

## *Client perception of Potter Clarkson*

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An independent qualitative research programme undertaken for Potter Clarkson LLP, Nottingham by Clarke Associates UK Limited

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Research conducted: Spring 2014

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## Summary Report

### Executive summary

The research revealed that clients enjoy a good working relationship with Potter Clarkson LLP and are very likely to recommend the firm to others. Clients would however, appreciate further information and flexibility on likely costs.

### What do clients of Potter Clarkson think of Potter Clarkson?

That is one of the questions we set out to answer through an independent qualitative research programme conducted in the first quarter of 2014 on behalf of Potter Clarkson. The aims were to gain an...

- ...appreciation of how clients view the service(s) of Potter Clarkson
- ...understanding of the extent of clients' knowledge of the firm's services, its skills - and its scope
- ...insight into any changes that would improve the service to clients.

### What we did

Our aim was to interview between 15 and 20 clients of Potter Clarkson worldwide. Some 40 clients were selected at random by Potter Clarkson in accordance with agreed criteria, which ensured a good cross-section for sampling purposes. We arranged detailed one-to-one interviews with senior individuals in about half of the selected clients – chosen randomly by us. Eighteen client interviews were conducted. Participant response would be unattributed. The research included a small quantitative element in order to measure the perception of the firm's services in a number of core areas.

We have reported fully to senior members of Potter Clarkson's management and the output of our research and deliberations is included in a 37 page report plus a detailed presentation and include a number of recommendations resulting from the research.

The principal outcomes include:

## Level of support

Clients enjoy the support given to them by Potter Clarkson and there is frequently a strong and long-standing relationship between the client and Potter Clarkson, and the firm's staff.

“ Potter Clarkson has been representing us for many years. I like to be able to call people without a pre-arranged time. I like to be able to speak with the person I'm trying to reach...we have very good access and I really like that. ”

“ We enjoy a hard-working relationship. ”

“ I would say it (the relationship) has been excellent – a particular matter I brought to them – they analysed it, they went further than I had anticipated because of their knowledge and expertise and they then got us more out of the matter which was great. So the value to us was huge. ”

## Knowledge of the firm

Some clients had less detailed knowledge of the firm's specialisms and sectors. However, the understanding by Potter Clarkson of the client's own sector/industry was rated highly. Many said they relied significantly on the firm – and that its sector and professional knowledge was critical.

“ Their knowledge is excellent and they have provided their services for a very long time and know more about (our) trademarks than anyone else internally. They bring their wider portfolio knowledge to the table. ”

“ I don't think they do a good job of promoting their services. They're not very good at shouting about it...but they do have the skills. ”

## Brand attributes

The four words or phrases most often mentioned when, unprompted, interviewees were asked to describe Potter Clarkson were:

- 1 Technically sound/experts in their field
- 2 Established
- 3 Professional
- 4 International

## Relationships with clients

A good proportion of clients expressed a desire for a more open and transparent relationship particularly in relation to fees, forecasting costs and their understanding of the firm's charges. However, the great majority of those interviewed acknowledged that a high-quality responsive service delivered by senior and experienced people would have a price attached to it. But there is also a desire for Potter Clarkson to be willing to forecast fees and costs where possible, to discuss fees and to adopt a flexible approach.

“ What I'm looking for is being upfront. Call me up and say this is going to be costly, this is what we propose. That creates trust. ”

“ I'd like an annual or bi-annual review – where we sit down and discuss fee levels. I'd like more openness. It would help both sides. ”

## How do clients rate Potter Clarkson?

We asked clients to rate Potter Clarkson on a 10 point scale (with 10 being exceptionally good). On average, the firm scored a highly commendable 8.54 across eight key areas.

It scored particularly well in respect of its expertise and technical ability; the overall quality of its service and its responsiveness. It was also ranked highly in terms of its problem solving ability as well as being pre-emptive and thinking ahead.

“ We’re very happy with them; they do great work. ”

“ I think they are a great firm...one of the best that we have worked with. ”

“ They absolutely add value to our work. ”

Expertise/technical ability



Overall quality of service



Responsiveness



Service Level



Accessibility



Problem solving ability



Thinking ahead/pre-empting relevant issues



Fee levels



Overall average



## Would clients recommend Potter Clarkson to others?

Yes – and resoundingly so. To help quantify that, we utilised the Net Promoter System (NPS)\* to help evaluation.

NPS evaluates customer loyalty to a brand or company as opposed to evaluating satisfaction with a particular product or transaction. It is based on the fundamental perspective that every company's customers can be divided into three categories. "Promoters" are loyal enthusiasts who keep buying from a company and would urge others to do the same. "Passives" are satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who can be wooed by the competition. And "detractors" are unhappy customers trapped in a bad relationship.

Potter Clarkson scored an admirable 77.8 - a score that places the firm in the highest quartile of all results and potentially within the top 10% of all companies worldwide.



## Potter Clarkson: the firm's response

“ We are really grateful to all those clients that participated – and all those who expressed a willingness to do so. This research has provided us with a real insight into the views of our clients. We are delighted that there is such a high level of satisfaction but we are far from complacent.

We are responding directly to those areas, such as openness and transparency on charges, where we aim to make further improvements.

Our objective is to continually achieve real results for our clients. We are committed to achieving client satisfaction and to exceeding the most demanding of expectations. ”

Colin Baker  
Managing Partner  
Potter Clarkson LLP

June 2, 2014

\* "Net Promoter Score" is a customer loyalty metric developed by (and a registered trademark of) Fred Reichheld, Bain & Company, and Satmetrix.

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