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2023

Maiwald

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GLOBAL
LEADERS

2023

INTERVIEWS WITH THE PINNACLE
OF THE PATENT LAW PROFESSION

Maiwald

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Maiwald is one of Germany's largest IP firms, with around 240 people in Munich and Düsseldorf who work closely with one another and with foreign associates. Given the size of the firm, how do you achieve a balance between so many experts and yet work together as a team to meet clients' needs?

The atmosphere at Maiwald is characterised by mutual respect and open-mindedness. Each individual is valued for his or her capabilities and character. We practice fair-mindedness, social responsibility, openness and a willingness to help in our day-to-day interactions – both at the workplace and beyond it.

High levels of talent, motivation, responsibility and team spirit in our people form the basis for our success. While Maiwald has a flat hierarchy in which partners lead their individual teams, the group structure is flexible and teams work closely with each other. This allows us to handle cases of any size and urgency. Within individual teams, the partners see themselves as catalysts; they can achieve a great deal but also know that they can do little without the efforts of individual team members. Thus, we ensure that every person has the opportunity to make a visible impact. The primary skill required of team leaders is the ability to raise the level of commitment and drive in the individuals that they influence.

At the heart of our multi-connective approach lies far-sighted thinking, as well as personal consultation. Clients can draw on the combined expertise of our interdisciplinary team of patent attorneys, attorneys at law and in-house patent search specialists. We advise and represent clients across a wide range of industries, mindful of the importance of staying ahead of the curve, especially in these times of rapid technological change and innovation. Maiwald's experts ensure the success of our clients' projects by combining all the necessary skills: sound legal and business knowledge paired with technical and scientific know-how.

Maiwald takes gender equality and equal advancement opportunities seriously, as shown in the high number of women at management level. What has been the secret to your success in this area?

Maiwald believes that gender equality and equal advancement opportunities are key to our success. The spirit of equity is integral to the firm and has always been reflected on all levels, including top-level management.

We offer flexibility, trust and consideration for family matters, respecting the individual needs of each employee and aiming to provide a practicable solution.



Dr. Eva Dörner, Partner



Dr. Ing Sophie Ertl, Partner

This ensures that the doors to a stellar career are open to all, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. We believe that our inclusive mindset is the most relevant reason for our outstandingly high number of women and the diversity of our teams.

How have client demands changed over the past decade, and what impact has this had on the services offered by the firm?

These days, clients expect faster return times. Financial pressure and the need for efficiency, along with increased awareness and consideration of reasonable IP measures are also crucial. We individually tailor services to clients' needs, while delivering high-quality services at competitive prices. It was previously more common to handle individual files, but now voluminous mandates are on the rise. Close coordination and

both interdisciplinary and individual support within a deadline-paced environment is mandatory.

What are some of the biggest challenges confronting your clients right now and how is the firm helping them face these?

We are keeping pace with the two biggest challenges – acceleration and digitalisation – by expanding our information technology structures. We are also playing to our greatest strength: individual consultation.

Legal issues are becoming increasingly complex as the world itself becomes more complicated. Tasks require a multidimensional perspective, which is why large and interdisciplinary teams are required.

Maiwald covers a variety of legal areas with a highly motivated and experienced team, providing a one-stop-shop for clients. We work seamlessly with clients' in-house experts and management.

How is Maiwald preparing for the launch of the UPC?

We have set up a dedicated internal UPC taskforce to answer all types of UPC-related questions from clients, colleagues and staff. We have prepared materials in various formats (eg, videos, lectures, podcasts and website content) for clients and on our intranet for Maiwald staff. We have also implemented new workflows and have conducted intense internal training sessions for attorneys and paralegals.

With regard to external communication, we have published UPC-related newsletters and blog articles on our website as well as in law and scientific journals. Dr Ing Sophie Ertl, our partner responsible for UPC implementation, regularly speaks at UPC-related events, such as the roundtable discussion at the IP Service World in Munich and IAM Connect: UPC. She has gained special insight into this area as a member of the board of directors of the German Patent Attorney Association.

How have working practices altered in response to the pandemic and does Maiwald expect for any of these changes to be permanent?

Even before the pandemic, a sustainable business practice (including a proactive and holistic approach) was a core corporate value for Maiwald. We have experienced a significant increase in remote work, home-office



Dr Eva Ehlich, Partner



Dr Naho Fujimoto, Partner

options and video conferencing with clients, which seem to be permanent changes. We possess the flexibility to adjust to these changes. By introducing a guide for digital work and cooperation, we are strengthening media competence and digital communication of our staff, without neglecting the human component. For us, social responsibility also includes sensitive and responsible management of our own human resources.

What does inspirational leadership look like at Maiwald?

We have several key principles. Success depends on each individual but is an achievement of many. Never

lose your humility or desire to do your best, and never stop building on strong ideas. Always remember that the spirit of your team needs to be nurtured and stimulated, so offer to help when a member of your team clearly needs it. Show a genuine interest in what your team members want and need to develop their careers. We motivate, support and promote our talents and allow team members to take responsibility for what they do.

The firm works with clients of all sizes (including start-ups, medium and large corporations) across a range of sectors and legal areas, both in Germany and worldwide. How does Maiwald tailor its services to fit the specific needs of each client?

To ensure the best possible outcome, it is critical that the team assembled to handle a project is composed of individuals who are specifically qualified for the task at hand. Many of our attorneys have industry experience and are therefore familiar with both sides. Our multidisciplinary approach provides room for creative, outside-the-box thinking and allows us to work across disciplines and consider alternative approaches for addressing problems from different angles.

We believe that the diverse make-up of our teams and close-knit and sincere relationships are also decisive factors in our success. Experience has shown that people with varied cultural and religious backgrounds, of mixed age structures and lifestyles view challenges differently. This works to the benefit of our firm as well as our international clientele.

What steps is Maiwald taking to build the next generation of talent?

Without the next generation, we cannot satisfy our clients' needs, and thus, Maiwald takes the demands of our young talent very seriously indeed. We are supportive of all types of training material and courses, and offer flexible work time to allow our people to balance work and training. In addition to our flat hierarchies, we also trust and rely on our young talent, encouraging them to work independently and directly with clients,



Dr Martin Huenges, Partner



Dr Marco Stief, Partner

without leaving them to fend for themselves when unresolved questions may arise. Moreover, our partners and experienced colleagues provide regular internal seminars and mentoring. We also encourage our young talent to visit IP-related conferences for networking possibilities and offer internships at foreign law offices.