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Network of Boutique Law Firms Goes Global to Serve General Counsel

A new offering from [Select Counsel](#) underscores the advantages of staying small when scouting out overseas law firms.

Sue Reisinger

When Jordan Kanfer, executive vice president and general counsel of NTT America Inc. in New York, needs a lawyer to handle an employment issue in, say, France, he no longer has to call a Big Law global firm.

Kanfer can just click into Select Counsel, [a network of over 300 boutique firm attorneys](#) in the United States, that has now added 40 lawyers in 19 other countries.

"I could ask a big firm for a referral in a given country, but generally that will just connect me with yet another big firm," Kanfer told Corporate Counsel. "A boutique firm that is highly specialized, local to a particular jurisdiction or has significant experience with a particular issue is generally a better fit than



Andrew Dick, CEO of Select Counsel in San Francisco.

a big firm that may, or may not, have someone with the right expertise. And it's always going to be more cost-effective."

Kanfer, whose company provides information and

communications technology, said he has already lined up, through Select Counsel, contacts with boutique lawyers in certain countries who have expertise in key legal

areas for him, such as employment, compliance and privacy. The GC has been a proponent of using boutique firms for years, according to a 2013 article in *Corporate Counsel* magazine.

He has consulted with Select Counsel in the past on his U.S. legal needs. And when he heard Select Counsel was expanding globally, he quickly contacted CEO and founder Andrew Dick, who is also an attorney in Headlands Law Group in San Francisco.

“Good boutique firms are hard to find, particularly in Europe and Asia where we do a lot of business,” Kanfer explained.

Dick said the response to the network has been good, and he is continuing to build the company’s international roster of lawyers. His goal is to offer a high-caliber boutique firm in every major business center worldwide.

“GCs shouldn’t have to pay the steep rates of a global firm or get passed from one big firm to the next to find good counsel abroad, especially when there are so many outstanding

boutique firms out there that are often a better fit,” Dick said in a statement.

Select Counsel touts its lawyers as having an average of 20 years’ experience, including 10 years with prominent Big Law firms.

For example, Select Counsel has recently added Taro Isshiki, founder of Isshiki International Law Office in Tokyo and formerly a partner at Morrison & Foerster. It also added Deborah Sankowicz, founding partner of Kepler Legal in Paris and formerly a partner at Latham & Watkins and Paul Hastings.

“For employment matters especially, using a lean, local boutique firm offers a much better fit for multinational corporations doing business in France,” Sankowicz said in a statement. But without Select Counsel, she said clients didn’t know where to look for this talent.

Select Counsel also serves lawyers and law firms, as well as in-house counsel. And it offers its own members a virtual community in which to network with

each other and discuss common issues.

Kanfer, for one, is a satisfied customer. “Select Counsel is a great resource to have at my disposal,” he said. “A quick and reliable way to source quality referrals to boutique firms has tremendous value.”

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