Innovation is a buzzword that more often is based on buzz than on meaningful change. And law firms seldom are viewed as innovators. On both counts, McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter LLP (MDM&C) strives to be the exception — consistently seeking new solutions and services to remain at least one step ahead of clients' needs. According to Edward B. Deutsch, managing partner of MDM&C, “Having up-to-date technology is not innovation. It’s simply a smart business practice. For us, innovation means developing new programs, tools and professional expertise for our clients that either addresses their emerging needs, makes their experience with us easier or less expensive, or increases their odds of a successful legal outcome.”

One example of innovation at MDM&C is Integrated Project Solutions, LLC (IPS), an in-house capability that offers clients the nonlegal services of professional engineers and construction specialists, all of whom have extensive experience in the technical aspects of construction-related disputes. By combining the expertise of its in-house engineers with the firm’s highly regarded construction attorneys, MDM&C provides clients a broad range of bundled or unbundled services designed to analyze, defend, prepare and resolve construction claims quickly and cost effectively. The firm’s IPS subsidiary alone offers efficiencies in nonconstruction cases. For example, IPS provides an in-house document-management system for collecting client and opposing party documents to create a highly searchable document database. This capability eliminates the need to engage outside vendors to conduct document management and e-discovery, thereby greatly reducing expenses in document-heavy cases.

Consistent with its reputation as a seasoned litigation firm, MDM&C’s recent track record of innovation includes the creation of its Litigation Technology Services (LTS) Group, consisting of attorneys, paralegals, IT professionals and administrative personnel who provide clients — across all the firm’s practice areas — with claims development and analysis services and with proprietary electronic information-management services. The LTS Group also handles technical and legal issues surrounding e-discovery and compliance. The unit’s attorneys and staff are well versed in a variety of litigation support software applications, including Concordance and Summation. The unit is also adept at Trial Director, a program increasingly used for computer-based presentations during trials to enhance and highlight key evidence, such as contract language, photographs, architectural drawings, sworn statements and testimony. The fact finder views the technologically enhanced evidence simultaneously with a witness’s testimony, resulting in the strongest possible presentation.

More broadly, at MDM&C innovation involves building its specialty practice groups and professional expertise to address legal requirements related to new and emerging market needs. Notable examples include partner Albert J. Pucciarelli, head of the firm’s Aviation Practice Group. He recently assisted a client in securing one of the first exemptions issued by the Federal Aviation Administration for commercial operation of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), or drone. Another example involves health care, where data breaches of personal information at some of the nation’s largest insurers and health care providers over the past year have put the privacy of more than 100 million Americans at risk. The American Health Lawyers Association recently validated MDM&C’s health care related expertise in its appointment of attorney Leonardo M. Tamburello as co-chairman of that national association’s Electronic Health Records Affinity Group.

Regardless of how others define innovation, MDM&C intends to continue its practice of anticipating and responding to change to the benefit of clients.