

## Global 20: Mayer Brown

By **Philip Rosenstein**

*Law360 (July 30, 2018, 4:27 PM EDT)* -- Mayer Brown has watered its global roots by breaking ground on new offices in Tokyo and San Francisco this year, while continuing to help clients work on innovative deals such as the first green bond sale by a pension fund on a global scale, solidifying its place on Law360's Global 20 list.

With almost half of Mayer Brown's 1,627 attorneys working from 18 offices outside the United States, the firm has seen increased business from clients across an array of practice areas and regions — particularly in Asia with the opening of the Tokyo office in March of 2018.

In 2017, 80 of the firm's top 100 clients worked with Mayer Brown in at least two of its three major regions: Asia, the Americas and Europe. Sixty-eight of the top 100 worked with the firm in all three.

"When we think about new Mayer Brown offices globally we are 100 percent driven by the needs and wishes of our clients," Mayer Brown Chairman Paul Theiss told Law360 in an interview.

The firm makes decisions on expansions based on its close relationship with clients and understanding of their legal needs across the globe. While teams are built around practice areas, Theiss described a matrix of cross-practice and cross-office collaboration structured around clients.

Mayer Brown's network has helped clients secure big-ticket deals around the globe, including what Theiss called the first green bond sale to be undertaken by a pension fund on a global scale. It represented the Canada Pension Plan Investment



## Mayer Brown

**U.S. headcount:** 917

**Global headcount:** 1,627

**Total offices:** 26

### Offices by Region:

**North America:** 9

**Europe:** 5

**Middle East:** 1

**Asia-Pacific:** 7

**South America:** 4

Board in a \$1.2 billion deal led by CIBC World Markets and the Royal Bank of Canada. The transaction was the largest ever for a single green bond transaction in Canada.

On the opening of the Tokyo office, Theiss spoke of the firm's long history of close relationships with Japanese financial institutions and trading houses.

“We got to a point where our relationships have been growing and deepening, and a number of our Japanese clients urged us to open an office in Tokyo in order to be able to better serve their needs,” Theiss said.

The Tokyo office is led by Rupert Burrows, previously of Ashurst LLP, and supported by another partner from his former firm and a partner who joined from Shearman & Sterling LLP.

The quality and depth of the firm’s presence in Asia are among the distinguishing strengths of Mayer Brown, Theiss said. The firm touts the biggest law office in Hong Kong, building off its 2008 merger with Johnson Stokes & Master.

Exemplifying this collaborative matrix spun between practice areas, regions and clients, Mayer Brown attorneys in France, the United Kingdom and the United States in August 2017 helped the Panama Canal Authority secure victory in arbitration against claims worth approximately \$200 million by the contractor that led the construction of the Third Set of Locks project.

Further demonstrating this cross-continental approach was Mayer Brown’s work on Nestle SA’s \$2.3 billion acquisition of Atrium Innovation, which saw attorneys in China, Germany, Belgium and the United States provide advice for the purchase of the nutritional health products company.

In step with the firm’s global expansion, newly-appointed managing partner Jeremy Clay highlighted a continued focus on bolstering the home office in Chicago along with other offices across the United States. He said a significant expansion in New York expected in the near term, with promotions and lateral hires in the firm’s sights.

The opening of a new office in San Francisco consolidates the firm's West Coast position, Clay said, with a focus on technology and real estate clients. The number of clients in the technology space has been increasing, which has attorneys addressing issues across the board from litigation and corporate work to antitrust regulatory and intellectual property matters.

Mayer Brown attorneys in the United States and France advised Oberthur Technology’s management in June 2017 on its multibillion-dollar acquisition of Safran Identity & Security and Morpho USA Inc. They took a lead role in the financing of the management package as well as corporate and structural concerns.

Clay noted growing legal demands stemming from cyber and privacy concerns, suggesting the trend will continue over the next few years.

“We can expect cyber data privacy and related matters to see the strongest relative growth, considering the smaller base they started from as the legal market for these areas was just getting started four or five years ago,” Clay said.

Mayer Brown has tracked those developments and has moved with them, he added, noting that the implementation of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation has particularly driven demand for such expertise, including privacy and data breach concerns.

Global growth is never far from top of mind at Mayer Brown, with 12 lateral partners outside the United States joining the firm from April 2017 through the end of March of this year. Where and when the next expansion is afoot is unclear, but the firm said it is constantly listening to clients to see how best to meet their needs.

"We don't have any new office opening immediately on the horizon," Theiss said. "As our clients continue to talk to us — we'll react to that."

--Editing by Emily Kokoll.