
CORPORATE COUNSEL *NOW*

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The Voice of the Member

Career Development



Most organizations have a mission — a vision statement that outlines the values and purpose of the organization and clarifies their target clientele or customers. Membership based organizations, like ACC, focus on serving the needs and interests of its members. Understanding and anticipating the needs of the in-house bar is the key focus of ACC.

Since its founding about 35 years ago, ACC has always put the needs of in-house counsel first by being member-driven. As a former chapter leader of ACC Europe and now as ACC board chair, I have tried to focus all strategic board-level discussions to ask: What do our members need and want, and how can ACC meet those needs? At the ACC global level, we asked just that. We surveyed ACC members last fall and held several focus group discussions. I would like to share what we heard and how the ACC board and staff are seeking to respond.

According to the ACC Voice of the Member Survey, we've made strides in advancing our mission, especially in the area of influence in the practice of law as it affects the in-house bar. Another key finding was that your ACC membership is helping you save time — and you told us that you annually save approximately 43.8 hours, to be exact. I know that the time I save more than pays for the cost of my membership, so I was happy to hear that most of you are experiencing the same.

You also told us that you strongly support the geographic expansion of the association, with 65 percent saying that it is important for ACC to develop a strong global presence — up 20 percent from the 2011 survey. This finding isn't at all surprising, with many of us having cross-border work

responsibilities. As the first board chair from France, I'm especially excited about and dedicated to ACC's continued global growth. A strong, diverse, and global network is paramount to the success of in-house counsel, and in order to drive continued innovation within corporate legal departments, we must connect and learn from our peers worldwide. ACC is working to facilitate these connections for our members and the in-house community as a whole (consider a few articles in this issue discussing the transfer and sharing of data and more).

With the recent charter of the ACC Middle East Chapter and the announcement of our credentialing program with the government of Dubai for the GCC-based in-house counsel community; continued expansion into the APAC region, including plans to charter a chapter in Hong Kong; formation of a new US chapter, ACC Oklahoma; and a growing presence in India — as well as collaboration with local in-house bar associations across the world — ACC continues its commitment to addressing the needs and challenges of our global in-house counsel membership.

I've learned a few things as a "global" general counsel, including viewing challenges as opportunities to learn, and the importance of actively listening to those we lead. As ACC continues to work toward remaining your global in-house bar association, we promise to regularly check in with you to see if we're doing OK or great, and what are the areas for further improvement. After all, our mission doesn't stop at addressing the needs of the in-house bar — we are tasked with anticipating them as highlighted by the foreseeable impact of disrupting technologies such as artificial intelligence. Challenge accepted.

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