



AND THE ART OF LEGAL NETWORKING

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INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON
*Relationship Building
within the International
Lawyers Network*

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10 Ways to be a Legal Marketing Rock Star

BY LINDSAY GRIFFITHS ON APRIL 21, 2016



The best session that I attended at the [Legal Marketing Association's Annual Conference](#) by far was "ROI: Measuring So You Can Better Manage," with [Equinox Strategy Partners' Jonathan Fitzgarrald](#) (Full disclosure: Jonathan is a friend of mine, but whether I'd known him or not, this session was chock full of value).

Per the conference guide:

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As stewards of marketing and business development resources, legal marketers can build trust and rapport within their firms and obtain buy-in for key initiatives by managing expectations and measuring results.

Join Jonathan Fitzgarrald of Equinox Strategy Partners as he provides real-life examples and best practices surrounding:

- **Key metrics for justifying your existence at your firm**
- **Formats and frequency for reporting results**
- **Determining which attorneys should see what metrics**
- **How to better leverage peer (e.g., finance) relationships**
- **Available technologies for tracking and reporting metrics”**

Jonathan used the session to give us ten actionable steps that we can use within our own firms and organizations to better manage the relationships with our lawyers.

1. Ask (Don't Assume) – what is the priority this year?

If we don't ask our lawyers about their priorities, we're assuming that we know what's best for them.

2. Form an unofficial board of advisers at your firm.

Who should be on this board? The executive director, laterals, practice chairs, the managing partner, rainmakers, CFO, industry chairs, recruiting director. This group is your internal advisers who will help you get things done. Work your way up through these decision makers by shepherding them through the process anytime you want to get something done – a recurring theme that Jonathan introduced here was that it doesn't matter where an idea comes from. Let go of having ideas/projects come from you – as long as they get accomplished, it doesn't matter where the idea comes from. Build bridges with the decision makers in your firm, let them “have” the ideas, and be your advocates.

3. Be proactive; Communicate your value actively.

Keep a record of what you do for each department. Many of us face complaints like “what do you actually do?” Head these off by demonstrating on a monthly basis what you're doing to

warrant your existence at the firm/organization.

4. No big initiatives should ever be proposed at your firm – there are too many opportunities for “death by committee.”

Instead, use an “idea cycle.” Take your initial idea, and identify advocates within the firm. Plant the idea with them, and fertilized and water it. The attorneys will then bring you “their” great idea. The end result is that the idea will come from a lawyer who wants the idea more than you do.

5. Tell Stories.

Sometimes hard numbers are challenging to come up with, so we have to fall back on anecdotal proof.

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We assume because they’re really bright, our attorneys are going to connect the dots. But they’re really linear.”

So we need to be better at telling stories about how what we do benefits the firm or our organization. Tell a story that the executive committee can understand – don’t just give them a treatise. And make it a one-slide story, so that the executives know what the marketing department is focused on for the year.

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It’s hard to tell a story with minutiae.”

6. Use your marketing committees to prototype ideas for your firm.

Before you’ve wasted your personal equity at the firm potentially launching something that could fail, let your marketing committee be the one to poke holes in your idea. Once you’ve done that, you’ve also got a whole group of advocates who are jazzed up about your initiative at the firm.

An audience member asked how we, as marketers, can demonstrate that we’re part of the process if we let the lawyers think that they’ve come up with the ideas. Jonathan said that it’s all about collaboration. Credit for new ideas doesn’t matter as long as the marketers are the one to

shepherd them. We show the lawyers that we can execute “their” great ideas. We’re their marketing “partner.”

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If you can make it happen, you’re worth your weight in gold.”

7. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Planning is not optional.

Talk to the executive committee in December and find out what they want to accomplish. They probably won’t have any ideas, so come prepared with your own. Give them a week to review these, and then if they don’t have any new ideas, go with your plan. Then provide the executive committee with a quarterly report on how the marketing plan is going. The more proactive you are, the less they’ll bug you. Don’t wait for someone to come and ask you for a report – by that time, you’ve already lost them. Jonathan suggests adding drama by putting “confidential” on it.

8. There’s no crying in baseball – keep the emotion out of it.

The facts are the facts – you do what you can, and then let it go. Jonathan described the example of running client seminars for one of the practice groups at his previous firm. The biggest complaint was the LA traffic, which made it difficult for lawyers to attend the seminar. So they moved it in-house, and despite the seminar being in a conference room down the hall, the lawyers still didn’t attend. At that point, he’d done what he could, and had to not take personal responsibility for the actions of the lawyers.

9. Do fewer things with more intensity.

If you’re wearing a lot of hats, it sounds like “pie in the sky” to limit how much you’re doing. Jonathan suggests keeping a Tier 2 list, and when someone comes to you with something that they’d like you to focus on, but you’re just not able to make it a priority, you put it on the Tier 2 list. You’re listening to the partners and writing their ideas down, but you’re also managing their expectations.

10. When are legal marketers accountable? Budgets and review time.

During those two times, that’s when people suddenly look at marketing. If you’re not prepared at least those two times with something that’s impressive, then you deserve to be fired, says Jonathan. He advises keeping a monthly scorecard of your initiatives, which will help to show your progress.

Huge thanks to Jonathan for these excellent, actionable tips!

