

THE CLIENT

Spencer West

Complete re-design of their existing website to bring the site in line with modern user expectations.

The work was carried out during 2019–2021 and initially took roughly 5 months to completion. This general study will go over some of the structure of the project as well as technical and design consideration along with further revisions.

My involvement with the project was lead designer/project manager as well as handling most of the front-end side of things. Back-end development was carried out by two other colleagues.

A red handwritten signature, likely belonging to the author of the text, is located in the bottom right corner of the page. The signature is stylized and cursive, written in a vibrant red color.

CONSTRAINTS

Considerations for the project

Mobile friendly

Ensure the site works well and doesn't introduce any incompatibilities with the interface or overlapping graphical elements. Focus around entire boxes/regions click through to the links instead of just the text within them.

Partner Profiles

Individual projects for the many Partners of the firm, and considerations in the design where not all areas of a particular profile can be filled. For instance, some partners have Awards and Citations, but others may only have one section, and some none at all.

Clean and modern

Intentional sharp lines, distinct graphical elements while using a tight colour palette, primarily blue, grey, and white to tie in with the general new branding going forward.

Simplicity

A clear focus on ease of use, many of the sub-sections of the site flow were to be reduced and allow the user to filter in a series of clicks to find a list of lawyers within the selected field of expertise at the firm.

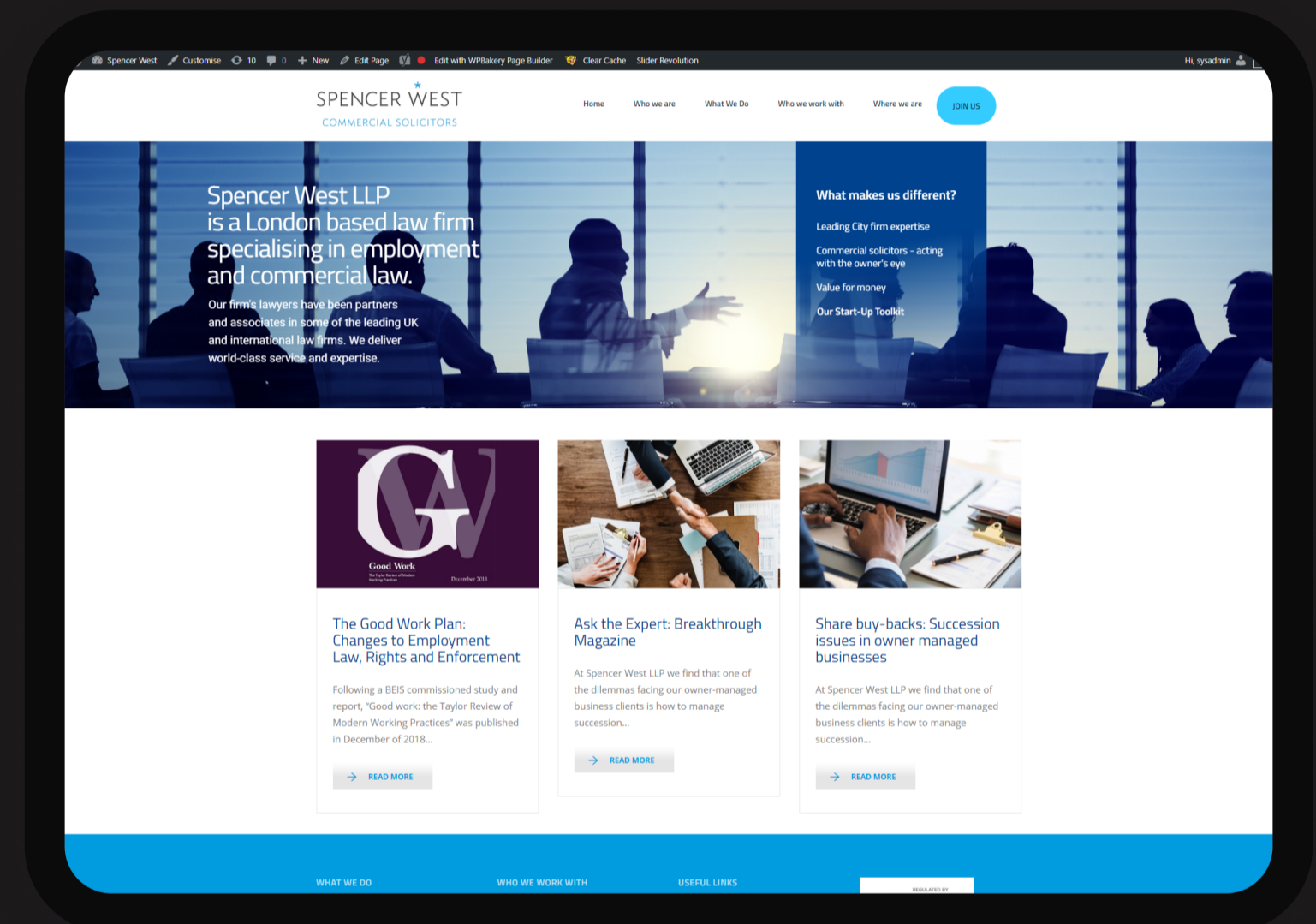
CHALLENGES

What's the problem?

Poor contract ratios, improvements can be made to the availability space. Header better colouration and something with a focus on contact.

More focus on services and upsells of the firm. Something to indicate to future partners that the firm is looking to grow.

The old UI



CHALLENGES

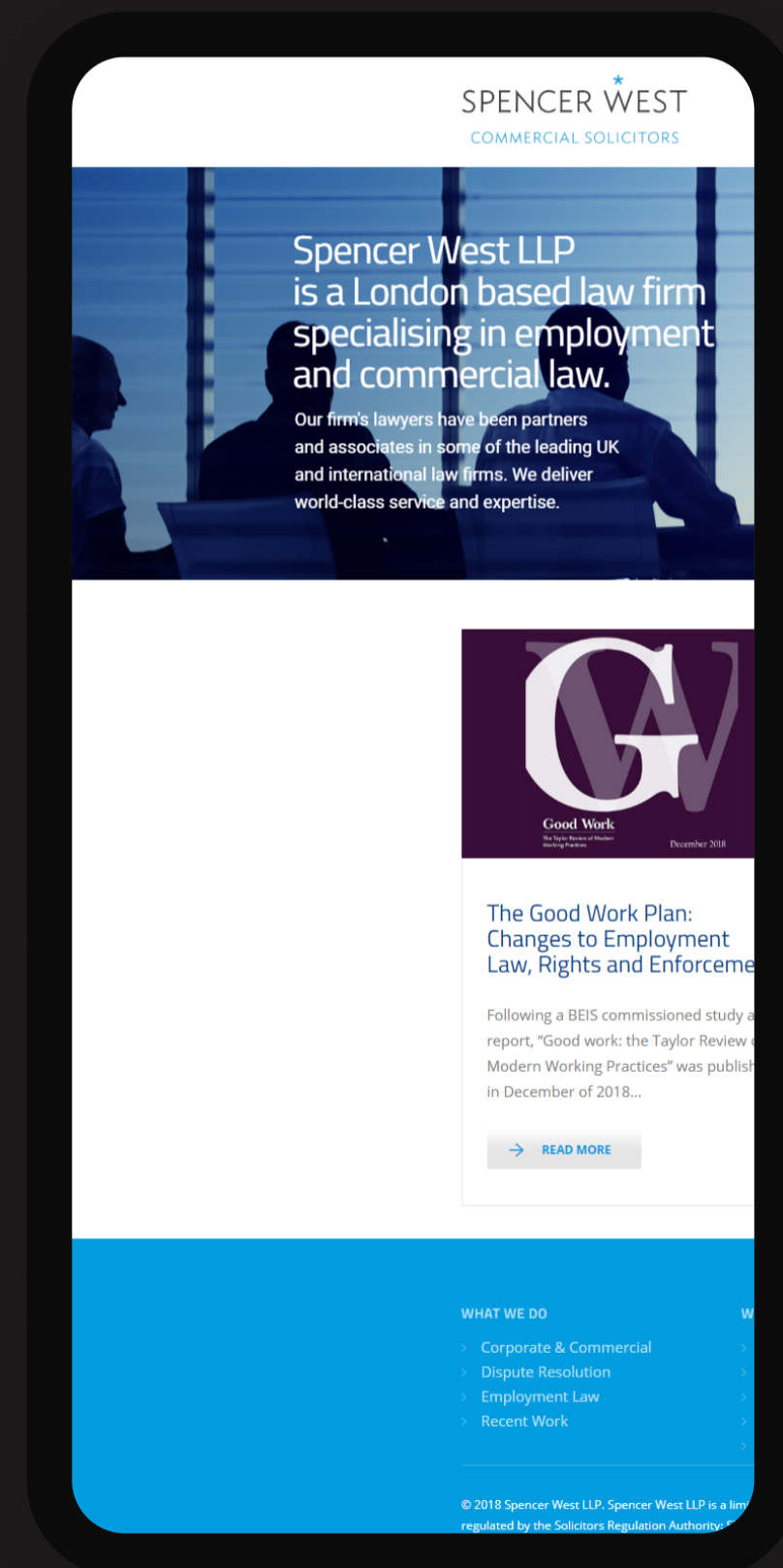
What's the problem?

No responsive design, unappealing against competitors within the same niche.

Hard to navigate on mobile devices with particularly low screen sizes.

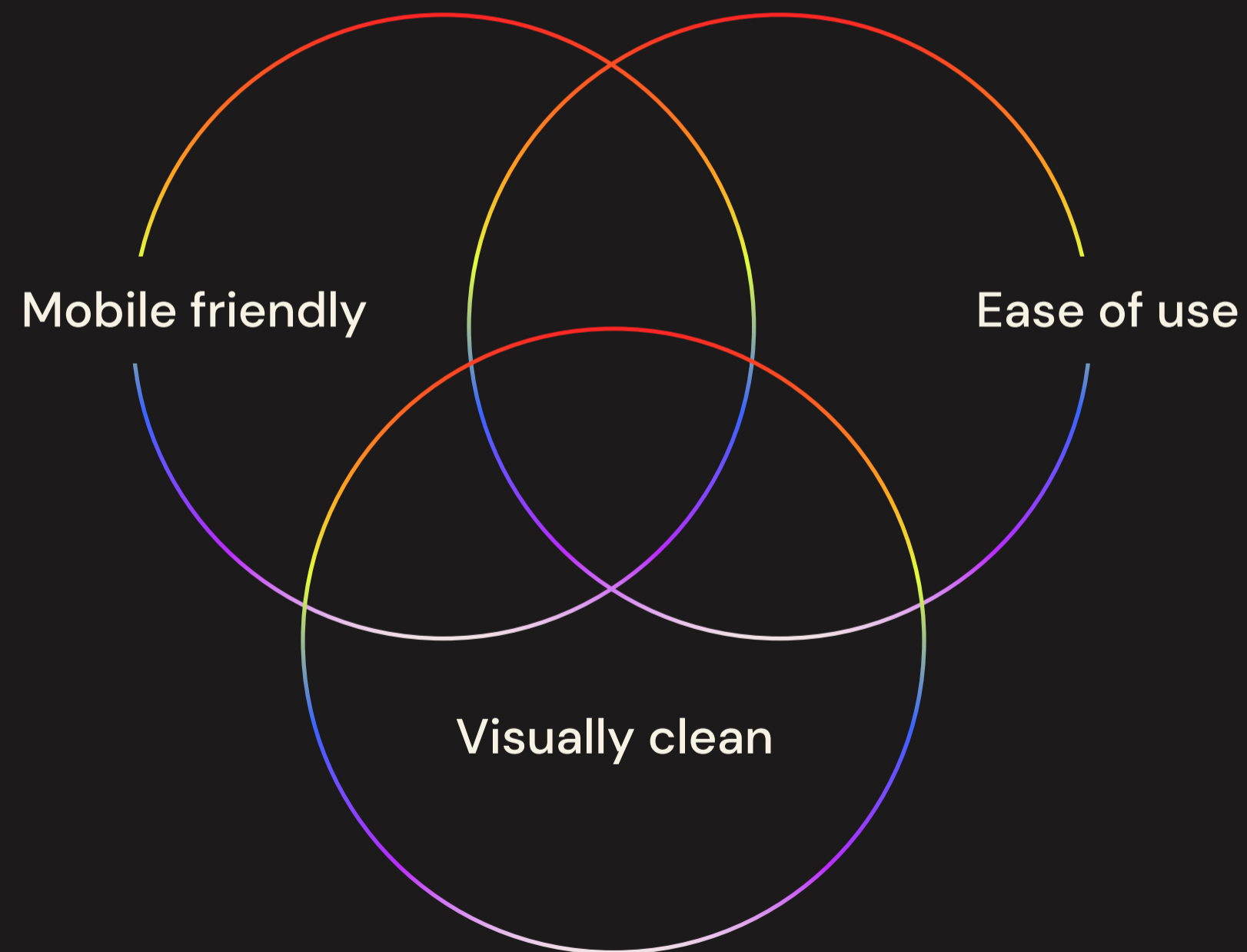
Essentially, the site needed a means of collapsing to fit the screen real estate it's provided with from a smaller device.

The old UI



DESIGN OUTCOMES

We're looking around these themes



Mobile friendly

Ensure the site transitions and works well across mobile and tablets, yet retains a familiar feel on desktop.

Ease of use

Emphasis on speed, users should be able to work through the site from top level categories to end up at the service or area of the site they require as well as easily be able to move between different areas of the site.

Visually clean

More emphasis placed on the partners at the firm and careful filtering, tunnels and visual aids to help guide a user to the right places while remaining a good experience.

SOLUTIONS

Here's what really happened

Are moving through various design stages and playing with a few ideas along the way, we ended up in a good place.

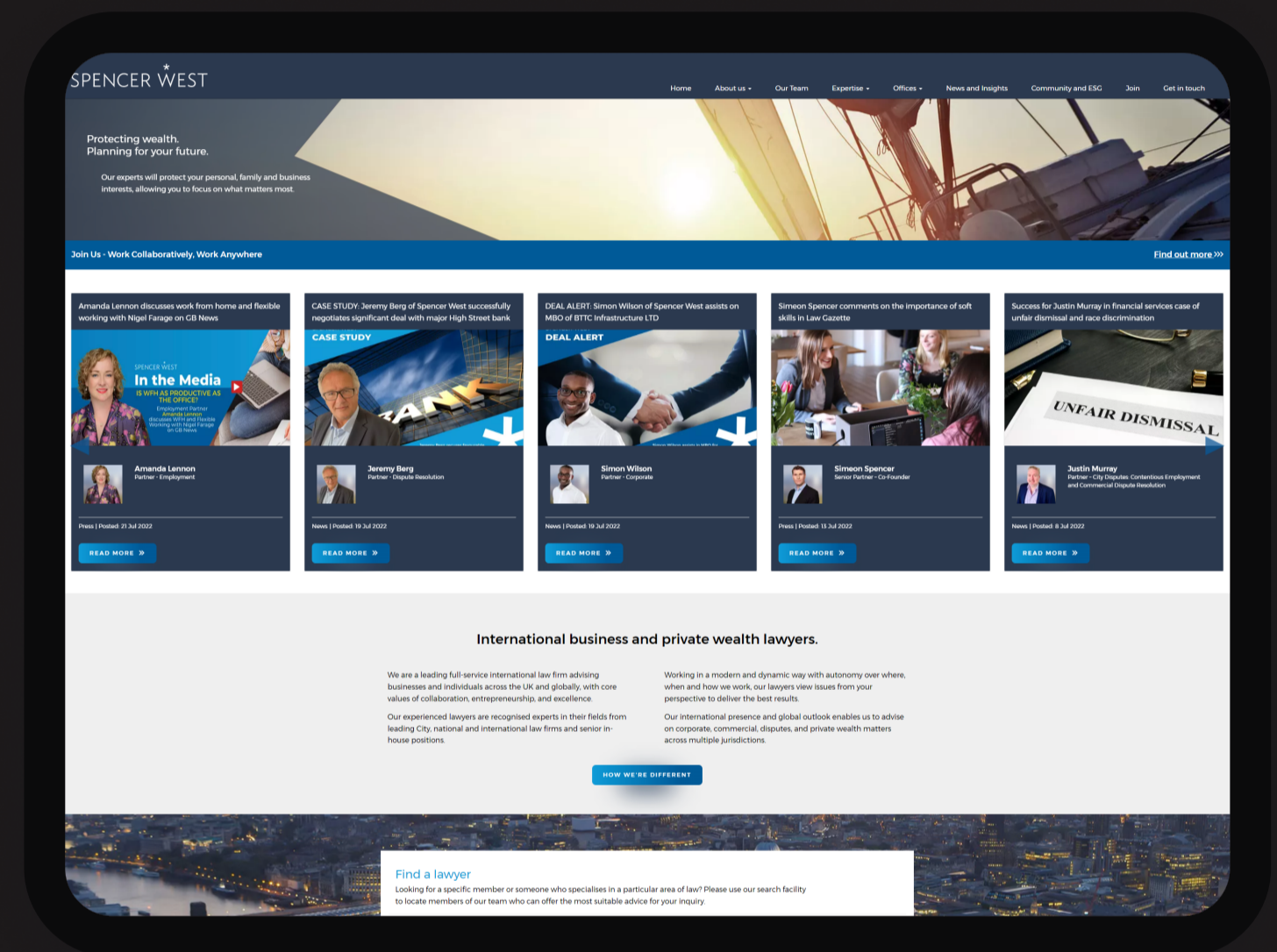
Site accomodates new media focus

As we developed the site we took on a more media-orientated form which meant a shift to a great emphasis on the news throughout the website.

Private Wealth and Recruitment

Additional areas of the site were built to focus certain high net worth clients on specialists within the firm. In addition to this, a recruitment section was added to the site to help explain the various benefits.

The new UI



SOLUTIONS

Here's what really happened

Site now fully mobile responsive while retaining familiarity.

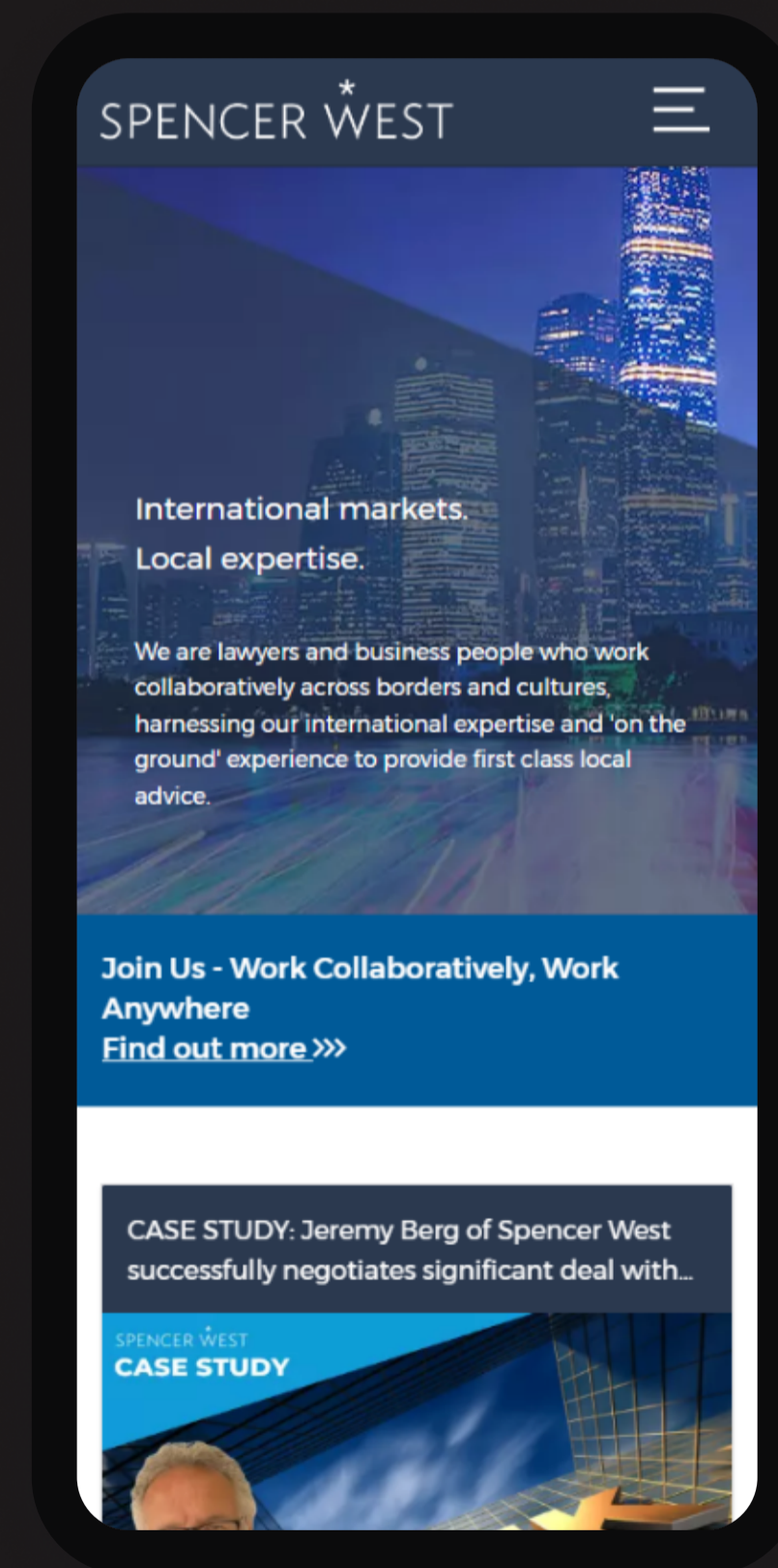
Better functionality

We took a mobile first approach to the website to help stack certain areas and with the addition of CDN's, speed was greatly increased.

More users

Working with a third party SEO company alongside the stakeholder, we saw positive interactions and user retention with the new site design. From word of mouth, the firm also receives new regular visitors for their news feed.

The new UI



THE CHALLENGES

Not everything went as planned

The initial idea was to approach the project as a re-design, while the initial re-design was complete we pivoted towards the current design

News feed

Originally, this was to be stripped from the site on initial launch and placed in it's own section, but after a while this was moved back to the homepage. This meant we needed to re-think the layout.

Ultimately, keeping it in there from the start was the wiser move, but the initial metrics pointed against that.

Re-branding

Roughly halfway through the project, the firm underwent a rebranding. While this didn't pose too much of an issue, some of the elements pertaining to services simply didn't fit in with the new colour palette and direction the firm was going.

These elements were attempted to be re-included into the services sub-section. But in favour of keeping things clean, these were later dropped from the site, but kept within the firms' internal private intranet.



MOVING FORWARD

Progressing the project

The project is at a good stage and appears to work well for it's intended use.

Moving forward, as the firm is international new functionality has been added to the site to allow the Partners to use additional language translations for their profiles. Ideally, we would build some additional functionality to allow a query string/locale detection to serve a natively translated version of the site.

Additional considerations would need to be taken with some areas of the site to avoid text oversets, but it would help with accessibility for the direction the firm is headed in. Further down the line, there may be consideration to serve versions of the site with alterations to the design dependant on the target continents audience.

<https://www.spencer-west.com>

A red, stylized signature logo consisting of the letters 'JW' in a cursive, handwritten style.