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**Chambers Changes on the Way**
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*From HBC's Sound Bites Blog (*www.hellermanbaretz.com/soundbites*)*

Recently, various members of the HBC team attended "Meet the Editors" events that Chambers (specifically, Chambers and Partners editors Catherine McGregor and Laura Mills) organized in Houston, Washington, and New York City. Always a fan of getting out from behind our desks and hitting the pavement, we enjoyed the opportunity to mingle with colleagues and clients and learned a lot about impending changes to the Chambers submission and research processes.

One change we wholeheartedly endorse is the move toward more "user-friendly" firm profiles. We understand the new profiles will be more detailed and focus on specific representative matters and firm experiences, rather than abstract descriptions of a firm's qualities. This only makes sense. Much as we marketers might want to define our firms' "brands" with positive generalities, in truth firms gain their reputations—and draw business—based on the specific work they've done and the specific people who do it. That's precisely why we floated the idea last month of rewriting law firms' boilerplate text to highlight individual attorneys within those firms. You can check out our full reasoning for that here.

Some other top-line takeaways:

- **Increased client research**: The goal of Chambers is to do more detailed client research versus attorney interviews. Researchers will continue to call provided client references (the meat of the rankings), but they will also do some independent client research, as well. Not all ranked attorneys will be interviewed every year, so if you don't get an interview request it doesn't mean you'll be left out of the rankings. Regardless of whether *Chambers* has requested an interview, they do encourage all to reach out with significant changes/updates as they occur.

- **Shorter research period**: The research period will be shortened to cut down on the lag time between information gathering and publication. Starting in 2012, the research period will take place between June and September.

- **No rolling submissions**: Instead of accepting submissions on a rolling basis, the submission periods will take place in April and July.

- **National submissions due first**: National submissions will take place first instead of state submissions. Since national submissions are being turned in this month per the old system, when the next submission period opens in April, you will only need to send updates on issues that have occurred between November 2011 and April 2012.

- **Increased scope of attorney rankings**: Researchers will also focus more on younger partners and associates than in the past, so it is important to include names of the full team for each deal submitted.

- **Earlier embargoed release**: Embargoed rankings will come out earlier next year (May), so that they can be included in July submissions.

- **Potential new Texas category**: There likely will be a new Capital Markets category added for the Texas state edition in 2013.

- **Chambers Confidential**: Lastly, Chambers now offers, on a bespoke basis, detailed feedback about law firms—in other words, "the research that doesn't get printed." Chambers Confidential, as the research will be called, can help firms gain a competitive edge since it allows them to see both positive and negative quotes from the market about practice(s).

If you're still not sure how to ensure stellar results for your firm's Chambers submissions in 2012, we encourage you to email us (click here to contact John Hellerman via email or call him at 202-274-4762). We'd be pleased to help you sort it all out.