

## GCs Name A-Listers For Client Service

By **Stewart Bishop**

*Law360, New York (February 01, 2012, 9:13 PM ET)* -- Corporate counsel from the Fortune 1000 and other billion-dollar companies have named the top 30 attorneys in the country who have made outstanding client service an essential base of their practice, hailing the litigators who go the extra mile for their clients.

Out of 272 attorneys nominated for outstanding client service, these 30 Client Service Super All-Stars and MVPs demonstrate an unmatched commitment to outstanding client service, according to the 2012 BTI Client Service All-Stars report from The BTI Consulting Group Inc. (Wellesley, Mass.).

"It's a way of life for them," BTI President Michael Rynowecer told Law360. "They get up in the morning and think about how they can communicate to their client. They think about how they can help their client. They're always thinking about what they can be doing better for their client. It's these kind of extra acts of care that really make a difference."

The survey of world-leading corporate counsel recognizes superior client service leaders. BTI, in its annual survey, asks general counsel and their direct reports to name those attorneys who drive superior client relationships.

Sanford V. Teplitzky of Ober|Kaler, who has earned praise from his clients for his his "breadth of knowledge" in health law and his client-focused delivery of practical advice to clients, says much of what makes for top-shelf client service is just being available.

"I make sure the client knows I'm here for them whenever they need me," Teplitzky said. "This is a fast-paced world and the issues that clients bring to me are bet your business issues. They want to know that they can reach you at anytime or anyplace."

Marc A. Alpert of Chadbourne & Parke LLP, who made BTI's roster of the top four attorneys in terms of client service, said much of his work boils down to acquiring an in-depth understanding of the clients' business and taking a almost personal stake in the clients' business.

"You've got to take ownership of your clients' problems," Alpert said. "Treat your clients' money as if it was your own."

Like most of the top attorneys on BTI's list, Alpert says providing quality work at a decent value is a working philosophy he really takes to heart.

"I don't view it as just aspirational, I view it as a principle to live by," Alpert said.

Michael Kendall of McDermott Will & Emery, who is in his fourth year as a BTI MVP, said in order to deliver truly great client service, one must strive to put yourself in the client's place, which means never taking a client for granted and never underestimating how important the problem is to them.

"It's about looking at things through a clients perspective and getting the best result," Kendall said.

Additionally, Kendall says nothing is a substitute for an attorney's in-depth involvement with all aspects of the case.

"You have to be intimately involved with the case," Kendall said. "Small concessions on the other side can open up a whole new approach. Nothing replaces talking to the witnesses yourself, and reading the documents yourself."

Ultimately, the top attorneys for client service concur that at the end of the day, lawyers are in the service industry, and that means keeping the client informed and satisfied.

"I grew up with a father who owned a retail store, and I learned you have to do whatever you have to do to make the customer happy," Teplitzky said. "It's about making sure I can deliver a quality product in a timely fashion at a reasonable price. And the product I'm selling now is me."

In addition to Alpert, the 2012 BTI Client Service Super All-Stars are Mark C. Kanaly of Alston & Bird LLP, William P. Aiken of Chambliss Bahner & Stophel PC, and Thomas A. Litz of Thompson Coburn LLP. Besides Teplitzky and Kendall, the 2012 BTI Client Service MVPs are H. Rodgin Cohen of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, Adam P. Hall of Frost Brown Todd, John F. Olson of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, Leslie A. Lanusse of Adams and Reese LLP, Anthony (Bud) A. Jackson of Chambliss, Bahner & Stophel PC, William H. Pickering of Chambliss, Bahner & Stophel PC, Michael A. Kahn of Crowell & Moring LLP, Kim J. Walker of Faegre Baker Daniels, Michael J. Tuteur of Foley & Lardner LLP, Gerard G. Pecht of Fulbright & Jaworski LLP, Anne M. Sidrys of Kirkland & Ellis LLP, Gary R. Cunningham of Lathrop & Gage LLP, W. Birch Douglass III of McGuireWoods LLP, Donald J. Silverman of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, Richard A. Menchini of O'Hare Parnagian LLP, Samuel Rosenthal of Patton Boggs LLP, Kelley A. Cornish of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, Daniel F. Kaplan of Perry, Guthery, Haase & Gessford PC, Peter Teare of Reed Smith LLP, David Israel of Sessions, Fishman, Nathan & Israel LLP, Peter C. Krupp of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Matthew M. Holman of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey LLP and Jonathan Wolfman of WilmerHale.

--Editing by Sarah Golin.