size and becoming more specialised with greater involvement in day-to-day business."

According to Jover, such developments mean that the legal work that is now outsourced by companies tends to be that which involves a greater level of complexity. "This means that law firms have to adapt by offering innovative solutions – not only from a legal, but also from a business perspective – and provide enough added value to justify the client's decision to outsource."

The increasingly global nature of many Spanish companies means clients more frequently need

lawyers to advise on "international structures", according to Jover. She adds: "Nowadays law firms should be able to offer homogenous and complete services while fulfilling their usual standards." Jover says that, over the last year, there has been a significant increase in the number of foreign companies interested in investing in Barcelona. "At the same time, local companies have initiated international expansion procedures in search of new markets," she adds.

What are currently the biggest opportunities for law firms in Barcelona? "In the current environment, the main opportunities for law firms in Barcelona consist of giving support to the client throughout the whole corporative process as well as offering legal advice beyond the local level in a multidisciplinary way," says Jover. She adds that this requires a "deep knowledge of the client's sector as well as the client's business".