

Management partner of the year

WINNER

Geoffrey Green

Ashurst

Forming the number one firm outside the Magic Circle

As he clocks up a decade as senior partner in 2008, Geoffrey Green can take much credit for the Ashurst success story. Head of the management committee, his ideas and leadership have helped shape a firm that has stormed up the tables to challenge the Magic Circle for profits and quality.

Noted for being charismatic, charming and authoritative, Green has seen it all: failed merger attempts with US firms; former managing partners come and go; and introducing a proposed restructuring of the firm's lockstep to reward junior partners and high flyers. Green has helped make Ashurst the number one firm outside the Magic Circle. The latest *LB100* results bear this out: an assured focus on profitability saw the firm achieve a spectacular 36% rise in PEP to £956,000, putting some of its closest rivals to shame.

Green personifies Ashurst's measured, intelligent approach and the stability of the ship gives a true picture of how far the firm has come. It is no coincidence that it has retained more of the partnership ethos than many rivals. Combine a content partnership and outstanding quality of work with impressive financial performance, and you have a firm that often rivals the Magic Circle, and is well ahead of the chasing pack.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

TED BURKE

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

Charged with turning Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer into a leaner, meaner outfit, chief executive Ted Burke has been forced to make tough and sometimes downright unpopular decisions. His implementation of the partnership and pensions scheme restructuring was vital to transforming the firm's financial performance to match its closest rivals. Inevitably, lawsuits from furious partners followed. Against this background, there was the small matter of a conflicts tribunal over the firm's role in the Marks & Spencer takeover battle to contend with. The former US managing partner has borne the burden with dignity, and the firm has emerged from the trauma stronger than ever.

NEVILLE EISENBERG

Berwin Leighton Paisner

Eisenberg has been instrumental in turning his firm into a successful, profitable full-service practice that has moved beyond its traditional strengths in real estate to become a leading mid-tier City firm. His impressive vision has become a reality, as its financial performance (top of equity is £1.2m) and *Legal 500* showing (more ranking improvements and new entries than any other London-based law firm) demonstrate. Eisenberg doesn't rest on his laurels. Under his effective leadership, BLP is set to become a top-ten firm in the next few years.

DAVID KERR

Bird & Bird

To say Kerr is popular among the partners at Bird & Bird would be an understatement. He held on to his role as



Geoffrey Green of Ashurst (centre) with Martyn Rodmell of the Commerce & Industry Group on behalf of Challengeror

CEO in 2007, standing unopposed in the most recent round of elections. He has now spent 11 years in the firm's lead role, and will serve yet another three-year term. In that time, the firm has emerged as the ultimate one-stop shop to the TMT sector, and its strategy of leveraging off its IP and technology practice to achieve breath-taking international expansion and a quality corporate and finance practice has paid off: turnover was up 20% last year, while PEP rose by a healthy 11% to £459,000.

PAUL MAHER

Mayer Brown

Vice-chair Paul Maher is noted for his strong influence in the firm's recent successes, which include an impressive array of lateral hires, strong financial performance and implementing a well-received strategic review. Maher is credited for leading the way on the firm's strategy to become a global leader, and the merger announced last December with leading Hong Kong firm Johnson Stokes & Master shows the firm is well on its way.

IAN PITTAWAY

Sacker & Partners

Under Ian Pittaway's leadership, this pensions outfit exemplifies the value of offering a superb niche practice and not chasing rainbows. The 2007 *LB100* results were a total vindication of the boutique model: its PEP of £876,000 is bettered by only a handful of firms in the City. Since Pittaway took his pensions team with him to Sacker from Nicholson Graham & Jones in 1996, the firm hasn't looked back. Realising in the '90s that the key to success was to either go global or go niche, Sacker plumped for the latter, helping it to become the go-to firm for pensions work.

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