

Liskow's Client-Driven Growth Puts It on the Forefront of the Energy Industry

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By Tasha Norman

What You Need to Know

- Liskow's rebrand to a shorter name, new logo and more navigable website reflects the firm's evolving client base, leaders say.
- The firm has been at the forefront of litigating cases in Louisiana's oil and gas industry and has serviced clients in the transition to clean energy.

Liskow & Lewis, a Louisiana-based midsize firm, is looking to the future.

The 150-attorney firm recently shortened its brand name to Liskow, along with a new logo and website. But the rebranding is more than just a marketing push.

Below, Liskow managing partner Mark Latham and director of marketing Rachael Schilling spoke with Law.com reporter Jessie Yount about the rebrand, in connection with the rapid evolution of the energy industry and what that means for the firm's client base.

Jessie Yount: Please tell me about the firm's rebrand. Mark

Latham: The process of reviewing our brand over the last year presented the opportunity to analyze who we have been, who we are, and who we want to be as a law firm. This review led us to shorten our name to Liskow, launch a new website, and update our visual identity. The new visual brand with the forward-looking element over the 'i' in "Liskow" symbolizes our move into the future.

Rachael Schilling: COVID was a driving factor in our decision to rebrand. We understood that all the industries we serve were evolving quickly, and we used that as an opportunity to communicate to clients that we're evolving, too. We recognize that we're not just their law firm partner, we're their business partner.

The new website is modern, easier to navigate, and allows visitors to find the information they're looking for. We hope it's a true resource for clients.

JY: Given the firm's roots in the oil and gas industry and



Courtesy photo.

Mark D. Latham of Liskow.

the significant changes afoot in the energy sector, how have your clients' legal needs evolved over time and how has the firm responded?

ML: Liskow is almost 90-years old. It got its start in the oil and gas industry with leasing and development activity. In the old days, Louisiana did not have a mineral code and a lot of issues were litigated. Liskow was involved in almost all those disputes, and many of those decisions were effectively codified in the Louisiana mineral code when it was enacted

in 1975. But many states do not have a mineral code, and as the oil and gas industry has expanded into those states, Liskow attorneys have been involved in their development. We have represented all the major oil and gas companies, and we represent some independent companies and 'mom-and-pop' oil and gas companies.

Today, we are seeing a new transition into onshore and offshore clean energy with the development of wind farms and things like carbon capture and solar. We are at the forefront of advising clients on those issues as well.

Apart from the energy industry, we have diverse clients in maritime, transportation, financial services, hospitality, chemical and manufacturing. Our maritime practice, for example, evolved as our oil and gas clients began their offshore exploration and development work. Most drilling rigs working offshore are considered vessels, which implicates maritime law. In addition to our maritime work in the Gulf of Mexico and inland waterways, we have expanded our practice in the last 10 to 15 years to work on the east and west coasts.

JY: What do you view as your biggest growth opportunities going forward?

ML: To the extent there is or has been a downturn in the economy,

that has not affected Liskow. But we do look at any economic slowdown as an opportunity because as a midsize, full-service firm we are able to provide high-quality legal services at a better value than our Big Law peers.

We are always open to strategic expansion. We have attorneys licensed in many other states including New York and Washington, D.C., and our clients are open to using us in areas where we are not geographically present.

JY: What do you view as your biggest threats to growth?

ML: Retention is always a threat that we take very seriously. Last year Big Law firms were snatching up associates, offering big bonuses, and letting them work remotely from wherever they wanted to live. We are now hearing a lot of reports of a reversal of that trend. That said, we are particularly proud of our ability to attract first-rate talent and then retain it for the long-term. In fact, many of our attorneys are what we refer to as 'Liskow Lifers,' who have spent all or the vast majority of their careers with us.

We also see strategic growth opportunities in the market. We have a very strong clerkship program that drives a lot of our hiring. We have also had success in lateral recruiting, which we expect to continue.

RS: We have a seven-year partnership track, which is different from many other firms. We're a lockstep firm, and when we hire associates, the intention is for them to become partners. That helps a lot with our retention. We've also always been proud of our ability to retain talent and regularly take steps to enhance our retention capabilities. For example, at the beginning of 2022, we started a business development program for associates and junior partners. It provides them with the resources and confidence to grow a book of business. Not only has it helped them grow relationships, but it trains them to approach business development as a team.

ML: A growing number of clients consider more than just the quality of legal services when they select a firm. They are concerned about ESG and DEI initiatives, and we are very active in those areas. More than 50% of our attorneys are diverse. But one 'high class' issue we have had is that many of our diverse attorneys are in demand and end up going on to do other things. For instance, a former Liskow shareholder, Dana Douglas, was selected as a U.S. Magistrate Judge several years ago and was recently confirmed as a judge on the United State Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.