

US Firms Capture Claims Worth 13 Times the Average in UK Litigation

By Oscar Glyn

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U.S. law firms have amassed an average claim value of £10 million in London disputes in the five years to 2025, 13 times the national average, demonstrating their continued pursuit of the highest value claims in the city.

The data, produced by Solomonic and charting the period 2020 to 2025, shows that, while U.S. firms account for just 4% of all claims in the U.K., their median value of £10 million dwarfs the £740,000 total median value of claims brought at the High Court and the Competition Appeal Tribunal.

The research also indicates that U.S. firms are far more likely to go to trial, with 21% of claims reaching judicial outcome compared to the average of 9%.

At over 180, Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan lodged the most claims in this period, with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and Reed Smith the closest competitors with around 150.

Senior partner at Quinn Emanuel Richard East said: "This is further evidence of the significant impact of U.S. firms in litigation in the U.K., and in particular the growth and influence



of Quinn, which has become the dominant force in litigation."

Despite the higher value of the work, U.S. firms are evenly split between claimant and defendant at 51% and 49% respectively.

The head of EMEA disputes at Cleary, James Norris-Jones, said: "The biggest shift is the way the market has changed in the last decade. Previously clients would have looked to the magic circle or other leading U.K. firms for the largest and most complex cases. Now clients see that U.S. firms like Cleary have the bench strength and experience to handle those cases. Cleary is, for example, currently acting in some of the biggest class actions in the market, which we would not have been a natural choice for previously.



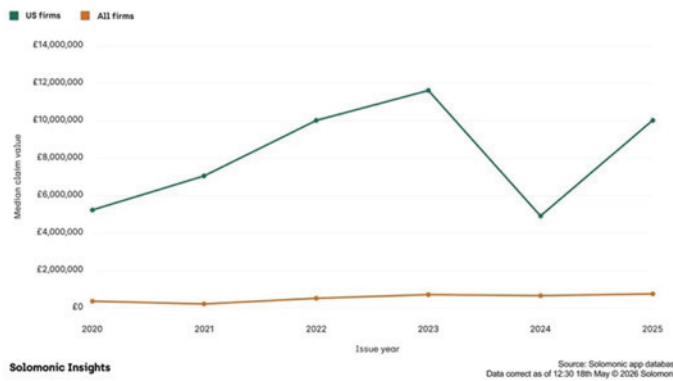
Top U.S. Firms by Claims Filed, Solomonic

“For any big piece of work, clients are looking at who they consider to be the top firms in the market, which now clearly include leading U.S. practices like Cleary. I’m not surprised by the data; firms like Cleary are now regularly involved in the biggest cases in the market.”

One in five cases before the London commercial courts now involves a U.S. firm, suggesting that U.S. firms are navigating litigation at the top end of the market.

Co-managing partner of Milbank’s London office and litigator Tom Canning said: “The data is interesting. It is, in my view, consistent with what we are seeing, in that clients often come to us with their most complex and critical issues, which frequently means the highest value disputes. The growing prominence

US firms median claim value 13x more than all firm average



Median Claim Value, Solomonic

of the U.S. firms in that part of the market is clear to see.”

Hilton Mervis, a partner at McDermott Will & Schulte sees U.S. firms plan of attack as different to that of the rest of the market.

“These figures are interesting, and if they bear out the trend described, the comparison needs to be understood in context,” he said. “Most U.S.-headquartered firms in London are not seeking to compete across the whole High Court and CAT litigation market. They tend to focus on complex, high value and often cross border commercial disputes. On that basis, the more meaningful comparison may be with UK headquartered firms that are similarly focused on major commercial litigation, rather than with all firms active in the High Court and CAT.”