

# PUTTING CLIENTS FIRST

*"Ask any professional services firm. We all say that we Put Our Clients First. Is that really true, though?"*



CHRISTINE BERRY  
MANAGING PARTNER  
OF  
TAYLOR VINTERS

For too long, lawyers in particular have hidden behind the "shield" of technical excellence; believing that first-class legal skills were all a client required. The phrase "service delivery" had no place in a law firm with its uncomfortable connotations of "trade".

We are committed to redefining the role of lawyers to deliver exceptional quality legal services which surpass clients' expectations. To achieve this consistently and seamlessly across the whole firm we must look hard at some of the legal profession's sacred cows and question their relevance in a modern law firm.

In breaking this mould, Taylor Vinters is reinventing itself as a vibrant and dynamic business, totally focused on the needs of our clients - as defined by you and your business objectives.

Honing our technical skills to maintain our reputation for high calibre legal work is not enough. A series of client audits over the past 18 months shows clearly what you want from us if we are to achieve our vision of all round excellence in everything we do.

*We must respond in five specific ways:*

- be accessible - by improving personal contact, communication and IT, and ensuring we have top quality support staff:
- be speedy in our responses - to cut our response times to meet your requirements:

- be proactive in providing advice - to anticipate your need for advice tailored to your circumstances by gaining a better understanding of your objectives:
- be consistent in the quality of service - by raising commitment at every level to avoid a "pass the parcel" attitude:
- do what we say we'll do - we want our clients to have complete confidence in our advice and quality of service. To earn this confidence, we must keep our word and deliver results.

If we can achieve these five standards we shall be well on the way to exceeding clients' expectations. Many of our commercial clients tell me that these requirements are no less than their own customers expect from them. The aim to deliver a customer-driven service is pervading all industry sectors. Why should a law firm be any different?

I will know that we are succeeding when our approach becomes a role model for other organisations - not just for law firms. I have said before that I want Taylor Vinters' name to be synonymous with excellence. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you experience anything less.

My email address is [CAB@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk](mailto:CAB@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk).

## £2 MILLION AWARD TO PETERBOROUGH GIRL

By Sarah Philbrook, Head of Private Litigation.

Trudy Samler was the victim of a head-on car crash. Taylor Vinters took on her case on a conditional fee basis and won more than £2 million for her.

Our Personal Injury Team has notched up a number of major wins in the past 12 months. The "Price of a Mother's Love", which made national press headlines, was reviewed in our last newsletter. Since then we have won a notable case for a holiday maker against Thomson Holidays. She walked through an unmarked glass door in an Egyptian hotel, suffering horrendous injuries and nearly bleeding to death. This claim was important because it made the tour company responsible for safety standards in a foreign hotel. It was widely featured in the national press, on radio and television.

In November last year we won £900,000 for a young man from St. Ives who was hit by a car late at night and left with severe lifelong disabilities.

In the past year we have won around £10 million compensation for clients injured in accidents at work, on the road or through medical negligence.

One of the saddest cases has been against the East Anglian Ambulance Service. A call was made for an ambulance on behalf of a heart attack victim. The ambulance crew misdiagnosed the victim's condition, leaving him at his home where he died several hours later.

With one of the largest Personal Injury teams in the

Region, Taylor Vinters has been quietly carving a reputation for success. The no win, no fee basis for many of these claims helps people who could not otherwise risk taking a big organisation to court to achieve justice.

This happened to a Cambridge client who was a warehouseman for a major national firm. The company refused to accept that he had been injured in the course of his work, and even made him redundant during his unpaid sick leave. He won £15,000 and the satisfaction of knowing that he was in the right.



Taylor Vinters, Merlin Place, Milton Road,  
Cambridge CB4 0DP  
Tel: (01223) 423444  
Fax: (01223) 423486  
email: [info@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk](mailto:info@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk)  
Web Site: [www.Taylor-Vinters.co.uk](http://www.Taylor-Vinters.co.uk)

The information and expressions of opinion contained in this publication are not intended to be comprehensive, nor to provide legal advice. Advice should be sought for specific problems.

# News UPDATE

INNOVATION & BRANDING SPECIAL

TAYLOR VINTERS SOLICITORS

## EXPLOIT IDEAS - CREATE PROFITS

In this age of Knowledge Management and fast moving technology, whatever business you are in, you will have ideas, information and specific knowhow that hold the key to your commercial future. The extent to which you exploit these high value, yet intangible, assets - and prevent your competitors or ex-employees from doing so - will have a direct impact on your future profits.

Taylor Vinters' Innovation and Technology Group combines commercially-minded lawyers from their existing intellectual property, new media and information technology teams with the breadth of experience and expertise to recognise both the threats and opportunities.

Each of them is skilled in all aspects of technology, intellectual property and commercial law. The Group includes lawyers with degrees in science or engineering and experience of working in industry before becoming lawyers. Apart from ensuring clients fully protect their ideas and data, they are active in developing means of exploiting their commercial value - through technology transfer deals, licensing and sales.



A commercially astute team.

### UNIQUE TEAM

Typically, Tom McGuire, who heads up this unique team of lawyers, technologists and commercially astute advisors, returned recently from a five day visit to Tokyo with clients to negotiate terms for a digital agreement. Tom was an automation design engineer who developed robot systems for the production lines of a multi-national company before switching career to the law. He acts essentially as an "in-house" external lawyer for a number of technology companies and advises on transactions including sales and licensing of technology.

David Rainford has a PhD in synthetic organic chemistry and subsequently acquired industrial research experience before starting his legal career. David also trained as a

barrister in chambers specialising in all areas of intellectual property, before joining Taylor Vinters to pursue his career as a lawyer.

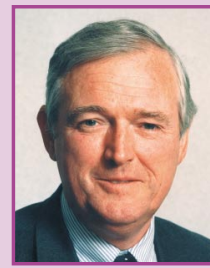
Sophie Kelley has degrees in both chemistry and law. She then completed her legal training with Martineau Johnson, in Birmingham, where she gained significant experience in a variety of intellectual property matters, before joining Taylor Vinters last year.

Edward Perrott heads the Business Disputes Team. He has been a Partner with Taylor Vinters since 1979. He has handled many intellectual property disputes over that period, particularly involving complex technology issues. Last year he gained a notable victory in the reported Don and Low trade mark case.

Michael Womack, a Partner since 1976, is a specialist in company and intellectual property law. He is well known within the academic world, advising many university colleges and departments, as well as businesses of all sizes on a broad range of commercial matters with an intellectual property flavour.

This Innovation and Technology Group is a one stop shop for all commercial, technology, IT and intellectual property advice and serves a wide range of industries and services, with a comprehensive approach to protecting and exploiting their ideas in a commercial context.

Attend the Branding event on September 15 to get a flavour of the work undertaken by our Innovation



## NEW CHAIRMAN ELECTED

Commercial property specialist Chris Evans has been appointed as Taylor Vinters' new chairman. He takes over the role from Herbert Robinson, who retired from the practice in April.

Chris has more than 30 years' experience of Taylor Vinters and its predecessor firms, and has been a Partner since 1967. He has been involved with the management of the present business since it was founded by a merger in 1988. "I am delighted to have taken over as Chairman during such a period of success for the firm - and I am looking forward to working closely with our Managing Partner Christine Berry, to guide the firm through this stage of rapid growth."

Christine Berry adds: "Chris will be a great asset as Chairman. He brings a great deal of management expertise to the role, and will provide an excellent 'sounding board' for the partnership as the firm enters the next phase of its development."

## FROM INNOVATION TO BRANDING How to exploit the value

Brands are big business. They are often aggressively protected and heavily exploited. The value of a brand lies in the distinctiveness it gives to a product or a service. The problem for many manufacturers or high technology innovators is "How to turn an invention into a brand?"

In the computer industry, Intel has led the field in demonstrating how to brand a component, the Pentium chip, so that it creates its own value. By branding its chip and heavily marketing it, Intel has created a consumer demand which motivates its customers (computer manufacturers) to respond to that market pressure.

We are organising a major branding and innovation event in September with a prestigious team of presenters. We shall look at branding in such diverse fields as brewing, hi-fi and the branding of Cambridge itself, with a case study on a new technology success story.

Leading off will be John Murphy. He set up Interbrands one of the largest branding and marketing organisations of its type. Having sold out, John started again with St. Peter's Brewery - developing brands for the beers he brews. He is also the owner of Plymouth Gin, a prestige brand.

Also from Interbrands will be Jan Lindemann, a worldwide expert on valuing brands, working with the owners of some leading international brands.

From the local scene we have John Dawson, founder and Managing Director of ARCAM, producers of top of the range hi-fi. He will explain the approach his company takes to branding and marketing to achieve the success it now enjoys. In addition, Shirley Jamieson of Cambridge Network will describe the campaign to brand Cambridge internationally as a vibrant business centre.

We shall also look at how product design can radically improve the saleability and value of a technical component.

This event is a "must" for Managing Directors of all types of organisations - high or low tech, service or manufacturer.

The date for your diary is September 15.

If you would like to book a place now, please contact Suzi Hodge on email address [suzi@Taylor-Vintners.co.uk](mailto:suzi@Taylor-Vintners.co.uk) or 01223 423444.

TOM MCGUIRE  
HEAD OF THE  
INNOVATION AND  
TECHNOLOGY GROUP



### INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY GROUP EVENT

#### BRANDS, INVENTIONS AND SECRETS HOW TO DEVELOP AND EXPLOIT THEM

Wednesday 15 September 1999  
CAMBRIDGE

8.45 am	Registration and coffee
9.00 am	Chairman's Introduction
9.15 am	WHAT IS A BRAND?
9.45 am	BRAND, INVENTIONS AND SECRETS
10.15 am	HOW TO TRANSFORM YOUR INVENTION INTO A BRAND
10.45 am	Coffee break
11.15 am	BRAND VALUES
12.00 pm	PROTECTING YOUR RESEARCH, BRAND, PROCESSES AND INFORMATION
12.30 pm	ST PETER'S BREWERY: CREATING A BRAND FOR BRITISH BEERS
1.00 pm	Open Forum
1.15 pm	LUNCH - and a chance to sample St Peter's beers!
2.00 pm	PRODUCT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT
2.25 pm	MARKETING CAMBRIDGE AS A BRAND
2.50 pm	Open Forum
3.15 pm	Tea and conclusion

## Deals Season in FULL Swing

Taylor Vintners' Company Commercial Department was involved in deals worth more than £100 million in 1998. A review of deals done so far this year shows that the figure for 1999 should be even higher.

*"There is certainly no slow-down in activity and the size of the deals with which we are involved is increasing"* says Steve Sharratt, Head of Taylor Vintners' Company Commercial Department.

In March, partner Michael Womack was involved in the sale of International Valves Ltd, a leading valve importer and distributor. The owners were offered £15 million in shares, loan notes and cash from an American company - an offer just too good to refuse.

"The transaction itself was complex, partly due to the American connection and partly to the tax implications, but we received invaluable help from Brown Raysman, our American partners in the International Jurists legal network," explained Michael Womack.

The MBO of W B Bawn & Co Ltd was completed in February for a substantial sum. This Bury St Edmunds-based company makes clothing lockers for work places and swimming pools. The Taylor Vintners' team was led by John Short.

A long-standing Taylor Vintners' client, Weyrad Electronics Ltd, purchased the business of BBH Windings Ltd, a company which manufactures and sells electronic wound components. The deal was worth £800,000. Senior lawyer Quentin Golder acted for Weyrad.

We worked with a new client, Toy Brokers Ltd, to purchase a toy distribution business from Ideal Toys (UK) Ltd. The deal was negotiated alongside an exclusive distribution agreement with Ideal's French parent company.

Trouble shooter Peter Callaghan, recently settled in England from Australia, has been working with Head of Department Steve Sharratt and Associate Matt Collen on an asset-financed MBO of Idem Furniture Ltd. Idem is a manufacturer of office, theatre and cinema seating and interiors.

American companies continue to show interest in the area's promising technology companies. In February, John Short and Tom McGuire acted on the sale of Axholme Resources Ltd to a quoted US company in return for shares in that company.

"Since the transaction was completed, an offer has been made for the US company which, if accepted, will value the shares at one third more than in February. This extra profit will be a welcome bonus for our client," said John Short.



STEVE SHARRATT  
HEAD OF COMPANY  
COMMERCIAL  
DEPARTMENT

## E-COMMERCE - A Revolution Waiting To Happen

*"We stand on the threshold of a revolution in the way we do business. We cannot afford to underestimate the impact of electronic commerce on the global marketplace, or the important part it has to play in creating our vision of the UK of the future - a modern, knowledge based economy ..."*

That was the message from Barbara Rouche, former Under Secretary for Small Firms, Trade and Industry, in her foreword to the DTI document *Net Benefit: The Electronic Commerce Agenda for the UK*.

The document was designed to pave the way for legislation intended to increase confidence in e-commerce transactions - and the laws that follow will play a critical part in establishing the rate at which the UK embraces e-commerce on a large scale.

### Addressing the Key Issues

The advantages of doing business over the Net are self-evident - both for businesses themselves and their clients or customers. There are several key concerns, however, that need addressing before anything approaching a revolution can take place, as outlined below.

### Encryption

While consumers tend to be quite happy to give out their credit card numbers over the telephone - they are not so keen to do so over the Net. The same applies to other confidential information, be it corporate or personal.

Encryption is the obvious answer to this - but it has other implications, relating to possible use by terrorists or criminals. The Government has plans to establish licensed Trusted Third Parties, with whom encryption keys could be lodged on the basis that law enforcement organisations have access to the information. This, however, raises human rights issues which are yet to be resolved.

### Legal Recognition

The question of whether or not an electronic document has the same legal standing as a paper one has not yet been addressed head-on.



DAVID RAINFORD  
INNOVATION AND  
TECHNOLOGY  
GROUP

Although legislation recognising electronic signatures is expected soon, the Government has been more cautious about dealing with the situation relating to complete documents, believing that the law should be changed on a piecemeal, case by case basis - rather than in one bold step.

### Fraud

The potential that websites offer for being "here today and gone tomorrow" causes inevitable concerns for consumers and businesses. It is difficult to judge the scale and credibility of an organisation by looking at its website. Consequently, consumers are likely to be wary about buying services or products from businesses previously unknown to them.

Worse still is the threat of outright fraud. Combine the fly-by-night opportunities that the Net presents with the potential for hackers to "steal" a perfect electronic copy of the company logo from your website, and the possible outcome is frighteningly clear. It is likely that the issue will eventually be dealt with through a system of quality control at service provider level. At present, however, a "no questions asked" culture pervades.

### Be Prepared

As is often the case, the law is having to play catch-up in the area of e-commerce and until some of these key issues are addressed effectively, the growth of the digital economy is likely to remain patchy.

All businesses, nevertheless, should prepare themselves. For once e-commerce does really take off, it can be expected to do so in a big way. And you cannot afford to be left behind.

## Getting To Grips With WOOLF REFORMS

Following a wholesale review of the civil justice system by Lord Woolf, fundamental reforms were introduced on 26 April this year - representing the most significant changes to the civil litigation system for more than 100 years.

The key objective has been to provide greater access to justice and, from now on, litigation will be quicker, simpler, cheaper and less aggressive. Parties will be given greater opportunities to settle out of court and the time and money spent on litigation will be proportional to the amount of money involved, the importance of the case, its complexity and the financial strength of each party.

Lord Woolf's Reforms have introduced a completely new set of rules, which have effectively taken litigators back to school. And, to meet this challenge, Taylor Vintners has invested £100,000 in training for its professionals.

The consensus is that the new system represents a tremendous leap forward. The rules are clear and straightforward. Already, clients are starting to see the benefits.

### So how does it work?

Every civil case will be affected whether proceedings have been issued or not. Pre-action protocols will isolate the

pertinent issues in each case before it enters the judicial system and litigants who fail to comply with strict timetables are liable to be penalised in costs later on.

The Small Claims Court will operate as before, but with a higher limit of £5,000. For larger claims up to £15,000, a new "fast track" system will ensure they reach the courts in under six months. Although the largest claims will take longer, they too will be resolved much more quickly than in the past.

For further information or a copy of our Briefing Note contact Edward Perrott.



EDWARD PERROTT  
HEAD OF  
BUSINESS  
LITIGATION

# Building a Business on CLIENT CARE



Entrepreneurs live by their instincts and thrive on their energy. The successful ones can sniff out a good business opportunity at a hundred paces. For those who know Phil Stanley it will be no surprise to learn that he got the idea for his multi-million pound telecoms service company Nationwide Cellular Fit Ltd from a throwaway comment.

"My wife worked in the mobile telecoms industry. In a meeting with a motor manufacturer it became clear that there was no national operator installing what were then car 'phones.' That's the business you should be in,' she said and straight away I could see the potential for success," explains Phil Stanley.

That was in 1989. Within three years the business hit £1 million turnover and since 1992 NCF has seen 36% year on year compound growth. Last year, NCF's success gained national recognition when it became one of the PriceWaterhouseCooper/Independent on Sunday Top 100 fastest-growing unquoted UK companies. The company is well on the way to its turnover target of £7.5 million for 1999. As well as the installation of hands-free mobile telephone kits in cars and commercial vehicles, NCF has diversified into call centre services.

"We operate call centres for both network service providers and mobile 'phone manufacturers. Chances are if something goes wrong with your mobile, you will end up talking to an NCF agent. We provide a top quality call centre service that, I believe, gives our clients an edge in a very competitive market," says Mr Stanley.

Opportunities for future growth seem to lie firmly in the call centre sector. NCF is already working with clients outside the telecoms industry and the company is marketing itself hard in other high tech sectors.

Steve Sharratt, Head of Taylor Vinters' Corporate and Commercial Team, has been advising NCF for five years. Acting as our Account Manager to NCF, Steve is their key contact at Taylor Vinters and regularly keeps in touch with Phil Stanley to stay on top of progress and offer advice wherever he can. Phil Stanley explains the role that Taylor Vinters plays in his business.

"The professionals in Taylor Vinters' Corporate Finance Team think more like businessmen than lawyers, so they can understand the way in which I run the company and my vision for the future. Steve can put legal issues to one side, act as a sounding board for my ideas and then when necessary take me through the legal implications of my plans. We talk most weeks, so he has in-depth knowledge of NCF and our objectives."

Matt Collen, Quentin Golder and Steve Sharratt have worked with NCF on its commercial contracts and last year advised on the company's buy out of its venture capital

backers. Chris Evans in Taylor Vinters' commercial property department advised on the freehold purchase of NCF's 1,765 sq m (19,000 sq ft) HQ in Colchester two years ago.

## CLIENT CARE

An enthusiastic customer service philosophy is at the heart of NCF's success. To deliver this to clients, however, Phil Stanley and his management team know that they need a dedicated, motivated and empowered workforce. They work hard to keep their staff happy and encourage competition between the teams. As a result they have very low staff turnover - currently running at around two per cent per annum. One of the stated aims in the company's mission is a "warm and friendly" work environment. This very human approach must contribute to staff satisfaction and in turn to high levels of customer service.

**"Continuous improvements in customer service will ensure NCF's future. Taylor Vinters, too, seems to understand that client care is the way forward. My central point of contact, Steve Sharratt, keeps in touch. The range of expertise at Taylor Vinters means I have access to the legal services I need, from employment to corporate finance. It is refreshing to work with a law firm that has such a client-focused approach," says Phil Stanley.**

## Calendar of EVENTS

Taylor Vinters organises a series of seminars, workshops and training sessions for clients. These can include in-house sessions tailored to a particular client's needs.

Below is a calendar of events for the year ahead.

- September 8 PERSONNEL PRACTITIONERS' FORUM**  
Quarterly workshop on a current employment topic.  
*Merlin Place*
- September 15 BRANDS, INVENTIONS AND SECRETS**  
How to develop and exploit them for profit.  
*Churchill College*
- September 30 CONSERVATION AND LISTED BUILDINGS**  
Jointly with Cambridge City Council and King's College.  
*King's College*
- October 6 ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE**  
By Business Link.  
*Ely*
- October 15 INTERNATIONAL TRADING CONFERENCE**  
Jointly with the International Jurists network.  
*Cambridge*
- October 21 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS - THE NEXT TEN YEARS**  
A review of the major influences and opportunities in the Cambridge sub-region. Jointly with the Cambridge International Land Institute.  
*The Wilson Centre, Fitzwilliam College*
- December 8 PERSONNEL PRACTITIONERS' FORUM**  
Quarterly workshop on a current employment topic.  
*Merlin Place*

Delegates to our events consistently rate highly the value of the presentations and documentation.

**For further details of any of these events please contact Suzi Hodge on 01223 423444.**

# PROTECTING PERSONAL AND FAMILY WEALTH

**It's never too soon for budding entrepreneurs to think about protecting their current or future wealth. There are also a number of milestones which should trigger a review of personal financial planning.**



JOCELYN FOX  
HEAD OF PRIVATE CLIENT DEPARTMENT

Marriage, birth of children, selling a company, launching a new enterprise or the declining health of aged parents - each of these will change the family fortunes in some way.

At a recent seminar held in conjunction with Grant Thornton and The Beckett Group, we looked at these and many other issues, including the sale of a business, planning for inheritance tax minimisation and retirement.

For a grown up family, succession planning is vital to avoid the taxman becoming a major beneficiary. A simple example will show what needs to be considered.

## Let's take the fictitious Gilbert family

Mr and Mrs Gilbert are in their 50's and have two married offspring. The family house is worth £300,000 and other assets include shares in a family business worth £200,000, life insurance policies to the value of £150,000, pension fund of £200,000 and other savings of £200,000.

Thus there is potentially just over £1 million of assets. If all the assets are bequeathed to Mrs Gilbert, there is no tax to pay when Mr Gilbert dies.

The tax man would have a field day, however, when Mrs Gilbert died!

As much as £180,000 inheritance tax could be saved by careful planning. Initially Mr and Mrs Gilbert should ensure that all insurance policies on their lives are written in trust, directing to whom the value of the policies will go on death. This then takes the policies outside the taxable estate of either of them.

Similarly the value of the pension fund can be written in trust to minimise taxation should Mr Gilbert die before the pension commences.

Next, as much as possible of the inheritance tax threshold should be used on the first death, whether Mr or Mrs Gilbert dies first. This means bequeathing some of the estate to the children or grandchildren, assuming the surviving spouse can maintain his or her standard of living from the remaining assets and income.

In addition, the shares in the family business need to be considered in light of the exemptions for business property which may be available to reduce the impact of inheritance tax.

**The use of trusts, as well as a properly constructed Will, can play a major part in making sure the family wealth is protected - you don't have to be in your dotage before creating the optimum financial environment!**

# GM CROPS Their Effect on Land Values

Farm-scale evaluations of GM crops are starting in the UK this year and farmers who agree to trial these crops will need to be alert to any possible risks to their businesses.



JEANETTE DENNIS  
PARTNER IN  
THE RURAL  
SERVICES GROUP

GM crops will be grown under contract and the contract terms will be analysed by the grower before signature. However, farmers and landowners also need to consider the implications for the land.

Landowners who have no mortgage and farm their land themselves have the right, of course, to grow whatever crops they please. However, if land may possibly be sold at a later date, landowners need to consider whether their farming practices could have an impact on value due to real or suspected contamination.

Insurance is another issue farmers and landowners must investigate in respect of potential future claims and liabilities.

Farmers who have mortgages also need to consider whether any of their practices could adversely affect the value of their land. If there is any chance of this, they should talk to their lender. It is my guess that most farmers will fail to do this and may find themselves in difficulties at a later date if land values fall. We really do not know whether farming with GM crops long-term will damage the subsoil or leave residues, or how it will impact on land values, particularly in the context of Crop Assurance Schemes. Other issues, such as "super volunteers" - volunteers that are resistant to herbicides - could also give farmers practical and economic problems later. Failure to consult lenders could also cause them to call in loans where they may feel vulnerable.

For landowners with tenants, now is the time to consider the incorporation of controls into new tenancy agreements and clarification of existing agreements. Where there is a clause in an agreement which allows the landlord to make reasonable regulations from time to time, then restrictions on the cultivation of GM crops without the landlord's prior written consent would be advisable. It may also be sensible to make direct mention of GM crops with a definition of what this includes.

Tenancy agreements should also make provision for indemnities. The tenant should be required to indemnify the landlord against any potential losses. This is only useful, however, if the tenant is solvent or has relevant insurance at the date of any claim.

**If in doubt, a call to me could prevent disastrous results in the future.**

email: [JAD@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk](mailto:JAD@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk).

# SAFE TRADING INTERNATIONALLY

By Chris Evans, Chairman of Taylor Vinters



*"Just consider this problem. How and where do you sue a former employee of an Afghanistan registered company who committed a fraud on your UK company in Germany?"*

**That's not a make-believe example. It really happened, as did a case against a former agent of a UK company involving a dispute in Turkey. Few organisations, particularly in Europe, can develop and grow without trading across international boundaries - either marketing to new customers or acquiring equipment or materials from foreign suppliers.**

Enforcing contracts against foreign customers or suppliers can present a raft of problems. Although contracts can be drawn up tightly in the first place, having the resources and knowledge to get payment or enforce quality standards can still be difficult.

International Jurists is a pro-active network of lawyers which Taylor Vinters set up some nine years ago. We have brought together like-minded legal firms across Europe and in the USA who are willing to invest time and know-how in building close relationships. In this way, we all have a detailed knowledge of the firms involved in the network and know what they can provide when needed.

*In total the firms in the network have more than 800 lawyers and support staff. We have member firms in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Scotland, Spain and USA.*

At Taylor Vinters we have used the network on a number of trans-Atlantic deals, including the sale of Cambridge high technology companies or shares in them. By contrast, the network was used by a supermarket client to pursue a case against a European wine producer when the quality failed to match up to the promise.

The Don and Low trade mark case was led by us in co-operation with the Scottish I.J. member.

International Jurists is not a paper exercise - it is dynamic and active on a daily basis. We encourage close links by exchange visits. Last autumn one of our trainee solicitors spent a month with our French member in Montpellier, and another has been seconded to our German member this summer.

Senior lawyers from each firm meet regularly - Steve Sharratt, head of our Company Commercial Department, was in New York recently to discuss closer links with our US associate, particularly to explore e-commerce and Corporate Finance business development.

**In October, Taylor Vinters will be hosting the AGM of International Jurists, and it will be an opportunity for a major seminar on international trading. More details about that later, but note the date 15th October.**

**We have produced a new brochure about International Jurists. If you would like a copy please contact me on 01223 423444 or email: [CJE@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk](mailto:CJE@Taylor-Vinters.co.uk).**

# RED CARD FOR SOUNESS AT BENFICA

Edward Perrott and Jonathan Davies of the Commercial Litigation team at Taylor Vinters are acting for the world famous Portuguese football club, Benfica.

The club's President is bringing a claim for libel against Graeme Souness who managed the club during the last two seasons, and The Daily Mail.

In an acrimonious outburst Mr. Souness made completely unfounded allegations against the club's President, Dr. Vale e Azevedo, questioning his integrity. Those statements were reported on sports pages throughout the world.

Further, Graeme Souness then collaborated with The Daily Mail on the publication of a full page article adding to what he had previously said.

The proceedings have been issued through the High Court in London, and served - and the case is expected to come on for trial in 9 to 12 months time.

This is another example of the International Jurists network in action. The President of Benfica, Dr. Vale e Azevedo, is a leading Portuguese lawyer and a prominent member of International Jurists.

There is other litigation which concerns contractual claims running in tandem, both in the British and Portuguese Courts, and again this shows the value of a close understanding between firms in different jurisdictions.

Edward Perrott says we have a very good rapport with our Portuguese colleagues and are able to discuss with them in detail how the different Courts will approach the common issues, and to make sure there is no misunderstanding between the way the case is conducted here, in London, and in Lisbon.

# OPENING IN BRUSSELS



This year we have invested in another major resource which will strengthen our international presence and directly benefit our clients. We have established a presence in Brussels, at the heart of the European Union with an office directly opposite the Community building. This is run by Michael Renouf who specialises in EU law and through him we now have a close and direct relationship to the source of new laws and regulations flowing from the European Commission. The photograph shows Chris Evans (left), Chairman of Taylor Vinters greeting Michael Renouf at Merlin Place.