



Robert R. Lucic  
Direct dial: 603.627.8188  
Fax: 603.641.2381  
rlucic@sheehan.com

### Practice Areas

International Law

## Good Company

### Think Globally, Work Globally

Monday, July 07, 2008

Companies that ignore the global marketplace do so at their peril. Businesses must be able to react to forces around the globe almost instantaneously as information regarding events in the Far East, Europe, Africa, South America arrives in real time. Even businesses which do not have a physical presence outside their jurisdictions must think on a global scale in order to remain competitive.

Business law firms are no different. Law firms must constantly strive to meet the needs of their clients, wherever those needs are. In today's world that can mean Bangalore, India just as easily as Manchester, New Hampshire.

Thirty years ago, law firms used satellite offices to project a national or international presence. Thinking globally meant opening a branch office in Washington, DC, London or Paris. The international marketplace today is much more complex. Clients are just as likely to have interests in Shanghai or Mexico City as in London.

How does a New England based law firm service its clients in the global marketplace? In 1989 a group of lawyers from leading independent law firms around the globe, among them Richard Morse from Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green, got together and formed an organization called Lex Mundi. The purpose of Lex Mundi, rather than establishing a global law firm, was to allow independent law firms in jurisdictions around the world to have access to a network of the best lawyers in each jurisdiction to provide the best quality legal services to clients around the world.

Key to the success of the organization was development of personal relationships among lawyers for the member firms. Lex Mundi was not to be simply a faceless list of names published in a book, but a real network in which lawyers from the member firms knew one another and had confidence in each other's abilities.

Today Lex Mundi has 160 member firms with more than 560 offices in 100 countries with one member firm per jurisdiction. It represents an organization of more than 21,000 lawyers around the world.

As the organization grew, the focus on the quality of the legal services remained the primary focus. Each member firm is peer reviewed by the other member firms every eight years. Each member firm must meet rigorous client service standards and member firms consistently provide information to other members regarding best practices to allow the best possible level of service.

Member firms commit to publishing "Doing Business" guides for their

respective jurisdictions. These guides are available to member firms and clients alike at [www.lexmundi.com](http://www.lexmundi.com). Lex Mundi practice groups also publish numerous surveys regarding issues of concern for lawyers and businesses alike, such as the Bank Finance and Regulation Survey and the In-House Counsel and Attorney-Client Privilege Surveys.

In addition, as Lex Mundi has grown, lawyers in each member firm have been encouraged to participate in the Lex Mundi practice groups allowing lawyers with particular areas of practice to get to know their colleagues around the world which further enhances the cherished aspect of Lex Mundi as being a network of independent law firms whose lawyers have personal relationships with their colleagues around the world.

In practical terms, this means that expert legal advice is merely a telephone call or email away, no matter where an issue arises. Sheehan Phinney's clients have used the Lex Mundi member firms throughout the world with issues ranging from tax and employment issues in France, bankruptcy issues in Germany, not for profit organizations seeking to provide services in South Africa and protecting clients intellectual property rights throughout the globe.

Other Lex Mundi firms have brought their clients to Sheehan Phinney to work in complex nationwide insurance litigation, employment matters, and tax matters (yes some of our member firms are surprised to learn that we do have taxes in New Hampshire). We have worked cooperatively with other firms around the United States on regulatory matters and with firms around the world on international tax, employment, and intellectual property rights issues.

As in any business, the ability to project one's presence seamlessly on a global scale is essential in the Twenty-First Century economy. Lex Mundi is the paradigm of global networking and allows Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green to provide the best quality legal services anywhere in the world.

***This article is intended to serve as a summary of the issues outlined herein. While it may include some general guidance, it is not intended as, nor is it a substitute for, legal advice. Your receipt of Good Company or any of its individual articles does not create an attorney-client relationship between you and Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green or the Sheehan Phinney Capitol Group. The opinions expressed in Good Company are those of the authors of the specific articles.***