

# lawyers weekly

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# BOX BREAKERS

**THE INNOVATORS  
CHALLENGING  
TRADITIONAL LAW FIRMS**

# OUT OFF THE

The individuals breaking away from tradition in the legal profession are using their innovative legal businesses to offer a competitive edge, writes **Angela Priestley**, and they may just also help solve some fundamental challenges facing the legal sector

# BOX

## the box breakers

### JEREMY SZWIDER

BESPOKE LAW

Jeremy Szwider's passion for innovation and changing the legal market is obvious, given the recent launch of his virtual law firm – Bespoke Law – which has the potential to revolutionise the traditional legal market. With more than twelve years experience working in Australia and Europe, within both private practice and in-house roles, Szwider felt the time was right to launch a virtual law firm and he did just that in early 2009.

Always fascinated by the e-commerce world, Szwider spent a lot of time researching before he came up with his unique business model. "I felt there was a gap in the market, particularly in the Australian legal marketplace...somewhere in between private practice and the in-house model."

Bespoke Law is the result of Szwider's hybrid legal business model, effectively combining the elements of in-house and private practice principles and flagged by Szwider as the "new third tier of the legal profession".

Having always believed that lawyers should become more aligned with a client's business needs, Szwider developed Bespoke Law to create what he calls an "outsourced in-house service".

"This hybrid model...takes the lawyer to the client's business [and] it's this virtual platform and technology that allows us lawyers to do that," Szwider explains.

Describing how his virtual firm works, Szwider says the business model allows their lawyers to act like an in-house lawyer as an extension of the client's business.

"Through the luxuries of technologies and all these online applications we're using, [we are] really accessible at the click of a button – where ever we are."

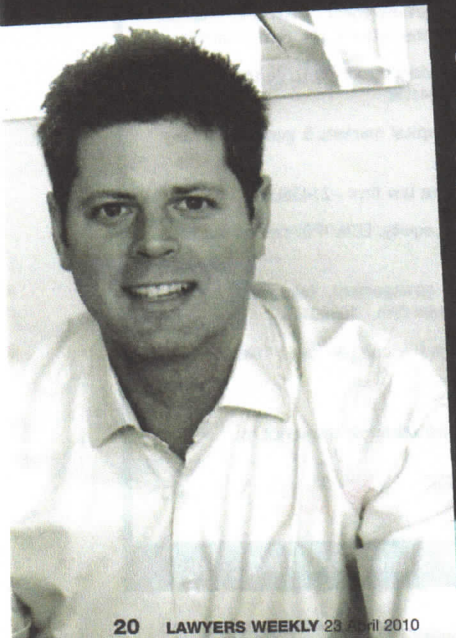
Szwider says Bespoke Law has none of the overheads otherwise associated with private practice and as a result, their costs are "30 to 50 per cent cheaper". The firm also offers alternative fee arrangements and they do not operate on an hourly basis – so they're not "watching the clock".

Confident his model will be successful Szwider believes alternative legal business models will continue to develop really quickly over the next few years.

"The virtual law firm is not going to replace the traditional law firms but it will be seen as an evolution in the way a legal service is provided.

"It's a matter of being ahead of the curve, which I'm trying to do."

Briana Everett



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