

The Origins of CMS in Germany – Media Backgrounder

CMS in Germany is part of the international CMS organisation. The law firm is the result of a number of mergers that brought together law firms with strong regional roots, initially within Germany, followed by international expansion. It is now one of the leading German commercial law firms and provides top legal advice in unique breadth and depth. The description below traces the history of the preceding German offices and their shared post-merger development (status: February 2016):

1990: Weiss & Hasche

In 1990 the firms of Ott Weiss Eschenlohr (Munich) and Hasche Albrecht Fischer (Hamburg) merged. Established by Dr Walter Hasche in 1945, Hasche Albrecht Fischer initially focused on marine and transport law as well as insurance and ship financing law, eventually becoming a highly respected firm advising on all areas of commercial law. The traditional domain of the Munich office, founded in 1924 by Dr Karl Weiss, was all aspects of commercial law.

1995: Hasche & Eschenlohr

The firm was renamed after Munich partner Dr Karl Heinz Weiss (son of Dr Karl Weiss) left the practice.

1997: Hasche Eschenlohr Peltzer Riesenkampff Fischötter

Hasche & Eschenlohr merged with Peltzer & Riesenkampff (Frankfurt/Main) and Fischötter Micheli & Partner (Hamburg) in 1997. Peltzer & Riesenkampff was established by Dr Martin Peltzer and Dr Alexander Riesenkampff in 1972 after both had held senior positions in the commercial sector for many years. From the start, the firm specialised in commercial law (particularly corporate transactions and banking law) and set up an office in Brussels for European law.

Fischötter, Micheli & Partner was established by Werner Fischötter in 1958 when he set up as a lawyer in Hamburg. Corporate law, intellectual property and competition law were among the key areas of advice provided by the firm from the start. It went on to enjoy strong growth.

1999: CMS Hasche Sigle Eschenlohr Peltzer

After joining forces with long-established law firm Fiedler & Forster (Frankfurt/Main, Munich) at the start of 1999, the firm merged with Sigle Loose Schmidt-Diemitz & Partner (Stuttgart) on 1 July. Dr Walter Sigle established the Stuttgart commercial law practice with its strongly international outlook in 1962. Prior to the merger it was already one of the largest German law firms.

Likewise on 1 July 1999, the German firm formed CMS, the international organisation of law firms, together with Cameron McKenna (UK), Derks Star Busmann Hanotiau (Netherlands), Schlüter & Hald (Denmark), Tisell & Co. (Sweden) and Strommer Reich-Rohrwig Karasek Hainz (Austria). The alliance has gained additional members in the meantime.

2000: CMS Hasche Sigle Eschenlohr Peltzer Schäfer

Merger with Schäfer Wipprecht Schickert (Düsseldorf).

2001: CMS Hasche Sigle

Name shortened.

2005: Growth in Cologne

The Cologne office of Norton Rose joined CMS Hasche Sigle in 2005. The firm's name remained unchanged.