

October 2017

Dear Member

First off, let me say what a huge honour it is to take on the presidency of ACC Europe for 2018. As I will explain below, I am a fervent believer in our association, the value it brings to members and look forward to bringing even greater value add to members in the coming year.

In Europe, we have the considerable benefit of a loyal and enthusiastic member base. In the year to come, we have an exciting opportunity to consolidate on the strengths of the past and to build ACC Europe as the preeminent association for in-house counsel in Europe so more members can benefit from the advantages of being a part of the largest association of in-house counsel in the world.

On a recent call with our ACC Europe Country Representatives, I briefly shared a personal insight in how I came to ACC and what a difference it made to my work and professional experience.

A few years ago, I was transferred to Singapore to head up Hewlett-Packard's legal department in Asia Pacific. When I arrived, there was no existing network of international legal counsel. There were local Singaporean lawyer associations which discussed primarily Singaporean legal issues. However, they generally disregarded lawyers from multinational corporations who were not Singaporean. Moreover, at that time they seemed to disregard the international role Singapore played in the regional and world economy along with the commercial legal implications of that role. As a result, I reached out to a number of likeminded counterparts in multinationals and even larger Singaporean companies. We met and shared our similar perspectives. Prior to that date, personally, I had not been active in ACC and indeed ACC did not have a chapter in Singapore. Shortly thereafter, some of us approached ACC and founded a Chapter. It was a lot of work but it was a very rewarding experience. The reaction was wonderful - comradery and knowledge sharing made a world of difference to our experiences as expat lawyers of multinationals in Singapore. The value added was clear.

ACC improved things almost immediately, the collegial collaboration between members benefited the companies we worked for and ourselves personally. Upon being transferred back to Europe, I made contact with ACC in the region and got involved immediately. My experience could not have demonstrated more clearly the difference between life with and without ACC. The difference was night and day and ever since I have been profoundly grateful for ACC.

With that background in mind, it is with optimism and determination that I propose three goals for particular focus for ACC Europe this year:

- Membership Growth;
- Establish a Plan for a Coherent Content Offering to our members in Europe; and
- Influencing Positive Change for In-house Counsel in Europe through Advocacy.

First, regarding, Membership: 2018 holds great potential for our association. We, in Europe, along with the ACC team in Washington hold a common belief that there lies still untapped

potential for membership growth in our region. I understand that there are [over](#) 90,000 in-house counsel in Europe today. Given that our current membership is approximately 2,400 members in Europe, clearly we have a long way to go in bringing value to the total addressable market of in-house lawyers in the region.

One particular focus will be to grow membership in large legal departments in multinational companies headquartered in Europe. ACC is dedicating resources to focus on five key markets in Europe: UK, France, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. This focus will no way undermine efforts more broadly across the region but is seen as a high impact initiative to grow membership where there is a higher concentration of in-house counsel.

The objective of growth is not just growth for growth's sake but a genuine desire to bring the advantages of ACC to a population which to date has yet to benefit. Also, the larger the organization, the more influence it can have on its advocacy initiatives, for example. Also, the more members, the more we can call up support to build out the structure of the Chapter, again for the benefit of the members.

Second, the substantive content we provide to members is hugely important. We must deliver on our value proposition to our members regarding [tailored](#) programming and content. The vision for designing and planning programming and content must continue to emanate from us so that we stay true to our unique [moto](#) – designed by in-house counsel for in-house counsel. Importantly, this year, there will be a strong focus on increasing the European content in the legal resources offered to our members. Our Board is excited about this and would welcome hearing from anyone who wishes to be involved in this.

[In addition](#), of course, we also look forward to another stellar ACC Europe Conference – in Paris on 20 – 22 May 2018. Our Conference is the annual 'event of reference' for in-house counsel across Europe and this year's Conference promises to be one of the best ever. Together, these different strands will continue to provide an equalled value proposition towards our members in the region.

Thirdly, as a European association, we continue to play an active role advocating for diverse issues of fundamental importance to in-house counsel in our region [including](#), in particular, the recognition of in-house privilege locally and across the region and the Convention on the Profession of the Lawyer. We have a unique voice in these matters given our international perspective and given our broad member base. We need to continue to strive [to](#) influence and seek positive change in such areas for the benefit of our members.

There is a lot to do but there is a huge amount of energy with the newly appointed Officers, the Board, the Country Representatives and ACC members across Europe to seize upon these opportunities for the benefit of the organization as a whole in the coming 12 months.

I would be delighted to hear from any member who wishes to help with the realization of our aims or who has further suggestions on our work.

All the best,

Chris

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Chris Murphy Ives

President – ACC Europe

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