



A few of the partners in Fox Rothschild's Atlantic City office – from left: Apple Sulit-Peralejo (Litigation), Michael J. Viscount, Jr. (Financial Restructuring & Bankruptcy), Eileen Oakes Musckett (Litigation), Nicholas Casiello, Jr. (Chair, Gaming Practice) and Jack Plackter (Real Estate).

High Praise

Clients give Fox Rothschild top marks in satisfaction survey.

Many clients approach the task of choosing an attorney by focusing first on whether they need a large law firm—with its vast resources, extensive experience and teams of lawyers deployable at a moment's notice—or a smaller firm that may offer a sharper focus and a more personal touch.

But clients of Fox Rothschild LLP would probably tell you that there's no reason you can't have the best of both worlds.

In a recent client-satisfaction study published by the research firm BTI Consulting Group, Fox Rothschild earned high scores in 15 categories.

In BTI's Client Service A-Team Report, Fox earned top marks in several categories that might seem like a small law firm's greatest strengths—"Client Focus," "Keeps Clients Informed" and "Anticipates the Client's Needs"—as well as several that are clearly the bastion of the big firms—"Breadth of Services," "National Resources" and "Advice on Business Issues."

- Fox also made the BTI "honor roll" for:
- "Provides Value for the Dollar"
 - "Understands the Client's Business"
 - "Innovative Approach"

The six remaining categories in which Fox scored a top ranking were: "Handles Problems," "Commitment To Help," "Unprompted Communication," "Helps Advise on Business Issues," "Quality Products" and "Meets Core Scope."

We spoke with Michael J. Viscount Jr., the managing partner of Fox's Atlantic City office, about the secret to maintaining the appeal of a small or boutique law firm while also delivering all the benefits of a firm now ranked among the nation's 100 largest.

Statistically, Viscount notes, Fox is clearly one of the largest law firms in New Jersey, with more than 150 attorneys in the four New Jersey offices—Atlantic City, Morristown, Princeton and Roseland—and 750 total attorneys in 22 offices nationwide.

As the firm has grown, Viscount says he was concerned that the sheer size could intimidate some clients. But in practice, he says, clients have seen no change in the quality and personalization of service.

"Our service is individualized to each client," Viscount says. "And nearly all of the lawyers in our New Jersey offices have been practicing here for their entire careers so they are very familiar with the New Jersey business community."

Viscount says each of Fox's four New Jersey offices has its own specific strengths.

The Atlantic City office, located in the heart of the state's gaming industry, is home to a respected group of more than 30 attorneys practicing in corporate law, gaming, commercial litigation, bankruptcy, real estate and tax law. Viscount says he has been practicing with many of them since the mid-1980s.

New Jersey clients have benefitted from Fox's growth, Viscount adds. As the firm expanded from a regional powerhouse into a national firm, it broadened the scope of its experience to more than 60 practice areas.

And that translates to better client services, Viscount says, because "if you have any sort of legal problem outside of the scope of our normal practice, we can get you answers—quickly."

Viscount says one of his clients recently inquired about a retirement benefits issue—a topic that is not part of Viscount's day-to-day practice. Instead of spending hours researching the issue, Viscount simply picked up the phone and chatted with a Fox partner in the firm's Pittsburgh office who serves as co-chair of the firm's Employee Benefits & Compensation Department.

"I was able to get an answer immediately. That kind of quick access to seasoned and experienced lawyers in so many areas brings tremendous value for local clients. It's a savings both in time and in money," Viscount says.

Beyond Atlantic City, Viscount says, Fox's three other New Jersey offices each have their own character and strengths.

The Princeton office has grown to nearly 80 lawyers and is now one of the firm's largest. The office is known for a cadre of intellectual property lawyers, a deep bench of skilled litigators, a team of seasoned corporate attorneys, as well as strong teams of labor and employment, real estate and tax attorneys.

The Morristown office, he says, is home to a powerhouse team of real estate attorneys well-versed in the regional market and experienced in assisting developers and companies in growing their real estate portfolios.

Fox's Roseland office is scheduled to consolidate with the Morristown office in 2017 in a newly constructed office building that will house nearly 60 attorneys. Currently, the Roseland office provides a full range of corporate and litigation services, with a strong emphasis on labor and employment matters, as well as family law, securities, employee benefits, tax and wealth planning.

Viscount says he believes every client has a unique set of factors that come into play when choosing a law firm. The key to Fox's success, he says, is satisfying so many of those factors under one roof.

"We really are the best of both worlds—big-firm experience and resources combined with the charm and personal service of a small firm." ■

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