



Our Biggest Marketing Flop

Marketers like to argue about which works better, Marketing or Sales. It's like asking which is more successful, **Nike**, the classic marketing company, or **IBM**, the definitive Sales organization? Obviously, the answer is "both." They're both terrific companies, they just have different strategies.

What we need to keep focused on in law firms is that in this challenging economy, law firms shouldn't cut marketing, they need to *do* it better. **Don't slash Marketing when the money is tight, improve it, so it works.**

When times were good, firms overspent on bad marketing and succeeded in spite of their poor decisions. Now there's no fat in the budget so they have to spend smarter and more strategically. **Critically, they must ensure Marketing is aligned with the rainmakers, so their efforts are more successful** (more below).

What I like about Marketing is that if you do it *right*, you can in one fell swoop improve the effectiveness of nearly EVERY rainmaker's efforts, firm-wide.

So, when they do the things fee-earners do (i.e. building their networks, investing in relationships, identifying opportunities where they can help people solve their business challenges), they find that **things simply work better.** Their win-rate improves. Some rainmakers get slightly better, others *significantly* better.

What happened? Their firm is suddenly viewed as a safer choice. The perceived quality of their "product" is enhanced. The firm's value proposition is clearer. Prospects are more interested in seeing them, and are more receptive to their message. They get the benefit of the doubt more often. They start to win the head-to-head competitions where the firm's reputation is an important consideration. The Sales scales simply tipped their way more often.

The overall effect across the entire firm becomes sizable -- and easily measurable. If firms don't see that type of improvement, they're shooting too low. **I think firms that overhaul their websites without seeking that type of strategic improvement are missing a real opportunity.**

We wouldn't touch a website redesign otherwise - I think that trading an "online brochure" for a shinier version of the same thing suggests to the lawyers that Marketing is just pretty pictures. I want to prove to them that it's a strategic tool that can achieve measurable results.



ROSS FISHMAN, J.D.



One unfortunate anecdote regarding the balance of Sales and Marketing:

Thirteen years ago we launched a terrific campaign, conceived initially by one of the smartest, most innovative managing partners I've ever had the pleasure to work with. It was strategic, creative, visually powerful, and narrowly focused toward a defined audience of purchasers. We were confident that it was going to be a *huge* success.

Unfortunately...

... when we measured our results, we discovered that it didn't drive a single dollar of new revenue. We were gobsmacked. Later, following a thorough investigation, we figured out what had happened - **the campaign simply didn't support anyone who knew how to sell business!**

That is, creative marketing might be fun, but without a sales force behind it, no one makes any money.

We'll never make that mistake again.

