

Business Law
Engineering and Construction Law
Litigation
Property Services
Maritime Law, International Trade and Insurance
Mining and Minerals
Administration of Estates and Trusts
Estate Planning
Agriculture and Environmental Law
Empowerment and Transformation
Tax Law
Labour Law
Competition Law
Insolvency and Recovery of Assets
Intellectual Property

Integrity PERSONALISED
INNOVATION Individuality
CREATIVE DYNAMIC
Adaptability



July marked 50 years since founding partner Graham Cox (right) opened the doors to this prestigious Durban law firm. A year later Jeremy Yeats joined Cox, becoming a partner in 1967, to create a formidable team combining their passion for law with astute business sense – Cox Yeats.

Since then many of KwaZulu-Natal's respected businesses have secured strategic and innovative legal solutions as Cox Yeats developed a reputation as a leader in the commercial and personal fields. The multi-award-winning firm became known for boldness and setting benchmarks by changing perceptions and giving fresh, innovative counsel. A platform of which the firm is intensely proud, it brings value to clients by learning from the past to shape the future.

"Our success has always been in providing appropriate strategic counsel based on clients' needs rather than commoditised solutions. This means providing a creative, customised service backed by our

comprehensive knowledge of the laws governing business and South Africa," Jackson (left) says.

Specifically, it means engaging with clients to add value where it matters most. Jackson is confident Cox Yeats will continue operating as an independent practice, believing that by concentrating on recruiting the best legal talent and placing young professionals in teams that bring out their individual strengths, the firm can meet clients' demands.

"The firm can grow organically – who knows how big – but without losing touch with the fundamental values that have been part and parcel of its fabric since inception," he says.

He recognises the legal landscape has changed dramatically in the past five years. Regional law firms have been acquired and consolidated into large national and international firms with hundreds of partners operating under international brands and vigorous systems.

Technology has changed the way professionals operate and Cox Yeats has adopted several strategies to accommodate these shifts. One of its core focuses remains attracting and retaining leading professionals – and that means offering something not in the mix from competitors.

"Inherent in that is creating a culture of freedom and independence; placing each professional in teams maximising their potential and allowing each professional within their team to enhance their own specialisation," Jackson says.



This reduced the barriers to accelerated professional growth and enhanced expertise within the firm – and includes remunerating young professionals based on performance and an accelerated career growth path.

That the firm's articled clerks have received a sound and varied training is borne out by two of them later becoming esteemed South African judges – Hilary Squires and Thabani Jali.

However, it has always been the intention to keep Cox Yeats an independent firm and to run it as a caring, professional practice rather than a business. In 2007 and 2011 the firm was rated as the Best Small Legal Practice in South Africa – and in the intervening years, always occupied one of the three top places. More recently, Cox Yeats were proud recipients of the Client Choice Award 2014 for firm of the year for South Africa.

www.coxyeats.co.za

HONOURING 50 YEARS OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE

Nicola Jenvey speaks to managing partner Michael Jackson about the years behind ... and those lying ahead