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Day in the Life: Dominic Gyngell

Interviews and Profiles



Dominic Gyngell

Vice President & Regional Counsel AMEA Region,

BT Legal

Hong Kong, China

6:00 am

The alarm goes off. **Hit snooze.**

6:15 am

The alarm is more insistent. Somewhere in the distance a dog barks. I want to throw the phone against the wall before grudgingly getting out of bed.

7:00 am

The toughest negotiation of the year, repeated morning, after morning, after morning: **getting the kids fed, dressed and out the door** for school.

7:30 am

Breakfast; notionally protein friendly, but nothing goes better with bacon and eggs than toast and **two strong flat-whites, espresso** with velvety steamed milk. I read the papers and check on the latest disaster to befall Australian rugby.

8:30 am

Catch up on the dozens of emails that have poured in overnight. Our region covers 99 countries and eight time zones so there is always something happening somewhere.

9:30 am

Weekly 1:1 with my head of regulatory affairs for the region. One of our key responsibilities as a regional legal team is to find ways to **facilitate growth opportunities**, whether by acquiring new licences, structuring our products to fit with local regulatory requirements, or lobbying with governments for increased liberalisation. For example, we just became the first European carrier to be awarded a DataComms licence in Indonesia.

10:30 am

The head of corporate governance and compliance and I meet with our regional CEO to discuss the progress of the roll-out of an **updated ethics compliance programme** for the region. We operate in a number of high-risk jurisdictions from a compliance perspective, and this has been an increasingly high profile area.

11:30 am

The eternal battle with our CFO over budgets. As with all companies, we are asked to do more with less and we are always looking for efficiency opportunities. This hour is spent looking at the

effectiveness of our LPO arrangements to see whether the cost benefits can be broadened.

12:30 pm

Lunch with a colleague from a competitor. **Hong Kong is a social place** and there is a great network of in-house lawyers, increasingly facilitated by the ACC!

1:30 pm

A deep dive with the team into a large corporate transaction. We try and run as many of our complex deals within the team, but we also rely on help from our **specialist internal resources in London** as well as a network of external advisors. For a number of the jurisdictions in our patch we have to rely on local expertise.

2:30 pm

Contract negotiations with a key Hong Kong customer for a large technology outsource. We are down to the last few points, including as always liability issues. I think the lawyers on the other side are paid by the word.

3:30 pm

Third flat-white of the day with our regional COO. We discuss contract management, new entity integrations and our favourite wines.

4:00 pm

Interview a candidate for a junior lawyer role in India. She has a great academic record, trained with a top Indian firm, is extremely bright and enthusiastic and speaks four languages. I hope she takes the job!

5:00 pm

London is now well and truly up-and-running so I have a number of governance calls on major deals with executives including my boss, the global services GC. Our region has **gone from having no major deals four years ago to closing eight deals valued at over \$50m last year.** I am extremely proud of the capabilities we have built into our team over the past few years.

6:00 pm

A series of calls and IMs with my senior lawyers around the region, including Hong Kong, Dubai, Johannesburg, Delhi, Gurgaon, Singapore, Sydney and Beijing. They are a very talented and professional bunch which makes my job that much easier.

7:30 pm

Crossfit: My goal for the year is to **not to be worst in the class.** Limited progress to date.

9:00 pm

Home to see family and **wolf down a late dinner.**

9:30 pm

A last check on emails and the chance to catch up on some extra-curricular commitments. I am on the board of our children's school and I am also heavily involved with our local rugby club. One of the great things about Hong Kong is that there are so many opportunities to **get involved with the community.**

11:00 pm

On another night I might catch up with Game of Thrones, but tonight I am heavily into **book three of Karl Ove Knausgaard's *My Struggle***. He is an amazing writer.

12:00 am

Drift into the sleep of the dead.

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