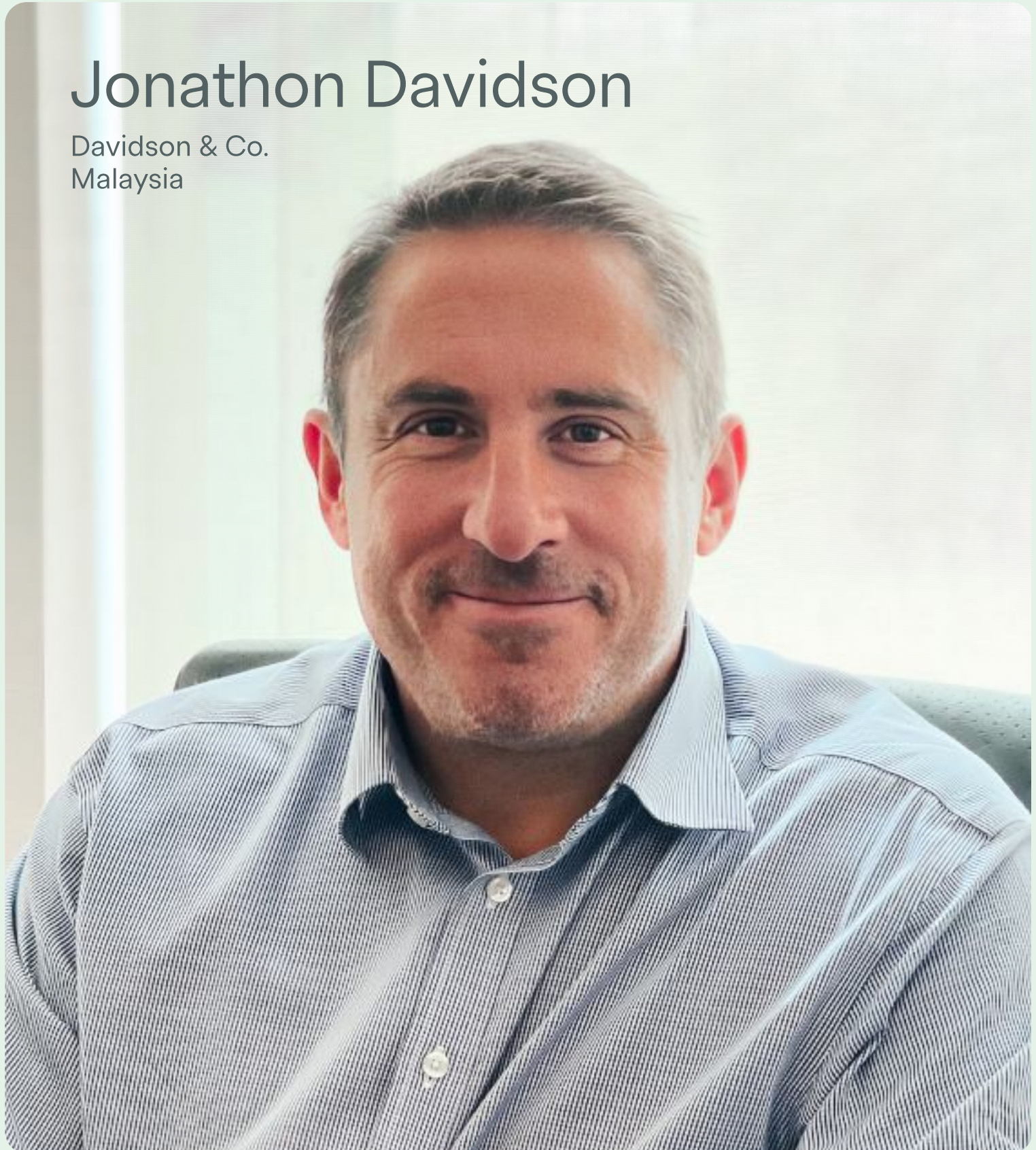


Interviews Series

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Jonathon Davidson

Davidson & Co.
Malaysia



“We regularly receive high-standard legal work from across the world, which has increased our global reach and reputation”

MALAYSIA



Jonathon Davidson

Davidson & Co.
Dubai

DAVIDSON & CO
LAW FIRM

1. **Can you provide an overview of Davidson & Co's history and key areas of expertise?**

I founded Davidson & Co in 2008. We are a pre-eminent boutique law firm and provide a range of legal services to SMEs, high-net-worth individuals and other private clients throughout the UAE, the wider Middle East and North Africa, United Kingdom, Switzerland and beyond.

The team, including civil and common law litigators and legal experts from the UK, Ireland, United States, New Zealand, and India, collectively has over 50 years' experience in the UAE, both in private practice with respected local and international law firms, and in government and industry. We are able to marry the rigors of international commerce with the nuances of local culture, and judicial and business practice.

The firm's key areas of practice are: corporate and commercial; litigation and dispute resolution; employment law; real estate and construction; regulation; private client; DIFC Wills; international trade; digital assets; and start-ups.

The firm has a well-known reputation in complex local litigation (Dubai and Abu Dhabi Courts of First Instance, Court of Appeal, Federal Supreme Court and Court of Cassation). We work with a small, hand-picked panel of local Arabic Advocates with whom we have fostered close working relationships for a number of years.

2. **What are the key trends and challenges currently facing the legal market in Dubai and the wider UAE?**

There are a number of trends and challenges currently facing the legal sector in the UAE, including digital transformation, regulatory changes, increased foreign investment, increased cross-border transactions, a preference for alternative dispute resolution, intense competition and cost pressure.

The regulatory landscape in the UAE is one of frequent reform. The UAE is working hard to enhance the business environment, align with international standards and

support economic diversification. One example of these efforts is the introduction of laws to encourage foreign investment, including allowing 100% foreign ownership of companies in certain sectors, and the implementation of clear procedures. Individuals and businesses must remain vigilant and adaptable to keep up with the changes, and this has led to an increased need for regulatory lawyers in the region.

The UAE has emerged as a global leader in digital transformation, and the legal sector, among many others, is embracing the movement. In particular, the sector is leveraging artificial intelligence in areas such as legal research, document review and drafting, and predictive analysis, leading to enhanced efficiency. It is clear that technology will continue to significantly impact the delivery of legal services in the region. With this trend though comes challenges, including the risk of inaccuracies, confidentiality and data protection, which firms will need to carefully consider.

3. How does Davidson & Co view its role within the Legalink network, and how has this relationship been beneficial?

Davidson & Co will continue to collaborate with and refer work to other members, engage in events, as well as strive to uphold our commitment to quality service and professionalism, all of which underpin the network's objectives.

Our firm has benefited greatly over the years from its involvement with the network. We regularly receive high-standard legal work from across the world, which has increased our global reach and reputation. Our membership has also reinforced our local standing as our clients recognise the value of our membership of the esteemed network.

4. What do you believe are the key benefits for clients when law firms like Davidson & Co. are part of a global network like Legalink?

As a member of Legalink, our clients are afforded the unique opportunity of seamless and swift access to a significant number of law firms across multiple jurisdictions with expertise in a broad range of legal practice areas. Further, our clients can be confident in receiving first-class service from us and other members. All members have to pass a rigorous vetting process before being admitted to the network and thereafter have to maintain high standards. Searching for a lawyer in a county a client is unfamiliar with can be a daunting process, but the network works to simplify the process. Finally, the network largely consists of small to medium-sized firms offering our clients lower costs, flexible billing arrangements, and

personalised service.

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5. What key topics or issues do you look forward to discussing at the General Meeting?

A number of speaker sessions are planned at the General Meeting including “Algorithms, Space and the Rise of the Middle East Entrepôts” by Mark Beer OBE, “Litigation Support & Crisis Management” by Michael Farrant of Farrant Group, an Energy Seminar: “The 100-year carbon journey of the Gulf States, a look at modern alternative and future energy aspirations” by Andrew Sutherland (formerly Baker Hughes, Emmerson Energy, Aspen Tech now special Middle East advisor), and a panel on Trade issues (sanctions, free zone).

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6. What are you most excited about regarding the upcoming Legalink meeting, and what can attendees look forward to?

We are delighted to welcome members to the next General Meeting in Dubai. There will be a number of meetings and social events to look forward to, as well as the Legalink Gala dinner. Our firm will also be hosting a cocktail reception at the Shangri-La Hotel, where our offices are located. There will be plenty of opportunity to catch up with peers, build new connections, and share updates, knowledge, best practices and ideas.

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