
Kluwer Arbitration Blog

The Nature of International Arbitration

Roger Alford (General Editor) (Notre Dame Law School) · Thursday, January 29th, 2009

The Kluwer Arbitration Blog is a project that has been in the works for months, and we are excited about what the future holds for this new venture. As the managing editor of this new blog, I wanted to offer a few quick thoughts about the nature of international arbitration and why I think the time is ripe for this endeavor.

The international arbitration world is a unique epistemic community. We come from every corner of the globe and yet we all deeply care about the same issues. We number in the thousands and yet there is a remarkable degree of collegiality among our members. The arbitration world is marked by an astonishing variety of individuals who share the common attributes of cosmopolitanism, professional competence and emotional intelligence. The people in the arbitration world are a fascinating lot, and we hope to make this new forum as interesting a venue for discussion as the people who occupy this field.

International arbitration is a market-driven enterprise that wields the power of the state. It would not survive if its consumers were not reasonably satisfied with the results, or if national authorities were not confident that it deserved the imprimatur of its power. It somehow has managed to find a sweet spot of support from both the market and the state. The business and regulatory functions of international arbitration are fascinating subjects, and we hope this new forum will provide an opportunity to analyze the meta-issues of international arbitration that frequently arise but often are ignored.

Finally, it is in the devilish details that most of us earn our keep, and international arbitration never ceases to offer intriguing issues for consideration. We work in a protean discipline that addresses the intersection between public and private international law, contracts and civil procedure, constitutional law and evidence. International arbitration presents grand issues of great international moment, as well as pedestrian concerns of stultifying minutiae. The practical details of international arbitration are incredibly complex, and we hope this new venture will provide a forum for expert discussion of questions big and small.

Given the nature of international arbitration, it is astonishing that we do not currently have an effective forum for daily discussion about the world of international arbitration. It is our hope that Kluwer Arbitration Blog will be that forum. We have leading experts from around the world who have enthusiastically endorsed this project. The interest they have shown in participating reflects the desperate need for a venue such as this.

Of course, there is no limit to the number of international arbitration conferences one could attend

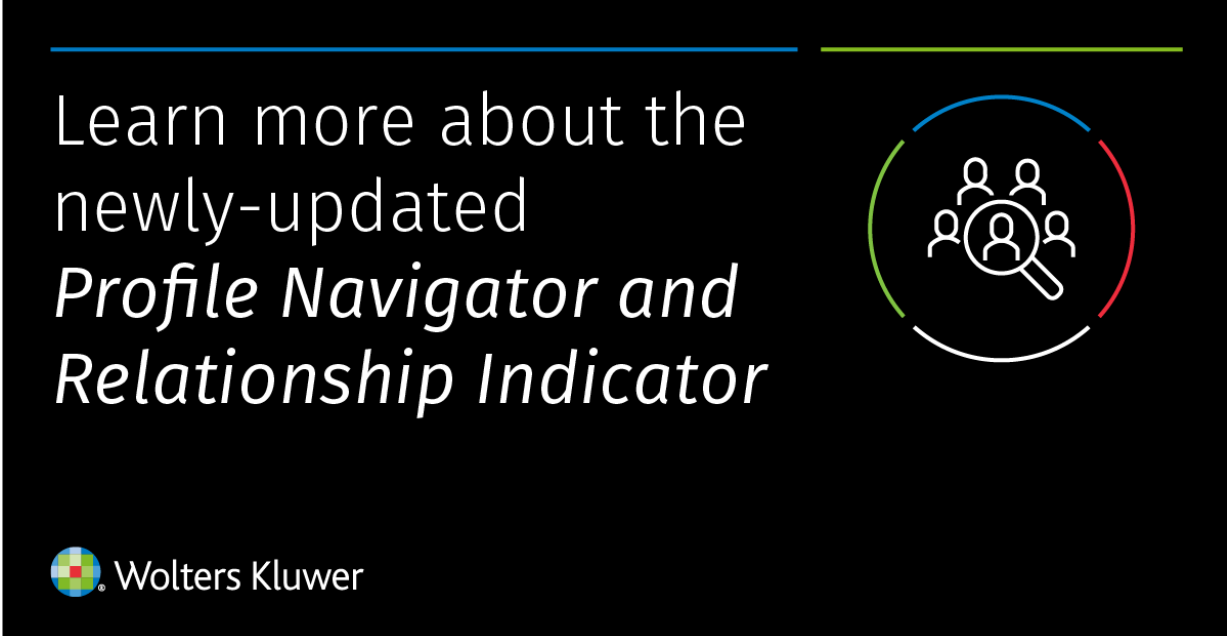
if time allowed. And there are numerous monthly and quarterly reports, newsletters, and journals that flourish. But law blogs are different. At their best, they are serious, thoughtful, high-quality sources of information regarding the latest developments within their particular specialty. We intend for Kluwer Arbitration Blog to follow in that tradition. Given the quality of the contributors, and the backing of the premier international arbitration publisher in the world, I have little doubt that it will be a success. We hope this blog will inform, enlighten, and entertain you.

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This entry was posted on Thursday, January 29th, 2009 at 5:08 am and is filed under [Arbitrators](#), [International Legal Theory and Teaching](#), [Legal Practice](#)

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