

Fall 2008 LMA Newsletter

President's Message

Summer 2008 is behind us . I trust that a lot of you were engrossed in the Beijing Olympics like me. Now I have one Michael Phelps and one Nastia Lukin “wanna be” at home –and that’s just me and my husband. The Metro Philadelphia LMA all-volunteer Board and Committee Chairs had a busy summer. Although we weren’t competing for the gold, we met on Friday, July 25th and focused on chapter succession planning, areas for chapter improvement, future educational programs, member networking socials and much more. Plans for 2009 are coming together. Now that we have officially welcomed Fall, our educational programming is ramping up, so get ready for a full third & fourth quarter .

On September 16th and 17th, I attended the Chief Marketing Officer’s Forum presented by Incisive Media in New York City. The program had a deep line-up of legal marketing talent so I'm happy to share any highlights you might be interested in learning about. On September 18th, our chapter welcomed Nat Slavin of the Wicker Park Group and past –president of LMA, to moderate our General Counsel panel. This is the first GC panel we’ve hosted and we learned from our panelists first-hand about what they really think. On September 25th, the member social at Apothecary Lounge undoubtedly provided you a remedy to relax and enjoy some downtime with your colleagues. In October, we welcome Greenfield Belser to present on Conversational Branding. During the month of November, the chapter will provide an educational webinar presented by Kevin O’Keefe of LexBlog on social networks and last but certainly not least, Philadelphia will host the 2008 QuickStart program. Be sure to use this opportunity to send either your new legal marketers and/or any staffer that would benefit from the agenda topics.

Now with budget spreadsheets in front of you, holiday cards samples galore and Web 2.0 questions polluting your in box, take a deep breath and remember that you have a network of support in your backyard. Thank you for your membership and feel free to contact me with your opinions and suggestions on how we can better meet your LMA-Metro Philadelphia Chapter membership expectations.

Best regards,

Jennifer Smuts
President LMA-Metro Philadelphia
jsmuts@cblh.com
302-888-6214

Break the Code to Tapping Top Talent

(And identifying the qualities of a winning marketing candidate)
Part 2 of 2

By Peggy Dixon

Part 1 of this article discussed ways to evaluate candidate(s) for law firm marketing positions – how to decide who will be the best fit for the firm and compliment the attorney culture and their client base.

Dealing with an age-old question?

Recruiting firms will verify that age discrimination is alive and well in Philadelphia. Despite the recent repeal of mandatory retirement policies for attorneys at many leading firms, decision-makers tend to select younger marketing candidates, when given the choice, forgetting the old adage - "the older the grape, the sweeter the wine." We've come to know today's 40's as yesterday's 30's and more senior candidates often offer a level of confidence and knowledge that's a meaningful plus on the job. And, seasoned legal marketers have shown they are not as prone to jumping ship in two years to climb the next rung on the LMA ladder. When it's time to make the call, take off your blinders where the age factor is concerned and select the smartest candidate with the strongest interpersonal skills.

A Case for the JD

Many attorneys have found the practice of law is not their cup of tea. Who knew that litigation is so demanding, that law firm politics affect your future and that building a book of business is the foundation for success? "I've thought things over carefully, and I've decided to transition into legal marketing," says the restless associate to a legal recruiter. Certainly law firms appreciate the legal education process - where lawyers are taught to identify a problem, address the problem and provide compelling, well-written solutions to that problem before they can complete their formal legal education. Could not these skills work equally well in the marketing department?

Sadly, most legal marketing departments say "no" without a look and, thereby, often deprive themselves of some of the best candidates - it's the RFP, CRM, ROI thing. Try taking the long view on attorney candidates by measuring the learning curve of your open position. Will their knowledge of the law make them more valuable to the practice groups and provide additional insights for the marketing department? You may just find a savvy communicator under that JD degree.

Choosing a new member of the marketing team is serious business. It's tempting to select a candidate with the exact experience that mirrors the job description. Do we want a clone from a competing firm who will continually tell us, "We did it this way at Dewey, Cheatum and Howe"? Take into consideration candidates' experience outside the legal marketplace, their familiarity with industries vital to the firm, and their well established business connections. Finally, evaluate the fit with existing members of the team.

The legal marketing alphabet (RFP, ROI, SWAT, LMA, CRM, Biz Dev) is easily learned. When firms hire the smartest available candidate, one with demonstrated communications, problem-

solving and analytical skills, with a broad base of knowledge - without reference to any specific prior academic or experiential history - they will find a short-term investment in that candidate's "catching up on the learning curve" will guarantee them the best possible legal marketing professional. Hiring someone solely on the basis of knowledge of the "alphabet soup of the trade" may well result in hiring only second best or another firm's cast-offs.

Furthermore, as technology changes with amazing rapidity, the candidate who already "knows" what to do may be unable or unwilling to change with the times. On the other hand, the very bright, intellectually curious, creatively flexible candidate will find opportunity rather than threat in keeping a firm at the cutting edge of legal marketing. While the ideal is to find the smartest AND most experienced candidate, because of the relative newness of the legal marketing profession there are very few ideal candidates in the pool. Consequently, law firms must demonstrate the same flexibility and creativity they hope to find in their legal marketing professional if they hope to identify the candidate with the most to offer for years to come.

Peggy Dixon is the Marketing Director for Barley Snyder LLC. She was formerly the Marketing Director and Legal Recruiter for Abelson Legal Search. She can be reached at mdixon@barley.com.

Member Spotlight : Crystal Garcia

Business Development Specialist

Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young LLP

By Diane Roka

Tell us about your road to legal marketing.

I began my legal marketing career in my native San Diego. I responded to a classified ad placed by a 35 attorney firm who was looking for a marketing/human resources coordinator. I knew that I wanted to work in marketing, and even though I had no idea what legal marketing was, I figured I had nothing to lose and submitted my resume. I landed the job and was responsible for spending half my time on marketing functions and half assisting the firm's Administrator with human resource initiatives. I quickly discovered that I didn't really enjoy the HR aspect of the job as much as the marketing component, which I found very intriguing. The only problem was that during that time, the firm felt that updating Martindale Hubbell listings and tweaking bios were major marketing activities. It wasn't until I stumbled upon the Legal Marketing Association that I began reading about what others were doing and what their jobs entailed. I met with a few other San Diego area legal marketers, connected with a mentor and through our conversations I was able to draft a new job description, one that reflected 100% marketing duties. I presented it to the managing partner and told him I would really like to focus exclusively on legal marketing. The rest as they say, is history. I was there for three years and in that time I developed the firm's first brochure, practice specific newsletters and seminars, and assisted with attorney recruiting initiatives. After that job I went on to work for a few firms over the span of six years.

How has your career progressed since then?

Having spent the first six years of my career in small firms (40 attorneys or less) where I was a one man show in each of them, I knew that I wanted to become affiliated with a large law firm , and become part of a team . I also knew San Diego wasn't going to be all I would know for my whole life and being aware that most large law firms are headquartered on the East Coast or the Midwest, I set my sights on Boston. In 2005 I made the move, and ironically enough, I landed at a firm with 40 attorneys, but I was able to work alongside a Marketing Director with a large law firm background who taught me a lot in the two years I worked for him. Through working there and making connections in the LMA and other organizations, I was able to finally make my way to a large law firm in Philadelphia and I've now worked for two large firms (670 lawyers, and my current firm of 200) since.

Small firm vs. large firm?

I can only speak from my personal experience in small firms where I was always a one man show. Small firms are great from the perspective of having your hands in everything -- PR, business development, events and operations, etc. You also have a chance to really get to know your attorneys and spend time with each one crafting their plans and goals. The downside is that the budget is usually a lot more limited in a small firm and you're more of an implementer and rarely have an opportunity to be strategic in your thinking. I've found at larger firms with a marketing team, where you may be one of 10 or more, you have a more defined role, usually one component of marketing you're responsible for. It allows you to perfect a skill set. It's also nice to have the support of a team, otherwise things can get pretty overwhelming. A con to a large firm is that sometimes it's easy to become lost in the mix with keeping up on current legal marketing trends because you're sitting on the sidelines working in your silo.

What advice would you offer to someone new to legal marketing?

Three P's. Passion, patience and perseverance. You have to have a passion for what you do because this job is so much more than just going through the motions. Patience is key because it usually takes a while for your marketing initiatives to pay dividends, and waiting for lawyers to see the value in marketing takes time. Perseverance because in your job you will face many obstacles and challenges, but the reward at the end of the day is far greater than the journey.

Crystal Garcia is the LMA-Metropolitan Philadelphia Social Programming Chair and Business Development Specialist at Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young LLP. She can be reached at 215-564-8038, or cgarcia@stradley.com.

Diane Roka is the Practice Development Manager at Post & Schell, P.C. She is a Board Member of the Legal Marketing Association's Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapter.

Practice What You Preach

By Nancy Hoffman

As a member of your firm's marketing department, as a legal marketing professional with years of experience and most importantly as a member of the Legal Marketing Association, perhaps it is time for you to step up to the plate and practice what it is that you preach to your attorneys on a daily basis. In order to succeed in this complicated industry and to be successful in your career and your future, there is no better time than the present to establish yourself as a legal marketing expert.

In the legal marketing industry, one of your largest responsibilities is to establish your attorneys as industry specialists so that when client x has a "bet the company" intellectual property litigation, that individual knows to contact your attorneys for the matter ahead. You have worked with your attorneys to establish them as credible industrial resources.

Now you must establish yourself as an expert when it comes to legal marketing and you know how to do it because you are already doing it for someone else. You must first determine an area of interest; is it P.R., branding, advertising, business development, technology, communications or something else?

Next, you must prove yourself to be an expert in that particular area. Fortunately, you are a member of the Legal Marketing Association and this membership offers you a tremendous amount of resources to further your career. Take thirty minutes each week and search the LMA website's resource center for articles related to this area of legal marketing and absorb all of this information. Begin to take your own notes relative to this topic. Keep these notes in a notebook that can be easily added to whenever possible.

Visit the American Marketing Association's website and learn everything you can about your area from the perspective of different industries. By reading through other industry's related materials, you will become familiar with additional ways to tackle similar issues as related to the legal marketing industry.

Stay on top of industry related news items. Become familiar with changes that relate to your area and be prepared to serve as an authority for local media outlets to reach out to you for comment. Seek out opportunities to speak on your area where the venue fits. Stay in constant contact with other legal marketers, both locally and nationally, to keep on top of your area as new developments occur.

After you have done your homework and thoroughly researched the area that you care to become an expert in, begin to develop thoughts and theories and practice them where you work. As successes surface, openly use that opportunity to write for a trade publication and discuss your achievements.

Individuals like yourself are constantly changing the face of the profession and taking it to new heights. Practice what you preach and become an expert in the area that appeals to you most.

Nancy L. Hoffman is the Director of Marketing at Hangley Aronchick Segal & Pudlin in Philadelphia. She is also a Board Member of the Legal Marketing Association's Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapter.

Sponsors' Corner

For supporting our educational programming, we thank:

Dun & Bradstreet for sponsoring **Measuring Market Success/ROI and Other Metrics** on June 19th at Brasserie Perrier.

Monitor Suite, Thomson West for sponsoring **Utilizing Competitive Intelligence** on July 17th at the offices of Drinker Biddle.

The Metropolitan Corporate Counsel for sponsoring **House Unplugged – General Counsel Panel** on September 15th at the offices of Ballard Spahr.

Merrill Corporation for sponsoring **Greenfield Belser – Mastering Conversational Branding** on October 16th at Brasserie Perrier.

For supporting our “End-of-Summer Social” at Apothecary, we thank:

Our Sponsor: **LexisNexis**

Door Prize: **NextLevel Promotions**

Creative Design Services: **Warkulwiz Design Associates**

Photos from our event at Apothecary are now up on the [LMA Metro Philadelphia website](#).