



BarkerGilmore ADVISING CASE STUDY

THE CLIENT:

PUBLIC RETAIL
COMPANY

ADVISING

SERVICES:

[LAW](#)

[DEPARTMENT](#)

[CONSULTING](#)

INDUSTRY:

[CONSUMER](#)

Building a Better Business Partner for a Public Retail Company

CLIENT NEED:

BUILD A COST-EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT LEGAL TEAM

The client is a public retail company based in the United States, Canada, and Europe. The client acquired and merged with other companies, bringing the legal department to approximately 20 members.

The [General Counsel](#), who had been in the role for a short time, wanted input on how to improve the department, including how best to integrate the team members from the newly acquired and merged companies, and what the best organizational structure of the department should be. The General Counsel also wanted assistance demonstrating the legal department's value to the C-suite and the board.

Challenges:

- The client is cost-conscious.
- The C-suite experienced turnover, and the GC needed to understand how legal should prove its value with metrics and financial data.
- The GC wanted to improve staff performance while ensuring the most successful team members remained engaged.

SOLUTION:

BARKERGILMORE'S LAW DEPARTMENT CONSULTING

The General Counsel enlisted one of BarkerGilmore's [Senior Advisors](#) to provide advisory services. The Senior Advisor had managed operations for a large Fortune 500 law department and had years of operational, financial, and organizational expertise from serving as a General Counsel and a Chief Operating Officer.

Throughout the engagement, the Senior Advisor:

- Met with the General Counsel to understand the department's pain points, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Met with the senior lawyers and leaders in Human Resources.
- Charted out the roles and responsibilities of everyone within the department.
- Helped the client understand how team members spend their time.
- Completed a review of the systems, roles and responsibilities, and feedback from business clients for the legal departments of the merged and acquired companies.

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RESULTS:

A BETTER BUSINESS PARTNER THROUGH COST-EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

As a result of the engagement, the client eliminated waste and made the department more collaborative and streamlined. Some systems, such as project assignments and gaps or duplications of legal coverage, were improved. The GC and other leaders learned about data metrics for lawyers that mesh with the goals of the company and the best ways to provide and prove value. Thus, the client became a better business partner and delivered a superior, cost-effective work product.

Specifically, the Advisor:

- 1. Implemented an RFP process for outside counsel.** The RFP process saved the client time and money and laid the groundwork for better coverage and cost. The RFP process also provided the GC with metrics to clearly establish the legal department's value and document how the client cut costs.
- 2. Aligned the areas of strength for the attorneys with the business needs.** With the roles and responsibilities chart, the client reviewed the structure logically, easily noticed gaps and duplication of effort, and addressed underperformance. The chart led to the creation of new roles and job descriptions, the realignment of the responsibilities of attorneys and paralegals, and changes to the reporting structure.
 - Team members were more engaged and productive. Some of the lawyers expanded their portfolios and were able to take on leadership roles to keep them engaged. Additionally, the client began integrating the lawyers from the merged and acquired companies into the legal department and adopted some of their business processes.
- 3. Increased collaboration within the legal department and between the legal department and the procurement and human resources teams.** The procurement team was appreciative that they could better support the legal team through the RFP process. The HR team welcomed the ability to benchmark and determine if the attorneys were paid fairly and at the right level for their tasks. Moreover, the legal department implemented team meetings to facilitate consultations across similar areas of law and requests for assistance.

The client reported that this organizational consulting was excellent, providing great insights and solutions. After six months of consulting, the GC was able to save \$700,000 per year by combining three lawyer roles into two and re-leveling some roles, and 15% of law firm fees for antitrust and import/export counsel as a result of BarkerGilmore's development of an effective RFP process.