



IP with Impact: MLL Legal's Integrated Approach to People, Workflows, and Technology

MLL Legal is a full-service law firm, and intellectual property law is at the heart of what they do. Unlike many full-service firms, IP is not a sideline for them; it is an important department within their firm. They work hand in hand with their Corporate Finance and Tax teams on both classical IP work and transactional work. They have one of the largest IP teams in Switzerland and have been ranked in the top tier of the relevant directories for decades.

Zurich-based Partner, Dr. Peter Schramm, heads the IP team at the firm, alongside two of his colleagues. He has advised some of the most well-known brands in the world and has global expertise in complex IP litigation issues.

Working alongside Peter is Franziska Schweizer, who is head of the firm's trademark and design prosecution team. She has a wide range of experience in the registration and enforcement of trademarks, designs and domains, with expertise in both the retail and jewelry industries.

The team was concerned that the firm's IP management platform was outdated, with functional limitations, particularly around reporting, that led to inefficiencies and additional work for employees. To better serve the needs of clients, MLL Legal selected AQX® Law Firm as their new IP management platform. In an increasingly fast-paced IP and legal environment, their team needed a faster and easier IP management system and the ability to deliver reporting quickly and effectively to their clients.

Peter and Franziska, can you tell us a little more about MLL Legal, how you operate and what makes your firm unique in the industry?

Peter: We are one of the largest full-service law firms in Switzerland and the firm with by far the largest IP department in the country. Compared to other big business law firms in Switzerland, IP is not a sidekick but an important and strong department that is regularly ranked as one of the most reputable IP law firms in Switzerland.

Franziska: What sets us apart is our comprehensive approach to managing clients' IP portfolios. We functionally manage the portfolio and advise on broader IP strategy and how it aligns with wider business objectives. We believe that this big-picture thinking sets us apart from other IP law firms.

Peter: For many years, we've ensured that the same lawyer that advises the client on strategic IP protection matters and prosecution strategy, is also the one that deals with any litigation issues. We know other law firms outsource their prosecution work to third parties. But we see it as critically important that the person who creates the strategy and IP applications is also the person who litigates if anything goes wrong. This delivers continuity and consistency that our clients value.

What are the key challenges your team is currently facing?

Peter: Like most companies in every industry, we are addressing the key challenge of how AI impacts what we do and how we do it. Along with this challenge comes the question of how we can protect our clients' portfolios more effectively in a world where AI is a significant disruptor.

Our team at MLL Legal includes professionals fully dedicated to AI. Since things are developing so quickly, every employee – from equity partners to paralegals – joins a weekly update on new and relevant AI

What we liked about AQX Law Firm was that it can deliver these kinds of insights and reports with a few clicks of a button. With AQX Law Firm our goal is to improve operational efficiency and reporting – enabling us to be more responsive to client needs.

developments. This helps us identify the tools we can use to be more efficient but also enables us to stay up to date with developments that may have an impact

And how are you addressing the wider pressures that law firms are facing?

Franziska: Clients are rightly demanding more from us – which increases the pace at which we work constantly. Adapting – not only to innovative technologies but also to new client expectations – is challenging. So, we are constantly looking at how we can be more efficient in the way we serve clients.

I tend to look across three important pillars that combine to help us do a better job. The first is people – do we need more? Do we need different expertise? Do we need more training in new areas? The second pillar is workflows: how can we make things more efficient, faster, simpler or more effective, and how can we change our workflows to achieve this?

Third is the IP management platform we use: how can our technology support the team and provide workflows to deliver improved efficiencies and better client experience.

You're currently in the process of moving to AQX Law Firm as your IP management platform. What prompted that decision?

Peter: The priority was to deploy an IP management platform that reduced the workload of our colleagues, enabling them to work more efficiently and optimize the amount of time they had to think about and give advice to clients.

Franziska: Our old system was complex and time consuming. We needed an IP management platform that delivered a unified system for docketing to avoid discrepancies and ensure smooth operation. We wanted to automate as much as we could – so our people could focus on the tasks that computers are not able to do – namely thinking about the entire IP lifecycle and the wider strategic picture to deliver more client value.

Peter: For example, one of our most important clients, a huge consumer goods company, had several different trademark families and wanted an easy-to-read report that would visually illustrate to a CEO or CTO where trademark coverage existed.

This is the kind of request that we receive more frequently, and our old system was unable to do this. Employees needed to gather the data and invest considerable time in creating something that visually illustrated the breadth of IP coverage.

How did you come to choose AQX Law Firm?

Franziska: The first criteria was to deploy the best possible IP management platform. We were impressed by how comprehensive the AQX Law Firm platform was and that it was important to have a system that could address all our needs.

But there is also the question of the support that comes with the system. The migration process from one IP management platform to another can be extremely complicated. I've seen migrations where the support from the vendor company is not of a high enough standard during the process.

The other consideration was the ongoing support we would receive from Anaqua after the migration has taken place. I value the Anaqua client community that interacts with us and shares information and guidance. This is unique to Anaqua in my experience. Anaqua offers active working groups where clients can be a part of providing input into the development of the platform. This helps us, as users, to shape functions and features that will come to the IP management platform in the future.

Finally, the Anaqua Experience Conference enables us to meet other users in person and share experiences. It's a dynamic conference with relevant keynote talks, and overview sessions of what is coming next from Anaqua. It also includes knowledge sharing sessions - led by clients - about how to optimize use of the IP management platform. We all share familiar challenges, so being able to see how other users have addressed certain issues is helpful and reassuring.

I'd previously used the AQX platform at another company and had been part of a migration process managed by Anaqua. So, I knew the level of support that we would receive and that the Anaqua team would help guide us through the implementation project step by step.

Finally, how far along are you in the implementation project and how is it going?

Peter: It's a huge project. Anaqua has been incredibly supportive in helping us develop a migration process that I've really bought into as it will deliver efficiency from day one. That support is critical because you could easily get overwhelmed by such a project. We're obviously looking forward to Go Live - I can't wait to get started on the platform!



31 St. James Avenue
Boston, MA 02116 USA
+1 617-375-5808
anaqua.com