

# Briefing Leaders

intapp™

JULY 2023



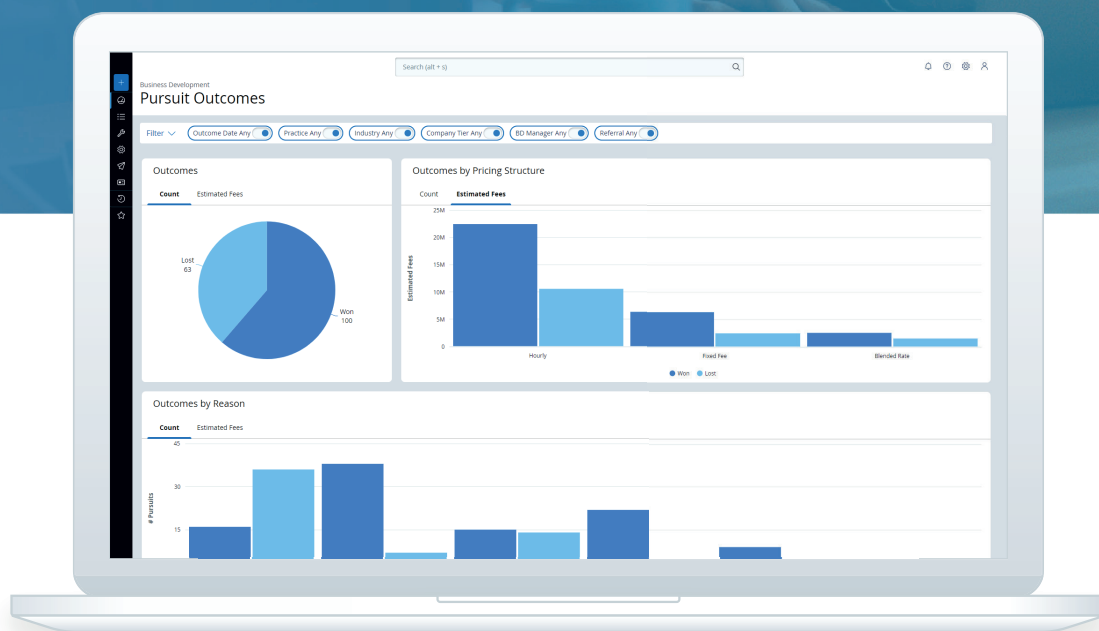
**BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND MARKETING  
LEADERS**

2023

# DealCloud: More than a CRM

## Your complete solution for relationship and matter intelligence

Capture unique insights and drive growth using a single platform. Purpose-built for firms, DealCloud gives you a single source of truth—so you can turn shared knowledge into actionable intelligence and enable easy collaboration firmwide.



- Build targeted campaigns with centralized firm data and streamlined list management
- Nurture stronger relationships with automated activity capture and relationship intelligence
- Monitor key relationships and market changes to discover new opportunities
- Inform client pitches and proposals with centralized client needs, firm experience, and market intelligence
- Track knowledge capture, build expertise, and improve decision-making with easy access to key insights and shared expertise

Learn more at [intapp.com/dealcloud](https://intapp.com/dealcloud).

**COMMENT: ATTRACT AND RETAIN CLIENTS WITH DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS**



**B**usiness development and marketing leaders know that data is the key to improving a law firm's strategic decisions and unlocking a firm's growth potential. By collecting and analysing both internal and external data, firms gain a wealth of insights that ultimately allow them to attract and retain more clients.

With data-driven insights, firms can:

- Determine how to better leverage the firm's collective network
- Uncover emerging client needs and market trends
- Identify new ways to innovate service delivery.

Previously, firms stored data across multiple disparate platforms, making it difficult for teams to access the information and insights they needed. Firms are increasingly seeking to democratise access to this data by investing in connected firm technology. But having access to data isn't enough. You also have to know how to leverage it.

Learn which data your marketing and business development leaders should prioritise, and how lawyers can effectively use data-driven insights to drive growth within their firms.



**Gemma Prescott**  
Practice group leader  
for marketing and  
business development  
Intapp

**Contact:**  
Gemma.Prescott@  
intapp.com

**Learn more about how  
Intapp can help to  
develop firms' data-  
driven insights:**

[intapp.com/dealcloud](https://intapp.com/dealcloud)

#### LEVERAGE YOUR FIRM'S NETWORK TO IDENTIFY NEW TARGETS

Your firm should have a clear understanding as to the types of clients you want to target, and for whom your firm is not a strong fit. For example, you may have a geographic footprint suited to serving international companies that require cross-border insights. Or you may determine your firm is better suited to assist domestic companies — perhaps smaller startups, scaleups, or entrepreneurs. You should also determine which specific industries your firm wants to serve.

With your target markets clearly defined, business development teams will benefit from technology that mines the firm's networks to identify connections that can lead to new prospects and business. Visibility into relationship intelligence is especially critical for firms using lateral hiring as a growth strategy to ensure new lawyers' networks are effectively leveraged.

External data sources can help to further extend network insights. Providers such as BoardEx or Equilar, for example, can help you to understand how your network's board-level positions might unlock new opportunity or insight.

#### UNCOVER EMERGING CLIENT NEEDS AND SURFACE INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

After determining your firm's ideal client, you must collect data around specific targets, current clients, and recent work in your prioritised markets. A firm's data strategy should enable industry teams to collect information around emerging trends as well as changing requirements, and to learn how these factors are affecting clients. This lets firms identify opportunities to educate prospects on emerging issues, and so helps them to build stronger, longer-lasting partnerships.

Begin collecting and analysing information at the prospecting stage and continue through the onboarding stage. When looking at prospective clients, ensure you gather data such as: ▼

- Risk factors
- Key stakeholders and leaders
- Competitive threats
- Regulatory and legal challenges
- Financial health and outlook.

Firms can collect this data in various ways, including interviews, surveys, intake forms, and external research. Firms can then leverage this external data and blend it with insight into their existing relationships and portfolios of past work to originate new leads. This strategy is one that other industries – such as private capital firms – have long prioritised.

Once you have the external data you need, it's critical that you then make it available across the firm. Subject matter experts can then identify trends and relationships that partners can translate into new opportunities with their clients.

#### IDENTIFY NEW WAYS TO INNOVATE SERVICE DELIVERY

Analysing datasets and identifying patterns helps the firm to identify ways to better serve your clients. Understanding how the firm delivered equivalent matters can help to streamline project delivery, to identify phases of work appropriate for the deployment of legal technology or alternative resourcing models, and to improve service consistency between practice groups and across offices.

Think carefully about the data you've captured as matters progress, as this can help your lawyers to educate potential and current clients around market best practices and the ways in which you bring value. After all, clients don't often view their issues purely through a legal lens – for them, antitrust, employment or tax problems are simply business problems.

Aligning more closely with clients around their industries, rather than legal practice areas, means structuring your firm's data and intelligence strategies accordingly. This enables lawyers to provide a clearer and more compelling analysis of the matter under consideration upfront, sharing market practice and expected negotiation outcomes.

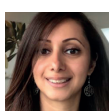
#### LEVERAGE THE POWER OF AI

If your firm is serious about winning and retaining clients, you'll need to devote technology, staff, and other resources to develop data-driven insights. And with so many new AI tools available to help analyse market and client data, firms can now identify opportunities and challenges for current and prospective clients faster than ever before. ▶

#### BRIEFING PEOPLE



Richard Brent is director of content, but still talks to as many readers as possible. Email him any time: richardb@briefing.co.uk



Suzanna Hayek is junior editor at **Briefing**, working on all aspects of our content and delivery. Contact her at: suzannah@briefing.co.uk



Sarah Newton is our data team leader, and worked on this report's research. Contact her at: sarahn@briefing.co.uk




Elena Berrino is our marketing manager, continually building the **Briefing** brand and audience: elenab@burlingtonmedia.co.uk




Reem Khurshid is editor at **Briefing**. She carried out several of the interviews for this report. Contact her at: reemk@briefing.co.uk


#### TALK TO US

 **Briefing** is on Twitter and LinkedIn:

@Briefinglegal  
[linkedin.com/company/briefing-legal](https://www.linkedin.com/company/briefing-legal)

 Write to us (by email):  
[editorial@briefing.co.uk](mailto:editorial@briefing.co.uk)

 All our previous research and reports – covering many legal business management topics – are online: [briefing.co.uk/our-reports](https://www.briefing.co.uk/our-reports)

 Read all monthly issues of **Briefing**, plus special-focus reports like this, in our free app for iOS and Android devices.  
[briefing.co.uk/briefing-magazine-app](https://www.briefing.co.uk/briefing-magazine-app)





01

# Power and purpose: the MBD position in 2023

**T**he **Briefing** Business development and marketing leaders research returns each year to keep tracking how those designing and delivering change – or perhaps striving for it – in this function feel about a range of factors they either influence or feel the effects of. In 2023 we have questions in the set about the most attractive areas for additional process or people investment, the perceived strength of firm data and what could be done with it, and assessment of progress in the field of client relationships and joined-up journeys.

**Words**

Richard Brent,  
head of content

**Research**

Sarah Butler,  
data team leader

As in 2022 we begin by asking whether the department is represented on the firm's board – and in our April/May 2023 polling just over half of leaders (51%) indicate this is the case (p6).

David Tomley, international head of client development at Osborne Clarke, says: “The chief marketing officer sits on the international board driving client and business development strategy, and has a very strong voice in terms of how we perform as an overall group – that’s a group comprising managing partners, CEO, CFO, CTO and CPO, as well as CMO.”

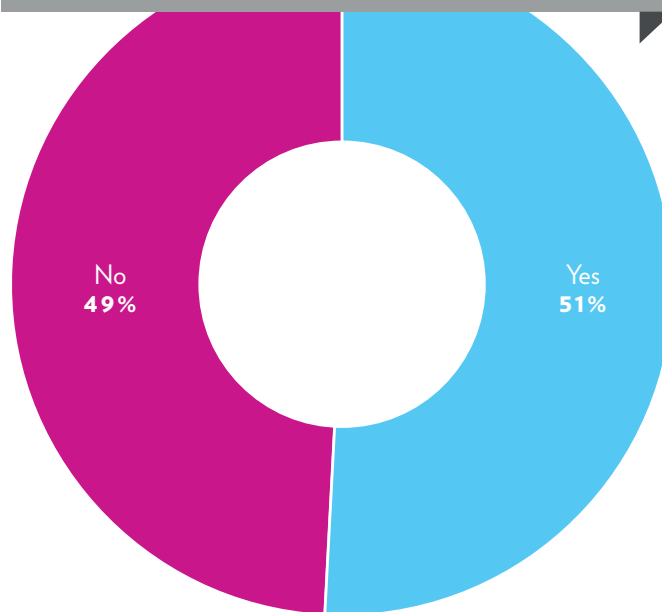
Julie Mortimer, director of marketing and a member of the operations board at Mills & Reeve, says: “You would generally see the CMO on the board at a large corporate, and I do believe it’s increasingly important for marketing and business development to be sitting alongside finance driving outcomes.”

For Lucy Rao, business development director at Boodle Hatfield, absolute necessity to be on the board depends on the business’s culture when it comes to asking for the right level of input – but she agrees that firm strategy needs this input to function efficiently. “BD needs to be engaged in scoping the opportunity when considering the launch of a new practice area, for example – if that approach is left too late, there’s a risk you need to unwind it to get back on track.”

David Ward, group director of marketing and propositions at Irwin Mitchell, adds: “The legal sector is excellent at delivering really high-end client experience. However, it has often been behind others culturally when it comes to customer-centricity.” It’s something of a contradiction, he says – and requires “business development and marketing involvement in the experience end to end – it shouldn’t be seen as a service that others simply tap into”.

Meanwhile, as pressure builds to demonstrate strong leadership and a strategic plan in the environmental, social and governance (ESG) arena – a potential lever of engaging both clients and the talent firms don’t want to lose, among other business drivers – 100% of this year’s respondents say they have a role in effectively articulating, or perhaps even distilling, the idea of an organisational purpose or mission beyond the obvious for a law firm.

**IS MARKETING/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTED ON THE BOARD AT YOUR FIRM?**



**IN BRIEF**

Just half of business development and marketing leaders responding to this year’s research say they are represented on the board – consistent with the 56% reporting this back in 2021. Firms have different board structures of course, but leaders need the room to add their perspective to strategic decision-making.

John Parkinson, director of business development and marketing at Blake Morgan, explains: “If you’re working for public sector bodies, it’s a commercial imperative to be aligned on areas of ESG and CSR – it can be as much as 20% of the overall mark. Candidates now also have questions to ask in interviews, and there’s enormous opportunity to sell our services to clients changing how they do business from a sustainability perspective.” As his team handles the business of responding to the increasingly challenging tenders, business development has played a key part in coordinating how to demonstrate credentials most

**“If you’re working for public sector bodies, it’s a commercial imperative to be aligned on areas of ESG and CSR.”**

*John Parkinson, director of business development and marketing, Blake Morgan*

# 100%

OF RESPONDENTS AGREED  
THAT MBD HAS A ROLE  
IN DEVELOPING AND  
COMMUNICATING THEIR  
FIRM'S ORGANISATIONAL  
PURPOSE OR  
MISSION

effectively and considering how they connect, he says.

Elsewhere, with the regulator releasing more on the topic, Rao is in a project group at Boodle Hatfield to review organisational 'culture' as working patterns and styles have moved on. She says: "Many firms are identifying this as a focus, as groups of employees have different preferences, and office environments are less social than pre-pandemic – even where some are trying to bring back more of that business bonding."

At the same time, Boodle Hatfield has a strand of client-focused collaboration after a recent report categorised the private wealth industry as having major challenges in how it approaches tax. "Today's high-net-worth individuals don't always want that stance, where tax is seen as a burden. Advisers can sometimes make that assumption without asking the right questions – so we're also ensuring our advice remains holistic, and we are part of the industry-wide discussion," she explains.

Ed FitzGerald, director of brand, clients and markets at RPC, says: "Sense of purpose is something that permeates all parts of the firm – lawyers and business services – but I do believe it also allows us to assess our specific impact in a fresh context, adding meaning beyond the simply financial."

Mortimer agrees: "It's practically useful to have a firm purpose or a mission as the 'headline' that all activity supports – whether it's internal communication or work with clients and other external stakeholders."

Ward at Irwin Mitchell adds: "As this data

indicates, it's 100% essential. Having a clear purpose statement for why you exist can anchor and guide strategic direction as well as marketing communications and business development."

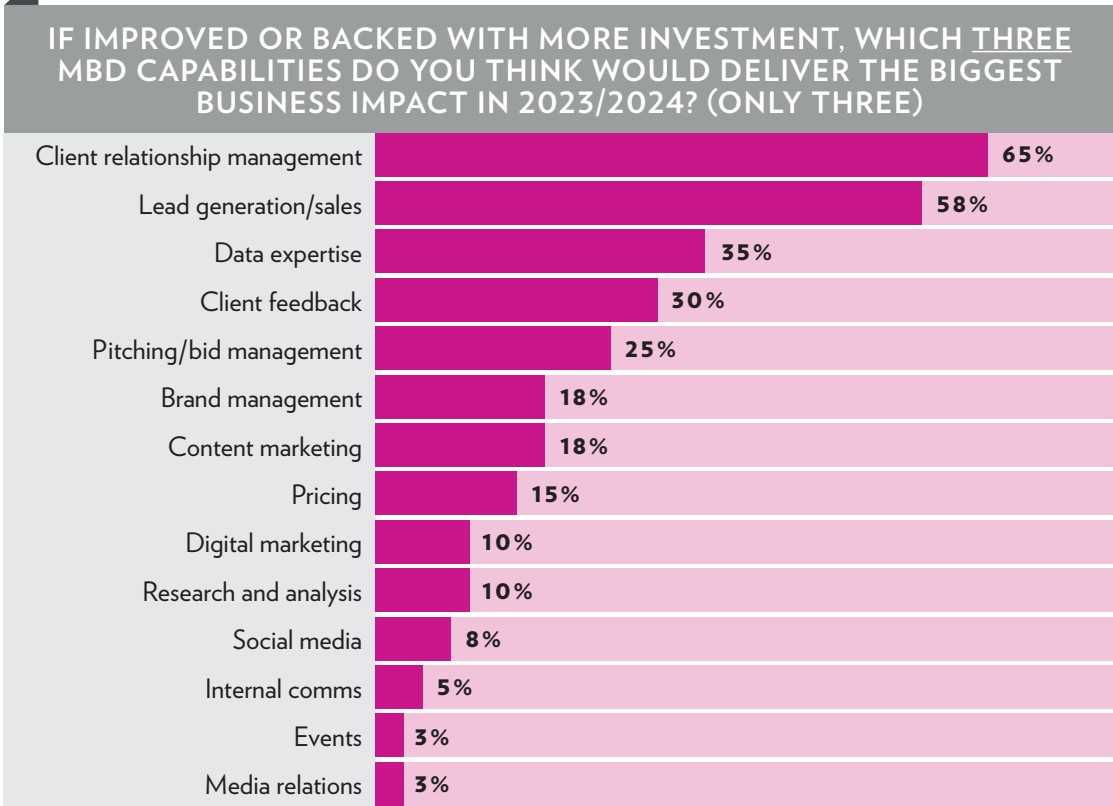
For a second year, in 2023 we've also asked where leaders believe additional investment in business development and marketing expertise now would be likely to yield the strongest return – they can choose up to three of 14 capabilities (p8). And as in 2022, client relationship management (CRM) clearly leads the pack (65%). This year, however, the idea of seeing improvement in lead generation/sales is hot on CRM's heels (58%) – overtaking the idea of growing 'data expertise' (35%) in order to understand more about business opportunities, which created so much buzz in 2022's conversations. The perceived importance of client feedback continues to perform strongly (30%), and pitching/bid management (25%) overtakes pricing (15%). Areas surrounding communication and thought leadership are lower down the collective priority list (although access to more reliable data may of course be a driver of improving both).

Stephanie Fisher, head of business development at Weightmans, says: "Everybody understandably wants new business of course, but there's also very fierce competition among firms to retain clients in this market." She stresses the need for a firm structure that puts clients in close touch with its sector as well as legal expertise, and recommends investing in relationships across seniority bands in addition to dedicated client relationship partners.

Tomley adds that CRM is also a cultural matter. "Established from the top-down, there's the

**"It's practically useful to have a firm purpose or a mission as the 'headline' that all activity supports – whether it's internal communication or work with clients and other external stakeholders."**

*Julie Mortimer, director of marketing, Mills & Reeve*



question of how any firm is seen to value CRM as a whole. It's also a real skill, so important to invest to maximise individuals' potential and help to develop them in instances where it perhaps isn't a core strength."

Mortimer says: "CRM is the Holy Grail in a law firm, but perhaps also a bit of a unicorn. Firms throw ever more technology at understanding very complex relationships to compensate for a behavioural shift – recording experience to get a better understanding of relationships. However, success ultimately hinges on how very busy people choose to use all that technology."

Parkinson at Blake Morgan, says he'd be inclined

to prioritise data expertise in the mix: "With the right data you might begin to drive the culture change required, as it helps partners to see the commercial value of inputting all this information. BD and finance can also work closely on pitches from a profitability perspective."

Meanwhile, very few leaders pick out 'events' expertise as a top driver of impact, perhaps reflecting the added challenge in shaping these interactions effectively since the pandemic pushed more online, with working from home a business norm. Tomley continues: "Clearly we do want to engage and interact with contacts on a personal level, but client appetite for different forms of interaction is quite fluid. Firms need to adapt to a changing audience, produce something of true value, and identify the best way of delivering it."

Rao adds: "People still need and want to network – and have the conversation between the meeting room and the lift – but we need to be much more sophisticated to organise a successful event." She says appetite varies by sector and practice area, as much as personal preference – and this also needs factoring into the approach. ▀

**“There’s the question of how any firm is seen to value CRM as a whole. It’s also a real skill, so important to invest to maximise individuals’ potential.”**

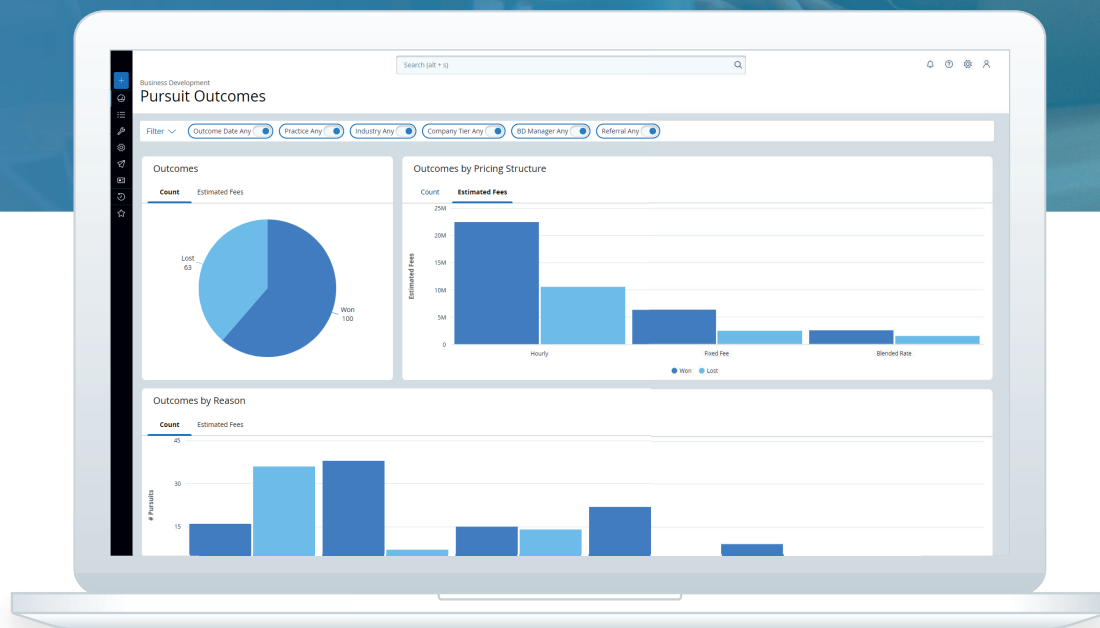
*David Tomley, international head of client development, Osborne Clarke*



# DealCloud: More than a CRM

Your complete solution for relationship  
and matter intelligence

Capture unique insights and drive growth using a single platform. Purpose-built for firms, DealCloud gives you a single source of truth—so you can turn shared knowledge into actionable intelligence and enable easy collaboration firmwide.



- Build targeted campaigns with centralized firm data and streamlined list management
- Nurture stronger relationships with automated activity capture and relationship intelligence
- Monitor key relationships and market changes to discover new opportunities
- Inform client pitches and proposals with centralized client needs, firm experience, and market intelligence
- Track knowledge capture, build expertise, and improve decision-making with easy access to key insights and shared expertise

Learn more at [intapp.com/dealcloud](https://intapp.com/dealcloud).



02

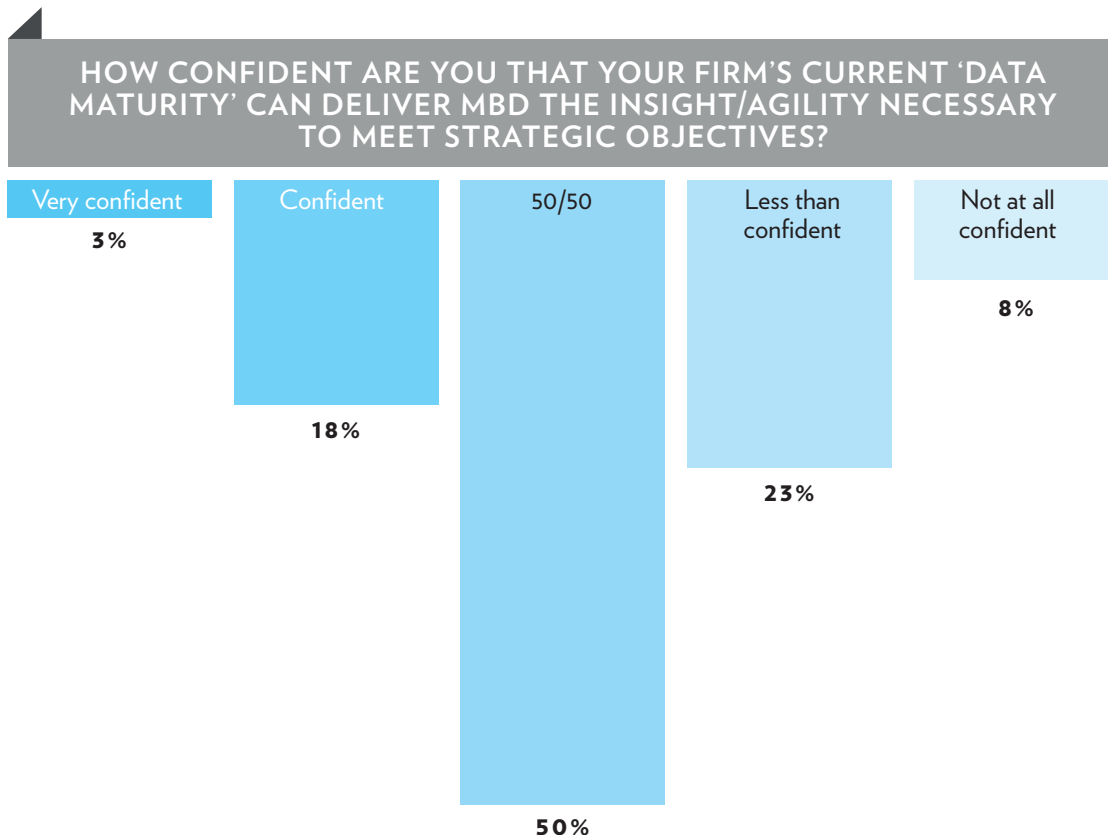
## Is firm data delivering for business development?

**A** related new question for 2023 concerns confidence of leaders in the firm’s ‘data maturity’ – are business systems sufficiently connected and well-maintained to produce the levels of insight that make a difference to client growth (p11)? This follows a question put to all senior business services and operational leaders in February’s **Briefing Frontiers 2023** research report – does your firm have a “business-wide data strategy” at all? Two-fifths then said not (or they didn’t know) – but almost four-fifths knew they would need such within three years. Data quality, access and trust were all identified as potential obstacles to realising a more joined-up

vision – but the opportunities for more predictive and agile decision-making clear.

Back to **Briefing Business development and marketing leaders 2023**, and our cohort’s confidence in their current data processes, culture or underlying technology falls into a classic bell curve, leaning somewhat towards the less confident. Almost one-third (31%) are less than 50/50 on the point – with 8% not confident at all.

Ed FitzGerald at RPC says: “Data can be an under-tapped opportunity for firms, and you do need the links between different data sources to create narratives that can lead to meaningful action.”



He adds: “Depending on the size of your team, it’s increasingly unrealistic for the BD professionals to be experts in the analysis and interpretation of data. There’s a growing need for true data experts to be embedded in the team.” RPC, for example, has individuals with dedicated data and reporting responsibilities, and FitzGerald says it could go further.

David Ward at Irwin Mitchell says: “Law firms aren’t short of data to work with, but they may be short of sufficiently purposeful data that supports not only with the necessary levels of insight into client engagement, but also to help them prioritise effectively. High-quality data can present trends for making good business decisions – such as the need



**IN BRIEF**

There is significant variation in how confident leaders feel about the state of their firms’ ‘data maturity’ in 2023. Almost four-fifths are less than 50/50, and alongside insight into the chances of new business they would prioritise client data for change – contacts, feedback and client relationship strength (p12).

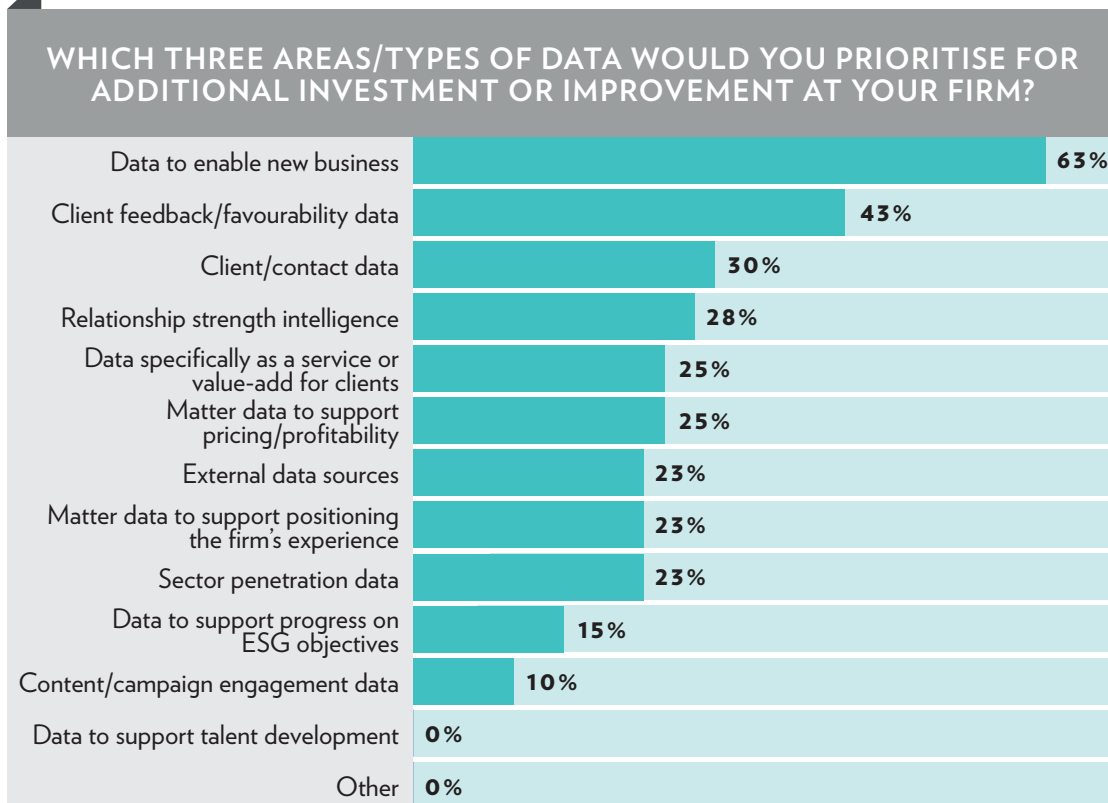
**“High-quality data can present trends for making good business decisions – such as the need to improve specific processes or enhance products.”**

*David Ward, group director of marketing and propositions, Irwin Mitchell*

to improve specific processes or enhance products – and make progress with personalisation.”

David Tomley at Osborne Clarke agrees. “Firms are probably capturing plenty of data, but continuously catching up in terms of its management. Do they have the powers of access and analysis to get to know what they don’t know? There’s no single answer, but part of it is certainly employing the right people, with the knowledge to pull and compare data points to answer questions.”

With plenty of room for improvement across the market then, are there any examples of data



which leaders would specifically prioritise for more or easier access? In line with our earlier results for investing more in CRM and lead generation capability, the most enticing data-improvement opportunity appears to be that which really enables new business (offered by 63%) – highlighting routes for cross-selling, for example, or to capture and track referrals (above). Client information and feedback data also emerge as priorities – and 28% show appetite for more insight into the relative strength of their client relationships.

FitzGerald continues: “It would be really useful to achieve more insight into the extent that increased collaboration and cross-selling can deliver improved client outcomes, and by extension lead to stronger firm performance.”

Julie Mortimer says Mills & Reeve has invested more in both people with specialist skills and the technology stack over the past two years: “Today we have wider access to tools such as Microsoft Power BI, which enables us to integrate and cross-analyse data from the CRM, practice management system and other sources of information. Progress has also been made in understanding that data quality needs to be impeccable.

“Referral data, in particular, can be very challenging to capture meaningfully as the sale of a high-value service can involve as many as seven or eight touchpoints that the technology currently can’t accommodate.”

Marketing and wider market data – such as sector strength – are less likely to be at the top of leaders’ wish-lists, although a quarter see opportunity in serving clients themselves more useful data about their work or industries (whether that’s for a fee or otherwise). ▀

**“It would be really useful to achieve more insight into the extent that increased collaboration and cross-selling can deliver improved client outcomes, and by extension lead to stronger firm performance.”**

*Ed FitzGerald, director of brand, clients and markets, RPC*

03

# On the case of consistent client experience

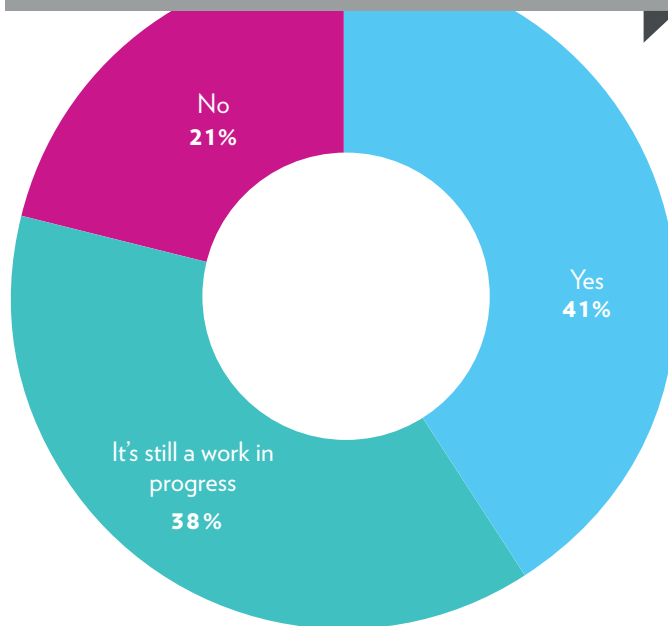
**P**erhaps the best indicator of positive progress in the pages of **Briefing Business development and marketing leaders 2023** is twice as many suggesting their firms now have a framework or ‘map’ for following or managing an individual client experience around the firm’s different practices and processes (p13). Only a fifth said yes to this in 2022. Most, however, admit ‘it’s still a work in progress’ at theirs (38%, down from 43% saying so in 2022).

Ed FitzGerald at RPC says it heartens him to see this movement. “It suggests that the idea of brand is now tied more closely to client experience – and I think probably reflects the fact that people across business services teams are increasingly collaborating with an understanding of the parts they play in that experience.” He also points out that a firm’s “approach to people” can influence client experience, returning us to the idea, opportunities and work of embedding a sense of wider organisational purpose.

But John Parkinson at Blake Morgan, agrees with the ‘work in progress’ assessment. “It takes time to embed, and needs to adapt to changes in how we interact with clients and use systems,” he says.

“Success can also depend on where different leads are coming from. We’re good at tracking, assigning and following up on

DOES YOUR FIRM HAVE ANY FRAMEWORK OR MAP FOR MANAGEMENT/VISIBILITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL CLIENT EXPERIENCE WITH THE FIRM?

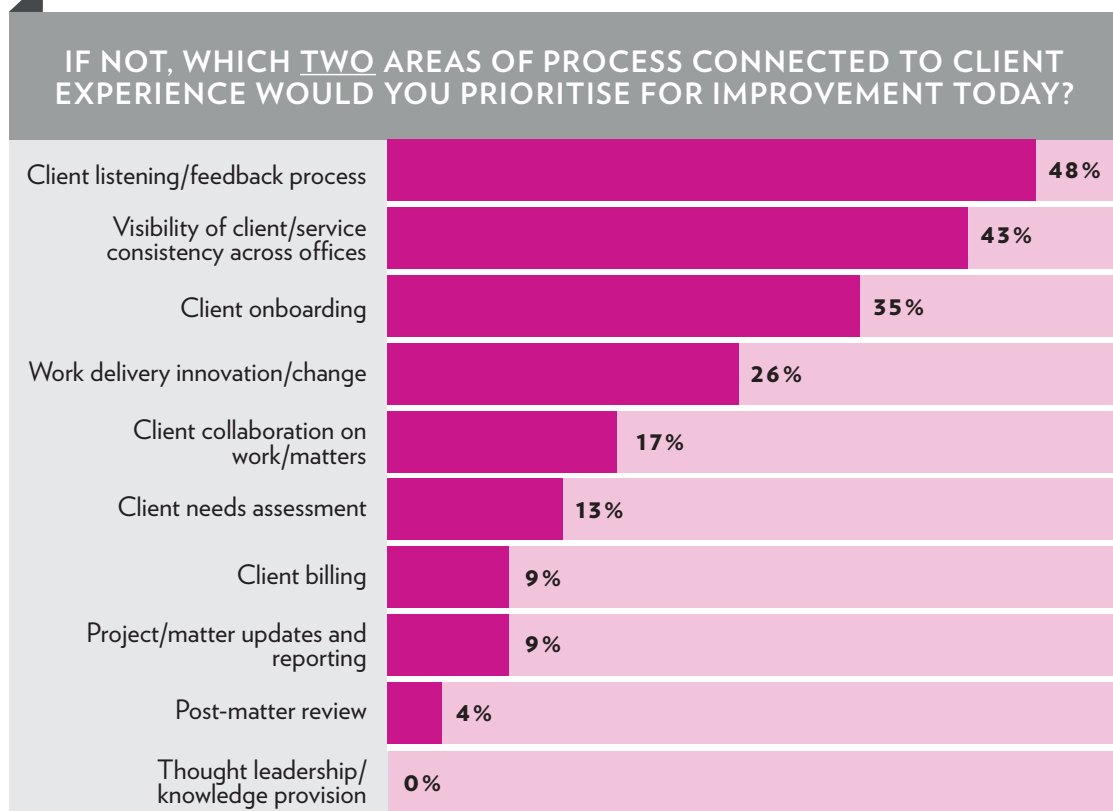


## IN BRIEF

Two-fifths of leaders now report their firms have some form of framework for tracking client experience around the points of interaction – up from one-fifth in 2022. However, 38% say this is still a work in progress. Client listening and service consistency are viewed as leading areas for change (p14).

**“The idea of brand is now tied more strongly to client experience – and probably reflects the fact that people across business services teams are increasingly collaborating.”**

*Ed FitzGerald, director of brand, clients and markets, RPC*



website enquiries – and that helps when reporting back to the board on return on investment. Tracking phone enquiries can be a different journey – but I do believe that you ultimately build relationships by talking to people.”

In 2022’s version of this report, Deborah Fleming, marketing and business development director at Walker Morris, said: “Thinking about absolutely every place a client touches the firm is probably quite daunting. They could be more inclined to pick a quicker win within client experience to get started, such as where work originates or billing.”

So in 2023, we decided to ask exactly this –

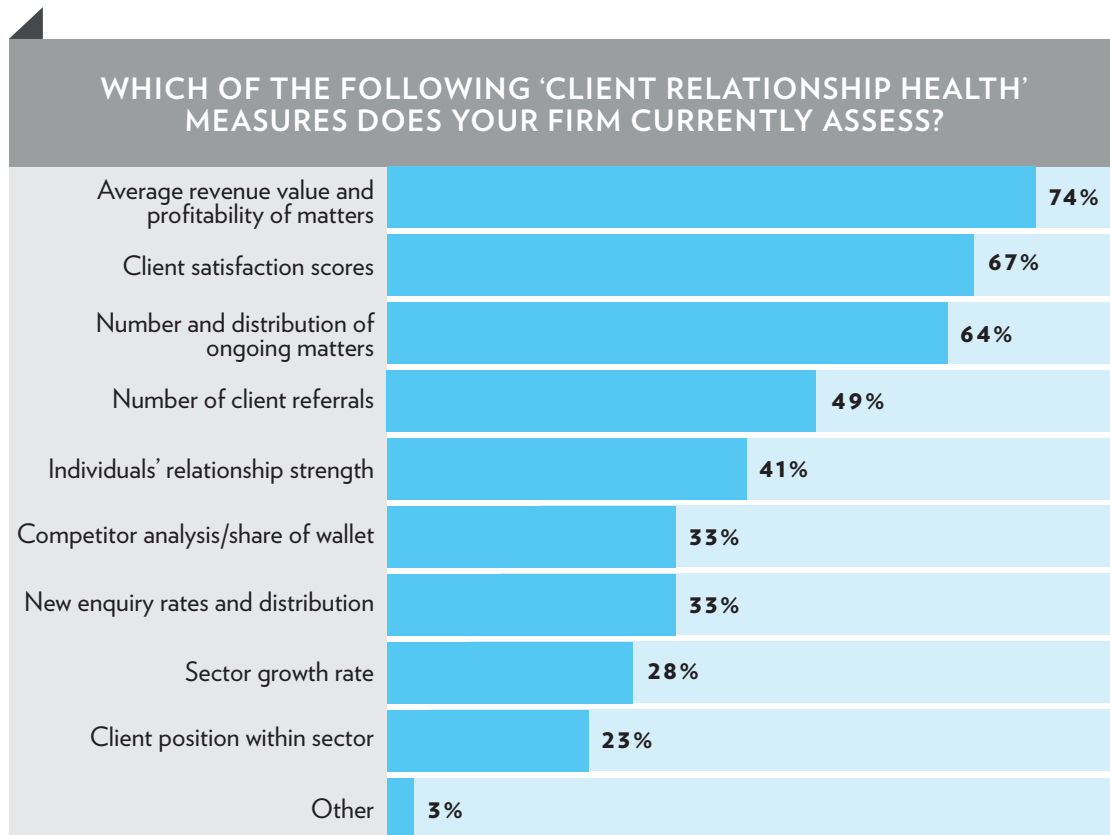
which specific areas of client experience would you prioritise for improvement to get closer to a consistent client experience (above)? In keeping with earlier strong backing for client feedback skills and supporting data, it’s the process surrounding this that most would presumably tackle first today (48%). Another challenge appears to be the provision of consistent client service/experience across a spread of offices (43%), and over one-third would focus on improving client intake. Perhaps surprisingly, just 9% would pick the mechanics of client billing or reporting for change – although friction within these may already have been addressed as a priority process.

Stephanie Fisher says Weightmans has had a robust client listening and feedback programme in place for some time, but has recently “expanded the cohort” – with interview training for more equity partners alongside an externally-run programme, for example. “Coupled with simple but regular matter feedback this provides a really good picture and balance that we all need to find between internal and external experience.”

The idea of a common purpose/vision helps, adds David Ward at Irwin Mitchell: “We’ve also

**“Coupled with simple but regular matter feedback [the listening programme] provides a really good picture and balance that we all need to find between internal and external experience.”**

*Stephanie Fisher, head of business development, Weightmans*



centralised a lot of our activity, and then it's about continuous monitoring for consistency with an operational excellence mindset."

David Tomley at Osborne Clarke says: "Firms have traditionally seen clients as owned by a client relationship partner, but forward-looking firms do now see it as a firm-wide relationship. Of course, individual partners might still want to keep their relationships potentially portable, and you need networks of internal relationships surrounding a client – building trust, common objectives and sharing information.

"In addition, we're now looking at more automated data capture to pull from different internal sources to map relationships more accurately and understand their overall strength."

He would also prioritise the feedback system: "However, listening and feedback need to be processes the client actually values. It can't be an annual exercise – or ticking a box – and needs to have focus and open conversations around things that could really be done differently."

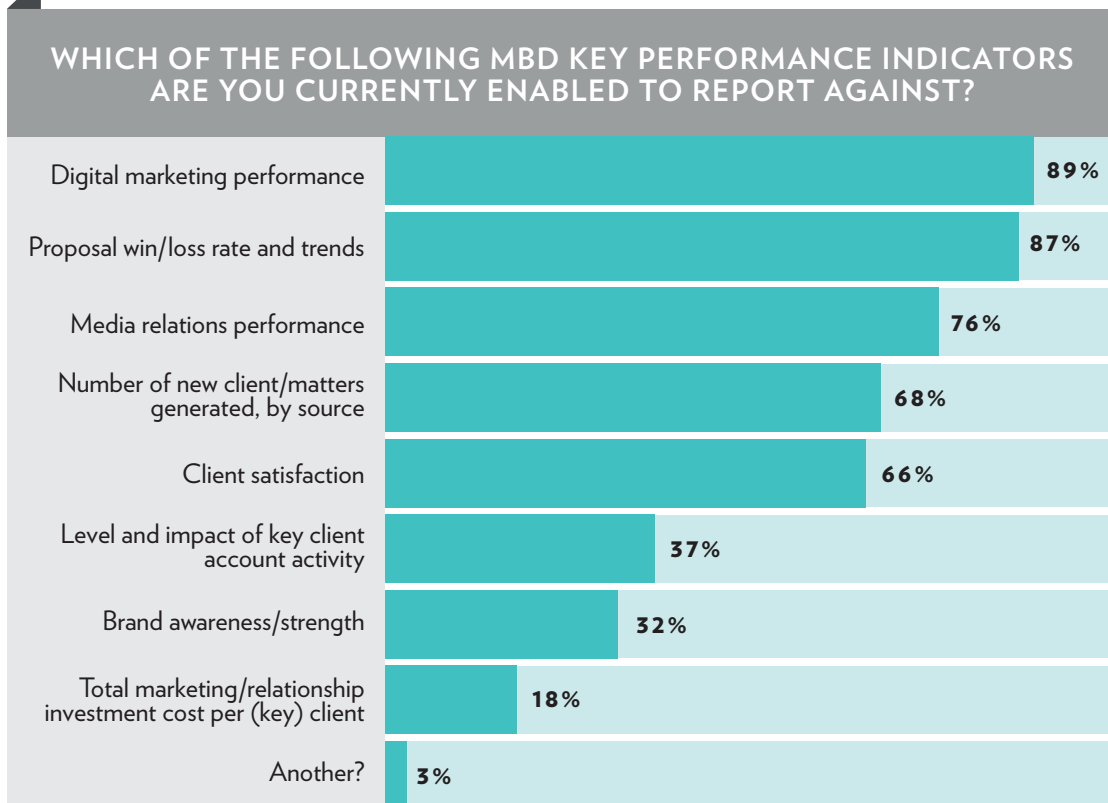
And Parkinson sees an opportunity for firms to differentiate with a slicker client experience in the space between compliance checks and the work

beginning. "There's an increasing focus on making the onboarding experience better. You can create welcome packs and carefully signpost services, relevant content and events – referrals, in particular, need close attention when feeding details into our systems," he says.

Finally, the likelihood that a **Briefing** law firm measures any of a range of 'client relationship health' indicators is another area where the picture is broadly consistent with the results in summer 2022. Lagging indicators like average matter profitability and satisfaction scores lead the way – although there's an increase in the number saying

**"Listening and feedback need to be processes the client actually values. It can't be an annual exercise – or ticking a box – and needs to have focus and open conversations."**

*David Tomley, international head of client development, Osborne Clarke*



they measure strength in client referrals and, most strikingly, looking externally at competitor analysis/ share of wallet (up from 17% in 2022 to 33% today). New enquiries and a given client’s position in its sector continue to be among the least-assessed metrics – with the impact/cost of key client account activity still among the least likely key performance indicators to be reported on (above).

Lucy Rao at Boodle Hatfield returns to the likely challenge of harnessing the right data here: “Firms may have the technology, but without having the data analysts or other resource to ensure data quality it’s less likely to be trusted for decision-making – people perhaps stop engaging with it as much and stop entering the data and then the

**!**

**IN BRIEF**

The most commonly tracked ‘client relationship health’ metrics continue to be lagging indicators – cash and client satisfaction. But more leaders say they’re assessing referrals and competitor performance in 2023 (p15). There’s still only a minority saying they can report on their key client account activity (p16).

quality drops again. It can become a vicious circle.” Julie Mortimer at Mills & Reeve concludes: “It’s relatively easy for law firms to measure outcomes like fees with the right systems, but understanding return on investment requires more surfacing up and recording of some softer interactions to measure the true level of engagement. Firm ties to the billable hour are still a challenge to driving change here, but a big step forward will be more effective assessment of qualitative factors, and the industry is now starting to wake up to that.”

**“Without the data analysts or other resource to ensure data quality it’s less likely to be trusted for decision-making.”**  
*Lucy Rao, business development director, Boodle Hatfield*