



Spotlight Firm: Probst



«If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together» (African proverb)

The origins of « Probst Partner AG » lie in an attic in Winterthur in 1995.

Franz Probst, then 40 years old, had just left behind the hustle and bustle of one of the biggest law firms in Zurich and decided to venture out into economic independence by setting up his own practice. Since then, many employees have joined (some have become partners), many clients have been acquired, and countless hours have been worked. Today, Probst Partner AG has expanded its office space, increased its workforce and come of age.

That we have become a reputed law firm, known in Winterthur, Zurich and throughout Switzerland, need not be said. Let's look behind the scene and turn the spotlight on the values and principles which guide us



1. Collective Leadership, Flat Hierarchies, Diversity & Respect

The backbone of Probst Partner AG is a partnership, consisting today of six equal partners. Besides doing case-work, each partner actively participates in the firm's continuing development. The firm benefits from each member's different background, experience and expertise.

We want to maintain this diversity - yes, we still have work to do on the gender aspect - as it generates better outcomes for our business and our work as legal practitioners. Georg Weber, for example, « doing it his way » (as he did in Amsterdam at the 2019 Pangea AGM), provides food for thought to his partners on strategic matters. Roy Levy, recognized by « Who's Who Legal 2019 » as leading expert for sports law and certified employment lawyer, ensures impeccable employment policies, and Franz weighs in with his three decades of experience, stamina and sense of humour.

The platforms bringing the partners together on a regular basis are partner lunches, partner meetings, seminars as well as occasional outings for pleasure. This builds trust, enhances cooperation, creates a sense of joint purpose, and helps when challenges require quick and effective action.

2. Joint Work & Individual Excellence

We believe that working together brings added value for our clients. And it also enables us to successfully handle complex and large cases. From managing multiparty/jurisdictional litigation with over USD 600 million at stake, to closing M&A transactions for SMEs or dealing with procurement matters for government and the private sector, the structure of Probst Partner AG as a joint-stock company allows us to deploy our team members as and when required (and we do, of course, « go the extra mile » for our clients).

For us, working jointly on cases is not as much about numbers as it is about brains. So we make every effort to hire the best brains. And to retain them, we engage in internal and external continued education and training, make every effort to ensure an interesting and conducive working environment, and tie compensation to joint as well as individual achievement. In return, we get excellence in legal skills, creativity, out-of-the box thinking, ethical behaviour and an ap-proach which puts clients' interests first.

We embrace what we get from our team members. Christoph D. Studer, for example, is a national champion in professional liability law, Stefan Weber and Max Naegeli are at their best when challenged with international corporate and tax structures, and Julia Bhend is persistent and thorough when it comes to public procurement (she is recognized as one of Switzerland's best lawyers in this field), data protection, IT and technology law. In hot pursuit is Kaj Seidl-Nussbaumer who is, despite his young age, already well recognized by start-ups and technology companies as a legal force to be reckoned with when it comes to IT, technology and data protection matters. And joining this league soon is our « fresher », Claudia Marti, who is about to finish her thesis on an intricate topic of copyright law and will reinforce the IP practice spearheaded by Michael Widmer and Franz Probst.

Sharing our knowledge with others helps us to keep abreast and promotes the firm. All lawyers conduct seminars at clients or teach students and professionals, and Michael Widmer, Oliver Fritschi and Julia Bhend pursue regular teaching engagements at reputed universities in Switzerland. Moreover, our recurring workshops on legal topics of interest under the brand « Lunch and Law » have become well known. We have conducted these workshops in Winterthur, Zurich and Bern.

QUICK FACTS

Office locations: **Winterthur and Zurich**

Founded: **1995**

Number of attorneys: **13**

Number of administrative staff: **5**

Apprentice in administration: **1**

Interns: **1**

Languages: **German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew, Norwegian, Albanian, Bosnian**





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3. Investing in our Future

Besides following a systematic approach to hiring external talent, Probst Partner AG invests in its future by providing training opportunities for law students, prospective lawyers and administrative staff. We offer flexible trainee positions allowing students to « sniff » law office air, we provide internships for exposing graduates to the challenges of legal practice and, like Alexandra Williams Winter, helping them prepare for the bar exam.

And we take great pride in being a host company for 3-year commercial apprenticeships. Having received her diploma as commerce professional, Hylja Ismaili chose to stay with us and continue her education to become a paralegal. While Hylja will graduate shortly, our new apprentice, Sefija Dzaferi, is already successfully tackling a portfolio of administrative matters. She keeps track of our cash, helps other firm members prepare presentations and deal with their IT equipment, and supports our office manager, Annette Williams, and our senior assistants, Daniela Imholz and Nathalie Wydler, in managing their challenging daily workload and ensuring that Probst Partner AG runs like a clockwork so that the lawyers are not absorbed by administrative matters and can focus on clocking billing hours.

What makes us successful?

We derive gratification and strength from our work, and we believe that our clients and partners feel and appreciate this. Putting ourselves in our clients' shoes, we understand our work not just as offering legal expertise « per se ». Taking the « helicopter view », understanding the commercial implications of the solutions we propose, making workable recommendations in an understandable language and form, is at the heart of our success according to the feedback from clients and partners. More often than not, our lawyers become sparring partners of a client's team for all legal issues, and in 2019, for the second consecutive year, Probst Partner AG has been nominated as a « Top Law Firm » based on surveys by reputed Swiss business magazines.

We also see that clients appreciate lawyers who treat them as partners, maintain a sense of modesty and charge reasonable fees. Similarly, engaging in pro bono work or occasionally working at a reduced rate brings us much goodwill (and intriguing cases which otherwise would not have landed on our desks).

And then there is PANGEA

With its tiny home market of 8 million, the Swiss industry is heavily export oriented. One half of every Swiss Franc is earned outside of Switzerland, and in many countries including the USA, the combined investment by the Swiss private sector makes Switzerland rank among the 10 largest foreign investors. Machinery, precision instruments and equipment, pharmaceuticals, luxury goods and foodstuffs are among the top exports. Working for such export oriented clients requires us to be able to draw on a strong international network. Hence, we value Pangea and have high expectations in its further development and growth so that we can promote our services through the network's member firms to where our clients are.

25 Years and Beyond...

This year, we celebrate our 25th anniversary. We have left the « attic » of our name giving partner and become a business providing high quality services to a wide range of companies, not-for-profit entities, entrepreneurs, private clients and public sector institutions. While we will celebrate with a number of large and small events throughout the year, Pangea's AGM in India is a highlight for us. Given our longstanding India-related practice, the partners have decided to combine this year's AGM with a trip through Rajasthan and Karnataka, together with their spouses. India's colours, diversity and manifold challenges appropriately symbolize the 25 years of lawyering that are behind us, and they will surely inspire us to successfully tackle the next 25 years of Probst Partner AG.



KEYS CONTACTS

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