

professions

Miami law firms offer unmatched international expertise

There's a new breed of professionals joining law firms in Miami. They are called international consultants. They travel regularly to Latin America and speak several languages. Some are international bankers. Some are lawyers licensed to practice in countries other than the U.S.

They know more than just the legal workings of other countries. They know the politics, business environments and these consultants offer services unmatched by law firms outside Miami.

Their mandate is to work with Latin American clients doing business in the United States and with U.S. clients who want to do business in South and Central America.



**CINDY KRISCHER
GOODMAN**

PROFESSIONS

The law firm of **Ruden McClosky** just hired four international consultants with intriguing résumés in its Miami office. They are **Felipe Garcia**, **Carlos Ignacio Aguilar**, **Luis Velez** and **Ariel Bentata**. Garcia is admitted to practice law in Mexico and specializes in the telecommunications sector, especially in the Pay TV and Internet industries. Aguilar is a corporate attorney admitted to practice in Venezuela and recently has represented several Internet service providers with their expansion to Latin America. Velez, admitted in Ecuador, has experience developing strategies for expansion in Latin America. Bentata is admitted in New York and Venezuela, and previously worked as Latin American Counsel of MTV Networks Latin America and currently serves as outside Latin American Counsel for the Association of Television Programmers.

Leoncio De La Peña, a partner with the law firm of **De La Peña and Bajandas** in

Miami, earlier this year teamed up with an international consultant and formed a separate company called **Global Consulting Group**. That company helps the law firm's clients with matters other than their legal needs. **Ruben Gomez**, a high profile international banker and most recently former CEO of IFB (International Finance Bank), is running the company. Already Global Consulting has landed World Bank as a client. **Jorge Daniel Rotsztain**—a former executive with El Sitio, a Spanish language portal—will be joining Global Consulting in January, bringing his Internet expertise to the firm.

De la Peña, whose firm represents some of the big banks, aviation companies and brokerage homes in Latin America, said: "Clients walk in the door and expect you to deliver legal services and consulting services. It's the wave of the future."

Then there's **Luis Lauredo**, an international consultant at **Hunton & Williams** in Miami.

Lauredo is not a licensed lawyer or a registered lobbyist. He is a former United States ambassador to the Organization of American States. Using his political and business know-how, he regularly consults law firm clients on cross border transactions and international trade issues.

Earlier this year, the law firm of **Ferrell Schultz** in Miami hired **Gerold Ibler**. He is a financial expert and management consultant with expertise in Europe and South America. He is a licensed lawyer in Austria. He regularly counsels firm clients on doing business in Europe. Ibler said he's currently advising a German bank owner with a manufacturing plant in Croatia on selling his businesses.

OUT-OF-STATE ENTRY

Louisiana's largest law firm is opening an office in Miami. **Jonas Walker Waechter Poitevent Carrere & Denegre** of New Orleans wants to use Miami to jump

into Latin America. It has leased 8,700 square feet in Courvoisier Center on Brickell Key Drive. The firm has hired **John Rooney**, former managing partner of **Fowler Rodriguez** in Miami, to head the office. Rooney, an international financial services lawyer, concentrates on insurance and reinsurance matters.

It's an easy entry for Jones Walker, which took over furnished office space formerly occupied by the law firm of **Burd Lozano** (recently merged into Tew Cardenas). New Orleans-based Jones Walker also has offices in Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Washington, D.C., and Houston.

Charles Landry, a Jones Walker executive committee member, said his firm is entering Miami because it wants to expand its Latin American business.

"We have significant client ties in Latin America and have a need to have a Miami base of