

Session 509

Moderated Discussions on Marketing the Small Law Department

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ACCA NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

MARKETING THE SMALL LAW DEPARTMENT

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Marketing the Small Law Department

Marketing - Marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, services, organizations, and events to create and maintain relationships that will satisfy individual and organizational objectives."-Contemporary Marketing Wired (1998) by Boone and Kurtz. Dryden Press.

What does a general counsel know about marketing, yet alone about marketing the small law department? In my quest to prepare for this roundtable session, I tried to remember every bit of marketing knowledge I acquired during my four (4) years of undergraduate study in the College of Arts & Sciences and three (3) years of study in law school. I finally came to the realization that after reviewing all courses throughout my formal education, my book knowledge on the concept of marketing would barely fill one 3 x 5 note card double spaced, if I was lucky! So where do I get off chairing a roundtable on Marketing A Small Law Department?

Prior to accepting my present general counsel position, I was the managing partner of my own law firm where I practiced for twenty (20) years. I spent ten (10) of those years as a general practitioner. As a general practitioner in the late 70's and 80's, the onslaught of lawyer advertising was a necessary evil with which I had to deal, and at times, reluctantly participate. How many times did I hear marketing people telling me about "packaging the product to appeal to your intended consumer"? Relying on that statement, I went to our corporate marketing department and asked them to please assist me in "packaging the product" i.e. how to market the small law department. After my brief conference with them, the unanimous opinion was to definitely start out with a lawyer joke and be humble. The phrase word of the day should be "the client is always right". Therefore, I have prepared a brief outline with bullet points in which to assist your roundtable discussion of this topic.

LAWYER JOKES:

A man walked into a lawyer's office and inquired about the lawyer's rates.

"\$50.00 for three questions", replied the lawyer.

"Isn't that awfully expensive?" asked the man.

"Yes," the lawyer replied, "and now what is your third question?"

Why are lawyers like nuclear weapons?

If one side has one, the other side has to have one. Once launched during a campaign, they can rarely be recalled. And when they land, they screw up everything forever.

- I. Value of the Department
- II. Objectives of the Department
- III. How to Enhance Values
- IV. How to Achieve Objectives
- V. Perception of the Department
 - a. Attorney and Legal Support Staff
 - b. Legal Staff
 - c. Senior Management
 - d. Management and Department Heads
 - e. General Employee Population

VI. Suggested Marketing Tools to Enhance Value, Achieve Objectives and Positively Modify Perception.

- a. Internet and Intranet Usage
 - i. Emails/general department information
 - ii. Electronic bulletin boards
 - iii. Ask a lawyer
- b. 800 toll free legal line
- c. Free general legal advice
- d. Early hour legal help line
- e. Bulletin Board in Corporate office
- f. Newsletter
- g. In-house sessions
 - i. Brown bag lunches
 - ii. Breakfast
- h. Marketing products
 - i. Note pads "preventive law"
 - ii. Mouse pads
 - iii. Calendars with important legal dates marked
 - iv. Bumper stickers?
 - v. Contests
 - a. Legal trivia questions
 - b. Best original lawyer joke
 - c. Department's greatest lost legal opportunity
 - vi. Law day "in-house"
 - vii. Surveys, rate legal department and legal services
 - viii. Awareness