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FIRST LATIN AMERICAN FORUM ON LEGAL MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Marketing and business development emerged as strategic drivers of legal growth in Latin America

More than 100 professionals connected to the legal world from across Latin America gathered at the offices of Carey, the largest law firm in Chile.

The event, organized by the Latin American legal marketing and business development associations, AICMJ and LMBD, featured three panels of experts and international guests.



The forum, held at Carey's offices, brought together professionals from Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, and other countries, marking a milestone in the professionalization of legal marketing in Latin America.

"This event aims to build bridges between the different perspectives within law firms: those of the partners, the communications and business development teams, and the clients. Our goal is to build a strong and collaborative professional community that raises the

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standards of this discipline across the region," said Magdalena Engel, Head of Communications, Marketing, and Business Development at Carey and Director of the AICMJ.

The day began with the workshop "Legal Design Lab: Redesigning Law with Creativity," led by Angélica Flechas, founder and CEO of HÁPTICA, who guided participants through a hands-on legal design exercise focused on client needs using artificial intelligence tools.

"This was the first workshop in which we applied the Legal Service Design methodology combined with prompting and artificial intelligence to redesign real legal documents. The experience showed how creativity and empathy can be integrated into legal work to create more humane and efficient solutions," explained Flechas.

Next, Romina Buso, Business Development Manager for Latin America at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP and co-founder of LMBD, presented, "From Overhead Cost to Strategic Growth Driver: The Strategic Role of Business Development."



Buso emphasized the importance of clearly defining the role of the marketing and business development teams, avoiding administrative tasks that do not add strategic value, and she highlighted that talent is the backbone of law firms, both in legal teams and in support areas. She also warned of the impact of artificial intelligence, which is already transforming legal services and requiring firms to adapt, incorporate technology, and offer differentiated value propositions.

"Business development is no longer a support area, but a strategic

engine driving competitiveness and sustainability in law firms. The cultural shift toward integrated management of marketing, BD, and leadership management is now irreversible,” Buso stated.

The closing panel was “From the Other Side of the Desk: What Legal Managers Want and Need,” moderated by Pablo Iacobelli, Managing Partner at Carey, along with Gonzalo Smith (Falabella), Macarena Vargas (Codelco), and Natalia Jiménez (Crystal Lagoons).

“Listening directly to clients is an exercise of enormous value. This dialogue helps us better understand which practices build trust and how to foster more strategic and collaborative relationships,” Iacobelli emphasized.

The General Counsels panel addressed the evolving role of in-house legal advisors within organizations, highlighting their increasingly strategic role, and that, in this context, the support of external firms is essential, although its scope and complexity vary depending on the assignment. The panelists agreed that they particularly value agility, quality, transparency, and fulfillment of initial commitments, along with a clear sense of accountability. The most highly valued external lawyers are those who understand the business, the value chain, and the challenges of the sector, demonstrating alignment, commitment, and deep knowledge of the client's environment.

In crisis situations, they highlighted the importance of availability, speed, and transparency, valuing the closeness of those willing to work side by side, just a message away. They also agreed that corporate reputation and third-party references outweigh the self-promotion, as they represent objective validation of quality and reliability.



The event concluded with a networking brunch, which helped strengthen ties among teams from different countries and opened new opportunities for regional collaboration.