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NEWSLETTERS

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CAREER JOURNAL

Behavioral-based Interviewing

By **Michael DeCosta**

As marketing leaders, many of this publication's readership has some familiarity with behavioral-based interviewing techniques. As you have built out your respective teams, perhaps this interviewing style has helped you discern which candidates possess the right leadership attributes to think critically — and extemporaneously — in order to meet the demands of working in a fast-paced environment where quick turnarounds and exacting standards are expected at every juncture. By and large, however, most of you as candidates have probably yet to experience this level of scrutiny in an interview.

For those unfamiliar with the interviewing discipline, it is a technique used to get to the essence of an executive's thinking and managerial style. These are competencies that may not present in a typical interview setting.

How It's Done

Through a series of situation-related questions, an interviewer can probe for how an executive manages relationships, assesses circumstances, learns and adapts, and importantly, makes decisions. These skills are often better determinants of success than just reviewing accomplishments and experiences outlined in a resume

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Cross-border Integration in the Wake of a Merger

By **Jeff Berardi and Debra Woodman**

When law firms merge, marketing department members are often faced with an enormous task list for the months leading up to and beyond the combination. High expectations from incoming lawyers on the level and type of services that will be provided by the firm's marketing function can further compound demands placed upon legal marketers. If a brand is relatively unknown in the new market, for example, plans must be developed and implemented in order to ensure a clear brand-building strategy, and results are generally expected quickly.

DEFINING THE CHALLENGE

Introductions to clients are a natural outcome of a merger, and cross-selling efforts should commence in the weeks following, if not before. Marketing team members from different firms are required to work together as a team in a collaborative and productive manner, in some cases with vast time-zone and cultural differences. And, in a perfect world, new work for all lawyers should start flying in the door a few weeks post-merger.

Along with these expectations, the merged entity will likely go through organizational changes and integration issues. If the merger is significant, the scope of everything is tenfold. Typically, there is not much time for the marketing or business development professionals to get to know each other, so they have to work efficiently to achieve a defined set of goals. Communication and collaboration are essential ingredients. But how is that accomplished across geographic divides and considering deep cultural differences? How can the marketing team adapt to ensure that every member focuses on the mutual goal of facilitating new work?

This article addresses these questions in the context of the experiences and lessons learned from a recent combination between two large law firms.

OVERVIEW

On Jan. 1, 2013, our firm, K&L Gates, merged with Australian national law firm Middletons, adding four new offices, 300 lawyers and a fifth continent to its

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Managing Mergers

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already extensive global platform. The formal combination followed a nearly year-long series of discussions between the two firms, and ultimately culminated with a firm that now encompasses more than 2,000 lawyers spread across four dozen offices worldwide, including the largest integrated presence in the Asia Pacific region of any U.S.-based law firm.

The marketing function for the two firms, led by the authors, was involved at an early point in the discussions to provide strategic direction on marketing communications activities and business development support. On Day One of the merger, the K&L Gates marketing department added 20 new members based in Australia, creating a combined team of approximately 90 professionals throughout the firm.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY INTEGRATION

The effective integration of marketing team members during the early days of a merger is critical. Marketers often serve as change agents, and in a merger, lawyers typically turn to the marketing department for guidance on shared clients, legal services previously provided to target companies, and any other business intelligence they might need to enhance their practice, thereby attracting more clients and more work. Marketers must be ready to provide the answers or, at the least, be able to steer the lawyers in the right direction.

For the combination between K&L Gates and Middletons, it was a requirement for the respective marketing departments to communicate for many months prior to the Jan. 1 effective date, largely to ensure that appropriate branding activities were fully in place for Day One of the merger.

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These tasks included updating the website, producing countless branded materials, managing PR and media relations, and planning for a major advertising campaign in the Australian market, among myriad other key elements. Regular communication across marketing teams needed to occur in a rapid manner so that by the time of the merger, key marketing personnel in each firm had established solid working relationships.

Given the time-zone differences of more than 12 hours, calls between the two firms were scheduled early in the morning or late in the evening. In addition to weekly calls between the authors, there were numerous group calls for specific function areas within the marketing communications and business development areas. During the project calls, there was a high level of accountability on both sides, with team members knowing exactly who was responsible for which assigned tasks, and project updates were compiled into a weekly status report. Jeff Berardi also participated on a separate weekly call with other Chief Officers from both firms, to ensure that marketing department plans were well aligned across broader administrative areas.

DAY ONE DELIVERABLES

The K&L Gates/Middletons merger had some unique logistical challenges, as although the two firms had been in merger discussions for most of 2012, there were just three short weeks from the formal partner vote in early December to the effective date on Jan. 1. Because of the lead time required for many brand activities, Day One deliverables were therefore prioritized to those external activities that would most directly affect clients. These included preparing and distributing effective communications to clients to inform them about the upcoming merger, updating website content with the addition of the Australian offices, recreating 300+ lawyer bios into a new format and uploading those to the website, and updating signage and stationery in time for Day One, among many other tasks.

Because there was such a high level of interaction between the

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Free Yourself from Chambers

Top Tips for Successful Submissions

By Pippa Greze and John Hellerman

'Tis the season once again, and we're not talking about Christmas. No, it's Chambers submission time, the annual ritual that marketing departments greet with all the anticipation of a trip to the dentist. Which is to say, unadulterated dread. We can't help with your dental exams, but when it comes to Chambers, you can stop gritting your teeth.

Although completing a Chambers nomination requires one to navigate many tricky issues (balancing the competing interests of various partners and withstanding the sheer administrative burden of it all, to name just two), a few simple rules can make your life easier and ensure you are putting your firm's best foot forward.

There are two main elements to the directories process: completing the submission itself and identifying client referees. For each element, following the tips below will give you a leg up on the competition.

DRAFTING THE SUBMISSION

Use the submission form provided. Three years ago, Chambers introduced a "submission form" that can be found on its website. The form asks for a substantial amount of information, but its requests aren't arbitrary; it asks for the information that is most helpful to the researcher in evaluating the submission. For that reason, try to fill in as much as you possibly can — especially the

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sections on "what makes your practice different" and "feedback."

Mindset: When drafting, think about what genuinely sets you apart from the opposition. Avoid brochure-speak and focus on true differentiators such as your niche expertise, unique client base, or impressive market share. Take a look at the firms you are ranked with — or who you think you should be ranked with — and think about what you can genuinely say about your team they cannot.

Address the Reader. Remember who your reader is and write in a way that will be clear and interesting to him or her. The Chambers researchers are generally graduates with a few years in the workplace; they are not former lawyers and are not even necessarily law graduates, so they will not understand the ins and outs of a property or banking transaction as well as a lawyer with over 10 years of experience.

A good rule of thumb is to think more *New York Post* than *New York Times*. You need to be clear in your language and ask yourself if someone coming to this matter for the first time will understand what actually happened.

Don't Write 'War and Peace.' Remember that the researcher will have dozens of submissions to look at. You will have their attention at the beginning of the submission and then it will begin to wane. You need to make sure that the researcher will want to keep reading.

Don't List Rankings in Other Directories: This is a huge no-no. Each directory is extremely proud of its own research methods and believes that it is superior to those of its rivals. A list of honors going back to high school spelling bees will be largely ignored by the researcher who will prefer to rely upon who the lawyer acts for, what she has been doing for those clients, and what the market — especially clients — thinks of her.

CLIENT REFERRALS

Be robust in the selection of client referrals. No matter how great you

think your practice group is, the researcher will not believe it until he or she hears corroborative positive client feedback. Quality and quantity of client feedback is the single most important factor for achieving a ranking in Chambers. Too often, lawyers assume that their clients will be accessible and positive when the client is neither. So when identifying your client referees, think: Will this client take the time out to get back to the researcher or will they be too busy? Who will be more accessible, the General Counsel or the in-house lawyer we interact with on a daily basis? Who is in the best position to comment on my work?

Also, before identifying a client referee, honestly assess your certainty that they will give positive feedback. Deep down, you may fear a negative comment about the depth of your firm's team, its responsiveness, or any number of issues — and if so, heed those fears. Contrary to what lawyers believe, clients always speak freely when a neutral listener asks for off-the-record feedback.

Ask for the Client's Permission Before Putting Him or Her Forward As a Referee. It is amazing how many people do not do this, despite the fact that it should be a basic courtesy. In requesting client permission, you may find, for instance, that the client is bound by company policy not to respond. More importantly, when prepped, clients are more likely to notice — and respond to — an e-mail from Chambers, improving your chances of success. In any case, you'll avoid the mistake of the firm that identified a client who gave one of our favorite quotes: "They are sacked and they would know it if they bothered to pick up the phone."

Hit the Deadline. This is a basic one, and there for your own sanity as much as Chambers'. There may seem to be a long lead-in time between the time of submission and actual research, but Chambers has its own internal processes to follow,

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Media, Comm

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including the uploading of client referees. And, in the event you think your submission will be late, place a priority on client referees — to a researcher, these can be more important than the submission itself.

Steering the Ship Home. You should keep an eye on the schedule and touch base with the relevant researcher regarding when he or she is contacting client referees and whether lawyers need to follow up with their referees (to ensure they

respond to Chambers). It is all well and good to send in the submission and referee spreadsheet, but you have to make sure that you have done all that you can to follow the process through.

Law Firm Interviews. Law firms frequently ask us about a third element of the process: the law firm interview with Chambers. Although the prospect of an interview produces much anxiety at firms, it should not consume your attention in preparing a submission. The fact is, a strong submission and referee feedback can preclude any need for

an interview — which is why the current editor of Chambers USA is eager to emphasize that getting an interview should not be taken as an indicator that your firm will or will not be ranked. That said, when interviews do happen, they can affect borderline decisions — so they should be taken seriously.

But that is a dentist trip for another day. And if you heed the tips above, it's one that you may well get to skip entirely.



Managing Mergers

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two marketing departments prior to the merger, team members generally felt much more comfortable with each other upon joining the combined firm than if they hadn't worked together so closely over the previous months. It helped that marketing personnel across both firms had a shared goal that they worked together to achieve — this felt like a true team accomplishment and substantially hastened the integration process.

BRAND-BUILDING IN A NEW MARKET

Positive outcomes to brand-building efforts in Australia were observed in the lead-up to the merger, and are ongoing. The media coverage that the firms received as a result of three separate media releases sent out around the merger was unprecedented for both firms, with more than 200 distinct articles regarding the combination, an overwhelming number of them positive.

The firm also embarked on an advertising campaign in the most widely read business newspaper down under — *The Australian Financial Review* — for a period of five months and early reactions to the campaign suggest that it has been beneficial in telling the market about the new firm's arrival. Cross-selling efforts continue, and new relationships among partners and clients are formed daily.

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

Post-merger, the task of integrating all marketing members must stay front and center. In the K&L Gates/Middletons combination, a marketing team video conference took place in mid-January, just two weeks after the effective date. This allowed members to see each other across time zones, and put names to faces following the distribution of a printed marketing team contact sheet earlier in the year. Frequent communications to team members by the authors were imperative, and replacing words such as “local,” “national,” and “regional” with “global” to describe the team was just one example of how two marketing teams were unified quickly.

Times of marketing and business development team calls were changed to accommodate the Australian team members. There is no perfect time to talk for teams working across Asia Pacific, the Americas and Europe, so a rotating schedule was introduced. Meeting minutes are documented and, in some case, the entire meeting is recorded so those who are unable to make the call can listen to the recording and view any slides following the call.

Another area of integration and communication was related to firm-wide practice group support. Within the K&L Gates marketing structure, there are often multiple managers and others who are responsible for supporting firm-wide practice

groups in their business development activities. As a result, team members needed to work together to ensure that there wasn't duplication of work or initiatives being conducted in silos, exchanging relevant marketing collateral and best practices with each other prior to the combination. This collaboration continued well after the firms formally combined, and remains ongoing to this day.

BUSINESS PROCESS INTEGRATION

A significant element of the integration process is the systematic review of legacy firm business procedures, and we spent many hours discussing the differences and similarities between the operational processes of the two firms, conversations that took place far in advance of the combination. The net result was a clear understanding of which procedures needed to change for legacy Middletons lawyers and marketing staff, and which could remain in place — either on a temporary or permanent basis.

In certain situations, we developed hybrid systems that combined elements of both perspectives, in consultation with members of the marketing team or other administrative departments. By taking a strategic approach to discussing these issues, the two firms minimized the impact of making widespread and possibly unnecessary changes to the firm's operations, and were able to do so in an integrated and collaborative way.

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Client Reviews

An Underrated Business Development Tool

By Allan Colman

In today's economy, ensuring lasting relationships with clients is key to staying afloat and managing the ups and downs of the market. One way to improve client retention is by conducting periodic client reviews to assess your firm's performance and re-evaluate the client's needs. Moving forward, there are questions you should ask your client — or your prospect — to win new business.

When discussing your client's preferences, needs and wishes, there are a few particulars you should touch upon to ensure success:

- What is the most beneficial service your business is currently providing? Understanding what services your clients benefit from or appreciate the most is a great way to gauge your performance. For example, whichever service they credit as being most beneficial provides a great model for how you should be performing all your services. Looking deeper into the professionals and processes behind the service will help your firm replicate that success.

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Career Journal

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alone. Historically, these evaluations have been conducted apart from other interviews, usually by an industrial psychologist trained in psychometric evaluation. Often, these sessions are

- What improvements or changes would they make in service? Allowing your clients to provide feedback and constructive criticism might be tough to take in, but it will give you keen insight into your performance.
- How would they define their ideal professional, including characteristics they find important? Identifying a client's ideal professional will help you to better match up your personnel to the project. For instance, if the client is looking to match a particular work style to his or hers, you can match an ideal candidate from your firm to create a better working environment.

Any changes in internal structure will likely affect day-to-day operations on either side — within your firm and at the client's company — so determining their preferred point of contact and modus operandi is a great place to start. And remember, while client evaluation is a great tool for retaining clients, it's also an excellent way to approach the relationship with new and prospective clients. When you get to the *closing zone*, asking what the client needs, prefers, and wishes will improve sales techniques and business development skills.

TAKING A LONG VIEW

Creating a successful roadmap for clients takes not only a closer look at the past, but also a clear examination of the challenges facing the company right now and in the immediate future. Whether it's a new, prospective, or existing client, discovering and understanding the

at the tail end of a series of interviews and may be only used on one or two finalists. More recently, such questions have bled into the general interview sessions as well.

IN LAW FIRMS

Despite their effectiveness, few lawyers have used these techniques

company's challenges is key to developing a successful strategy with all possibilities considered.

Reassessing an existing client's direction and potential hurdles improves client retention rates and shows dedication and commitment to success and service. A preliminary assessment of challenges for new and prospective clients is a great business development technique that helps align your firm's sales efforts with the company's marketing goals.

During the research and discovery process, there are a number of items that you must address with the client:

- The company's strategic direction now and in five years;
- The challenges and obstacles the client thinks are in the way of its goals;
- Any uncertainties or recent changes in the company that could impact the future;
- Any competitor or industry concerns; and
- Any new products or services that will affect business.

SECURE THAT NEW BUSINESS

Gathering this knowledge will help you and your client effectively map out the future, aware of the challenges you may face. Assessing all the possibilities will improve your selling skills, your closing skills, and client retention. While the background research you have conducted will help you while you're in the *closing zone*, engaging with your clients about challenges ahead will ultimately secure your business relationship and future work.



when interviewing candidates for senior management positions at law firms. In fact, most lawyers have struggled with their line of questioning when the candidate is not a fellow practicing attorney being considered as a lateral hire.

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Often, they'll spend most of the session doing all of the talking. Still others, if they do ask questions, tend to revert to the devil's advocacy style they learned in law school. Even those lawyers who have never seen the inside of a courtroom fancy themselves Perry Mason when it comes to interviewing candidates. They come armed and ready to cross-examine candidates as they would a key witness on the courtroom stand. They ask loaded questions and look for any sign of weakness, all of which rarely reveals what they're looking for. At times, I'll hear back from clients that they liked a candidate, but did not get a really good "read on him." It's really no surprise when candidates tell me they could barely get a word in edgewise!

So, as candidates for senior marketing positions in law firms, you have, for the most part, been spared this type of inquisition. But be prepared for a change the next time you find yourself across from the table of an interviewing attorney. Interviewers are certainly getting more sophisticated in discerning candidates' skills vis-à-vis the job description.

Lawyers, who tend to lose some cogency when they're not interviewing other lawyers, are getting better versed in what to ask and look for. They no longer stop at the outward veneer, slick presentation, or consultant-talk of a suave marketing candidate. They ask probing questions, ones that will keep you on your toes.

For anyone who has been interviewed by a lawyer, this new tack may come as a big surprise. A few years ago, I hinted in this column that behavioral-based interviewing was on the horizon as the next iteration of interviewing to be used

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by lawyers in assessing marketing candidates' talent. It has taken a little longer than I expected, but the discipline is catching on. It has become more commonplace in the interview setting. Candidates are fairly comfortable talking about, and prepared to discuss, the experiences or accomplishments listed on their resumes. But too often, they are ill-prepared to walk through a scenario when requested by the interviewer to do so.

While I would not want to compromise the efficacy of behavioral-based interviewing by over-preparing candidates — after all, it really should reveal your ability to think on your feet — it is certainly a good idea to offer some guidance on how to prepare ahead of time should such questions arise.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEING UNPREPARED

Behavioral-based interviewing can take a candidate out of his or her comfort zone and presentation mode and ruin an otherwise highly credible candidate's chances of success. Too often, I have received calls from candidates as they are leaving an interview frustrated with their inability to respond to such questions. Many would like a "do-over" as my kids like to call it as they thought of a better scenario they could have used; one that usually popped into their head on the elevator ride down to the lobby.

Ultimately, I am a huge advocate of psychometric evaluations. It brings a more scientific discipline by which to assess juxtaposed candidates with diverse backgrounds. It creates a more formulaic approach and draws better and more uniform decision-making among stakeholders. Most importantly, it drives stakeholders to make collective decisions on candidates, vetting through various stakeholder opinions and mitigating capricious comments made by renegade interviewers.

Of course, these questions should not supplant an interviewer's gut reaction to a candidate. If an interviewer likes a candidate or conversely, does not care for him, it really does not matter what is said. Form trumps substance. But it does

drive better consensus among all members of hiring committees.

GETTING READY: WHAT TO EXPECT

Regardless, all should heed the challenge of readying themselves for interviews by thinking ahead of time about examples to draw from to help answer these questions. Not surprisingly, behavioral-based questions focus on adversarial or challenging situations. While not all are negative, the questions tend to look for one's ability to manage, cope and lead in difficult situations. And, the last time I checked, law firm management can present a lot of difficult situations.

Lawyers are increasingly looking to hire executives who can be
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Situation-based Questions

Examples of situation-based questions include:

Understanding of the business: Provide an example of how you stay up to speed on what competitors are doing in the industry.

Problem-solving abilities: Tell me about the most intriguing problem you have worked on.

Organizational skills: Provide an example where you came in below, at, or above budget when predicting project costs. How did you respond?

Courage of conviction: Think about a time when you "stuck to your guns" despite overwhelming sentiment against your opinion. What did you do about it?

Staffing: Recall for us what was your best and worst hiring decision.

Interpersonal skills: Tell me about a time when you helped establish relationships where none existed before or were badly damaged and in need of repair.

Adaptability: Provide an example when you made a change to your style based on feedback you received.

THE VOICE OF THE CLIENT

Content Is King

By Kathy O'Brien

According to a survey released in May 2013 by Citi Private Bank Law Firm Group, demand for legal services dropped by 3.3% in the first quarter of 2013, sending another clear sign that the law firm gilded age is a distant memory. With belts already tight and so many firms chasing less legal work, it is critical for law firms to stand out from their competition — and they need to do so in a way that resonates with clients.

"The most important thing to me personally as regards outside lawyers is that they understand enough about our business to ask the right questions and spot the right issues," one associate general counsel commented in the recent report, Corporate Counsel: Agenda 2013 from ALM Legal Intelligence. "That permeates everything, including budgets."

'UNDERSTAND OUR BUSINESS'

Understand our business. It is a stipulation to engagement that we hear over and over again from in-house counsel. It appears in studies, surveys and even casual conversations with GCs. Law firms of all sizes struggle with how to showcase their experience and highlight their thought leadership in particular sectors so clients clearly see that a firm not only understands its space, it owns that space. To do that, it's all about finding the right marketing mix to emphasize knowledge, experience and value. And that begins with content.

CONTENT

"Give us content that is targeted, relevant and pertinent. Forget the wining and dining. Give us content that says we know about your business and we're paying attention" — these were some of the comments expressed during an in-house counsel panel of the ABA Section of Litigation

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Joint Committees' CLE Seminar on "The Substantive and Practical Challenges Faced by Today's In-House Counsel." While developing and distributing content seems like lots of work, it does not need to be. A good first step is to start small and try to leverage the most of a client alert.

Creating Content

Text-based client alerts are a great start. Every firm creates client alerts and e-mails them to clients. But why not go a step further and repurpose that content you've already created into a bylined article for a prestigious publication that your clients read and care about? Article writing is a credentialing activity that gives lawyers instant credibility because that content is published by a third-party source. It also positions them as authorities on specific topics that affect clients.

Once an article is published, it's the gift that keeps on giving — it can be posted to the firm's website, and shared among the firm's social media channels.

Reusing Content

The same client alert can also be repurposed into a presentation, a blog entry, video footage, or even edited down to subject matter for a pitch to reporters who cover the topic. Reporters are always trolling the Internet for new ideas and new sources. By proactively sending the information to them, you are saving them valuable

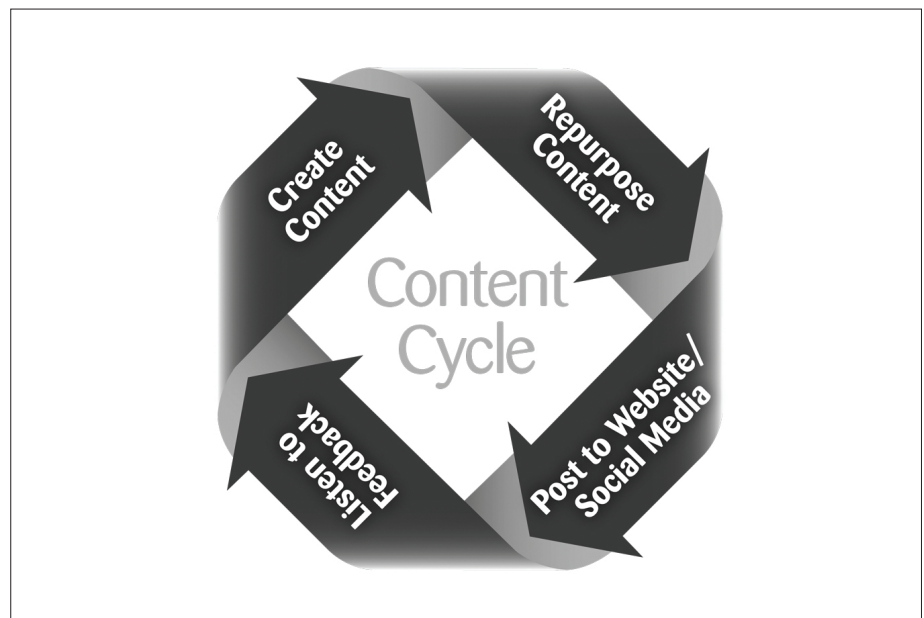
time and establishing an instant connection. If your source is quoted in a story, that earned media placement, which will, no doubt, be seen by your target audience, is more grist for the firm's content mill — its website and social media platforms.

Distributing Content

LinkedIn has become one of the largest publishing platforms for business — and it's completely free. Most firms have LinkedIn profiles with captive audiences of followers. For instance, Baker & McKenzie has almost 20,000 followers, DLA has 18,000 and other firms have impressive numbers in the thousands. Even mid-size to small firms have respectable LinkedIn presences. These firms are using LinkedIn as a firm-specific broadcast channel that pushes out useful content that clients, prospects, referral sources and laterals care about. Distributing client alerts here is just the beginning.

From a firm's branded LinkedIn page, attorneys or firm marketers can push out regular updates on firm-wide news that is helpful and not self-promotional. The audience is looking for unique insights and perspective. Postings may include information on seminars and speaking engagements, analysis of news coverage on topic that is important to clients, the impact

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Voice of the Client

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of recent Supreme Court decisions, reaction to newly implemented regulations or legislation, and so on. Posts that show the human side of law firms are particularly well-received. The goal here is content that is informative, helpful and unique.

CONCLUSION

Your firm's clients are already there and listening. Seize the opportunity to provide meaningful content to this established audience

and take another step down the road to becoming the recognized thought leader on a topic.

In the end, it is about staying relevant and demonstrating to clients your industry knowledge in a very meaningful way. As Scott Mozarsky, executive vice president & global chief commercial officer at PR Newswire, noted during his presentation at the Social Media Marketing Summit for Law Firms in New York in May, when a firm continuously delivers relevant content and establishes its worth to its audience, the audience trusts the firm enough to iden-

tify themselves and grant permission for engagement. It's the circle of life.

With so much talent and so many firms vying for the same piece of pie, showcasing knowledge in a helpful and informative way can be a make-or-break moment. There is no doubt that sharing high-quality, valuable and branded content that informs and demonstrates an understanding of the critical issues that affect your clients' business in a very clear and real way will win the day.



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EFFECTIVELY MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

It's a tall order for a marketer to manage the expectations that partners have of the cross-selling efforts resulting from the merger. Some partners may expect that work will flow immediately following a merger, even though in reality it can take months and even years to strengthen and expand relationships with current clients to new markets or practice areas.

That said, the marketing team should identify and prioritize a certain number of clients or contacts that should be considered key opportunities for growth. At K&L Gates, directors of business development worked together with the CMO and members of the Management Committee to analyze mutual clients and determine which companies could

most benefit from the expanded capabilities presented by the merger.

Branding is usually a hot-button item, especially for firms that had a well-known brand in the marketplace prior to the merger. In those cases, it is important to describe the plan for building the brand, and demonstrate results of the strategy as the weeks and months unfold. Setting reasonable expectations about how quickly an unknown brand will take root in a new market is an essential part of the process.

CONCLUSION

Integration of the marketing team following a significant law firm merger is an ongoing process. There are a plethora of challenges and issues that inevitably arise following a combination, and having the right structures in place to overcome these issues is paramount.

Leaders of combined firms must step up their communication to team members to provide appropriate so-

lutions to problems and to ensure that team members can express concerns in a productive manner. This could be no more than scheduling an extra weekly meeting to talk about processes and frustrations, but it is important to make sure that the gathering does not simply become a venting session. Leaders must keep discussions focused on solutions or new approaches, serving as sounding boards for any concerns that individual team members may have throughout the integration process.

It's not an easy task to create the most productive structure in teams to enhance communication, but it can be done. The effort takes time and patience, but since legal marketers often serve as change agents within the organization, we shouldn't forget the power we have to drive positive evolution in our firms.



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their proxy to decide on a number of business issues — and yes, lay blame when the decision results in a bad outcome. The business of law is a difficult proposition. Partners in big law firms are abdicating the decision-making to their business leaders. They rely upon them

to make decisions in areas heretofore sacrosanct to the partnership; for example, pricing, compensation, promotions, and management of partner affairs. You asked for the responsibility. And now that you have it, you need to be prepared for a new level of critique, an evaluation that goes to the heart of your ability to act on their behalf in critical situations. Be prepared for behavioral-

based interviewing. It's coming to a law firm near you.



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