

# BTI Brand Elite

Client Perceptions of the Best-Branded Law Firms

*Executive Summary*



**2017**

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## **Your *BTI Brand Elite* order includes:**

- An exclusive *BTI Brand Strength Spotlight*
- A detailed, custom analysis of how your firm's 9 brand attributes perform against up to 8 key competitors of your choosing
- A 6-year history of the firm's brand performance

## **Order today:**

[www.bticonsulting.com/brandelite](http://www.bticonsulting.com/brandelite)

# How POWERFUL IS YOUR BRAND?

## 28 BEST-BRANDED FIRMS RANKED ABOVE ALL OTHERS

### BTI BRAND ELITE 2017

A typical Fortune 1000 client works with an average of 37 firms—the largest clients turn to more than 100. Making a memorable impression is a high hurdle. A modifier such as “Litigation” fails to narrow the playing field. Even adding specificity such as “IP Litigation,” though helpful, doesn’t dip the numbers below a dozen. Yet ask clients to name their most trusted, go-to provider or which firm delivers the highest value and suddenly the leaders begin to shine.

In the eyes of clients, law firms are rarely distinguished because of practice-specific expertise. With a few notable exceptions, corporate counsel assess and differentiate firms on less tangible, more subjective qualities. These intangibles are how law firms are branded in the eyes of clients.

In 2008, BTI launched the first, large-scale brand valuation study of law firms to demonstrate the significant link between a law firm’s brand and business results. Specifically:

- Increased revenue
- Outsize financial performance
- Greater access to premium rates

*BTI Brand Elite* ranks the law firms with the best brand standing among GCs and legal decision makers. Additionally, BTI provides you with a road map of activities to ensure your brand starts winning you more work tomorrow.



# BRAND DRIVES PERFORMANCE

The 28 law firms earning a spot on BTI’s 2017 Brand Elite list underscores the power of brand. These firms enjoy:

**61.4% HIGHER PROFITS PER PARTNER**

The message: a strategic brand management framework can unlock growth for your law firm.

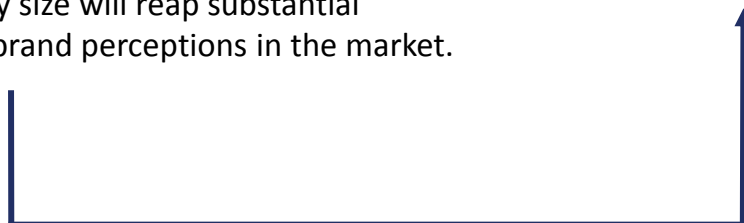
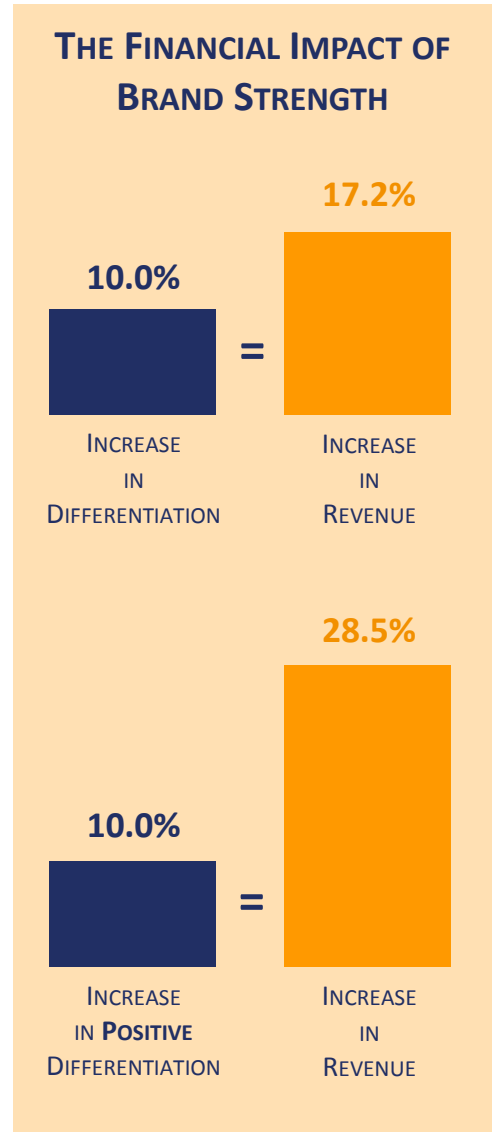
BTI brings together market, brand, competitor, and financial data into a single framework to help you:

- Assess the performance of your firm’s brand against competitors
- Identify areas for improvement
- Quantify the financial impact of investing in your firm’s brand

### An Important Note on Law Firm Branding

When it comes to branding, the most frequent argument raised is: brand is driven by size—not vice versa.

BTI has distilled the 9 core attributes most impacting brand strength and differentiating a law firm in the eyes of corporate counsel and legal decision makers ([see page 36](#)). These attributes are based on why clients hire and recommend law firms—not the services, size, or location of a law firm. BTI’s research shows law firms of any size will reap substantial financial benefit by improving brand perceptions in the market.



# HOW TO BUILD YOUR BRAND TO DRIVE GROWTH

## PROFIT FROM YOUR FIRM'S STRENGTHS BY USING STRATEGIES TAILORED TO OVERCOME YOUR WEAKNESSES

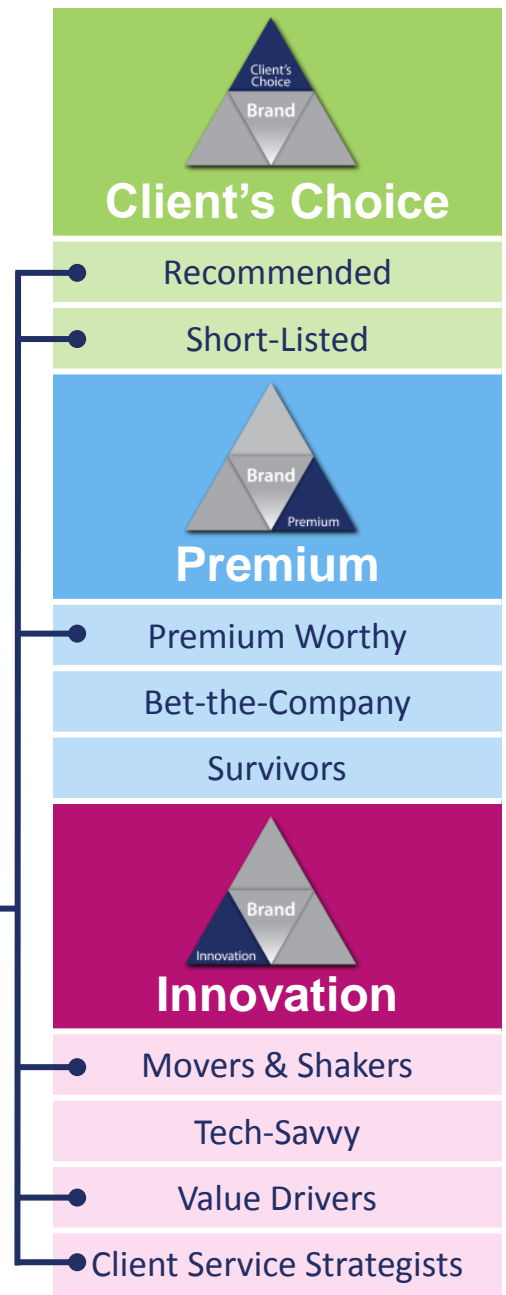
The building of a recognizable brand rarely happens overnight. For law firms in particular, a brand is built over time through a series of direct—and indirect—interactions.

A byline in a respected publication, an engaging presentation at an industry event, a hosted educational forum, or a fiercely effective opposition strategy all can contribute to the impression a client develops. Yet some imprints go deeper than others.

Emotional reactions leave a mark more indelible than casual or fleeting exposure. Activities which speak to clients' most pressing needs—such as 2017's top-rated goal of driving value—earn prominence. As do “sure thing” reputations and one-on-one experiences. Ultimately, a law firm who is firing on all cylinders—racking up brand recognition along each of the 9 critical success factors—will have the most opportunities to be considered for hire across different, changing scenarios.

**IF YOU ASSESS NOTHING ELSE, ASSESS THIS:**  
YOUR FIRM'S CLIENT SERVICE PERFORMANCE  
DIRECTLY IMPACTS  
6 OF THE 9 BRAND DIFFERENTIATORS

**DIFFERENTIATE BY DELIVERING  
BETTER CLIENT SERVICE  
THAN OTHER FIRMS SERVING YOUR CLIENTS**



**BUILD BRAND DIFFERENTIATION AND WIN MORE WORK  
ORDER BTI BRAND ELITE TODAY**

# BRAND ELITE:

## METHODOLOGY

BTI's goal each year is to be objective and transparent in our rankings. The *BTI Brand Elite* is a data-driven ranking based solely on in-depth telephone interviews with leading legal decision makers.

**This research is independent and unbiased—no law firm or organization other than BTI sponsors this study. No law firm or attorney influences the results, submits nominations, or provides client names to BTI.**

Each year, BTI reaches out to a sample of legal decision makers at large organizations with \$1 billion or more in revenue. *BTI Brand Elite 2017* draws on data collected in BTI's ongoing Annual Survey of General Counsel.

Participants are granted confidentiality at the individual and organizational level. [See page 91](#) for a demographic overview of the organizations interviewed.

BTI's brand valuation system relies on 3 variables to leave no room for subjective opinion or judgment:

### 1. Persuasiveness

Strong brands influence client choice, hiring, and rates, especially premium rates. BTI assessed which activities were most important to legal decision makers when:

- Making hiring decisions
- Bestowing law firm recommendations
- Awarding premium-rate work

From this analysis BTI isolated 9 attributes most frequently associated with a strong law firm brand.

### 2. Strength

BTI conducted 633 in-depth telephone interviews with legal decision makers to solicit candid, open-ended feedback as to which law firms stand out as the best in each of the 9 activities.

This analysis relies on top-of-mind awareness. Meaning, legal decision makers were not asked about particular law firms. Rather, open-ended questions were asked to determine which law firms truly harness the power of brand to be remembered by decision makers.

### 3. Competitiveness

Performance on the 9 brand factors is judged relative to other law firms to assess the competitive strength of each law firm identified by General Counsel and legal decision makers. This cross-market analysis delivers an insightful snapshot of the strength and weakness of a law firm's brand.

# Methodology and Demographics

*Independent, unbiased research*

## 2017 Survey Participant Demographics

### OVERVIEW

Each year, BTI reaches out to a sample of legal decision makers at large organizations with \$1 billion or more in revenue. *BTI Brand Elite 2017* draws on data collected in BTI's ongoing Annual Survey of General Counsel.

<b>Interviews</b>	633 in-depth telephone interviews
<b>Time Frame</b>	Conducted between <b>March 9, 2015</b> and <b>August 1, 2016</b>
<b>Incentives</b>	Respondents receive a complimentary report of legal benchmarks and metrics

### Methodology:

BTI's brand valuation system relies on 3 variables to leave no room for subjective opinion or judgment:

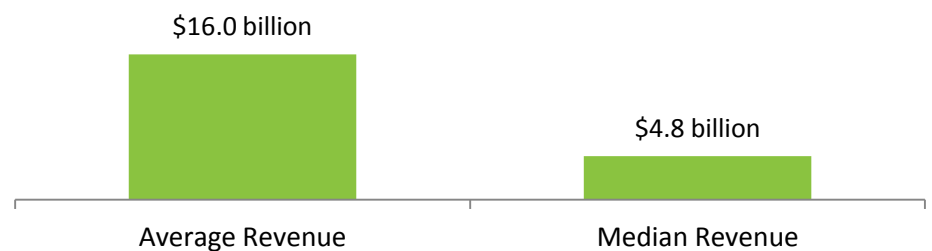
- Persuasiveness
- Strength
- Competitiveness

[See page 4](#) for an overview of the methodology used in analyzing the interviews conducted for BTI's ongoing Annual Survey of General Counsel.

### HIGHEST-RANKING LEGAL DECISION MAKERS

- General Counsel/Chief Legal Officer
- Direct Report to General Counsel
- Other Legal Decision Maker

### ORGANIZATIONS WITH HIGHEST LEVELS OF LEGAL SPENDING



### REPRESENTATIVE OF MORE THAN 15 INDUSTRY SEGMENTS

Banking	High Tech	Professional Services
Chemicals	Insurance	Retail Trade
Consumer Goods	Investment Banks	Telecom
Energy	Manufacturing	Transportation
Financial Services	Pharma	Wholesale Trade

## Key Services To Help Our Clients

*Data-driven insights and high-impact advice*

### Driving Superior Client Relationships. Fueling Superior Growth and Profits.

BTI conducts more independent research on how clients acquire, manage, and evaluate their professional services providers than virtually anyone.

We benchmark how Fortune 1000 companies buy, how professional services firms sell, and how to manage service provider performance. Through more than 14,000 independent interviews with C-level executives and systematic analysis, BTI has helped professionals boost client service for 27 years.

We examine the market from the client's perspective. Our proprietary methods include open-ended interviews with high-level executives and decision makers, carried out by highly trained senior interviewers. These are not to be confused with check-off-the-box surveys. Our reports and findings are based on what your clients and users say: we don't put words in their mouths and we don't look to third parties to report what your clients are saying.

BTI is the leading provider of strategic, client-based research to the legal community. BTI has helped more than 200 law firms and professional services firms improve client service through compelling research and advice. We conduct the only continuous benchmarking market study in the legal services industry, now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year.

Clients use BTI's insightful, custom client feedback surveys to drive change, create urgency, and substantially boost performance.

For details on how to  
**FUEL PROFITS** through  
**Clientelligence**  
see page 9

For details on how to  
**DRIVE GROWTH** with  
**Client Feedback**  
see page 8



## Drive Profits and Growth Conduct Your Client Feedback with BTI

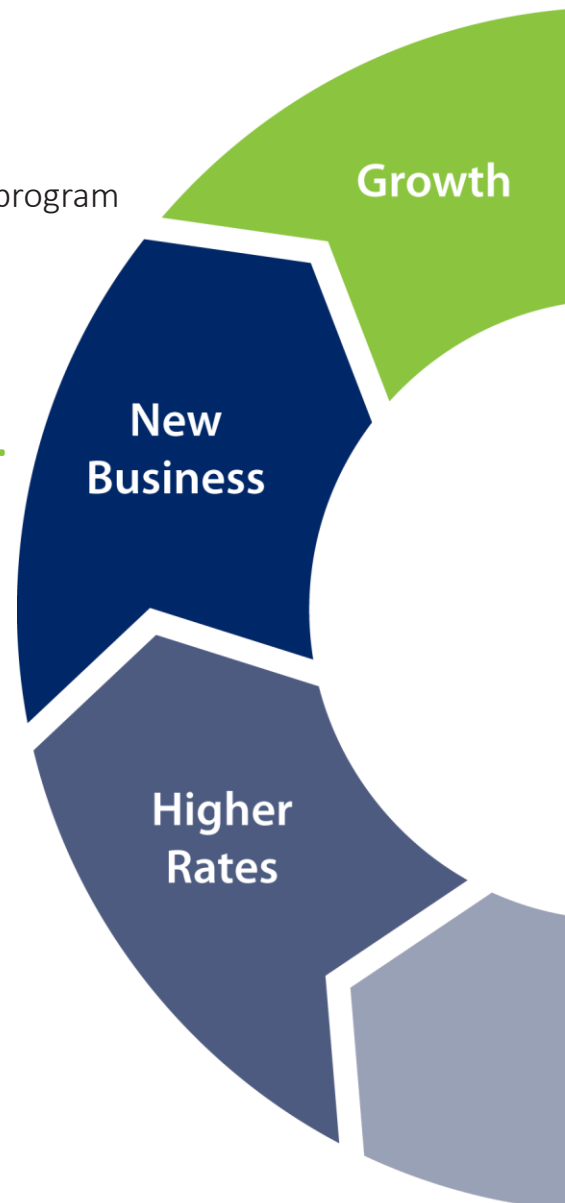
Only BTI can help you immediately drive growth, profits, and increase retention through high-impact client feedback.

BTI research shows strategic use of in-depth client feedback translates into:

- 33% higher profits
- 19.5% rate premiums across all staffing levels
- 2x the fees from a single client
- 33% higher client retention

BTI works directly with you to design a custom client feedback program to drive new business.

**Please contact Michael B. Rynowecer at  
+1 617 439 0333 or [mrynowecer@bticonsulting.com](mailto:mrynowecer@bticonsulting.com)  
to learn more about BTI's custom research & services.**



## Immediately Drive Growth with *Clientelligence*

**Pinpoint your strengths—and weaknesses—  
in the activities proven to drive growth**

BTI's more than 25 years of research pinpoint the 17 activities responsible for driving the absolute best client relationships. In essence, they are how clients define client service excellence and what clients expect out of the firms with whom they have the best relationships. The best-in-class performances in these activities are proven to drive superior financial performance.

There's only 1 way to determine if you are hitting the best-in-class threshold: Ask.

Client feedback allows you to unequivocally pinpoint where you are excelling and where you need systematic improvements in your relationships.

The best feedback initiatives not only assess how you and your firm perform, but also look at the performance of the competitors also serving your clients. At the end of the day, what does it matter if a client thinks you are doing great, if a competitor is doing better?

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 17 ACTIVITIES AND  
BTI'S BEST SELLING BOOK:**

***CLIENTEILLIGENCE:***

***HOW SUPERIOR CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS***

***FUEL GROWTH AND PROFITS***

**[www.bticonsulting.com/17](http://www.bticonsulting.com/17)**

### **THE 17 ACTIVITIES DRIVING GROWTH**

#### **Quadrant I: Relationship Bliss**

1. Commitment to help
2. Client focus
3. Understanding the client's business
4. Providing value for the dollar

#### **Quadrant II: Price of Admission**

5. Legal skills
6. Quality
7. Meeting core scope
8. Keeping clients informed
9. Dealing with unexpected changes
10. Handling problems

#### **Quadrant III: Relationship Builders**

11. Breadth of services
12. Helping advise on business issues
13. Reputation
14. Unprompted communication
15. Bringing together resources

#### **Quadrant IV: Business Magnets**

16. Anticipating the client's needs
17. Innovative approach

## Key Services To Help Our Clients

*BTI performs a broad range of services for our clients, including:*

### CUSTOM CLIENT FEEDBACK RESEARCH

High-impact client feedback drives SUPERIOR client service. Superior client service drives growth.

- ❑ Client Service Performance Studies
- ❑ Client Needs Assessment
- ❑ Your Firm's Client Service Score

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

BTI looks at PERFORMANCE in new ways—driving adoption of new tactics and better results.

- ❑ Strategic Business Planning
- ❑ Client-focused Business Practices
- ❑ Custom Training

### MARKET ASSESSMENT

Establish a DIFFERENTIATED position—with less risk, lower costs, and a greater chance of success.

- ❑ Brand Health & Market Awareness Studies
- ❑ New Market Entry Assessments

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Assess your options to find the GROWTH best suited to your firm: from least risk to highest return and anything in between.

- ❑ Financial and Market Performance
- ❑ Competitive Analysis

### CLIENT INSIGHT BRIEFINGS

Tailored to your firm and chock full of CLIENT-BASED insights, BTI briefings draw from our research and experience to help you boost client satisfaction, increase client retention, and improve your performance.

## USE BTI'S SERVICES AND RESEARCH TO:

Drive new business immediately

Keep competitors out of your client base

Find your strengths...and weaknesses

Learn what clients really want from you

Increase client retention

Please contact **Michael B. Rynowecer**  
at +1 617 439 0333 or  
[mrynowecer@bticonsulting.com](mailto:mrynowecer@bticonsulting.com)  
to learn more about  
BTI's custom research & services.

## BTI Research and Publications

*Authoritative, innovative, and practical advice from our research*

Law firms who would otherwise have little insight into corporate counsel hiring decisions, goals, law firm preferences, market positions, and detailed recommendations can now gain access to the same research used by the largest and best-performing firms in the world. The data and insight found in BTI's reports are used to train attorneys, guide business development, inform strategy, and calibrate market trends against firm tactics. In short, you get many of the benefits of a custom study commissioned for your firm, at a fraction of the cost. These insights are proven to drive growth and client retention and protect fees.

All of our reports come with a 100% satisfaction guarantee and complete telephone support to help you maximize the value from our publications.

You can order these and other compelling BTI research or publications at [www.bticonsulting.com](http://www.bticonsulting.com).

### **BTI Client Service A-Team 2017**

17 activities drive superior client relationships. 4 matter most. Discover how clients rate nearly 300 law firms—by name—in these key activities, including Client Focus, Commitment to Help, Legal Skills, and Provides Value for the Dollar.



### **BTI Practice Outlook 2017**

Your best source for the data and strategies to jump start your firm's growth today. With detailed information on 17 practice areas and 16 industries find the best opportunities to grow, target and win market advantages, and chart the best course of action for your firm.



### **BTI Litigation Outlook 2017**

Your trusted and essential guide to navigating the hurdles in the litigation market ahead. Use it to immediately target the best opportunities, overcome challenges, and prepare for the biggest changes.



### **BTI Client Service All-Stars 2017**

The definitive annual guide to the 319 attorneys commanding the attention of GCs and legal decision makers at large organizations. BTI went straight to the source—the client—to find out exactly which attorneys are truly influencing and changing the legal industry.



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Read *The Mad Clientist*—BTI's blog at:  
[www.bticonsulting.com/themadclientist](http://www.bticonsulting.com/themadclientist)



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