

How *Not* to Structure the Marketing Department

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A chief marketing officer was on the phone with me, looking for research on how to structure a law firm's marketing department. The Made Guys at the firm had just separated marketing from business development.

I didn't need to find any research. The decision of the partners made as much sense as separating a fisherman from his lure. Marketing and business development ("sales") are vitally intertwined.

Business development cannot succeed without marketing. Direct mail, advertising, newsletters, email broadcasts, events, print collateral, public relations, branding and the Web site **make the law firm a known quantity.** Without marketing, business developers are facing this guy in the chair:

From marketing you get strategy, without which sales has no direction. From marketing you generate leads, without which the sales pipeline is empty. From marketing you identify a firm's unique sales proposition, without which business developers have nothing to say.

Marketing is the hook and Business development is catching the fish.

Business development ("BD") is creating personal sales plans that the attorneys will carry out to generate new files. BD is training attorneys how to fish and showing them which techniques to use to acquire a target client. BD is rehearsing the partners before they go out on a sales call. BD is meeting the prospect face-to-face, asking questions to determine client "pain," and offering to help. BD is asking for the business.

Without fishermen there is no catch. Should law firms separate marketing from business development? Only if they want to sleep with the fishes.

Potential Clients

I don't know who you are

I don't know your firm

I don't know what your firm stands for

I don't know your firm's customers

I don't know your firm's record

I don't know your firm's reputation

Now... what was it you wanted to sell me?

