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EXCLUSIVE

Big Law Partners Launches, Debuts Value Model

By [Kelsi Maree Borland](#) | Los Angeles

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Taban: "The client cares about a lawyer who can identify issues and find solutions."

LOS ANGELES-Selecting legal representation in **commercial real estate** has long been a battle between quality and cost. This week, attorney **Eli Taban** is eliminating the dichotomy with the launch of his debut law firm **Big Law Partners**, GlobeSt.com learns exclusively. The firm will offer its clients highly experienced real estate attorneys sans the high prices through a value-driven alternative model developed by Taban, which will save clients an estimated 40% on billing rates compared to the typical costs incurred at larger firms.

"I started to think about why this problem exists, and it occurred to me that there are a lot of excess overhead expenses at the bigger firms that most clients would choose not to pay for if they could," Taban tells GlobeSt.com. Some of these superfluous expenses include trophy office space, a word processing staff and ample secretaries, and these are the expenses that Big Law Partners plans to forgo. "These don't ultimately translate to improvements to substantive work product, which is what the client really cares about," Taban says. "The client cares about a lawyer who can help get deals done while mitigating risks and a lawyer who can identify issues and find solutions."

Perhaps Taban's experience as both an attorney and client helped him pinpoint these excessive costs. Most recently, he handled legal and business matters for **Jade Enterprises**, and he began his legal career at **Pircher, Nichols & Meeks** representing institutional investors and lenders in acquisitions, dispositions and **debt financing**.

Taban designed Big Law Partners to be a telecommute environment where attorneys work from home with flexible schedules and communicate frequently through phone and email. However, Taban explains that this is not a string of freelance attorneys. "This really is a full-fledged law firm, except rather than sitting desks away from each other, we are typically sitting homes apart from each other," he says. "We do leverage each other's experiences, and we still foster a collaborative work environment facilitated by cloud-based practice technologies. In fact, our attorneys are arguably more effective and efficient at Big Law Partners than they ever have been because our structure eliminates much of the significant stress that comes with big-law life." Attorneys will be responsible for providing unyielding service to their clients, but won't need to be involved in the administrative or management processes, like invoicing and client procurement. The model will target middle-market real estate firms focused on cost and quality.

While developing the value-driven alternative model, which took the better part of a year, Taban found that it was appealing to experienced attorneys seeking a strong work and life balance. "This appeals to a particular type of attorney," he explains. "Specifically, those [attorneys] interested in giving up some compensation benefits in exchange for substantial lifestyle benefits. Our attorneys are drawn by the ability to continue to do interesting work while enjoying new lifestyles that afford them more time to spend with their kids or to explore other passions." Taban is starting the firm with a staff of two attorneys, but anticipates the firm will have 10 attorneys by the end of 2014.

Dean Craig Walker and **Herb Meyers** are the firm's first two attorneys, who bring with them more than 60 years of legal experience. Walker has worked at **O'Melveny & Myers LLP**, **Lewis Brisbois, Bisgaard & Smith LLP**, and was counsel at **Washington Mutual Bank** and VP and assistant general counsel at **Coast Federal Bank**. Among his varied talents, Walker has notable experience representing lenders in complex financing transactions. These include multi-billion dollar revolving credit facilities, inter-creditor agreements and loan workouts. Meyers, on the other hand, was formerly a senior attorney at **Glaser, Weil, Fink, Jacobs, Howard, Avchen & Shapiro LLP**. He has represented major owners, investors, developers and national tenants in sale and purchase, leasing and development projects, including representing the **MGM Mirage** in negotiating the construction and design contracts for the 16 million-square-foot **CityCenter mixed-use project in Las Vegas**.

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Kelsi Maree Borland is a freelance writer and editor living in Los Angeles. Her work has appeared in publications such as *Travel + Leisure*, *Angeleno* and *Riviera Orange County*.
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