

SMALL PRACTICE SUPPORT GUIDELINE

JULY 2020

POSITIONING YOUR FIRM TO EARN BREXIT RELATED INCOME



BACKGROUND

The UK left the EU on 31 January 2020 and is currently progressing through an 11-month transition period.

A number of different scenarios are possible at the end of the transition period but whatever happens is likely to impact on most businesses in Ireland creating a large amount of work opportunities for solicitors and other professional service firms.

Pursuing Brexit work and promoting your firm in this regard has an additional benefit. As well as winning Brexit work, your firm is likely to pick up other commercial work and new business clients.

Commercial work and commercial clients both tend to be good quality and lucrative. So, going after Brexit work can result in more than increased work; it can also move your firm up the value chain.

In this guide, a seven step approach to position your firm for Brexit work is outlined. Any legal firm can use this strategy. The secret is to start as soon as possible and follow the steps, one by one.

RECOMMENDED STEPS

1. Get Knowledgeable

If you want to do Brexit related work you need to get up-to-speed as quickly as possible on what is involved and on possible scenarios that may play out.

Fortunately, there is excellent literature and other information available. Some resources are listed at the end of this document.

Do not try to become an expert on all matters from the outset. You just need a good overview in order to progress on to the next steps. Familiarise yourself with the Quick Brexit Guide for Business published by the Irish Government and you are ready to move on to the next step.

2. Consider Your Clients

Brexit is going to impact on a myriad of business matters including data protection, common travel area, international sales and purchases, quality assurance, conformity, assessment and certification. How are these matters likely to impact on businesses that are your clients?

Contact clients and discuss your common understanding of what is likely to happen and how they need to get prepared. You are likely to end up learning from some clients and educating others.

3. Consider Other Businesses

Promoting your firm with regard to Brexit provides you with a really useful opportunity to engage with businesses that you may not yet have a relationship with. What challenges are they likely to face? Can you help them prepare?

4. Create Content

There are numerous ways to create content. You can publish a leaflet or newsletter – or a series of these. You can dedicate a section on your website.

Providing information is a great way to credibly promote your business in a new business area but you can only do this if you have content available.

Creating content is also a great way to gain in depth learning on a particular matter.

5. Publicise Your Expertise

Seek to publicise what you believe is most newsworthy and is most critical to your clients and prospective clients. Consider writing an article for your local newspaper and seek to get on to local radio to talk about your insights and about the content you have created.

Try and be the bearer of good news if possible. A whole lot of opportunities exist such as associated grants that can be accessed, attractive loan financing and training supports. Make sure local businesses are aware of all such opportunities.

6. Establish Related Services

Consider what services you can set up that will encourage businesses to engage your firm. You might be able to provide an audit service that lets a business establish how prepared they are.

Introductory services such as audits often lead on to more long-term work.

7. Evaluate and Adapt

As your firm gets active in the matters outlined above, it is wise to review what has been done, what has worked out best and what has not.

You can then create more content, continue to publicise your expertise and look at building alliances and collaborating with others.

WHERE MATTERS CURRENTLY STAND

The UK and EU have said serious differences remain over a post-Brexit trade deal, following the latest negotiations in Brussels. The UK has ruled out extending the December 2020 deadline to reach a deal.

Negotiations are continuing but the outcome remains very uncertain. However, whatever happens will most likely involve major change.

SELECTION OF USEFUL RESOURCES

- [Quick Brexit Guide for Business booklet.](#)
- [Brexit Preparedness Checklist](#)
- [Getting Your Business Brexit Ready – Practical Steps](#)
- [Local Enterprise Supports for Brexit](#)



TOP TIPS

- Involve others and adopt a team work approach with lots of brainstorming, collaboration and supporting other.
- Try and match responsibilities with personal aptitudes. Some people are great at research while others are better at talking on radio and TV.
- Approach the project as a fun and part time involvement to be done after you take care of your traditional work.
- Get skilled at social media and use it to publicise what you are doing, sell services and to build alliances.

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