BTI Client Service A-Team
Survey of Law Firm Client Service Performance

Executive Summary

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Introduction to BTI’s Client Service A-Team Rankings

For the past 16 years, BTI has published the definitive ranking of client service excellence for the corporate law firm market. Our focus is on which law firms legal decision makers are recognizing for delivering the absolute best client service. Now in its 16th year of publication, the BTI Client Service A-Team is the gold standard (used by law firms and corporate counsel alike) to assess how law firms honestly stack up in client service delivery. The analysis is based on 17 objective ranking factors—all of which corporate counsel agree drive the strongest relationships with law firms. You can read about the 17 activities in this report and more in depth in Michael B. Rynowecer’s Amazon best-selling book Clientelligence.

Welcome to the BTI Client Service A-Team 2017

The rankings of the 295 law firms recognized in the BTI Client Service A-Team 2017 are the end result of more than 330 in-depth interviews with legal decision makers at the world’s leading organizations.

CLIENT SERVICE LEADERS—As Selected by Clients

- Jones Day has reclaimed the top spot in client service excellence for 2017.
- Dentons shoots up an impressive 9 spots to land at number 2 this year.
- Coming in 3rd, Skadden celebrates its 15th appearance near the top of the list.
- Rounding out the top 5 are Cooley and DLA Piper, demonstrating clear client service prowess.

The leaders in client service earn recognition from corporate counsel on an ongoing basis, fostering and maintaining strong client relationships day-in and day-out. The top 10 firms have averaged more than 10 years in the exclusive BTI Client Service 30 (the 30 firms outperforming all others in client service delivery). Nearly all—28 of 30—of The BTI Client Service 30 are repeat honorees, reinventing how legal services are delivered year after year.

MORE THAN JUST RANKINGS

The BTI Client Service A-Team 2017 is more than a guide to the law firms delivering superior levels of service—it’s a handbook to make you an expert in client service as well.

- 4 activities correlate to higher growth and higher profitability; learn exactly how to differentiate your firm around:
  - Commitment to Help
  - Client Focus
  - Understanding the Client’s Business
  - Providing Value for the Dollar
- 6 activities are required before a client will even consider entering into a relationship with a law firm
- 5 activities are proven to highly differentiate law firms from one another—driving longer-lasting client relationships
- 2 activities stand out as magnets attracting organizations with the highest levels of legal spending

The BTI Client Service A-Team is your tool to understand how to develop superior skills in each of these activities to drive the absolute best and longest-lasting client relationships.
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- Be Committed, Not Helpful
- The Best Law Firms

**Client Focus**
- Solutions Tailored to Each Client
- The Best Law Firms

**Understands the Client’s Business**
- Clients Love to Be Understood
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**Provides Value for the Dollar**
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Introduction and Methodology
Introduction

BTI’s Methodology and Approach

BTI’s goal each year is to be objective and transparent in our rankings. The A-Team is a data-driven ranking based solely on in-depth telephone interviews with leading legal decision makers. This research is independent (no law firm or organization other than BTI sponsors this study) and unbiased.

Each year BTI reaches out to a sample of legal decision makers at large organizations with $1 billion or more in revenue. BTI tracks legal spending and thought leaders. No law firm influences the results, submits nominations, or provides client names to BTI.

Methodology

BTI’s scoring system relies on 3 variables to leave no room for subjective opinion or judgment:

- Importance of each of the 17 activities to legal decision makers when assessing legal providers
  - BTI asked legal decision makers: On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most important, how important are each of the following activities when you hire or evaluate a law firm?

- How difficult it is for a legal decision maker to find a law firm performing well in each of the 17 activities (in essence, does the activity differentiate one law firm from another)
  - BTI asked legal decision makers: On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most difficult, how difficult is it for you to find a law firm performing at best-in-class levels in each of the following activities?

- Candid, open-ended feedback from decision makers as to which law firm stands out as the best in each of the 17 activities
  - BTI asked legal decision makers: For each of the following activities, can you please tell me which firm you consider best?

The 17 Activities—A Brief History

27 years ago, BTI began the first and longest-running continuous survey with C-level buyers of professional services. The goal was to understand what drives the absolute best relationships with professional services firms—how and why top executives pick the service providers they do.

More than 14,000 in-depth telephone interviews later, BTI has isolated 17 activities proven to be essential to delivering superior client service and driving the best relationships.
Introduction

BTI’s Methodology and Approach — Continued

BTI Client Service A-Team 2017 draws on data collected in BTI’s ongoing Annual Survey of General Counsel. This study includes between 50% and 55% of companies participating in prior years. This approach provides for accurate analysis of longitudinal trends while simultaneously allowing for insights into new, changing, and up-and-coming shifts in the legal market.

2017 Survey Participant Demographics

Overview

Interviews: Over 330 in-depth telephone interviews
Time Frame: Conducted between February 18, 2016 and August 1, 2016
Incentives: Respondents receive a complimentary report of legal benchmarks and metrics

Highest-ranking Legal Decision Makers

- General Counsel/Chief Legal Officer
- Direct Report to General Counsel
- Other Legal Decision Maker

Organizations with Highest Levels of Legal Spending

- Average revenue of $13.8 billion
- Median revenue of $4.9 billion

Representative of More than 15 Industry Segments

- Banking
- Chemicals
- Consumer Goods
- Energy
- Financial Services
- Food & Agriculture
- Health Care
- High Tech
- Insurance
- Investment Banks
- Manufacturing
- Pharmaceuticals
- Professional Services (excluding law firms)
- Retail Trade
- Telecommunications
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
**Introduction**

**295 Law Firms Named by Corporate Counsel**

According to BTI’s research, 650 core law firms serve large and Fortune 1000 clients. However, less than half of these firms earn a spot in the *BTI Client Service A-Team 2017*. **295** law firms, in total, are singled out—by name—by legal decision makers for their prowess in at least 1 of the 17 activities driving superior client relationships.

![Graph showing two tiers of client service recognition]

**Two Tiers of Client Service Recognition**

**BTI CLIENT SERVICE 30:**
- The 30 firms boasting the highest overall scores in client service delivery—outperforming all other firms by a factor of 5
- Win recognition in each of the 17 activities driving the best relationships with clients
- They impress clients with their savvy, outpace all other firms in service, and reap real financial benefits from their efforts; simply put, the law firms in The BTI Client Service 30 are the best

**BTI CLIENT SERVICE A-TEAM HONOREES:**
- **265** additional firms earned recognition—by name—from corporate counsel
- Legal decision makers see these firms as delivering best-in-class levels of service in at least 1 of the 17 activities clients consider most important and most influential in a law firm relationship
Introduction

Three Types of Honors

Nominated firms receive one of three honors:

Best of the Best

🌟🌟🌟 The highest level of achievement based upon a firm’s unparalleled performance in client service. These firms perform at a higher level than all others.

Leaders of the Best

★★ The second-highest level of achievement designating the firm’s leadership status in client service. These firms are performing better than most.

Honor Roll of the Best

★ The third-highest level of achievement indicating an honorable mention in client service.
Order *BTI CLIENT SERVICE A-TEAM 2017* for:

The Best Law Firms in the 17 Activities Driving Superior Client Relationships

Which Law Firm Is Most Arrogant

Profiles of The BTI Client Service 30 Firms

Full report includes expanded law firm profiles, rankings across 17 metrics, trend data and much more.

ORDER YOUR COMPLETE REPORT NOW

www.bticonsulting.com/ateam
17 Activities Driving Superior Client Relationships
17 Activities Driving Superior Client Relationships

BTI’s research with more than 14,000 buyers of professional services isolates the 17 activities essential to delivering superior client service and driving the best professional relationships. Corporate counsel then assess each activity on 2 dimensions, specifically, to identify the activities most important and most influential when evaluating legal providers.

Reading BTI’s 17 Activities Quadrant Map

BTI’s 17 Activities Quadrant Map measures the components of client service along 2 key dimensions:

- Importance
- Ability to differentiate a law firm

The horizontal axis of this chart represents relative importance of each activity. Activities on the right side of the chart are more important to legal decision makers than activities on the left side.

The vertical axis of this chart represents the strength of each activity’s ability to differentiate a law firm. Activities on the top half of the chart are harder for legal decision makers to find in a law firm—making them strong differentiators.

BTI’s ongoing research with corporate counsel shows how each quadrant in the chart exhibits distinct characteristics and plays an important role in developing and maintaining superior relationships with legal decision makers.
17 Activities Driving Superior Client Relationships

Quadrant 1: Relationship Bliss
4 activities are most important to corporate counsel and provide the highest levels of differentiation for law firms. Corporate counsel see these activities as scarce, and they drive hiring decisions on a continuing basis. Law firms can draw on these primary activities to reap substantially more business from existing clients and draw in new clients.

1. Commitment to Help
2. Client Focus
3. Understands the Client’s Business
4. Provides Value for the Dollar

While the activities in quadrant 1 have the strongest statistical correlation to financial benefit, every activity has a crucial role in the development, maintenance, and ultimate growth of client relationships. Without the Price of Admission activities, clients won’t even consider hiring you. Failure to demonstrate your ability in the Business Magnets could cost you some of the highest-spending clients. Overlook the power of Relationship Builders and opportunities for organic growth with your existing clients may be missed.

Quadrant 2: Price of Admission
Corporate counsel see 6 activities as the minimum requirements expected from a law firm. These activities are of high importance but are also widely available. Clients expect you to deliver these activities in order to win work, but they do not differentiate you enough to be the sole decision criteria.

5. Legal Skills
6. Quality Products
7. Meets Core Scope
8. Keeps Clients Informed
9. Deals with Unexpected Changes
10. Handles Problems

Quadrant 3: Relationship Builders
5 activities stand out as providing high differentiation to the law firms able to deliver them. However, these activities are of lower importance to corporate counsel. On their own, these activities are nice to find in a law firm, but they won’t drive a relationship over the long term.

11. Breadth of Services
12. Helps Advise on Business Issues
13. Regional Reputation
14. Unprompted Communication
15. Brings Together National Resources

Quadrant 4: Business Magnets
These activities are an anomaly. They are of lower importance and are less differentiating with most clients. The notable exception: the largest-spending, least price-sensitive clients with a large number of complex needs—the organizations most law firms attempt to add to their client roster.

16. Anticipates the Client’s Needs
17. Innovative Approach
Order *BTI CLIENT SERVICE A-TEAM 2017* for:

The Best Law Firms in the 17 Activities Driving Superior Client Relationships

Which Law Firm Is Most Arrogant

Profiles of The BTI Client Service 30 Firms

Full report includes expanded law firm profiles, rankings across 17 metrics, trend data and much more.

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About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.
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Driving Superior Client Relationships.
Fueling Superior Growth and Profits.

BTI conducts more independent research on how clients acquire, manage, and evaluate their professional service providers than virtually anyone.

We benchmark how Fortune 1000 companies buy, how professional services firms sell, and how to manage service provider performance. Through more than 14,000 independent interviews with C-level executives and systematic analysis, BTI has helped professionals boost client service for 27 years.

We examine the market from the client’s perspective. Our proprietary methods include open-ended interviews with high-level executives and decision makers, carried out by highly trained senior interviewers. These are not to be confused with check-off-the-box surveys. Our reports and findings are based on what your clients and users say: We don’t put words in their mouths and we don’t look to third parties to report what your clients are saying.

BTI is the leading provider of strategic, client-based research to the legal community. BTI has helped more than 200 law firms and professional services firms improve client service through compelling research and advice. We conduct the only continuous benchmarking market study in the legal services industry, now in its 17th year.

Clients use BTI’s insightful, custom client feedback surveys to drive change, create urgency, and substantially boost performance.

For details on how to FUEL PROFITS through Clientelligence see page 157

For details on how to DRIVE GROWTH with Client Feedback see page 156
About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.

*Drive Profits and Growth—Conduct Your Client Feedback with BTI*

Only BTI can help you immediately drive growth, profits, and increase retention through high-impact client feedback.

BTI research shows strategic use of in-depth client feedback translates into:

- 30% higher profits
- 7% rate premiums across all staffing levels
- 2x the fees from a single client
- 35% higher client retention

BTI works directly with you to design a custom client feedback program to drive new business.

Please contact Michael B. Rynowecer at +1 617 439 0333 or mrynowecer@bticonsulting.com to learn more about BTI’s custom research & services.
About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.

Pinpoint your strengths—and weaknesses—in the activities proven to drive growth

BTI's more than 25 years of research pinpoint the 17 activities responsible for driving the absolute best client relationships. In essence, they are how clients define client service excellence and what clients expect out of the firms with whom they have the best relationships. The best-in-class performances in these activities are proven to drive superior financial performance.

There’s only 1 way to determine if you are hitting the best-in-class threshold: Ask.

Client feedback allows you to unequivocally pinpoint where you are excelling and where you need systematic improvements in your relationships.

The best feedback initiatives not only assess how you and your firm perform, but also look at the performance of the competitors also serving your clients. At the end of the day, what does it matter if a client thinks you are doing great, if a competitor is doing better?

Learn more about the 17 Activities and BTI’s newest book:

Clientelligence: How Superior Client Relationships Fuel Growth and Profits

Visit: www.bticonsulting.com/17

The 17 Activities Driving Growth

Quadrant I: Relationship Bliss
1. Commitment to help
2. Client focus
3. Understanding the client’s business
4. Providing value for the dollar

Quadrant II: Price of Admission
5. Legal skills
6. Quality
7. Meeting core scope
8. Keeping clients informed
9. Dealing with unexpected changes
10. Handling problems

Quadrant III: Relationship Builders
11. Breadth of services
12. Helping advise on business issues
13. Regional reputation
14. Unprompted communication
15. Bringing together resources

Quadrant IV: Business Magnets
16. Anticipating the client’s needs
17. Innovative approach
About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.

**BTI performs a broad range of services for our clients, including:**

**Custom Client Feedback Research**
- High-impact client feedback drives SUPERIOR growth.
  - In-depth Client Feedback
  - High Impact Online Surveys
  - Deep Dives to Drive New Business

**Business Development**
- BTI looks at PERFORMANCE in new ways—driving adoption of new tactics and better results.
  - Strategic Business Planning
  - Client-focused Business Practices
  - Custom Training

**Market Assessment**
- Establish a DIFFERENTIATED position—with less risk, lower costs, and a greater chance of success.
  - Brand Health & Market Awareness Studies
  - New Market Entry Assessments

**Strategic Planning**
- Assess your options to find the GROWTH best suited to your firm: from least risk to highest return and anything in between.
  - Financial and Market Performance
  - Competitive Analysis

**Client Insight Briefings**
- Tailored to your firm and chock full of client-based insights, BTI briefings draw from our research and experience to help you boost client satisfaction, increase client retention, and improve your performance.

**USE BTI’S SERVICES AND RESEARCH TO:**
- Drive new business immediately
- Keep competitors out of your client base
- Find your strengths... and weaknesses
- Learn what clients really want from you
- Increase client retention
About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.

The data and insight found in BTI’s reports are used to train attorneys, guide business development, inform strategy, and calibrate market trends against firm tactics.

In short, you get many of the benefits of a custom study commissioned for your firm, at a fraction of the cost. These insights are proven to drive growth and client retention and protect fees.

All of our reports come with a 100% satisfaction guarantee and complete telephone support to help you maximize the value from our publications.

You can order these and other compelling BTI research or publications at www.bticonsulting.com.

**BTI Litigation Outlook 2017**

- Now Available

Your guide to understanding how clients’ expectations are changing to help you grow and capture new market opportunities, take smart risks, and spur innovation. BTI Litigation Outlook 2017 helps you create and provide solutions before clients realize they need them.

**BTI Practice Outlook 2017**

- Now Available

Make the best decisions for your firm with data and insight straight from your clients—and your potential clients—on how they plan to divvy up their outside counsel budgets in 2017. Includes detailed information on the drivers impacting 17 practice areas and the 2017 growth forecast for 16 industries.

**BTI Brand Elite 2016**

Based on why clients hire and recommend law firms—not the services, size, or location of a law firm—BTI’s research reveals how law firms of any size reap substantial new business by improving brand perceptions in the market.

**BTI Client Service All-Stars 2016**

312 attorneys step up to meet—and exceed—clients’ expectations and earn recognition, by name, from corporate counsel for delivering the absolute best client service.
About The BTI Consulting Group, Inc.

Questions? Research inquiries? Interested in becoming a BTI Client?

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www.bticonsulting.com

Read The Mad Clientist—BTI’s blog at:
www.bticonsulting.com/themadclientist
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