



Pitcher Partners  
*Japan Desk*

# Introduction

**Japan Desk represents a collaborative network of trusted business advisory professionals spanning Australia and Japan, here to support companies operating across these dynamic markets.**

Our integrated team combines decades of expertise in accounting, tax, and comprehensive business advisory services, delivering support for M&A transactions, international tax structuring, business establishment, due diligence, and ongoing compliance across both jurisdictions. By working as one, we ensure our clients receive consistent, expert guidance, whether they're navigating Australian regulations or Japanese business culture and practices.

Our collaborative approach leverages the deep local expertise and extensive networks of advisory professionals in each market, while maintaining the Japanese principles of “omotenashi no kokoro” – putting client relationships and exceptional service at the heart of everything we do. This integrated model creates a comprehensive support system that helps businesses thrive across the globe.

# Our experts *at your service*



***Michael Sonego***

**Partner, Pitcher Partners Melbourne**

Michael launched his career in industry and joined Pitcher Partners Melbourne after working in London for Baker Tilly. He became a Partner in 2013. Michael is the global chair of Corporate Finance for Baker Tilly International.

As a chartered accountant with deep expertise in mergers and acquisitions, financial analysis, due diligence and valuations, he provides business owners with strategic guidance to navigate complex transactions with confidence. His approach goes beyond deals but incorporates long-term vision, stakeholder impact, and business sustainability.

Under Michael's leadership, Pitcher Partners Melbourne has developed a strong M&A practice, earning a reputation as a leading provider in the sector. His proficiency in negotiation and strategic decision-making allows him to find solutions in high-stakes situations, building strong relationships with founders and executives that last beyond the transaction. Alongside fellow Partner James Beaumont, he was recognised as one of Australasia's most active M&A advisors for completed deals in 2019.



***Tamegi Akimoto***

**Director, Baker Tilly Japan**

Tamegi Akimoto is a Director at Baker Tilly Japan Tax Corporation with over 20 years of experience in accounting and business process management. He joined the firm in 2023.

Mr. Akimoto is a licensed U.S. CPA and a certified Project Management Professional (PMP). His industry expertise includes plant engineering, large financial institutions, and aviation manufacturing. He has held key roles as a business analyst in corporate accounting departments and has also worked in a consulting firm.

His international background includes seven years of overseas experience in Singapore and the U.S. (Washington State). He has a broad range of experience, including managing a business acquisition, supporting a foreign company entering the Japanese market, and establishing operations for Japanese expatriates in the United States. In addition to accounting, Mr. Akimoto specialises in business process management across the full lifecycle: from process design (BPE) to execution (BPI) and transformation (BPR).





# Our experts *at your service*



## *Stuart Dall*

**Partner, Pitcher Partners Melbourne**

Stuart is a specialised tax advisor with qualifications as a practicing lawyer and chartered accountant. Stuart advises on strategic business issues and Federal tax matters for a range of clients, including high net worth individuals and families, listed entities and large private groups.

Stuart's depth and breadth of experience is extensive, including milestone M&A transactions, configuration of funding and holding structures, wealth distribution, tax disputes and interaction with tax authorities.

Clients appreciate Stuart's direct style and insights, his technical knowledge, approach to finding solutions, and ability to provide advice where the next steps are clear and capable of practical implementation.

Stuart joined Pitcher Partners Melbourne in 2015. He has witnessed strong growth in the team during his time with the firm, and thrives on the collegiate nature of the partnership and its practice areas.



## *James Beaumont*

**Partner, Pitcher Partners Melbourne**

James specialises in both buy-side and sell-side transactions, focusing on mergers & acquisitions and financial due diligence. As a chartered accountant, he is known for his commercial, methodical, and creative approach, excelling at simplifying complex issues for clients. He is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes, treating every engagement as a priority and ensuring strategic success in all circumstances.

Since joining Pitcher Partners in 2013, James has played a key role in growing the M&A practice, becoming a Partner in 2017 and later taking charge of Corporate Finance in Melbourne in 2022. His leadership has helped establish Pitcher Partners as a premier corporate finance team in Australia. Recognised for his expertise, James ranked as Australasia's top M&A advisor in 2019 based on transaction volume.



## *Makiko Okamoto*

**Japan Desk Lead, Pitcher Partners Melbourne**

Makiko joined Pitcher Partners Melbourne in 2025 as Japan Desk Lead in the Corporate Finance team, specialising in facilitating Japanese investment into Australia. With over 25 years of experience at a leading Japanese bank in Melbourne as a certified practising accountant, she provides deep cultural insight, extensive business networks, and strategic guidance to navigate cross-border operations, regulatory frameworks, and financial landscapes.

Her expertise helps Australian and Japanese clients identify opportunities, optimise investments, and expand market presence. With over 30 years of global experience across Japan, Australia, and the UK, Makiko applies a customer-centric approach to anticipate challenges, develop sustainable financial strategies, and drive long-term business success.



# Our experts *at your service*



***Justin Reynolds***

**Partner, Pitcher Partners Sydney**

Justin brings over 30 years of CFO experience with multinational companies, offering deep expertise in Australian regulations and international business practices. He provides comprehensive outsourced services including accounting, payroll, tax compliance, and strategic planning, allowing Japanese headquarters to focus on core operations. For Japanese subsidiaries, Justin serves as Resident Director and Public Officer, ensuring corporate governance compliance while acting as a trusted local contact. With extensive Japanese client experience, he values clear communication and long-term relationships, helping businesses align operations with global expectations.



***Christopher Chandran***

**Partner, Pitcher Partners Sydney**

Chris started as a Cadet in 1998 and joined the partnership in 2006. He provides audit and assurance services to ASX-listed companies, large multinationals with Australian subsidiaries, private groups, and Not-for-Profit entities. Beyond statutory audits, Chris addresses broader business areas including risk, governance, and regulatory compliance. With experience in Australia and London, he brings commercial insights and international knowledge to serve diverse client needs. His proactive, collaborative approach ensures a holistic understanding of clients' business challenges and opportunities. Chris works closely with our Japan Desk on common clients across various industries, providing practical accounting expertise that maximizes value in every engagement.



***Azusa Weedon-Newstead***

**Japan Desk Director, Pitcher Partners Sydney**

Azusa joined Pitcher Partners Sydney in 2016 to establish the Japan Desk, growing it from 2 to 10 Japanese staff across outsourcing and tax divisions. With approximately 20 years in accounting firms and previous experience at a major Japanese insurance company and bank, she serves subsidiaries, branches, and representative offices of listed Japanese companies. Azusa assists with establishing new ventures, streamlining back-office processes, and managing payroll, tax, and ASIC compliance. Her extensive experience facilitating Japan-Australia business relationships and deep understanding of both cultures enables her to deliver exceptional client satisfaction by finding the best solutions for each client's needs.



***Annette Azuma***

**NZ Japan Desk Lead, Baker Tilly Staples Rodway**

Annette is a chartered accountant specialising in international business and dealing with a number of listed and unlisted corporates and high net worth individuals, assisting with all aspects of taxation, compliance, M&A and immigration.

Fluent in Japanese, she has particular expertise and experience assisting many Japanese clients doing business and investing in NZ, as well as representing NZ companies expanding their business to Japan.

Annette has been with Baker Tilly Staples Rodway since 1996. Annette also serves on the following organisations:

- Japan New Zealand Business Council – Vice Chair
- Drive Electric – Board Member
- Global Women (New Zealand) – Member



# Our *services*



## *Business Advice and Improvement*

- Accounting services
- Business succession and change management
- International trade and customs
- Outsourced services



## *Audit and Assurance*

- Accounting technical
- External audit
- Internal audit and risk advice



## *Business Recovery and Insolvency*

- Asset protection and advisory
- Debt recovery and investigations
- Financial stress



## *Business Tax*

- Tax advice and compliance
- Reviews and disputes
- International tax
- Specialty taxes



## *Deal Advice*

- Deal advice: Mergers and acquisitions, IPO
- Due diligence
- Valuations



## *Digital and Data Strategy and Advice*

- Innovative digital solutions
- Digital strategy
- Digital solutions
- Data analytics
- Cybersecurity

# About *Pitcher Partners*



145+  
partners



1,500+  
people



6  
independent  
member firms



9th  
largest network  
of accounting and  
advisory firms

National statistic as at 1 July 2024

## We're ready to *help you thrive*

Since day one we've been helping businesses, families and individuals intelligently frame their goals and make the most of their potential.

Today, we're one of the largest accounting, audit and business advisory firms in Australia. We work with middle market businesses, from family-run companies to renowned industry leaders and iconic brands. And help families and individuals manage their wealth across generations.

If you've got ambition, we're the team you want on your side.

### Local knowledge, national footprint

Pitcher Partners is a national association of six independent accounting, audit and business advisory practices. You'll find our firms in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Newcastle and Hunter, Perth and Sydney. Each firm has a unique character, with a strong connection to the local community. Supported by our combined resources, we deliver Australia's most personalised and responsive assurance and advisory services.

And if you're thinking beyond the border, we can support your global operations and ambitions through the Baker Tilly International network.

### We'll always make it personal

At the heart of Pitcher Partners is the idea that business is never just business. We're known for the dedication we give to building great relationships, and it's been that way from the start. People first.

Everything we do is grounded in communication and collaboration. We're here for that frank, refreshing and always informed discussion that leads to new ideas and better decisions. And we're here for you. Whatever your goals, we can get there together.

Making  
business  
*personal*



**Michael Sonego**

*Partner, Melbourne*

p +61 3 8610 5485 | +61 418 102 609  
e michael.sonego@pitcher.com.au



**Justin Reynolds**

*Partner, Sydney*

p +61 2 8236 7733  
e justin.reynolds@pitcher.com.au



**Makiko Okamoto**

*Japan Desk Lead, Melbourne*

p +61 3 8612 9557  
e makiko.okamoto@pitcher.com.au



**Azusa Weedon-Newstead**

*Japan Desk Lead, Sydney*

p +61 2 8236 7775  
e azusa.weedon-newstead@pitcher.com.au