

Lexvoco and Dovetail join the disrupters

The WA market is continuing to attract new providers of alternative legal services.

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ONE of the early disrupters in Western Australia's legal market celebrated its 50th anniversary this month.

LOD - Lawyers On Demand, which began trading in Perth as Balance Legal, has grown to have 41 legal staff in WA.

That makes it the 14th largest law firm in WA, according to the BNIQ Search Engine.

Internationally, the firm has expanded to have more than 650 lawyers and consultants across 10 office locations.

That success has attracted more providers of alternative legal services, with entrants to the local market including Lexvoco and Dovetail Legal Solutions.

Another notable move in this space was Jackson McDonald recently launching JacMac+.

National law firms are also active in this space, with Corrs Chambers Westgarth's Orbit and MinterEllison's Flex service being two examples.

LOD co-founder and director Ken Jagger said he welcomed the presence of more competition because it demonstrated the market for alternative legal services was maturing.

"We don't see it as a battle for a finite market share," Mr Jagger told Business News.

The starting point for each of these firms is a secondment service that helps companies with in-house legal teams deal with fluctuations in their workload.

Beyond that starting premise, there are major differences.

Mr Jagger noted that LOD had evolved over the past 10 years to reflect market changes.

"We now provide teams of lawyers undertaking entire transactions and projects, we consult on business process improvement and technology plays a key role in allowing our lawyers and clients to work collaboratively," he said.

LOD's biggest direct competitor is Lexvoco, which has 80 staff across Australia and New Zealand.

About 45 per cent of its staff works part-time, highlighting the



HEADS UP: Naomi Hutchings (left) and Camilla Kraj-Krajewski lead Lexvoco in Perth. Photo: Owen Gregory

40 DOVETAIL LEGAL SOLUTIONS LAWYERS AVAILABLE FOR WORK IN PERTH

flexibility that attracts many experienced lawyers to these firms.

Lexvoco is co-led in WA by Naomi Hutchings, who was managing counsel for BHP, and Camilla Kraj-Krajewski, formerly of the Pilbara Ports Authority.

They are now at a point where they are planning to start recruiting extra lawyers in Perth.

One point of difference is that Lexvoco only hires lawyers with in-house experience, whereas the

established firms tend to draw on their alumni for their secondment service.

Lexvoco also has a law firm division but says it operates differently from traditional law firms.

About 60 per cent of the advice that its law firm division provides is not on the record as external counsel but at the client's risk, as though its lawyers were employed in-house.

Lexvoco also offers legal operations and technology services

to help companies build systems and processes to improve their efficiency.

In WA, business development director Sonia Cason is the point person for Dovetail Legal Solutions.

Sydney-based managing director Andrew Murdoch said the firm had more than 40 lawyers available for work in Perth and had plans for expansion.

He emphasised that Dovetail was not a law firm, which allowed it to focus on its secondment service.

Mr Murdoch said clients were attracted to Dovetail's transparent pricing structure.

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