

REWARDING SUCCESS - RCD - ROUSAUD COSTAS DURAN

Posted on 23/11/2017



Category: [Uncategorized](#)



RCD - Rousaud Costas Duran is having the best period in its history, according to managing partner Adolf Rousaud, who says this is partly because, unlike some competitors, the firm is run as a meritocracy that gives the biggest rewards to its most talented lawyers

Business has rarely been better for Spanish law firm RCD – Rousaud Costas Duran. Indeed, managing partner Adolf Rousaud indicates that it is going through its own golden age: “The first quarter of 2017 was the best in the history of the firm”. RCD’s financial data suggests that it is undergoing a period of rapid growth – revenue grew by 24 per cent last year to €25.5 million. And this followed a sustained period of year-on-year billing increases. “In the past three years, we have experienced annual growth rates above 20 per cent,” says Rousaud.

With billing on the rise, the firm has been in a position to make a sizeable investment in the form of a new office in Valencia, which opened in September this year. It’s the firm’s third office – it also has

operations in Madrid and Barcelona – and, explaining the move, Rousaud highlights the “strong economic growth experienced by the region in recent years”. Specifically, RCD sees a major opportunity to expand its tax practice in Valencia – to this end, the firm hired tax partner Borja de Gabriel, a native of the Valencian Community, from MA Abogados.

In addition to tax, Rousaud says that the pharmaceutical, insurance and sports sectors are practice areas that are undergoing significant expansion. He adds that, not only is there increased regulatory work in these areas, but also M&A, employment and financial crime-related matters. Meanwhile, Rousaud says the firm's growth is partly attributable to transactional work in foreign markets including Asia, and “especially China”.



“ We have the aim of transforming a deeply conservative sector into something more open to society.”
Adolf Rousaud
RCD – Rousaud Costas Duran

Smart companies

Rousaud also believes serving innovative technology-focused companies is an area of activity that has huge potential for law firms. “The economy has great opportunities in the area of innovation because the country [Spain] is a very attractive place for locating the headquarters of smart companies,” he explains.

Seizing opportunities such as these has led to a dramatic increase in headcount at the firm since it was established 14 years ago – back in 2003, the firm had three partners and seven professionals in total; today it has more than 250 lawyers, of which 31 are partners.

The firm has recruited a further two partners – in addition to Borja de Gabriel – in the last year. The new arrivals included Jesús Martrat, formerly an in-house lawyer at pharmaceutical company Almirall, who joined RCD's pharmacy and privacy practice. Also joining the firm's regulated markets practice as a partner was former state lawyer Carlos Hernández Rivera – who was previously Director General for the Regulation of Gambling, a role connected to the Spanish Ministry of Finance.

Fitting in

What is the philosophy behind RCD's recruitment strategy? “We have a well-defined philosophy, with very clear values, and a firm culture that is very well internalised throughout the organisation,” says Rousaud. “The first element we value in people who join the firm is the personal fit and technical training, more than the business fit, because that guarantees the stability of the firm – we believe this philosophy is crucial to our success.”

Rousaud also says the firm places a great deal of emphasis on the need for its lawyers to have an entrepreneurial spirit, and claims that this approach distinguishes RCD among its competitors. “We focus on attracting talented individuals who want to participate in a project that is growing constantly, as well as professionals with an entrepreneurial philosophy,” he says. “Traditional firms have a very rigid structure that somehow does not facilitate this type of meritocracy – for us age is not a factor, it's about knowledge, experience and skills.” Rousaud claims that, unlike some rival firms, RCD gives the biggest rewards to those lawyers who have the most ability and talent. These rewards include promotion to the partnership on the basis of performance rather than seniority. “Age is not a factor, it's about knowledge, experience and skills,” says Rousaud. “We have, with a lot of effort, built a meritocratic firm in which our professionals develop a career – it is a great source of pride that many of our partners started as junior lawyers in the firm. All these factors make us a very attractive firm for graduates and other senior profiles.”

The firm also has a strong commitment to the use of technology as a means of improving its efficiency, according to Rousaud. “We are currently collaborating with Signaturit, a start-up dedicated to the development and utilisation of an online platform that makes it possible to electronically sign legal documents,” he adds.

With regard to the outlook for the coming year, Rousaud says that real estate, hotels, technology and industry are the sectors that will lead the economic recovery. “These sectors will offer

companies the most business opportunities," he explains. "Specifically, in the technological sector there will be great opportunities and our country is also a leader in pharma and biotechnology." Rousaud adds that many Chinese businesses are interested in investing in Spain, which they also see as a bridge for investing, and expanding, in Latin America.

Falling behind Portugal

In addition, Brexit represents an opportunity for Spain, in the view of Rousaud. "Now, more than ever, concerns about the consequences of Brexit are in the spotlight as the European Union and the UK are

preparing for negotiations regarding the exit," he says. "As a result of this, there are opportunities with London-based financial companies looking for existing, and CNMV-approved, regulatory schemes enabling them to operate from the EU." Rousaud adds that, from the perspective of tax and also related to Brexit, there are "some political movements to make the tax system more attractive for UK nationals residing in this country [Spain]". However, Rousaud adds the caveat that Spain has fallen behind some of its rivals in this respect. "Other EU countries such as Portugal, Switzerland and Belgium are ahead in terms of these policies." It should also be pointed out here that some partners at Barcelona law firms say foreign investors are now more cautious about investing in Barcelona due to the political uncertainty in Catalonia.

One of the biggest challenges law firms now face is finding the best way to collaborate with each other on both domestic and international matters, Rousaud says. "As the delivery of the best service to clients is key, law firms need to be able to collaborate with other partners in order to provide a global and tailor-made service adapted to their clients' needs."

However, many firms are aware of the need to provide tailor-made services to clients, so why should they choose RCD as their legal service provider? "We were established with the clear aim of transforming a deeply conservative sector into something more open to society, in which clients and potential clients understand the reasons behind our advice and the legal solutions that we offer," says Rousaud. "We are still very committed to this. We are committed to a transparent and ethical vision of law. We are people-oriented, in terms of both our clients and the professionals within our organisation."

RCD – Rousaud Costas Duran fact file	
Lawyers:	250
Partners:	31
2016 Revenue:	€25.5 million

Recent deals handled by RCD – Rousaud Costas Duran

July 2017

RCD - Rousaud Costas Duran advised ELIX on the creation of a company to manage a real estate sector investment vehicle. The company, named ELIX Vintage Residential Socimi, is expected to manage funds of more than €200 million. The agreement will allow ELIX Vintage Residential Socimi to invest in Spanish residential real estate stock. Investment funds such as KKR, Altamar Capital Partners and Deutsche Finance Group backed the Socimi.

June 2017

Fintonic was advised by RCD - Rousaud Costas Duran on a €25 million financing round. Investors included ING Group and the insurer PSN – the financing was obtained for the purposes of expanding Fintonic's business in Spain and Latin America, where it has a presence in Chile. Financial app Fintonic enables its 400,000 users to get loans and insurance from more than 40 companies.

April 2017

Grupo Farga instructed RCD - Rousaud Costas Duran in relation to a €40 million investment in its subsidiary Farggi by Black Toro Capital. The funding provided by Black Toro – which instructed Cuatrecasas on the deal – to the ice cream producer Farggi consisted of a mix of convertible debt (90 per cent) and equity (10 per cent). Farggi obtained the funding to support its acquisition of La Menorquina, the Iberian branch of Canary Islands-based ice cream manufacturer Grupo Kalise Menorquina.