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## The American Lawyer's Top 50 Innovators

The American Lawyer

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Big Law is notorious for its hidebound habits, but over the last 50 years a few dozen men and women have had an outsize impact on the profession. Our research and reporting teams spent six months looking for the people whose ideas, policies, and practices have left an indelible mark on the legal industry over the last five decades. These lawyers, academics, clients, and business executives range from the familiar (Thomas Sager and the DuPont Legal Model are to the legal industry what Derek Jeter is to the Yankees) to the obscure (Quick: Who invented the poison pill?) The innovators are a varied group. Some, such as long-serving Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom's managing director Earle Yaffa, blazed a trail for other C-suite executives. Others, like Slater & Gordon managing director Andrew Grech, who led the first law firm IPO, appear to be ahead of their time. Most importantly, all of these people promoted ideas that were embraced in some form by an industry not known for its innovation. Sometimes it's not enough just to have a great idea—convincing others to adopt it is also worthy of respect.—*Robin Sparkman*

*The Innovator profiles were written by: Susan Beck, Tom Brennan, Drew Combs, Mary Ellen Egan, Chris Johnson, Victor Li, Anthony Lin, Jessica Seah, Robin Sparkman, Grace Tatter, Ross Todd, Julie Triedman, and Claire Zillman.*



### [REENGINEERING THE LAW FIRM](#)

Law firms aren't necessarily known as hotbeds of innovation. And yet the business of law has evolved dramatically in recent decades, thanks in great part to the efforts of these partners and managers.

## LAW FIRM VALUES INNOVATORS



### IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE MONEY

Not so long ago, the ranks of the largest law firms were mostly filled with lawyers who were straight, white men focused almost entirely on revenue. Our innovators in this category weren't content with the status quo.

## BIG IDEAS INNOVATORS



### THE MASTER STRATEGISTS

While the 12 individuals featured in our Big Ideas section come from around the world, they all have one thing in common: They imagined ways in which their firms could be different from the rest.

## OUTSIDERS' INFLUENCE INNOVATORS



### OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN

Big-firm lawyers may think they have all the answers, but some of the biggest innovations affecting large firms have originated outside the large-firm world, with in-house counsel and nonlawyers.



## STARTING FROM SCRATCH

It's a good thing to rise to the top of one's practice specialty—but creating your practice specialty from the ground up is even better. That's what distinguishes these ten lawyers.

## THE LIST OF OUR TOP 50 INNOVATORS

### LAW FIRM VALUES

[Hillary Rodham Clinton](#)  
[Esther Lardent](#)  
[Jonathan Lippman](#)  
[Robert MacCrate](#)  
[David Morley](#)  
[Roderick Palmore](#)  
[Thomas Sager](#)  
[Howard Westwood](#)  
[Keith Wetmore](#)

### THE WORK

[Richard Beattie and Jack Levin](#)  
[Thomas Boggs Jr.](#)  
[H. Rodgin Cohen](#)  
[Kirk Davenport](#)  
[Robert Fiske and Charles Ruff](#)  
[Joseph Flom](#)  
[Martin Lipton](#)  
[Harvey Miller](#)

### BUSINESS OF LAW

[David Boies](#)  
[Andrew Grech](#)  
[Scott Green](#)  
[Simon Harper](#)  
[Sir Nigel Knowles](#)  
[Peter Martyr](#)  
[Diana Newcombe and Stephen Hopkins](#)  
[Raymond Niro](#)  
[Larry Sonsini](#)

### BIG IDEAS

[Russell Baker](#)  
[Ralph Baxter](#)  
[Jerome Cohen and Owen Nee Jr.](#)  
[Allen Holmes and W. James MacIntosh and Clinton Stevenson](#)  
[Wang Junfeng](#)  
[Peter Kalis](#)  
[Young Moo Kim](#)  
[Regina Pisa](#)  
[John Quinn](#)  
[Ralph Savarese](#)

### OUTSIDERS' INFLUENCE

[Robert Banks Sr.](#)  
[Steven Bochco](#)  
[Steven Brill](#)  
[Mark Chandler](#)  
[Sir David Clementi](#)  
[Mark Harris](#)  
[Ben Heineman Jr.](#)  
[Sanjay Kamlani and David Perla](#)  
[David Lat](#)  
[Hugh McLernon and John Walker](#)  
[Marla Persky](#)  
[Jerome Rubin](#)  
[Amy Schulman](#)  
[Earle Yaffa](#)

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## E-DISCOVERY INNOVATORS



### INNOVATORS EXTRA: E-DISCOVERY'S TRAILBLAZERS

*Eleven people—lawyers and nonlawyers—who helped create the industry.*

The lawyers, consultants, archivists, and judges who have played key roles in the evolution of electronic discovery by outlining processes, setting standards, defining the scope of e-discovery, and anticipating future industry trends.