

## Ramp up the Power: Plan and Budget for Marketing Now (part 1)

By Kimberly Alford Rice

*Kimberly Alford Rice is Principal of KLA Marketing Associates ([www.klamarketing.net](http://www.klamarketing.net)), a business development advisory firm focusing on legal services. As a law marketing authority, Kimberly helps law firms and lawyers develop practical business development and marketing strategies which lead directly to new clients and increased revenue. Additionally, Kimberly founded Women in the Law Rainmaker Forum to provide women lawyers guidance in professional and career management issues. She may be reached at 609.458.0415 or via email at [kimberly@klamarketing.net](mailto:kimberly@klamarketing.net)*



---

Law firms, large and small, should develop and implement a solid marketing plan and budget as key to effective business growth. Large firms typically have something that *looks* like a budget but is often not aligned with a strategic firm marketing plan. Small (or solo) firms usually do not create a specific marketing plan or budget but rather make marketing investments on an ad hoc basis. To that, I would ask, how's that working for you?

Commit to making 2015 a more strategic, deliberate year for your firm's marketing efforts. Six reasons why firms should create a marketing plan and budget for 2015 are:

- 1. To "map" and drive the firm's direction.** It's tough, if not impossible, to track progress in your marketing efforts without a written, well-conceived plan of what exactly the firm offers, a firm's market (who you are or should be trying to reach), and what you are realistically trying to achieve within a given period of time. Remember, marketing plans and budgets are NEVER one-size-fits-all and, ideally, it is the marketing plan which drives the budget. (No marketing plan usually means a budget).
- 2. To avoid spending foolishly.** In these challenging economic times, law firms cannot afford to spend marketing dollars unwisely, on an ad hoc basis. Every expenditure should be a part of a cohesive plan. Make every dollar work hard and be measurable towards your stated goals.
- 3. To minimize "black hole" expenditures.** This category includes such items as brochures, static websites, general advertisements, announcements, holiday cards, sponsorships, donations, etc. It is too easy to drop serious dollars for very little return on investment. Avoid this trap by developing a plan which allows for these certain expenditures, but cap the spending.

In our next installment, we will examine additional steps to make 2015 a more strategic, deliberate year for your firm's marketing efforts.