

solicitors
Hart Brown

'The firm of choice'

Client Survey 2009

www.hartbrown.co.uk

October 2009

May I first of all say a big thank to those clients past and present who agreed to take part in our client survey.

We are very grateful for their input and honest comments. In these ever changing times it is important for us to understand what you our clients think of us, what you expect from us and what in the future you would like to see us doing.

We already send out “client satisfaction questionnaires” on completion of a matter and we will be developing this approach further but there is, I believe, no substitute for someone speaking to you and getting a real feel as to how we are doing.

I now have pleasure in publishing the results of the survey and some quotes taken from the conversations had.

I don't want to burden you with a lengthy introduction but thought you might welcome our thoughts on the survey.

It is clear that we have many loyal clients who feel able and confident to use us, our result show 60% of those surveyed have used Hart Brown for over 5 years and 37% for over 1 year.

Most used a broad range of the services we offer although commercial clients appear less inclined to use our private client services and vice versa. This might be because they positively want to keep the two separate but we believe that understanding the whole needs of our clients means we are more likely to ensure that they get the best results in all areas of their lives.

This is therefore an area we have identified as something for us to work on. It might be that we are not communicating clearly enough to both sectors the broad range of services we are able to offer and how we can help.

We were delighted to see that the majority of our clients (both private and commercial) came to us through recommendation which is in line with the high percentage who said they would recommend us. It is also consistent with the feedback we get from our own client satisfaction questionnaires. It is the best endorsement we can have and we are very grateful to all those who do recommend us.

I was pleased to see that a percentage (admittedly small) came through brand recognition something we have been working at developing. It is therefore very pleasing to see a modicum of success although there is still along way to go – and we recognise that.

The overall satisfaction with the services amongst the private and commercial clients was pleasingly high. It was higher for private clients who also felt they had a stronger relationship with Hart Brown than commercial clients and again this is something we have identified as requiring attention. I have no doubt we can improve here.

Interestingly both private and commercial clients rated the support and care equally high. However we can still do better and improve our efforts for those who did not feel completely satisfied. This is an ongoing process but the current results will enable us to see whether we have improved in say a year's time.

Lawyers fees is always a sensitive subject but we are not afraid to ask, 39% were completely satisfied but 3% were completely dissatisfied.

We already offer fixed fees in a number of areas of work but recognise that we need to continue to improve the way we explain how fees are arrived at and what something is likely to cost. If we are not able to give a fixed quote we have already implemented a process whereby we give indications about certain tranches of work and we issue regular bills so that our clients are aware at all stages what costs are being incurred. It is clear however that we need to improve on this. We do believe in delivering a quality service and this does not come at the cheapest rate. However we are continuing to invest in IT and resultant efficiency savings will over time enable us to reduce the cost to our clients.

Interestingly whereas a high proportion of commercial and private clients use the internet to purchase services (commercial use it more than private) 57% said they did not want Hart Brown to provide more services on line. When one also takes into account the comments about more internet based services, the clear message is that it has its place but it is the personal service and ability to speak to your lawyer and continuity with one individual which are key to the service our clients are looking for. The concept, of commoditisation and centres around the world dealing with your matters, being driven by the likes of the Co-op is not in fact what people are looking for, although it has its place. How many people mourn the demise of the post office or complain about call centres!!

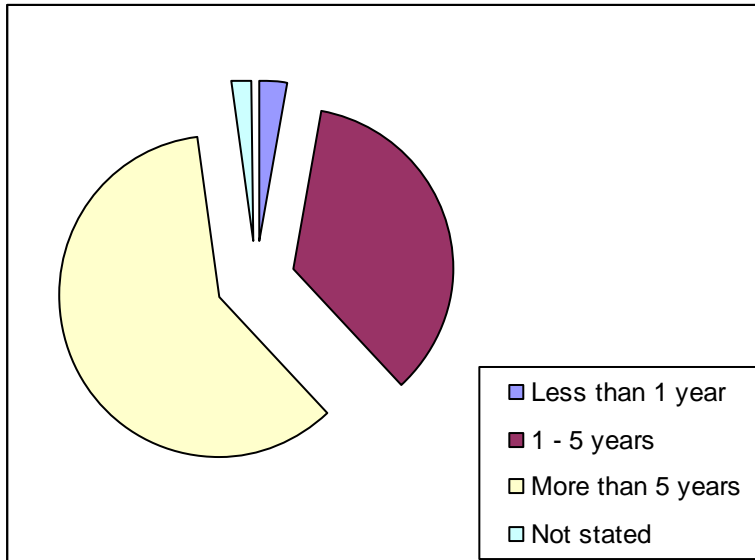
Finally we need to improve on keeping our clients informed of issues affecting them. Although a large percentage said they were happy we can very clearly look at stepping up on this.

I believe we have gained some valuable information from this survey – including that we are getting quite a bit right! However we have areas we need to address and as Hart Brown in November celebrates 90 years, we will start the celebration with the launch of our new website and rebrand early in the New Year.

We are excited about the future and its challenges. With the on-going loyalty of all our clients we have confidence that Hart Brown and its clients will continue to prosper.

Kind regards
Bettina Brueggemann
Managing Partner

Number of years clients have been using the services of Hart Brown



Percentage of Managing Directors and Owners who use Hart Brown Commercial services

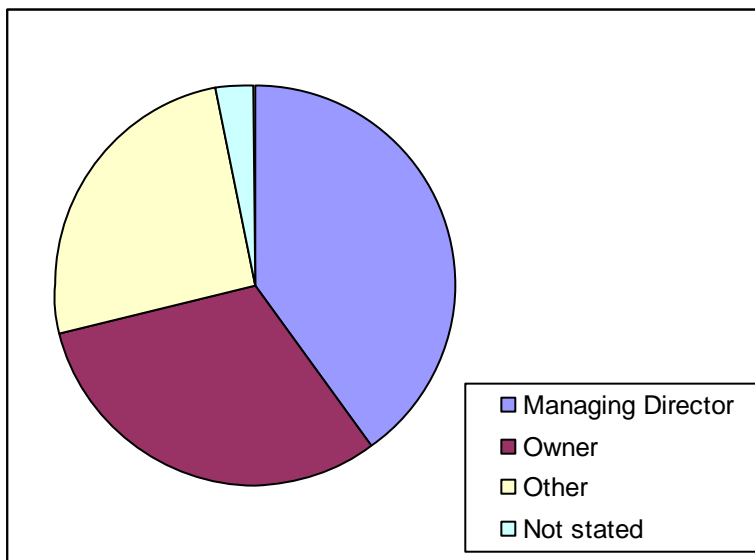


Illustration of the services used by the individual clients of Hart Brown

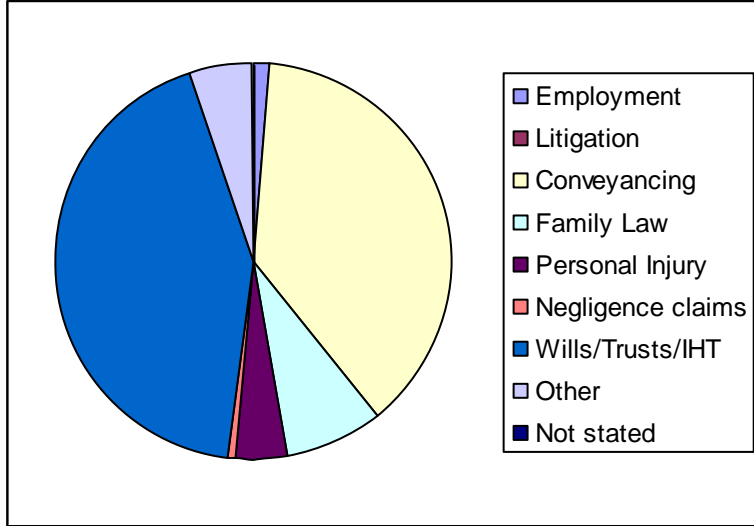
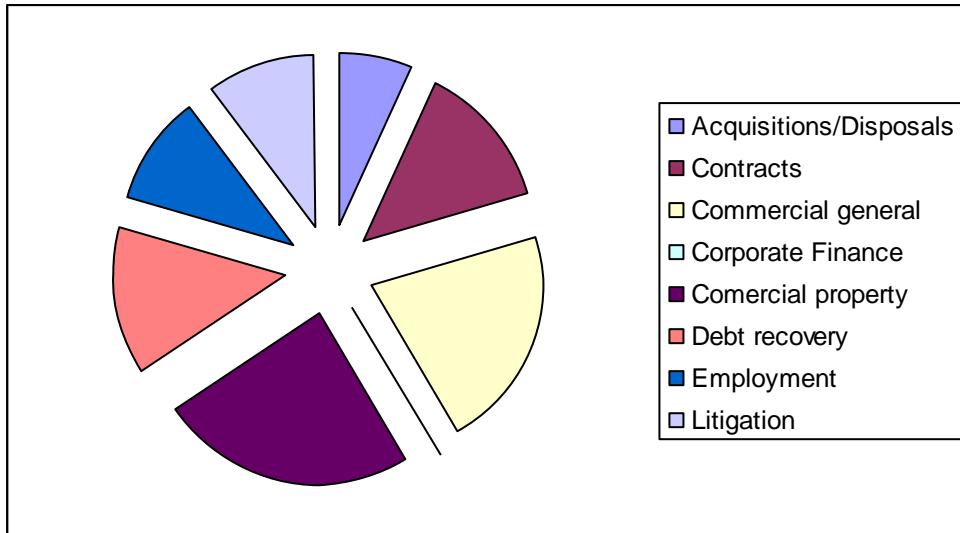


Illustration of the services used by business clients of Hart Brown



We asked clients who used our individual services how they decided to select Hart Brown – they were able to choose more than one answer

The top four responses were

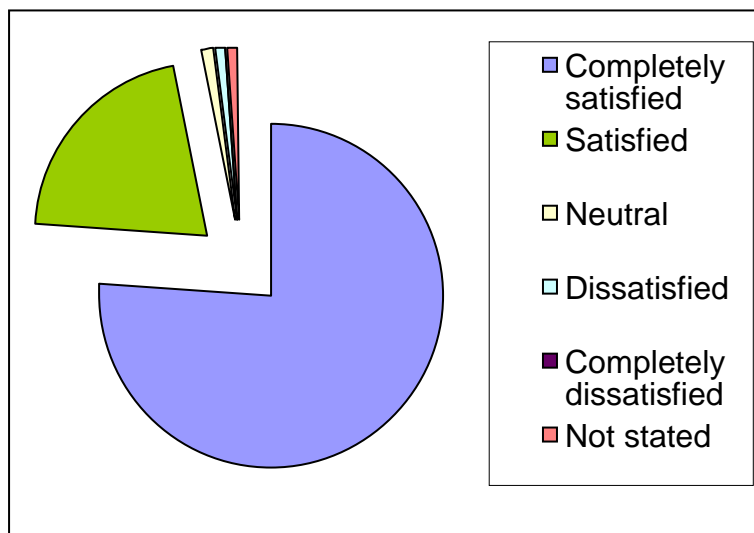
- 54% referrals
- 28% an existing relationship with someone at the firm
- 22% location
- 9% brand recognition

We asked clients who used our commercial services how they decided to select Hart Brown – they were able to choose more than one answer

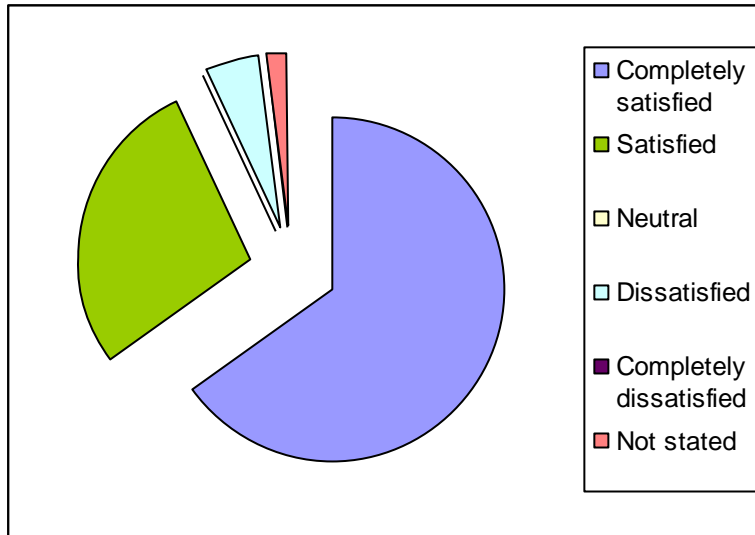
The top four responses were:

- 40% referrals
- 35% an existing relationship with someone at the firm
- 25% expertise
- 12% brand recognition

Individual clients asked to rate their overall satisfaction of Hart Brown

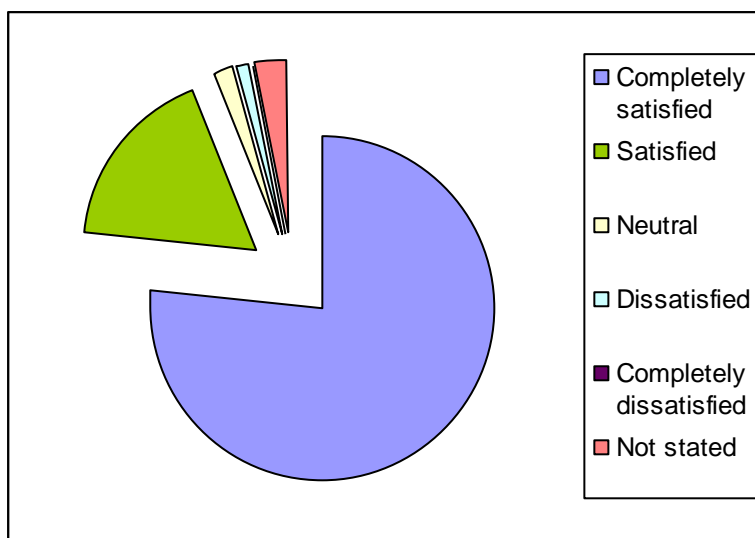


Commercial clients asked to rate their overall satisfaction of Hart Brown



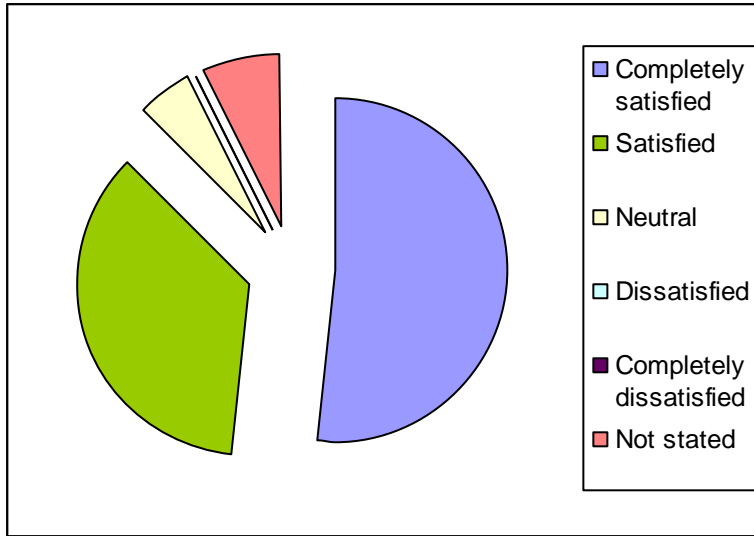
Individual clients asked to rate the performance of Hart Brown judging

Strength of relationship



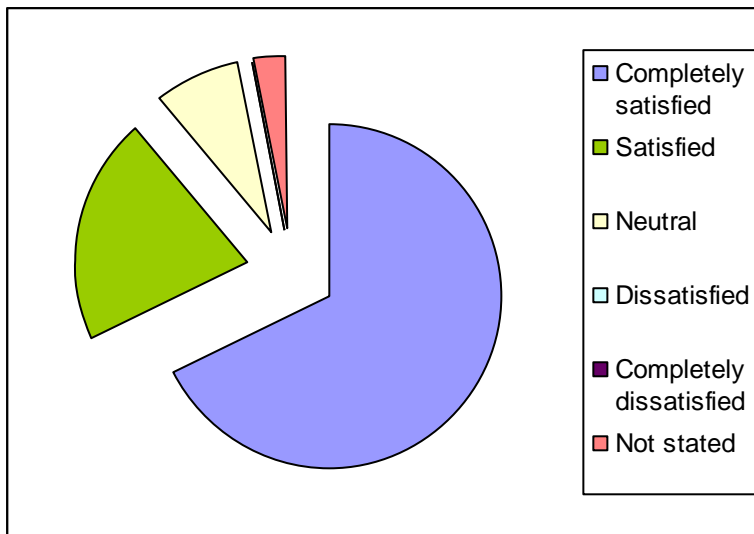
Commercial clients asked to rate the performance of Hart Brown judging

Strength of relationship



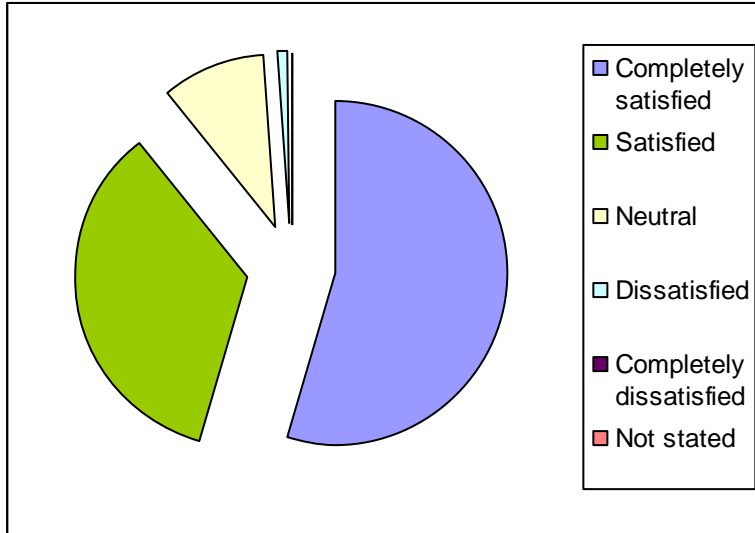
Individual clients asked to rate the performance of Hart Brown judging

Support and care



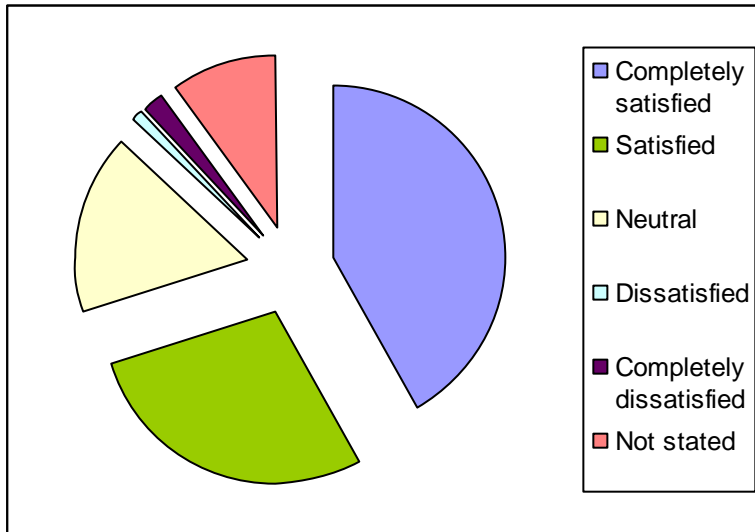
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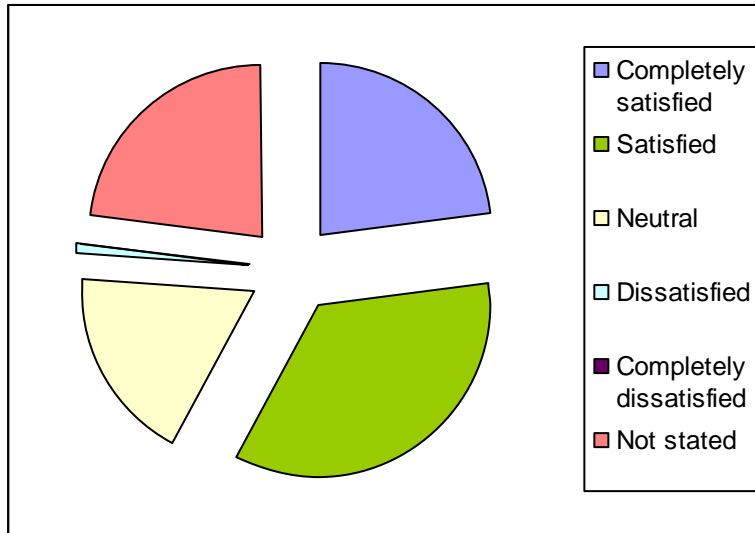
Individual clients asked to rate the performance of Hart Brown judging

Competitive fees and costs

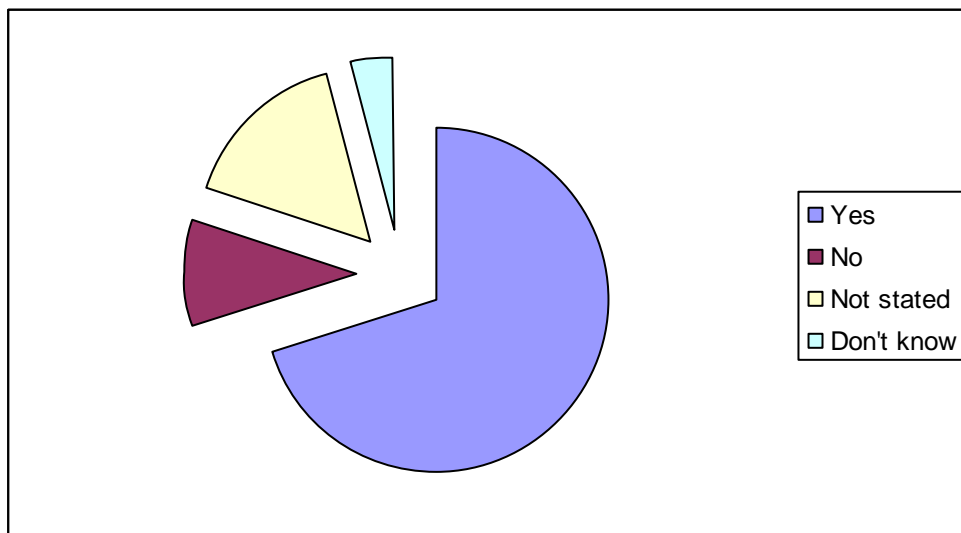


Commercial clients ask to rate the performance of Hart Brown judging

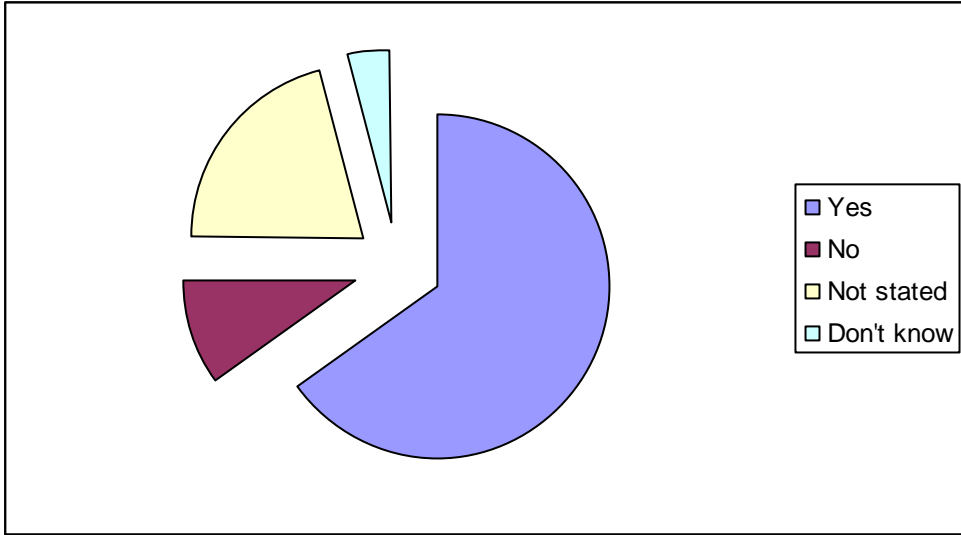
Competitive fees and costs



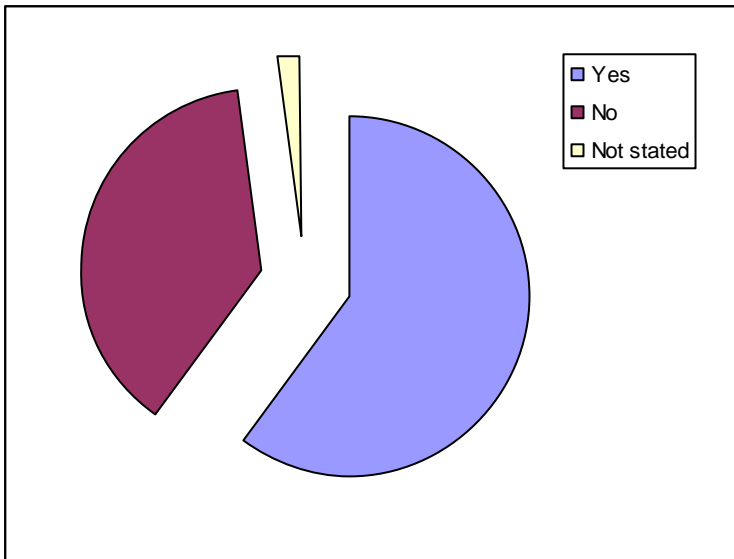
Individual clients were asked if they would recommend Hart Brown



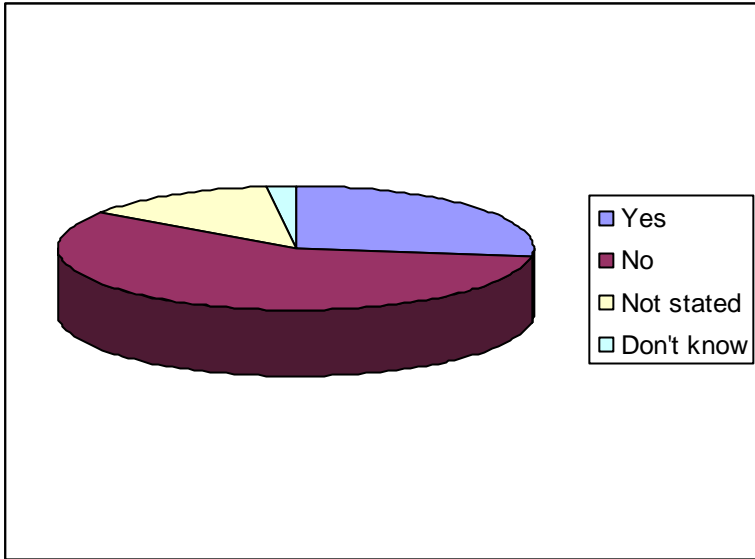
The response when Commercial Clients were asked if they would recommend Hart Brown



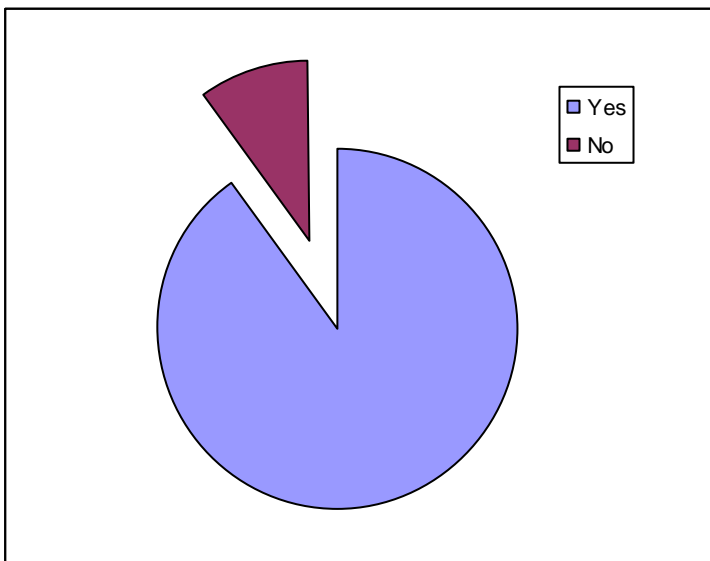
Percentage of individual clients who use the Internet to purchase services



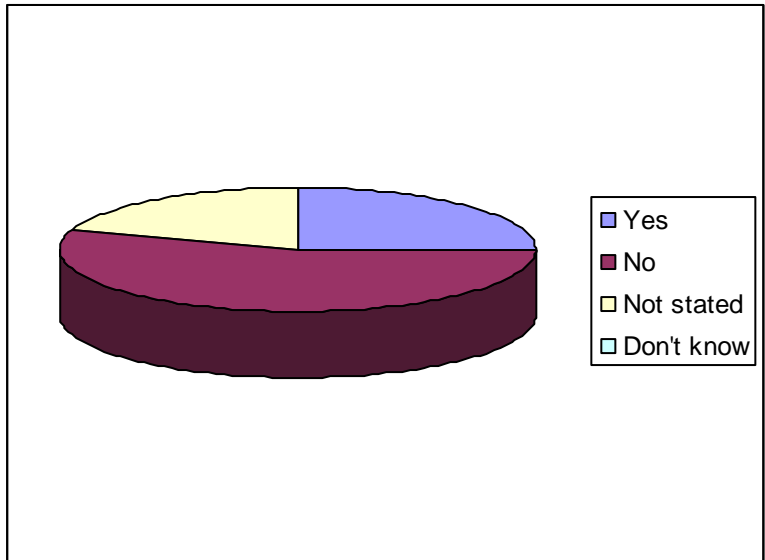
Individual clients were asked if there was more scope for Hart Brown providing more services online



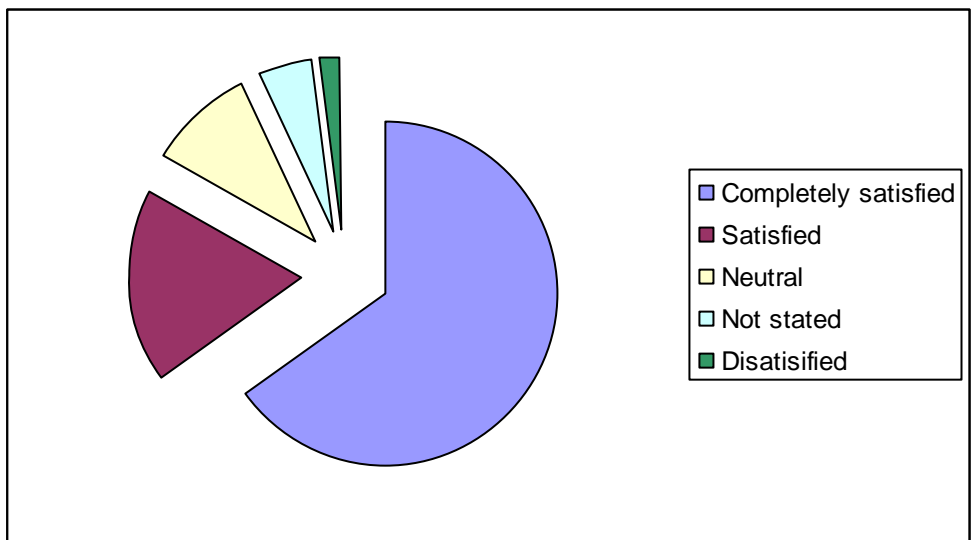
Percentage of Commercial Clients who use the Internet to purchase



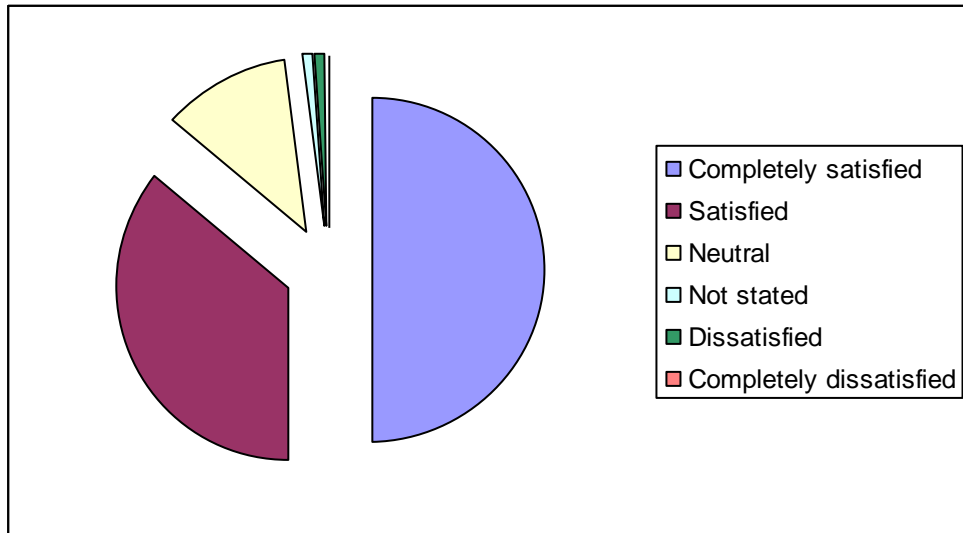
Commercial clients were asked if there was more scope for Hart Brown providing more services online



Percentage of individual clients who judged Hart Brown as keeping them informed of issues that might affect them



Percentage of Commercial clients who judged Hart Brown as keeping them informed of issues that might effect them



Some quotes from the survey:

I prefer to go and see my solicitor at the Hart Brown office to discuss my personal affairs and get a tailor-made service.

Feel that Hart Brown cares about clients and letting them know what to expect

Very pleasant approach and had no feeling of superiority or impatience

Like face to face contact

Happy to do the grunt work on line (like filling in forms) but want to see someone face to face to discuss things

Hart Brown has full understanding of the case. Not passed around to different people so that have to keep explaining what the case is about.

Efficient but friendly

I would not like to use the internet for more services as I value the personal relationship with Hart Brown

I don't think the internet would be appropriate, need to talk to someone about problems not tick boxes

Very good team, great back up, right people for all situations

I know someone who downloaded some house purchase documents, very good idea. But, must be careful when servicing and purchasing not to lose personal contact – would be easy to overstep the mark

The quality of their advice has been absolutely sound – very important when dealing with employment issues

Easy firm to work with, but would like to see more fixed price quotes. Charging per hour is not the best way to do it

Hard to get personal recommendations from the internet

They made a mistake during dealings with them, but would not count this as a weakness

I like using emails for contact but not for purchasing these kinds of services

Felt I could ask questions and not be charged for every minute. Not on a clock, got the impression they actually want to help you as a client and not to charge for everything

Thoroughness, the purchase was very complicated and not easy but Hart Brown were on the ball throughout

Re the internet, I have had experience of lawyers purchased on line, cheapest lawyers, complete and utter nightmare

Good local reputation. Generally helpful, nice and friendly people. Mostly very efficient. Knowledgeable PAs as well as solicitors. So sometimes the PA can give information rather than wait to speak to a solicitor.

Hart Brown are good fun

Seems to have a breadth of expertise, Very accessible.

Seminars are very interesting. The yearly will service review is at a reasonable price. Time and effort put in by Hart Brown carrying out this phone interview shows care and continuous support.