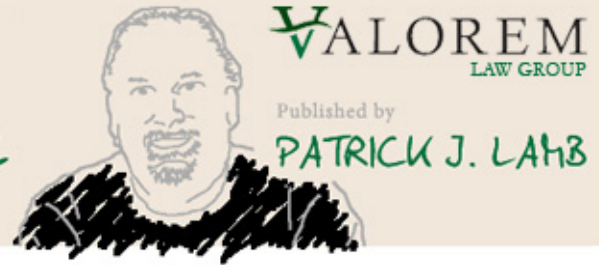


# In Search of Perfect Client Service



## One great client

By Patrick Lamb on January 27th, 2012

Some clients make you love working for them. They make you want to excel. They bring out the best you have to offer. DSW is one such client, and I just have to share the experience we had yesterday.



In December, we won a trial for DSW. It was the company's first trial—they want to sell shoes and make people happy, not fight with landlords, after all. But some fights can't be avoided, and ours was one of them. Yesterday was our time to celebrate. The first thing they did was give us a tour of their space. It is a fantastic space in a renovated WWII aircraft production facility. It has a SOHO feel to it, lots of open space, lots of places to get together and talk. I had

been to the facility several times, but one of my colleagues had not, and I just kept smiling as I heard him say "wow" over and over. Having said my share of "wows" out loud the first time I was there, I was now "cool" and just kept saying "wow" in my head.

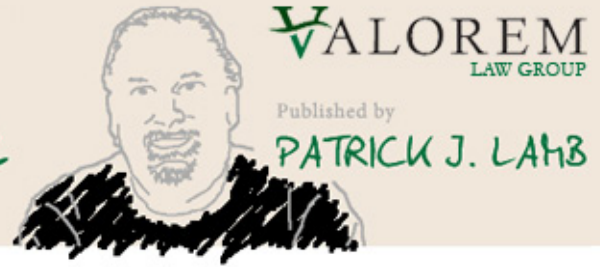
One of the first "wows" comes when you see that every office is the same size—small—and totally functional, not glitz. This includes the CEO's office, which looks just like everybody else's. Egos get checked at the door—when you walk in, it's about the shared objective of selling shoes and making customers love DSW. If that's not your mindset, you soon see the door going in the other direction.



But here's what really got me. Right up front, you see a bold, clear, unequivocal statement of the company's values: What you can't see from the picture is that everybody has signed the wall, making, if you will, a collective contract with each other. The leadership of the Company has just rolled out another value—passion. And the passion is evident—you feel it was people do their jobs. These values just permeate the facility. It is apparent that every element of design, of organization, of operation, all are in harmony with these values (and the new one). And if there is any doubt about whether this approach works in a tough economy, check out DSW's [performance](#). It's now a \$2 billion dollar company.

As we walk around, we encountered this sign outside the General Counsel's office: I am reminded of Captain Jean-Luc Picard's way of saying simply, "make it so." There is a "can-do" feeling that permeates the place. Those feelings start at the top and are consciously created. People get

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measured against them, just like we were measured against the company's values. We heard several ideas for how we can do our job better. As one of my colleagues remarked, "I would go through hell for these guys." I couldn't agree more.

After business was finished, we had dinner. As we were getting ready to sit down, David and Bill provided us gift cards for every employee and member of our firm. "Even though you three were at the trial, we know that everybody contributes to the result." Wow. I would be surprised if any person at Valorem ever buys a pair of shoes anywhere else.

It is possible to design passion, to instill a desire to please, to create customers that feel like they are part of the enterprise. My hat is off to DSW and to my friends Bill and David. We could not be prouder to be part of your team.

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