

# M&A Law Firm of the Year - Japan / Hibiya-Nakata



16

**Partner at Hibiya-Nakata Nobuo Nakata was delighted to hear of the firm's recent success in achieving M&A Law Firm of the Year. Nakata tells us more about the firm and, in particular, what this success can be attributed to.**

Hibiya-Nakata is one of the very few M&A boutique law firms in Japan which specialises in cross-border M&A.

*"Although for many Japanese companies global expansion of their operation by way of M&A is crucial under the current market situation, they do not have sufficient experience and know-how on how to deal with cross-border M&A," he explains. "We are responding to such needs through our involvement in the M&A transactions using "English style deal management" skill for the Japanese companies, making use of the global network of Allen & Overy."*

An award such as this is clear validation of the firm's team culture and Nakata continues to describe how the firm operates with regards to this.

*"The DNA of Hibiya-Nakata came originally from Allen & Overy, where Nobuo Nakata was a partner for years, but some changes have been made to effectively accommodate the current market needs. We are always speedy, client-friendly, flexible and innovative. Such culture has been generated by deep involvement of myself in almost all M&A transactions being advised by Hibiya-Nakata."*

As the global M&A market's strength retruns following a period of economic turbulence it is important for no firm to rest on its laurels and Nakata embellishes on how he continues to build business in the face of increasing competition.

*"Because of our unique nature, we do not have so many direct competitors in the Japanese market. What we currently need is to let the mark know more about Hibiya-Nakata and our service."*

Consolidation in the global legal market place continues unabated and, whilst there are opportunities for expansion through merger or acquisition, Nakata insists that small practices which focus on the specific practice area with strong expertise such as his are another way of the future of such a profession. It is through remaining smaller that Nakata can maintain the highest levels of service quality and the unique nature of the firm, although he is not adverse to the possibilities of further recruitment.

*"It has been our observation that experienced M&A expert lawyers tend to show really good interests in Hibiya-Nakata," he explains. "Hibiya-Nakata can provide best platform to ambitious and talented younger generation of M&A expert lawyers."*

With a history of less than two years of activity it is fair to say that Hibiya-Nakata is still in the early stages of establishing its brand as a quality cross-border M&A boutique law firm. However, it does have the strong support of the Allen & Overy global network behind it. Nakata firmly believes that the firm has a strong USP that is clearly articulated and positioned to differentiate the firm from the competitors.

*"Hibiya-Nakata (i) is focusing on cross-border M&A making full use of English style deal management skill, (ii) has small number of lawyers who however are all very experienced in cross-border M&A and (iii) is freely accessible to and is supported by the global network of Allen & Overy. All these factors will result in best quality service with most efficient legal fee. Since such M&A boutique law firm is very new in concept in the Japanese market, it is not so easy to be correctly understood by the market but such recognition is being expanded in the market steadily."*

## Fact File

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