



Holmes & Company

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CANADA - INTERNATIONAL/CROSS BORDER LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR

Holmes & Company provides corporate/commercial/securities/tax services to the national and international business community. We have focused on cross-border business for over 25 years and have worked in all of the major jurisdictions including, Asia, Latin America, Europe and the Middle East. We have been to those jurisdictions so as to understand not only the legal systems but the business environment as well. Through our worldwide alliances we have professional contacts throughout the world to work with our clients and provide effective solutions. Speaking multiple languages within the firm also assists our clients.

Main Strengths

We work closely with our clients to understand their business. Based on the cultural differences of a jurisdiction, including the legal system, we make a practical, effective plan. Doing similar transactions around the world creates a sensitivity to various alternatives which could work in emerging countries. We also can facilitate introductions, not only to our international legal team, but to potential business connections. Business connections are necessary to a successful project.

Source of Business

Most of our work is referrals from existing clients or our international associates. Through the Alliance of Business Lawyers we have associated offices in 40 countries, including India and Brazil, with close to 1,000 lawyers. The senior partners from each of the offices meet twice a year to review their domestic and international issues. At those meetings referrals are often generated. We also have strategic alliances with a law firm with offices in Shanghai and Beijing. At least three times a year Stephen Holmes will teach courses to lawyers or businesses. He has taught courses in Asia, Europe, North America and Latin America. Further, being the Honorary Consul for Malta increases referrals and contacts both domestically and internationally. We also participate in various cross-border practice groups of the Alliance of Business Lawyers to discuss real estate, securities and insolvency.

Relevant Cases

The downturn affected many individual's net worth. This has resulted in them having to consider changes to their retirement plans. We have assisted many clients to retire in foreign jurisdictions such as Mexico, Malta and Panama where the cost of living is lower. We assisted them in regard to obtaining permanent residence status, acquiring real estate, introductions and international tax planning. While tax rates in Canada have dropped considerably, we have assisted many clients in regard to changing their residence to low or no tax jurisdictions to facilitate their international business. We often use Barbados and Malta Tax Treaties to effectively and substantially reduce global taxes.

Social gaming has developed into a new industry. We have assisted in the structuring of these companies, as well as, locating their operations in appropriate international jurisdictions to maximize profits. We have acted similarly in regard to e-gaming and e-commerce.

Cuba is a country with tremendous potential and is beginning to open up to foreign investment. We have been travelling there for many years and have developed considerable knowledge. We are starting to see clients make investments and perform business transactions in Cuba.