

Law Firm Business Development: Is Marketing Department Outsourcing The New Black?

By [LawVision](#) on November 21, 2016

Outsourcing a law firm's back office functions like Finance or Information Technology (IT) certainly isn't a new concept. However, as law firm leaders continue to seek ways to grow the firm's bottom line and improve the service quality of its "support" staff, outsourcing of the tactical (non-strategic) marketing functions is becoming more prevalent. Depending on the firm, tactical marketing activity may include proposal development, CRM system management, event planning, and even marketing communications. Typically, the business development (e.g., Business Development Managers, etc.) or practice development (e.g., Practice Development Managers, etc.) roles are viewed as being a strategic (non-tactical) function and continue to remain in-house. Of course, it's not uncommon for firms to surgically, rather than holistically, outsource certain marketing/business development-related functions like Public Relations or Creative Services, but the decision to outsource functions that include MarCom are particularly interesting to this former Chief Marketing Officer.

The trend is that all non-strategic functions, Marketing Communications or otherwise, are being considered as potential outsourcing targets. Not unlike outsourcing of other back office functions, once the decision to outsource the marketing function is made, the typical scenario is that marketing team members are offered a position in the new geography. Under the current outsourcing paradigm, teams of people from a particular firm are moved to a lower cost geographic location with the expectation that these individuals will provide dedicated service to that particular firm.

Given this interesting development in the industry, one must wonder if the next phase of this outsourcing evolution is for certain firms to outsource functions to individuals that are not dedicated to a particular firm, but belong to a well-organized shared resource pool or "multi-tenant" operation that works under the guidance of an experienced outsourcing company.

What are your thoughts on the future of Marketing Department outsourcing?