



## EVENT OVERVIEW

# 14<sup>th</sup> MANAGING PARTNERS FORUM

5 & 6 March 2021 | Pier One Sydney Harbour - Sydney

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# RESILIENCE AND RE-INVENTION – POSITIONING FOR GROWTH

## THE 14TH MANAGING PARTNERS FORUM – WRAP UP

The Managing Partners Forum held last week was the first live event for over a year. You could feel the joy of freedom to be able to actually chat to peers and listen to real speakers on the podium from the delegates and event partners in the room. The theme of the event was resilience and re-invention and the sessions covered not only how to recover from the year that was 2020 but also how to plan for a better more resilient future and growth.

The event was opened by the Chair, **Mark Rigotti**, former Global Managing Partner for Herbert Smith Freehills who gave an exemplary summary of the past year, the present situation and what the future may hold. An excellent way to path the way for the day's presentations.

**Dr Rebecca Newton** an organisational psychologist at The London School of Economics started the day, beamed direct from London. She discussed the importance of firm culture and how it is key to its success. Her insightful presentation was a great way to start the event with plenty of food for thought. Part of the theme of the event was resilience and positioning for growth and a couple of the presentations covered this area and gave the room hope.

**Danielle Wood**, CEO of the Grattan Institute gave an interesting talk about Australia's path through the pandemic and the risks and opportunities for both businesses and the Australian government. Gareth Airds of the Commonwealth Bank gave a promising view of the economy in light of Covid and his talk was one of optimism that we all need. Following on the theme of resilience, Dr Ian Norton of Response Global gave an exceptional overview of the pandemic both nationally and globally. He emphasised the important steps to recovery and business continuity and how a pandemic can leave a legacy of better prepared law firms. Ian also explained the different vaccines and variants and what this means for our border approach, his presentation was gripping and informative.

One of the consequences of the pandemic was the need to transition from working in an office to working from home and the implications this had on the workspace. **Simon Pole**, Global Design Director of Unispace has always delivered clever and accurate presentations on best ways of utilising workspace and for these new challenging times he has developed a Future Legal Workplace Framework. It makes the new hybrid way of working easier and cost effective.

Technology is part of the infrastructure of a firm and one of most important assets of a law firm is its data. Tim de Sousa from FTI Consulting gave a very important and relevant presentation on safeguarding data and managing data risk in volatile environments. Continuing on the topic of data was Lexis Nexis' Managing Director Greg Dickason who spoke about the value of law firm data and the importance of data analytics.

One of the last sessions of the day was a candid discussion between corporate counsel and law firm leaders on the topic of Growth in demand for legal services. The roundtable was expertly facilitated by **Mark Rigotti** who easily could be the next compare of Q & A, if he ever wanted a career change. On the corporate counsel side were **Bill Reid**, Woolworths and **Danielle Keyes**, Guzman y Gomez and they were joined by three leading Managing Partners: **Virginia Briggs**, MinterEllison, **Tony O'Malley**, PwC and **David Newman**, Maddocks. It was refreshing to hear both points of view in an open platform. Finishing the day's sessions was **Rory Kinsella** from Kinsella Meditation who brought everyone to a peaceful end of the day through breathing and meditation, always important to reduce stress and benefit mental health.

The first day finished with everyone finally able to enjoy a conversation over dinner, in a relaxed and safe way, for what seems to have been a lifetime ago since the last live event.



The second day started early with the international expert **Richard Suskind** who from his home in the UK gave an extraordinary talk on the future legal world post COVID. It was a riveting session that tied together a number of the issues covered by the other presenters on the first day and delivered some excellent gems of knowledge.

The theme of positioning for growth continued with the fireside chat that followed the opening keynote session. The Cohen Group's Air Chief Marshal **Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (Ret'd)** and **Alison McGuigan**, expertly interviewed by

**Amber Matthews** from DLA Piper. The group explored the growing political issues in both a global and national perspective and the importance this has on our economy and possible growth. The purpose of the session was to explore how these issues might effect law firm clients and thus why they should be considered in strategic planning.

The other fireside chat of the day was with **Ray d'Cruz**, Performace Leader and **Mark Rigotti**, Herbert Smith Freehills who openly and frankly discussed what it was like managing a dispersed and hybrid team as Global Managing Partner. The session was extremely relevant to both incoming managing partners and outgoing legal leaders as it covered all; the good, the bad and the challenging issues leaders face.



It is always good to hear from solution companies at the event as it allows an insight into an area of technology that is not always known. **Carl Olson** from Thomson Reuters offered insights into emerging trends and how they can facilitate the legal process. The importance of technology in this new world of working was followed by **Dr Rob Silberstein** of Silberstein & Associates who gave an excellent case study of how their firm needed to pivot quickly to work remotely when the 2020 challenge happened. Rob's talk was enthralling, especially how the firm managed to keep the work team motivated and connected whilst keeping the high value of service.

The closing keynote topic on mental health could not have been more relevant and **Lucinda Brogden's** presentation was captivating. The importance of mental health, especially during these testing times is paramount to all and Lucinda gave a thorough summary of how to help and the services that can assist in creating a mentally healthy environment.





As with every successful event, the influence and knowledge brought to the programme from the start by the advisory panel is what sets the programme. Thank you again to our esteemed advisory panel for 2021:

**Annette Kimmitt AM**, MinterEllison; **Amber Matthews**, DLA Piper; **Alison Deitz**, Norton Rose Fulbright; **David Newton**, Maddocks; **Gavin Maclaren**, Corrs Chambers Westgarth and **Tony O'Malley**, PwC.

We are also grateful to all our speakers for their time, commitment and knowledge sharing and to our sponsors for their support. Thank you also to our delegates for trusting us in attending the first live event of the year and allowing us to offer a platform for law firm leaders to network and learn.

Thank you again for being part of the event and we look forward to seeing you again in 2022.

**Jenny Katrivesis**  
Conference Director



## TESTIMONIALS 2021 - 14th MANAGING PARTNERS FORUM

“ After a year since we last came together- 14th Managing Partners Forum at Pier One Sydney Harbour turned out to be a milestone event for both Chilli IQ and the Legal Industry, and it was clear by the time we paused for a dinner on the first night that all delegates had really missed the interaction with peers! ”

“ The 14th ManagingPartnersForum off to a great start as ever - brilliant to see a busy room for an in-person conference from my virtual seat 3000 kms away! ”

“ This was one of the many excellent presentations at the Managing Partners Forum. A really powerful an energised group of people getting together to share stories, experiences, and opinions on key issues facing legal practice management in challenging times! ”

“ These sessions are opportunities - to reflect and draw out learnings from past experiences ”

*We are proud to have produced our first **successful live event** in 2021 - exactly a year after our first and only event of 2020!*

Any event we produce is only as good as its **speakers** and we at Chilli IQ are incredibly lucky to have had leading experts from across Australia and the UK share their knowledge with this unique group of delegates - we would like to personally thank them again.

Thank you also to our **event partners** who make it all possible and to you the **delegate**, for attending and we hope that you found the event both informative and enjoyable.



**Kathy Katrivesis**  
Operations Director



**Jenny Katrivesis**  
Conference Director



**George Katrivesis**  
Marketing and Sales



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[www.chilliiq.com.au](http://www.chilliiq.com.au) | [info@chilliiq.com.au](mailto:info@chilliiq.com.au)