A wealth of lawyers have set newsrooms abuzz in their pursuit of excellence, in one of the most challenging years for legal sectors seen across the Asian region.

Now in its sixth year, ALB’s HOT 100 aims to provide an – admittedly subjective – overview of the personalities of the past year. We list those who have performed outstandingly in their field, or courted controversy and turned heads.

After all, winning the game is not always the be all and end all – it’s the style, poise, and class with which you play that also counts. This list is intended to entertain, not offend, and certainly is not a definitive guide to the industry. Please enjoy this year’s ALB HOT 100.

Name: Lindsay Esler
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Deacons Hong Kong
Location: Hong Kong
Why hot: Esler sealed lucrative Lex Mundi membership for the firm earlier this year as it goes about cementing its position as the island’s premier domestic law firm. Unfazed by the decision of Deacons Australia to partner instead with Norton Rose, Esler, says there are no similar plans in the work for the firm in HK, at least for now.

Name: Nicola Wakefield-Evans
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Mallesons Stephen Jaques
Location: Hong Kong
Why hot: In an industry where glass ceilings are conspicuous, Wakefield-Evans can be widely commended for being among a rare few to have broken through it. Wakefield-Evans has also built the profile of the Australian-based firm to a level where it is rivalling US and UK firms, for a share of the most lucrative China-related work.

Name: Andrew Grech
Title: Managing director
Firm/Company: Slater & Gordon
Location: Australia
Why hot: Grech’s Slater & Gordon legal practice remains the only law firm in the world to have listed on a stock exchange. Specialising in commercial law, the Australian firm’s growth since its IPO in 2007 provides a model for other legal firms who are looking to follow in the same path.

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Name: Sam Farrands
Title: Head of Asia major projects & infrastructure
Firm/Company: Minter Ellison
Location: Hong Kong
Why hot: One of the region’s leading lawyers in projects and PPPs, Farrands is considered the brains behind the firm’s recent acquisition of boutique construction firm Cordells.

Name: Kwang Ju Myung
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Hwang Mok Park
Location: Korea
Why hot: One of the Korean legal industry’s most prominent figures, Hwang splits his time managing the expansionary firm while sitting on the board of Korea Telecom. Korea’s first in-house counsel for Gulf Oil, he helped the firm secure a merger with boutique firm Hanseung Law Firm. HMFP is widely considered as one of the firms nipping at the heels of the larger firms in the market.

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Name: Ken Siegel
Title: Tokyo managing partner
Firm/Company: Morrison & Foerster
Location: Japan
Why hot: The downturn has proved to be fortuitous for some, and MoFo’s Tokyo office is among them. Not only is it rumoured to be one of the most profitable of the firm’s offices worldwide, but its headcount has substantially increased over the past year. This has come on the back of a number of high-profile deals for blue-chip clients, including Fujitsu, Hitachi and Toshiba.

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Why hot: A winner in the firm’s management reshuffle, Sweeney was duly installed as the Singapore office’s managing partner. With its newly-issued QFLP license in arm, Sweeney will be leading an office that is widely considered to be head and shoulders above other international firms in dispute resolution matters across southeast Asia.

Name: Austin Sweeney
Title: Herbert Smith
Firm/Company: Singapore managing partner
Location: Singapore

Why hot: With the government introducing new measures to develop Singapore’s legal sector, Rapp will be at the vanguard of change. He will lead the Magic Circle firms’ operations in the newly-QFLP licensed Singapore office and oversee the India desk. The firm plans to cement its large footprint in the region by dipping into the local employment market.

Name: Philip Rapp
Title: Clifford Chance
Firm/Company: Norton Rose
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Another of the Lion Nation’s new QFLP licensees, Smith told ALB that the granting of the license was more than just a “pat on the back” for foreign firms in Singapore. Keep an eye out for Norton Rose to build its practice in the staple areas of energy and projects in the year ahead.

Name: Jeff Smith
Title: Head of Asia energy and infrastructure
Firm/Company: Norton Rose
Location: Singapore

Why hot: There’s no doubt about where the QFLP license fits into this firm’s Asia strategy – India. Peel forms a core part of White & Case’s India team. According to a number of industry insiders the firm is said to be on the brink of sealing a ‘best-friends’ alliance with one of the subcontinent’s largest firms.

Name: Doug Peel
Title: White & Case
Firm/Company: White & Case
Location: Singapore

Why hot: After breaking away from its alliance with DLA Piper – which only lasted six months – his independent law office found a new ally in Clyde & Co and is set to capitalise on the increasing number of cross-border disputes arising in the Gulf region at the moment. Al Bosaify works in the Middle East corporate and financial services group.

Name: Abdulaziz Al Bosaify
Title: Local partner
Firm/Company: Clyde & Co
Location: Riyadh

Why hot: As the first onshore law firm to launch in an offshore jurisdiction after entering the BVI earlier this year, there is no doubting that Withers is a trailblazer. Bradley heads up another of the firm’s newly opened offices (in Hong Kong) which services the legal needs of Greater China’s increasing numbers of high-net worth individuals.

Name: Samantha Bradley
Title: Hong Kong managing director
Firm/Company: Withers
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: For having this position vacant for three years, Freshfields appointed Marchant to the position of Asia managing partner earlier this year, saying that the time was right to reinstate the role as the attention of investors turns to the Asian region for growth opportunities and investment.

Name: Simon Marchant
Title: Asia managing partner
Firm/Company: Freshfields
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Wang’s nine years with the firm paid off this year after he ascended to the position of Shanghai office chair, where he replaced incumbent Mitchell Dudek. Wang has previously practiced in the Los Angeles and Hong Kong offices before relocating to Shanghai. He will be responsible for rebuilding the firm’s China practice, after layoffs in the region.

Name: David Wang
Title: Shanghai managing partner
Firm/Company: Paul Hastings
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Ever the active hiker, Milliner has overcome many peaks this year – after climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, he has been reappointed as Malleisons chief. He scooped the pool at the recent ALB Australasian Law Awards, taking home the coveted “managing partner of the year” award and the “corporate M&A deal of the year” award.

Name: Robert Milliner
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Malleisons
Location: Australia

Why hot: A winner in the firm’s Australasian Law Awards, taking home the coveted “managing partner of the year” award and the “corporate M&A deal of the year” award.

Name: Clive Cook
Title: Managing principal
Firm/Company: Baker & McKenzie
Location: Singapore

Why hot: As the Singapore head of one of the three remaining joint-law ventures in the Lion Nation, the firm’s strategy for Singapore deserves recognition. Under the auspices of its alliance with Lee & Lee, the embattled firm has the southeast Asian power and projects market cornered.

Name: James Harris
Title: Local managing partner
Firm/Company: Lee & Lee
Location: Singapore

Why hot: In a period where the whole world seems to be watching India, Sagar has responded by growing his firm from mid-tier in size, to one of the largest law firms in India. As part of this process, the firm recently acquired boutique outfit M&C Partners, increasing its operations in Bangalore.

Name: J Sagar
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: J Sagar & Associates
Location: India

Why hot: After being granted a QFLP license last year, A&O broke away from JV partner Shear, Lin & Bok to establish its footprint in Singapore. Aboud led a team that worked on a groundbreaking deal in the Indonesian Islamic finance sector – the Republic of Indonesia’s inaugural global US$500m sukuk. The deal will likely serve as a precedent for future Islamic bond issues.

Name: Kenneth Aboud
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Allen & Overy
Location: Singapore

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**Feature**

**Moves & Shakers**

- **Matthew Laight**
  - **Title:** China managing partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Bird & Bird
  - **Location:** Beijing
  - **Why hot:** Quashing rumours that the alliance forged with Singapore firm ATMD was not because Bird & Bird was unsuccessful in its attempt to obtain a QFLP in the Lion City, a very busy Laight had to also facilitate the expansionary firm’s launch in Shanghai last October.

- **Ashley Gunning**
  - **Title:** Corporate and investment funds group head
  - **Firm/Company:** Walkers
  - **Location:** Singapore
  - **Why hot:** Charged with increasing the offshore firm’s footprint in Singapore, Gunning also leads its investment funds and corporate group. Two finance lawyers have been brought in to boost the new Singapore office, and the firm will no doubt be using this as a stepping stone into the Indian market.

- **Don Boyd**
  - **Title:** Chief executive partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Deacons
  - **Location:** Sydney
  - **Why hot:** The merger between Deacons Australia and Norton Rose, while certainly not a merger of equals, couldn’t be more significant. Boyd was the first to do what other Australian firms were delaying, as a base for pushing into Asia. He forged a strategic plan in 2006 which may have yielded the merger with Norton Rose—but will it work?

- **Zili Shao**
  - **Title:** Asia managing partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Linklaters
  - **Location:** Hong Kong
  - **Why hot:** It has been a comparatively easy step-up to Shao’s position as the firm’s new Asia managing partner, replacing the outgoing Giles White. Having already headed the firm’s Greater China practice since 2003, his appointment is a dear indication of where the firm will be looking for growth.

- **Cui Liguo**
  - **Title:** Managing partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Guantao
  - **Location:** Beijing
  - **Why hot:** Cui Liguo is leading the international expansion strategy, with Guantao forming an alliance with Hong Kong firm Jackson Woo & Associates. A new Xiamen office is also up and running, developing the firm’s international trade and shipping practices, as well as facilitating economic ties between the mainland and Taiwan.

- **Nick Seddon**
  - **Title:** Asia managing partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Eversheds
  - **Location:** Hong Kong
  - **Why hot:** One of two Eversheds lawyers to make our list this year, Seddon’s move from DLA Piper to head up the firm’s Singapore office is as high-profile as we’ve seen in 2009. Expect a number of his DLA Piper colleagues to follow him once Eversheds settles into its new home in the Lion City. Was his departure the reason DLA Piper missed out on a QFLP license?

- **Shabir Ahmed**
  - **Title:** Partner
  - **Firm/Company:** Baker Botts
  - **Location:** Dubai
  - **Why hot:** As Lovells’s Dubai office managing partner, Ahmed was widely credited as being one of the biggest reasons behind the firm, which was without peer in the Gulf for Islamic finance. However, Ahmed surprised many in May this year by moving across to Baker Botts’s global projects practice, to work under managing partner David Emmens.

- **Zia Mody**
  - **Title:** Managing partner
  - **Firm/Company:** AZB & Partners
  - **Location:** India
  - **Why hot:** It’s been an extremely busy year for the impressive Mody. After securing a ‘best friends’ alliance with Clifford Chance, the firm swallowed Bangalore boutique Anup Shah — in addition to taking home two trophies at the ALB Southeast Asian Law awards; for its involvement in Nomura’s acquisition of Lehman’s assets in Asia and as the “India deal firm of the year”.
San Lu affair and worked on debt at this year’s ALB In-House Team of the Year award

Matthews manages the Firm/Company: practice mainly focuses on China -in the US, he has been practising in Beijing. Qualified to practice law in Qingdao-headquartered Deheng to Daniels’ Beijing office, Liu has joined and chief representative of Baker &

Why hot: Former resident partner and chief representative of Baker & Daniels’ Beijing office, Liu has joined Qingdao-headquartered Deheng to lead its international practice group in Beijing. Qualified to practial law in the US, he has been practising in China for more than 10 years. His practice mainly focuses on China-related cross-border investment, M&A and international trade.

Why hot: Replacing Desmond Ong who left for Everests, David was recruited from Linklaters in October. He looks to rebuild a Singapore office that has been decimated by lawyers departing and a number of layoffs. DLA was “disappointed” to have been one of the international firms to miss out on a QFLP license in December 2008, but still has in the next round in 2010.

Why hot: Previously the general counsel for Aliston in China, Liang decided to return to private practice and has chosen Beijing-based Run Ming, a new but fast-rising firm. He has extensive experience in FDI, M&A, international technology transfer and commodity trade, dispute resolution, and key areas of law related to the operations of multinational corporations in China.

Why hot: We should have known something was up when Lui was lured from Pinsent Masons last year to head Salans’ new Hong Kong office. Two months after announcing the Hong Kong opening, the once-rival firms announced they were partnering up in a strategic alliance.

Why hot: Elevated to head up the magic circle firm’s operations in Greater China earlier this year, both Celia Lam and Mark Harvey have a hard task ahead of them. Competition among the international firms in the Asia region will reach new heights as Asia comes out of the global financial crisis.

Why hot: Although it’s rare for Jun He’s senior partners to depart, the firm lost its Beijing senior partner to US firm Kirkland & Ellis at the end of 2008. Li is now a senior Chinese corporate partner in Hong Kong, representing PE funds, international and domestic public and private companies in M&A transactions and other complex corporate matters in China.

Why hot: As partner, Shetty has a large task ahead of him. Picked up by Clifford Chance from its former JV partner WongPartnership in early August, he has been charged with launching the firm’s Southeast Asian disputes resolution practice. Watch for the firm to dip into local talent pools across the region to add to its 40-strong S & Asia disputes team.

Why hot: Matthew manages the team that won the New Zealand In-House Team of the Year award this year’s ALB Australasian Law Awards. The team has handled the San Lu affair and worked on debt raisings, including the AS$800m retail debt issue.

Why hot: One of a handful of high-level lawyers to move from in-house to private practice this year, the former Morgan Stanley chairman decided to go to Australian firm Blake Dawson’s Indonesian office, citing increasing transactional activity in the region and the chance for new challenges, as the reasons behind his move.

Why hot: Being in a similar position to Clifford Chance’s Chris Wyman (above), Parthasarathy, a capital markets partner, will be charged with strengthening relations with ‘best-friend’ firm Trilegal. He relocated from the Singapore office to Mumbai earlier this month.

Why hot: It has been touted as the very model of a modern-day lawyer. A networker without peer, he will tap resources at his previous post at Morgan Stanley to drive the firm’s burgeoning capital markets practice to new heights. Certainly he is one to watch as Hong Kong’s equity markets spring back to life.

Why hot: The man credited for the merger with Mayer Brown and JSM has had an eventful year, to say the least. After being snubbed in Mayer Brown’s management reshuffle, Maher left the firm – only to re-emerge as managing partner Greenberg’s new London office as chairman, thus becoming a named partner.

Why hot: Gleeson beat four other prominent lawyers to win the In-House Lawyer of the Year award at this year’s ALB Australasian Law Awards. The former Blake Dawson lawyer managed the major acquisition of Dyno Nobel and coordinated financing arrangements with lenders for Incitec.
THE STATESMEN

Displaying gusto, gravitas and a touch of charisma, these are the men and women who have made their mark by leading their firms, companies and practice groups through the global financial crisis.

**THE STATESMEN**

**NAME:** Toru Ishiguro  
**Title:** Partner  
**Firm/Company:** Mori Hamada & Matsumoto  
**Location:** Japan

*Why hot:* The charismatic Ishiguro returns to our Hot 100 this year. One of the faces of Mori Hamada’s banking and finance practice, he was a finalist for the coveted lifetime achievement award at this year’s ALB Japan Law Awards. Ishiguro also played a large part in the firm taking home both the “M&A corporate team of the year” and the “Japanese deal firm of the year” awards; the latter which was shared with fellow Big Four firm Anderson Mori & Tomotsune.

**NAME:** Poh Lee Tan  
**Title:** Asia Pacific regional managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Baker & McKenzie  
**Location:** Hong Kong

*Why hot:* In November 2008 Tan was elevated to the coveted position as Baker & McKenzie’s chairman of Asia-Pacific operations, after a three-year stint on the firm’s executive committee. Tan is certainly one to watch as she goes about building the already well-known brand in Asia. Keep an eye on the firm as one of the first into the soon-to-be liberalising legal markets in India and Korea.

**NAME:** Rajiv Luthra  
**Title:** Managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Luthra & Luthra  
**Location:** India

*Why hot:* While firms in the US are doing the opposite, under Luthra’s management the Indian firm has received kudos for paying bonuses and increasing salaries. The firm is also looking to introduce a lockstep system this year, and topped the legal advisory leader board for project finance deals closed in the first half of 2009.

**NAME:** Cyril Shroff  
**Title:** Managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Amarchand & Mangaldas  
**Location:** India

*Why hot:* A very vocal opponent of the move towards Indian legal market liberalisation, Shroff made headlines this year for converting his firm – the country’s second biggest by headcount – to a full lockstep model. This change is what many in the field are heralding as the beginning of the modernisation of India’s legal services market.

**NAME:** Huen Wong  
**Title:** Hong Kong managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Fried Frank  
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*Why hot:* The charismatic former Jones Day partner was snapped up by Gibson Dunn, along with three of his colleagues (Emad Khalil, John Vivenito and Saptak Santra) to launch the firm’s Singapore office. An India expert of high renown, Pathak will undoubtedly be looking to extend the firm’s footprint and has said that offices in Greater China are also on the cards.

**NAME:** Azmi Mohd Ali  
**Title:** Managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Azmi & Associates  
**Location:** Malaysia

*Why hot:* Ali has grown his firm steadily this past year with new work and international appointments, and is now one of the region’s leading firms specialising in Islamic finance. One of the few Malaysian lawyers to be on the record for liberalisation of the country’s legal market, Azmi says it will lift standards across the board and will see his firm “emerge tougher and more creative” as a result.

**NAME:** Vicente Connor  
**Title:** Partner  
**Firm/Company:** Pinsent Masons  
**Location:** Hong Kong

*Why hot:* After making the bold move from Scotland to China in 2007, Connor took up the top post as Asia Pacific head of operations. Under his rein the firm has grown from 40 lawyers to 65 today, recently sealing an alliance with Salans. This will give Pinsent’s unprecedented access to the lucrative Eastern European markets.

**NAME:** Peter Charlton  
**Title:** Asia managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** Clifford Chance  
**Location:** Hong Kong

*Why hot:* Anointed as the magic circle giant’s new Asia MP last year, Charlton is faced with the task of seeing the world’s biggest law firm through the downturn. He has made inroads into the closed Indian legal services market in 2008, with the announcement of a ‘best-friends’ relationship with Indian firm AZB & Partners.

**NAME:** Som Mandal  
**Title:** Managing partner  
**Firm/Company:** FoxMandal Little  
**Location:** India

*Why hot:* A year after launching the business in London, Mandal is now focusing his efforts on the LPO market. FoxMandal’s outsourcing division has grown rapidly over the past twelve months and it aims to capture more of the market in the West, as more clients face credit squeezes.

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The Experts

Technically brilliant and encompassing superior legal skills in existing and emerging areas, these are the lawyers who have operated at the vanguard of change in the profession.

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Name: Lu Hongbing
Title: Chief executive partner
Firm: Grandall Legal Group
Location: Shanghai
Why hot: Hongbing hasn’t had much time to rest after he stepped down as the president of the Shanghai Lawyers Association in April 2008, raising its profile domestically and internationally. He was appointed vice president of the All China Lawyers Association six months later, which will strengthen the capacity of the nation’s legal professions across the board.

Name: Wang Ling
Title: Managing partner
Firm: King & Wood
Location: Beijing
Why hot: With King & Wood continuing to cement its position as a leading PRC firm, Wang Ling keeps playing a pivotal role. In what has turned out to be a very challenging year for most international firms, King & Wood has established a New York office and completed the merger with its long-time Hong Kong associate firm, Arculli Fong & Ng.

Name: Rafael Morales
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan
Location: Philippines
Why hot: As the immediate past president of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association, Morales is considered one of the ‘go-to’ lawyers for projects, infrastructure and M&A work in the Philippines. The firm’s M&A team acted as Philippine counsel for the GMR-Intergen financing and acquisition, recognised in the 5E Asian deal of the year at this year’s ALB 5E Asia Law Awards.

Name: Connie Carnabuci
Title: IP/IT practice head
Firm/Company: Freshfields
Location: Hong Kong
Why hot: Arguably one of the region’s busiest intellectual property lawyers, Carnabuci has developed one of the region’s leading IP practices. Her work includes advising clients such as Alibaba.com and Bally, and more recently on the intellectual property aspects of the MANS Group-Sinotruk acquisition.

Name: Rupert Li
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Clifford Chance
Location: Beijing
Why hot: There’s arguably no bigger name in Asian dealmaking than Rupert Li. He was Clifford Chance’s head lawyer advising China Development Bank for the financing of Chuchao’s $2.2bn bid for the failed acquisition of a stake in Rio Tinto, among other high profile deals. Li’s expertise earned him a nomination as a finalist in ALB’s China International Dealmaker of the Year award.

Name: Xu Jiali
Title: Founding and managing partner
Firm: Longan
Location: Beijing
Why hot: Xu Jiali has gained a reputation as one of China’s best IP practitioners, through his handling of a wide range of patent, trademark, and copyright cases. Xu, who heads the firm’s IP practice group, is one of the first postdoctoral scholar in IP law in China and the only doctoral instructor to date. He has been involved in many landmark cases — three of which were selected as the 100 typical IP cases since China’s reform and opening up, by the Supreme People’s Court in 2009.
Why hot: In a year where global M&A volumes have plunged, Norris has stood out. He was the firm’s lead partner on deals such as Coca Cola’s proposed US$2.5bn takeover of Chinhuy and the US$1.9bn privatisation of PCCL Ltd. Norris is this year’s winner of the ALB SE Asia Law Awards insolvency & restructuring Deal of the Year, for the Nomura-Lehman Brothers (Asia) acquisition.

Name: Xu Shaocuan
Title: Senior partner
Firm/Company: V&T
Location: Beijing

Why hot: As a highly regarded lawyer for capital markets and securities matters, he has advised on a large number of IPOs, listings, share placements, restructurings and transfers of Chinese companies at home and abroad. Xu was appointed to the first examination committee for the newly launched Shenzhen Growth Enterprise Board by the China Securities Regulatory Commission.

Name: Malcolm Miller
Title: Managing partner
Firm/Company: Appleby
Location: Mauritius

Why hot: With Mauritius remaining the most favoured onshore/offshore destination for investment into India and Africa, there is sure to be a rush to the tropical island in the near future as India relaxes its foreign investment rules. Appleby, under Miller’s leadership, seems to have this market cornered at the moment, with its nearest rival on the island, Conyers, still some way off, according to industry experts.

Name: Jimmy Yim
Title: Managing Director of Litigation & dispute resolution
Firm/Company: Drew & Napier
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Yin leads a legal team at Drew & Napier that reclaimed the ALB award for ‘International arbitration law firm of the year’ and for the sixth straight year, the ‘Commercial litigation firm of the year’. His success representing multi-million dollar corporate clients over the years is widely noted in the industry.

Name: Nick Gall
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Gall & Lane
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: Gall parted ways with fellow founding partner of Lacy Gall, Damien Laracy, earlier this year, to go an establish Gall & Lane and the timing, it seems couldn’t be better. Dispute levels across the region have seen a marked increase. The firm’s alliance with White & Case is designed to pick up the work emanating out of the expected storm of insolencies.

Name: Charles Duan
Title: Founder and managing partner
Firm/Company: Duan and Duan Law Firm
Location: Shanghai

Why hot: Shanghai’s renowned lawyer, Charles Duan, has made international headlines for his involvement in the high-profile Rio Tinto bribery case. He will represent Australian citizen Stern Hu, general manager of the Rio Tinto sales team in Shanghai, before the court, defending him against allegations of illegally obtaining commercial secrets and receiving bribes from officials. This is a case that has raised tensions between Australia and China.

Name: Paul Ng
Title: Global head of aviation
Firm/Company: Stephenson Harwood
Location: Singapore

Why hot: Stephenson Harwood pulled off one of the most high-profile lateral hires this year, after snaring asset finance specialist Paul Ng from Freshfields to lead its global aviation practice. Known as the ‘low-cost carrier king’, because he is said to be the counsel of choice for low cost carriers like AirAsia and Lionair, watch for Ng to build a market-leading practice.

Name: Jeanette Chan
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Paul Weiss
Location: Hong Kong

Why hot: As the ‘go-to’ lawyer for anything TMT, IT and private equity-related in Greater China, Chan and her fellow partner Jack Lange lead one of the strongest M&A outfits in the region. Chan and the firm are noted for their expert carriage of the most complex deals – for example, the US$1.3bn Ericsson – Nortel assets acquisition.

Name: Oliver Agha
Title: Joint managing partner
Firm/Company: Agha & Shamsi
Location: Abu Dhabi

Why hot: Agha made the headlines earlier this year for leaving his high-profile position as head of DLA Piper’s global Islamic finance practice, to launch his own firm, Agha & Shamsi is believed to be the world’s first Shariah-law compliant legal practice.

Name: Nick Gall
Title: Partner
Firm/Company: Gall & Lane
Location: Hong Kong

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<th>Name: Yan Yiming</th>
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**Why hot:** Zhu Xiangyang has been a key player in the establishment of Zhonglun W&D’s Middle East practice group and the branch office in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia. He manages the development of the Riyadh office and the firm’s Middle East practice group, which provide legal services to both Chinese clients doing business in the Middle East and clients from the Middle East investing in China. Zhonglun W&D is the first PRC firm to successfully establish a presence in the Middle East region.

**Why hot:** Ahmad Kusayer has played a key role in the establishment of Zhonglun W&D’s Middle East practice group and the branch office in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia. He manages the development of the Riyadh office and the firm’s Middle East practice group, which provide legal services to both Chinese clients doing business in the Middle East and clients from the Middle East investing in China. Zhonglun W&D is the first PRC firm to successfully establish a presence in the Middle East region.

**Why hot:** Li Changqing is one of the first lawyers to test the country’s new Anti-Monopoly Law for issues relating to abuse of dominant market position. He represented Tangshan Renren Information Services in a court case against internet search giant Baidu for alleged antitrust violations. Although a verdict is yet to be handed down by the court, the case is heralded as one of the earliest high-profile antitrust private litigation matters run in the country.

**Why hot:** Yan Yiming, a Shanghai lawyer well-known for his expertise in securities law and his track record of taking on public-interest cases, has again raised his profile internationally. Shortly after the government announced its CNY4tr stimulus plan, Yan made requests with the Ministry of Finance and NDRC to make public the detailed expenditure of the hefty stimulus package. His reasons were public concern with possible fund misuse, corruption and the effect on macroeconomic control.

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**Name:** Gary Locke  
**Title:** Secretary of Commerce of the United States  
**Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Why hot:** Gary Locke, the former co-chair of the China practice at US firm Davis Wright Tremaine (DWT), has returned to public service as the Secretary of the Department of Commerce of the United States. Locke joined DWT in 2005 after two successful terms as the Governor of the State of Washington. His leadership of the firm’s China practice has been instrumental to DWT’s growth and success in the region.