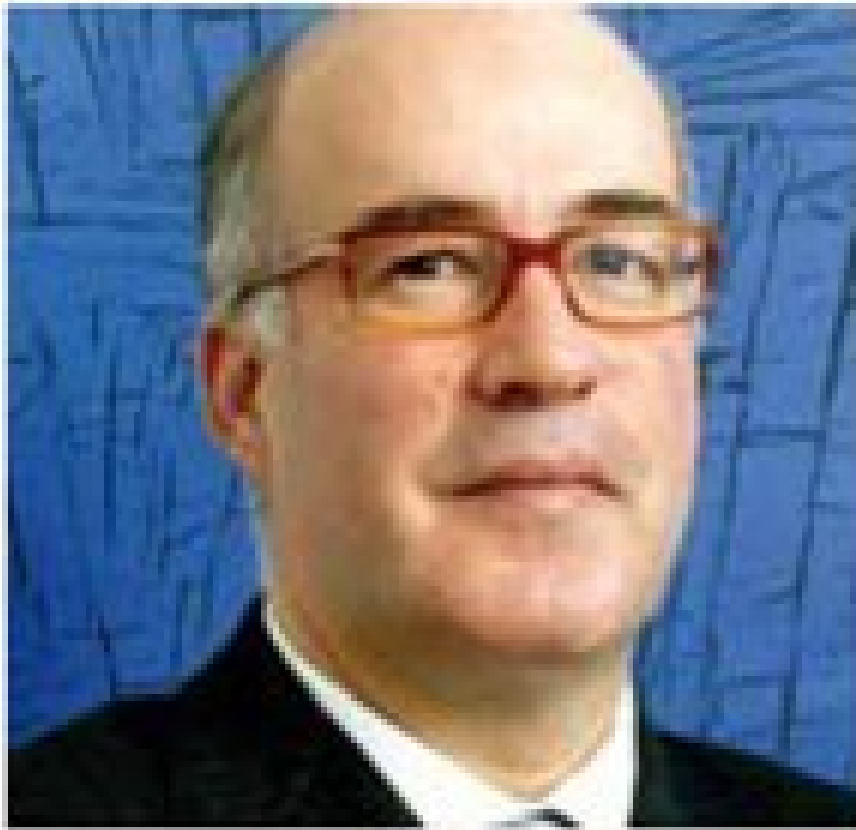


SEEING BOTH SIDES - ABBC

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Filipe Faria

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Experience within companies as an in-house counsel is something that few external counsel can claim; but, those lawyers who have seen both sides, such experience is invaluable in understanding clients' regulatory compliance requirements.

Uno de los aspectos más valiosos para un despacho es el integrar el conocimiento de sector que posee un ex abogado interno. Esta experiencia es crucial para entender los requisitos específicos de cumplimiento normativo de una empresa y los pormenores del sector, afirma Filipe Faria, de ABBC

Filipe Faria, Of Counsel at ABBC Advogados in Lisbon, in telecommunications, information technologies and outsourcing, has previously served as Legal Director at PT Prime and PT Corporate and as the Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs at Companhia Portuguesa Rádio Marconi. He says it can be harder for external counsel to see what is at stake within a big company when

providing advice.

"Generally, clients feel that their law firms may not always understand their wider business needs enough, such as the risks and overall strategy," he says.

In-house experience can deepen knowledge beyond the law, which is significant when it comes to providing advice on specific practice area compliance matters, says Faria. As he focuses on IT, telecommunications and outsourcing matters, he says this is vital in providing value-added advice.

"A lawyer needs to know the sector, the company and the business; it has to go beyond the analytical. Big companies have more than one head, more than one manager, more than one department and more than one compliance challenge."

Faria points to the telecoms sector, where companies deal with a myriad of issues, such as data protection, telecoms infringement processes and the ever-changing compliance regime.

"Most compliance rules come from the EU but they are designed for an average European company, not those in Portugal," Faria concludes. "The rules do not consider the size, structure or public involvement in local companies so clients are perplexed as to how to implement regulations."

According to Faria, legal and business sector knowledge are a crucial combination.