

Developing Reputation,  
Visibility & Business <sup>SM</sup>

**HARDY NORMAND**  
& ASSOCIÉS S.E.N.C.R.L.

## CASE STUDY

# Hardy, Normand & Associés S.E.N.C.R.L.

*"Clients see us as a real alternative to the Big Four accounting firms in Montreal. Confidence sells and we feel much more competitive with Alliot Group at our side."*

**Valérie Ménard**, Partner,  
Hardy, Normand & Associés S.E.N.C.R.L.

**ALLIOTT**  
GROUP

A Worldwide Alliance of Independent  
Accounting, Law and Consulting Firms



**Firm Profile:** **Hardy, Normand & Associés**

**Sector:** Accountancy

**Location:** Montreal, Canada

**Employees:** 115

**Date of affiliation:** March 2013

**Website:** [www.hardynormand.com](http://www.hardynormand.com)

Hardy, Normand & Associés is an independent Montreal based firm of chartered accountants that offers a wide range of audit, tax, and financial consulting services to small and medium sized businesses and private individuals. Since its foundation in 1981, the firm's founders and partners have expanded the firm's services and client base exponentially. In 2013, the firm decided membership of international alliance Alliot Group should be an integral part of the firm's future growth strategy.

## THE CHALLENGES

Over a period of more than 30 years, Hardy, Normand & Associés (*HNA*) had experienced steady growth in Montreal's accounting and tax services market and built up a substantial client base. However, the local market had also become much more competitive, and with a greater choice of providers available, clients wanted more.

Despite healthy strong growth, the internationalization of an increasing proportion of their clients' business was altering the local landscape. Clients needed their HNA advisors to be more knowledgeable about international business and expected them to be able to source answers quickly to their urgent questions or to put them in contact with a reliable professional advisor on the other side of the world, often at a moment's notice.

### **Addressing clients' growing needs for international services**

This put pressure on HNA to find a reliable and credible solution that would reassure clients that the firm was equipped to meet the expanding scope of their needs.



**Valérie Ménard, partner, comments:** *"Clients' business needs were becoming increasingly complex – we faced a situation where we couldn't service all of their requirements reliably and certainly not in the many different geographic markets around the world. We needed to close the gaps in our service offering to guarantee a joined up service for our internationally focused clients."*



### **Firm growth and profitability under threat**

The firm wanted to protect its client base from the larger, international firms and find a long-term solution that would safeguard the future value of the firm for its owner managers: *"It was clear that we needed an international link to support the future growth goals of the firm. We started to look at the various options available to a firm of our size and resources."*

### **THE SOLUTION**

#### **Thorough research confirms ideal solution**

Research into how other similar sized firms had resolved related challenges helped the firm to identify the type of service that would meet many of its requirements. Further discussions with trusted experts in the professional services sector confirmed the firm's view that membership of an international association of independent firms would provide a solution that would meet their needs within their budget.

**Roger Najm, partner, explains:** *"We identified a small number of international groups that had a vacancy in Montreal and that offered the range of services we needed. We looked closely at the profile of each group, the size and focus of the member firms in other countries with whom we would need to work, the associations' membership offering, and we looked for evidence that we would be joining an association with real drive and ambition. After meeting with the leadership of several groups, we focused our attention on securing membership of Alliot Group. The services that were offered matched exactly what we needed to thrive and extend the services offered by our firm."*



In March 2013, HNA was appointed as Alliot Group's sole accounting firm member in Montreal. As a result, the firm has extended the range of services it can offer to clients and the number of locations in the U.S. and worldwide where it can refer clients to a trusted professional.



## THE RESULTS

### Reassurance and lower risk

Alliott Group meetings and conferences have given HNA ample opportunities to give presentations, participate in special interest groups, acquire new knowledge and to network at a personal level. This has built awareness of the strength of their practice in Montreal and positive outcomes have ensued, with Ménard commenting: *“The majority of our interactions have involved referring our clients to the tax partners at the U.S. member firms and to members in other countries. We have developed close personal relationships with people whom we consider colleagues – our values are very closely aligned. It’s reassuring to know that I can pick up the phone and get through to a trusted colleague’s cell phone to ask a technical question or to arrange an introduction to my client.”*

### Changed perceptions

As a result of the firm promoting its membership of Alliott Group consistently across its internal and external marketing communications, *“Clients and prospects with current or future international needs are aware that the firm can serve their needs locally and internationally and put together a team of accounting, tax and legal experts almost anywhere in the world. Professional intermediaries also appreciate our global capabilities and are now more inclined to refer clients to HNA who have more complex, cross border needs.”*

### New revenues

After four years of membership (including leadership in the association’s Global Mobility Services and International Tax Services groups), the firm has increased the revenues it generates from existing local clients to whom international support is now offered. Ménard explains: *“Our increased visibility as an international firm in the Montreal market is reflected in the overall billing increase with existing local clients.”*

### Greater confidence

Moreover, the firm’s reputation has been enhanced, with Ménard explaining that *“Clients see us as a real alternative to the Big Four accounting firms in Montreal. Confidence sells and we feel much more competitive with Alliott Group at our side.”*

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