

## **In-House Attorneys Explore Legal Operations with Counsel On Call**

Lawyers manage risk. As the magnitude of complexity in legal services increases, corporate legal departments are becoming more business oriented by incorporating process and technology to reduce risk. In addition to managing outside spend, creating efficiencies and implementing technology solutions, legal departments are starting to report performance metrics in a way that business people are used to seeing. Embracing legal operations as a multidisciplinary function is a necessary step for legal departments to achieve increasing non-legal demands.

This was the focus of an interactive CLE panel for ACC Georgia members hosted by Counsel On Call on Jan. 28. “Legal Operations: Why Should You Care?” gave more than 50 legal operations professionals, attorneys and legal educators an opportunity to discuss how corporations have defined a successful legal operations function and how to evaluate which solutions may be appropriate for them. Panelists included Bill Henderson, professor at Indiana University Maurer School of Law and Legal Evolution editor, and Charles Bowen, Cox Enterprises managing attorney. The program was moderated by Mona Maerz, Counsel On Call vice president of corporate transactions.

“I am so grateful to be at a stage in my legal career that allows me to be part of a team that innovates and guides others through this evolving and growing field,” Maerz said. “My very job

is to create solutions that involve multidisciplinary teams to deliver modern legal services.” According to Henderson, law departments are increasingly working to mitigate risk and cost. They are substituting work traditionally sent to firms in various ways, from growing their departments in size to utilizing alternative legal service providers. Overall, they are taking on more sophisticated work internally. Henderson said there are currently more lawyers working in-house than in Am Law 100 firms.

Although fewer than half of law departments reported having a formal legal operations role in 2017, demand continues to grow. ACC Legal Operations supports today’s corporate legal operations professionals by giving them a voice and tools to collaborate. Henderson has begun laying the groundwork for training the next generation of lawyers, whose curriculum will include design thinking, data analytics, technology, process and project management and business tools. An emerging field brings with it unfamiliar territory that naturally requires integrative collaboration. Bowen attributes much of his organization’s ability to embrace legal operations by making people feel part of the process and solution. In his view, collaborative processes support legal services that lead to client success.

*For more information about legal operations, visit [www.acc.com/legalops/](http://www.acc.com/legalops/)*