


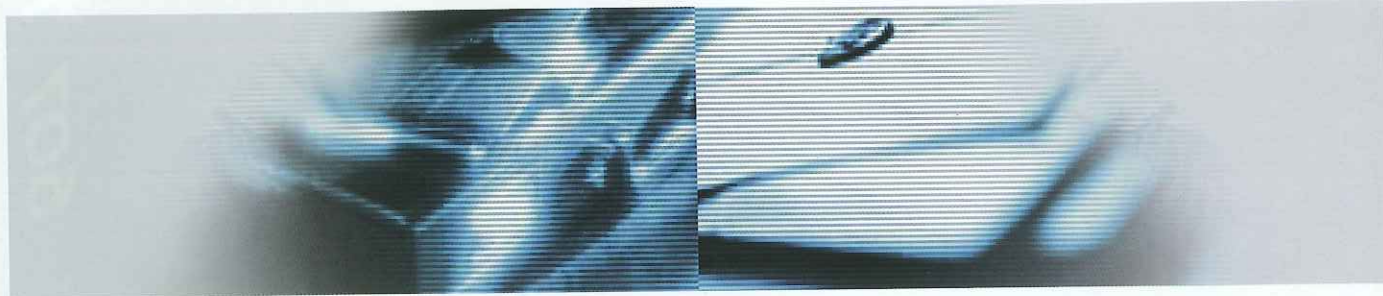
- China:
The Fourth Generation
- Koizumi:
From Lion to Lamb
- US & China:
Ambidextrous or Just Ambivalent
- Hong Kong & Singapore:
No Contest?
- Shipping:
A Tale of Two Container Ports
- Special Feature:
French Impressions



**“The Brain is
Everything”**

— The Science Parks Chief C D Tam





Two Systems, One Company

Thomas, Mayer & Associés (TMA) is a French law firm founded by Eric-Jean Thomas and Eric Mayer, two French international lawyers who had been involved in business transactions in South East Asia for many years before combining their expertise to set up the only French law firm originated in Hong Kong.

Thomas explains that the French and Hong Kong legal systems are two different planets ignoring each other. Thomas, Mayer & Associés (TMA) provides a bridge between the two structures; "We operate in the middle, giving the right advice," he says. The company regularly advises clients doing business in an international environment involving both common law and civil law jurisdictions and focus on the niche its profile suits most: advising the many French and continental European entrepreneurs, companies and businesses trading with and investing in Hong Kong, China and the Asia Pacific region, as well as the many Chinese and Asian entrepreneurs, companies and businesses trading with and investing in France and in continental Europe.


TMA are a very unusual firm, in that they are a foreign firm operating in Hong Kong without an overseas office. To ascertain its existence, the company had to be approved and covered by the Paris bar, which then was enough to convince the powers-that-be in Hong Kong that it was a justifiable prospect, who in turn granted them a licence. Thomas says, "Our niche is the cultural gap and our knowledge of the different environments." TMA can provide its clients with almost any of their legal requirements through its own expertise and a very close relationship with a number of other law firms, on both sides of the world.

The company's practice areas include International Business Law, Mergers and Acquisitions, Joint Ventures, Company and Commercial Law, International Tax Law,

International Arbitration, International Private Law, and Immigration Law. Through its close liaisons with both Asian and European law firms, TMA can offer a one-stop shop to its clients regardless of whether they wish to operate from Europe or Asia. The company provides its clients with services adapted to their specific needs, according to the size of their business, their activities and their prospects.

TMA's close relationship with the French law firm of Thomas, Herbecq & Associés based in Paris means they can provide a wide range of services to clients based in Hong Kong, China and the Pacific region doing business in France. In addition to this, their association with the local firm Fred Kan & Co allows them to provide precise and updated information and advice on Hong Kong law to its clients, in a wide range of areas. By representing, together with Fred Kan & Co, a team of approximately 80 people in Hong Kong, TMA can tap the resources of two international associations of commercial law firms, ADVOC ASIA, with members

throughout Asia and Australia, and EALG (Euro-American lawyers Group), with members throughout Europe and Central and North America. The services and advice TMA provides to its clients are tailor-made and stem both from a practical approach and an extended practice areas. The approach at TMA is to focus on making a valuable contribution to the progress of its clients' business, developing long-term relationships built on mutual understanding and trust. ■



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