

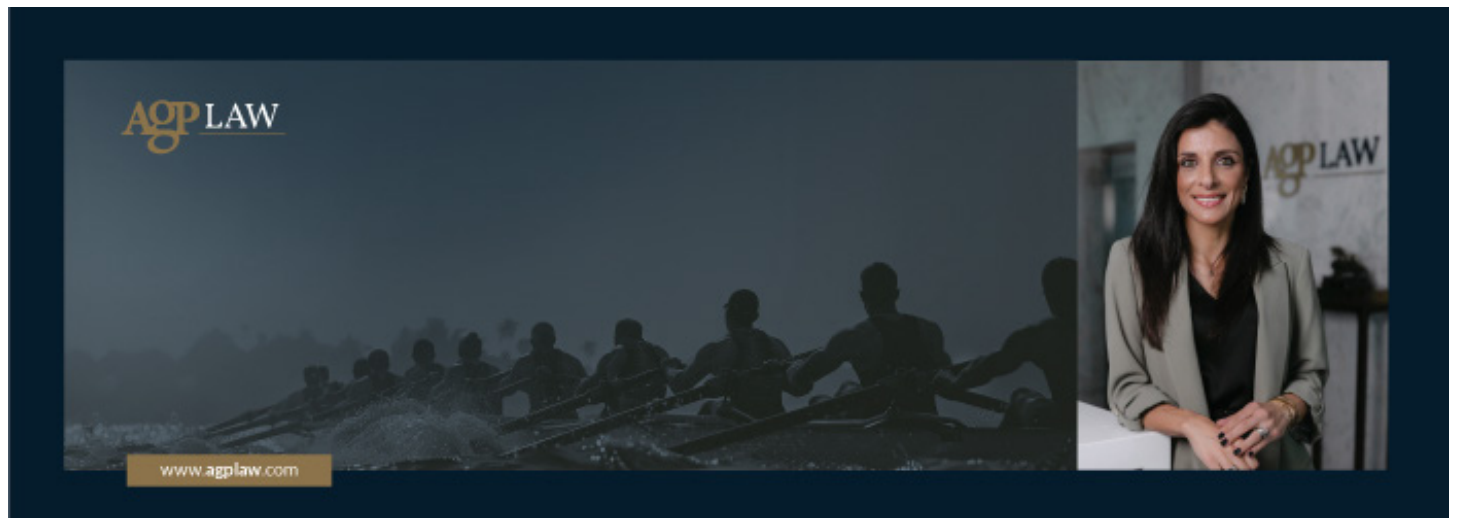


**Why Experienced
Lawyers are Joining
Larger Law Firms
as Partners.**

**What do they
gain from it?**



Why Experienced Lawyers are Joining Larger Law Firms as Partners. What do they really gain?



Loukia Porakou

Manager | Human Resources and
Partners Operations & Relations

Why Experienced Lawyers Are Joining Larger Law Firms as Partners. What do they really gain?

By Loukia Porakou

Over the past 16 years, I have worked in senior HR and people-management roles within large professional organisations. For most of my career, this was within KPMG Cyprus, where my responsibilities were focused exclusively on internal HR management for auditors and accountants, including talent development, performance management, partner relations and organisational structure. Twelve months ago, I transitioned into the legal sector, joining AGPLAW as Manager of HR and Partners Relations. This move has given me direct, hands-on exposure to the legal profession and to the way experienced lawyers operate, make career decisions and evaluate partnership structures. Observing these dynamics from inside a law firm **has revealed a clear and growing pattern: Senior Lawyers with established practices are increasingly choosing to move away from solo or boutique structures and to join larger, well-organised firms as Partners.**

In my professional view, larger firms increasingly provide the ecosystem and strategic depth, that experienced lawyers need, in order to grow sustainably and with confidence.

This is not a trend limited to one market. I see it consistently across Europe, the UK, the Middle East and the United States, and we are implementing the same model in Cyprus. What interests me most is why this shift is happening and what senior practitioners genuinely gain from it. What was once a decision

driven largely by prestige is now shaped by far more practical considerations: economics, regulatory pressure, client expectations and the growing complexity of cross-border and cross-sectors legal work.

In my professional view, larger firms increasingly provide the ecosystem and strategic depth, that experienced lawyers need, in order to grow sustainably and with confidence.

Below, I share my 10 thoughts on the key drivers behind this movement and how an effective partnership structure can empower senior practitioners to elevate their practice:

1. Clients Now Expect Full-Service Capability, something Solo Practitioners Cannot Match

Today's corporate and high-net-worth clients want more than a lawyer; they want a solution. Transactions touch multiple jurisdictions, disputes require specialised enforcement tools, and regulatory expectations, from sanctions to AML, are too complex for one practitioner to manage alone.

From what I see in practice, a larger firm provides access to:

- specialised departments (specialized litigation, corporate, regulatory, shipping, tax, private client & trusts, and more),
- compliance expertise and AML system infrastructure, professional monitoring management, all at once, without multiple and ongoing requests to clients,
- support teams who ensure speed and precision, and
- Substantial professional insurance cover (not just the minimum).

For a senior lawyer, operating on such a platform / team significantly magnifies the ability to serve demanding clients. Instead of turning work away, or attempting the risk of advising on areas beyond expertise, lawyers can retain clients and expand their involvement through the firm's extended practice areas, something that benefits both the lawyer and its relationship with the client.

2. The Economics are Simply Better: Predictable Revenue, Shared Infrastructure and Scalability

Running a solo or small practice involves operational, liability and financial burdens that directly affect profitability. Technology, HR, AML compliance, case management, accounting, regulatory reporting, staff management, client administration, marketing and business development, all consume significant time and resources. Beyond the direct costs, the time lawyers spend managing these responsibilities is time not spent on client work or business development, limiting income growth.

In contrast, larger firms typically offer:

- An established and ranked brand that generates inbound work
- Existing administrative and compliance infrastructure
- Shared resources that allow Lawyers / Partners to focus entirely on fee-earning work and client / network development

From my experience, senior professionals / lawyers who join as Partners see their income stabilise and then increase. This is largely because they can dedicate 100% of their time to client work, networking and production (i.e. activities that directly generate revenue) while the firm absorbs operational responsibilities.

3. Access to Higher-Value Work and Institutional Clients

One of the strongest incentives I observe for experienced lawyers is access to institutional clients. Banks, funds, corporates and family offices avoid instructing stand-alone practitioners anymore. They require firms that provide:

- High level professional indemnity insurance and risk oversight,
- Established governance
- Documented processes
- Proven teams and capacity

By joining as a Partner, an experienced lawyer gains immediate access to a client base that may previously have been out of reach. They also become part of an internal referral network, receiving work from other departments whose clients require their expertise. This creates a multiplier effect: growth comes not only from one's own client portfolio, but from the wider firm ecosystem.

4. Increased Professional Credibility and Brand Authority

Legal practice today is closely tied to reputation. A recognised firm brand conveys trust, organisational depth, international reach and consistency in quality. For large corporates, financial institutions and international organisations, working with firms ranked in leading legal directories is not a preference but a requirement, as these rankings form part of their internal risk, procurement and governance criteria

Achieving and maintaining top-tier rankings in directories such as Chambers, Legal 500 and IFLR1000 is the result of years of sustained performance, peer recognition and client feedback. By joining a firm that has already reached this level, senior lawyers immediately benefit from institutional credibility that would otherwise take many years to build independently

Many senior lawyers have built strong individual reputations through years of practice, yet their visibility and market reach can remain limited without the backing of an institutional platform. Joining a

ranked and respected firm enhances brand leverage, increases exposure to larger and more complex mandates, and positions senior practitioners to compete more effectively for high-value work that would otherwise be inaccessible at an individual level.

This is particularly evident in cross-border disputes, international arbitration, corporate transactions, shipping matters, regulatory advisory (including financial regulation, pharmaceuticals, insurance, competition and GDPR on a pan-European level) and high-value litigation, all areas where clients tend to prefer institutional representation.

5. Operational Support That Allows Lawyers to Focus on What They Do Best

In a well-structured firm, Partners are supported by:

- Senior associates and fellow Partners,
- Junior Lawyers
- Paralegals
- Compliance units
- Accounting and billing teams
- Marketing and Business Development teams

This infrastructure accelerates case handling, improves client service and significantly reduces stress. For lawyers who have spent years doing everything themselves or for junior Partners who find themselves managing large teams or working outside their preferred practice areas, the change can be transformative. Many report improved work-life balance, fewer administrative burdens, and a renewed focus on legal excellence rather than operational survival.

6. Leadership, Collaboration and the Ability to Build Something Bigger

In my view, from an HR management position, joining a structured firm as a Partner does not diminish independence; it amplifies it.

Partners gain the ability to:

- Build their own teams
- Lead practice areas
- Expand into new sectors, and
- Leverage a platform designed for long-term career development

For many experienced practitioners, the sense of belonging to something larger is a major driver and a powerful motivator.

7. Regulatory Pressure Is Increasing – and Larger Firms Are Better Equipped

The regulatory side of legal practice has changed considerably over the years. Issues such as AML requirements, sanctions checks and ongoing compliance are no longer occasional formalities; they are part of the day-to-day reality of running a modern legal practice.

For many experienced lawyers, particularly those operating on their own or in smaller setups, these obligations can become an increasing distraction from core legal work. It is not a question of capability or experience, but of time, resources and the constant need to stay updated in a fast-moving regulatory environment.

Within a larger, well-organised firm, these responsibilities are handled at firm level. Compliance teams, internal guidance and ongoing support allow Partners to practise with confidence, knowing that regulatory matters are being managed properly in the background. This removes unnecessary stress and enables lawyers to focus on their clients and their work, rather than on understanding regulatory processes alone, on a daily basis.

8. The Partner Model Protects Long-Term Career Value

A modern partnership model (such as the one adopted by AGPLAW) offers:

- Substantial revenue potential
- Internal referrals
- Cross-practice collaboration
- Immediate growth
- Absolute flexibility, and
- Professional security

It allows experienced lawyers to transition away from the volatility of small-practice survival into a setting where their experience is properly leveraged, their work is valued, and their practice can scale sustainably, while working on the own pace.

9. Who Can Join as a Partner and Why Timing Matters

One of the strengths of the AGPLAW partnership model is its openness and flexibility, to which we have deeply invested. It is designed for seasoned practitioners who want to elevate their practice without sacrificing independence, including:

- Solo practitioners (with or without support staff)
- Lawyers running small offices with junior lawyers or paralegals
- Senior associates in other firms who have reached a ceiling in their current firm and want to grow, and
- Existing partners in other firms seeking a more dynamic, better-resourced environment and more freedom.

The pathway is straightforward, adaptable and built around the realities experienced lawyers face today

Joining With Your Team and Even Your Office

A particularly attractive feature for solo practitioners is the ability to join with their existing team whether a secretary, administrator, paralegal or junior lawyers. AGPLAW options include:

- retaining an existing office, if you prefer to continue operating from your own office space,
- using AGPLAW offices when needed, or
- operating in a 100% hybrid model

The Gain? Higher Income, Lower Costs, No Stress. Joining AGPLAW as a Partner reshapes the economics of legal practice:

- **income increases** through inbound work, cross-referrals, institutional clients and brand strength,
- **expenses decrease** dramatically, as the firm absorbs support staff and younger colleagues available on demand, compliance, HR, administration, IT, accounting, marketing, case-management and infrastructure costs, and
- **stress is reduced** thanks to full departmental support across litigation, corporate, tax, regulatory, shipping, private client and AML functions, allowing lawyers to focus on what they do best: producing legal work.

Instead of paying for software licenses, AML and security systems, office rent, secretarial cover, website upkeep, branding, professional insurance, and marketing, Partners rely on the firm's already established systems. This can lead to **tens of thousands of euros in annual savings**, not to mention the **hours of time regained**.

Partner Opportunities

10. Freedom to Work 100% Remotely and How It Transforms a Lawyer's Life

One of the most revolutionary elements of Partnering with AGPLAW's is the ability for Partners to operate 100% remotely, from anywhere in the world. This flexibility has become a cornerstone of AGPLAW and one of the most praised aspects by lawyers who have joined us.

Partners may work from AGPLAW offices in Cyprus, from their own office, from home, from another country, while travelling, or through any combination of the above. This model is not only possible, but also actively encouraged, because it enhances productivity, reduces unnecessary stress, and respects the individuality of each lawyer's lifestyle.

Many Partners describe this as a lifestyle shift rather than simply a career move. Feedback consistently highlights greater autonomy, improved quality of life and a renewed sense of freedom. AGPLAW's remote-friendly platform ensures uninterrupted access to legal, corporate and compliance departments, documentation teams, billing and administration, marketing, secure IT systems and cross-department collaboration regardless of physical location. Clients, notably, respond very positively to this model, appreciating the depth, responsiveness and institutional support it provides.

A Strategic Move, Not a Step Back

In today's legal landscape, joining a larger firm as a Partner is no longer perceived as a loss of independence. It is increasingly recognised as a strategic decision that maximises opportunity.

From my professional perspective, partnership within a larger, structured firm is often the natural evolution for accomplished lawyers who want to grow further with impact, support and a future-proof strategy. For senior practitioners who previously worked in isolation, either as solos or in environments with limited cooperation, this team-driven ecosystem becomes one of the greatest advantages.

Join Us: AGPLAW is currently welcoming applications from established lawyers who wish to join a modern, collaborative and high-performing legal environment. Whether you are a solo practitioner, a team leader, a senior associate ready to move on, or a partner elsewhere seeking a better platform:

This may be the right moment to take your practice to the next level.

For confidential discussions, I can be contacted at: loukia.porakou@agplaw.com

Alternatively, you may apply here:

Partner Opportunities at AGPLAW

The information provided by AGPLAW | A.G. Paphitis & Co. LLC is for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as professional or formal legal advice. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information contained herein, no representation or warranty is given. In no event will the author or any related parties be liable for any loss arising from reliance on this article.