



There's a new firm in town

There's a new law firm in town. But this isn't just another law firm. It specializes in a niche area of law, it's adaptable, and it offers flexible billing arrangements. It might also change the landscape of Canadian law firms.

Spectrum HR Law LLP opened its offices in Calgary and Vancouver on Feb. 1, and specializes in providing human resources legal services to businesses. Chris Brown, one of eight founding lawyers, says they recognized the need for a firm with a new business model, one that brings all of the legal services

of their target area of law under one roof. "Spectrum HR Law was in the making for years," says Brown. "The lawyers who founded Spectrum HR Law either articulated or worked together at traditional law firms. For years, we all thought and talked about founding a firm that focused on our specialized areas of law in a way we believed was a natural progression from the traditional firm."

Brown says with Calgary and Vancouver's mature business markets, and with Calgary having the second-highest number of head offices in Canada, this was the perfect time to open a law firm based on this new business model. Spectrum will provide HR legal services to its clients but in a different way. "We are able to offer clients access to all HR-related legal services under one roof. Services include employment, labour relations, pensions, employment benefits, executive compensation, busi-



The Spectrum HR Law team (l to r): Scott Sweatman, Shana Wolch, Kristin Smith, Evelyn Ackah, Michael Wolpert, Christopher Brown, Janet Nystedt, Will Cascadden.

ness immigration, occupational health and safety, and privacy law. All of our lawyers specialize in one or more aspects of such services and our lawyers have the ability to collaborate with each other on all of their clients' needs," says Brown.

Evelyn Ackah, another founding lawyer, says Spectrum goes one step further than a traditional law firm and focuses on helping its clients proactively manage their HR legal risks. "We provide our clients with legal counsel up front, which will help to mitigate potential legal problems down the road leading to significant cost savings."

Since Calgary is well known for its boom and bust cycles, mostly due to the oil and gas industry, Ackah says the city's businesses experience HR legal issues in both good times and bad. "We can very quickly adapt to our clients' needs. For example, when times are good, we have many corporate clients that need

HR legal help with bringing in foreign workers and preparing employment agreements. But when times are bad, we help our clients manage the legal process when the same volume of workers may no longer be required."

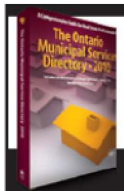
A key component to Spectrum's new business model is the firm's billing options. Ackah says its billing system is proactive and up front and provides cost certainty for clients. "For our clients who want flexible billing arrangements, we developed creative billing options for clients to choose from. Clients know what services they will receive, at what

cost, and in what time frame so they can set their legal budgets and there are no surprises."

Its business model also offers myriad benefits to the firm's lawyers. "We provide an entrepreneurial work environment and a different culture. We believe in work-life balance and our goal is to provide a collegial team atmosphere where our lawyers will enjoy working. Our flexible work arrangements also allow the firm to reduce its operating costs while at the same time allowing our lawyers to be more productive," says Brown.

Now in operation for two months, Brown and Ackah say even though it was a ton of hard work to create the firm, it was also lots of fun and they wouldn't have it any other way.

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