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2026 Client Expectations
Webinar Takeaways

Jake Ward
Founding Member,
Ward Law Office

Robert Wells
Managing Partner,
Rock IP, PLLC

Cary Levitt
Managing Director,
Azami Global

Marc Kenigsberg
VP of Marketing,
Global – Azami Global

Round-Table Moderator

Discussion Summary

This roundtable explored how **client expectations for IP services are evolving heading into 2026**. While cost, quality, and transparency remain foundational, the discussion made clear that the biggest shift is how clients expect their IP portfolios to be managed: faster-moving, more strategic, more business-driven, and supported by technology that improves outcomes—not just efficiency.

The conversation emphasized that clients increasingly view IP as a business system, not a collection of filings, and expect their legal partners to guide decisions proactively across jurisdictions, budgets, and risk profiles.

Key points

Higher expectations are driven by a faster, more complex business environment

Clients are operating in shorter business cycles, global markets, and technology-driven ecosystems. Instant communication, AI adoption, and continuous cost pressure are reshaping how IP portfolios must support business objectives.

Execution alone is no longer enough

Firms that focus solely on accurate filing and prosecution risk falling short. Clients now expect **jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction strategy** tied directly to revenue, competitive risk, and enforcement value—not mechanical execution of instructions.

Law firms often underestimate communication and cost alignment demands

Clients expect rapid, proactive communication, budget alignment, and thoughtful delegation of work to the lowest qualified professional. Silence, surprise invoices, or delayed insights erode trust quickly.

“Fast enough” means timely and proactive—not rushed

Speed is table stakes, but clients do not want rushed filings or reactive decisions. They want structured guidance, early warnings, and fewer last-minute emergencies that compromise quality.

Transparency builds trust when complexity is translated into business insight

True transparency goes beyond invoices. It includes explaining the business impact of foreign office actions, claim scope differences, enforcement risk, and strategic tradeoffs in clear, actionable terms.

Technology and AI are assumed—value comes from outcomes

Clients care less about which tools are used and more about results: predictable cost, consistent claim strategy, fewer surprises, and better coordination across jurisdictions. Technology supports judgment—it does not replace it.

Price predictability enables better decision-making and risk management

When firms understand whether patents are defensive, pioneering, or enforcement-driven, they can guide investment, manage overruns, and help clients justify IP spend to leadership and finance teams.

Ask our team

Are we managing our clients’ IP portfolios as integrated business systems—or as a series of disconnected filings?

How can we deliver more proactive guidance, cost predictability, and strategic insight across global prosecution in 2026?

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