

# Breaking Down Silos: Why Integrated Marketing?

Integrated marketing is the ideal – the method we all strive for in our practices. But the truth is professional services marketing is full of theoretical silos. These silos limit collaboration among different key players of the marketing team, which reduces efficiency and diminishes results. The more we can find ways to **work together substantively across roles**, the more successful our marketing strategies will be.

Recently, Jaffe CEO **Terry M. Isner** and I presented a session at the LMA Southwest Region Conference about integrating your PR and business development strategies. The discussion spurred a number of great questions. For those who were not able to join us, here is a summary.

## The “Wheel and Spoke” Model

The typical marketing department is likely to have a business development team, a PR team and a marketing/marketing-operations team. In theory, everyone is in the same department and our primary goal is the same: to create opportunities for our attorneys to retain and increase their business. In practice, though, the different groups often spend more time maintaining their territories than collaborating.

One way to look at the interrelationship among BD, PR and marketing functions is to see the marketing department as a wheel where each function maintains a part of the wheel. Communicators take in information from all areas of the firm and develop consistent messaging – they are the hub. Business developers are fully immersed in their practice areas and are subject matter experts – they are the spokes. The marketing or marketing operations team brings it all together to maintain the firm brand – they are the rim. Without any of these groups, the wheel will not function.

While this is a helpful model to visualize how different team functions fit together, you still have to understand how these various groups can collectively create a singular strategy.

## PR and Biz Dev Collaboration

One example that illustrates collaboration between separate functions is the relationship between PR and business development.

Buyers of legal services are making decisions about your firm before they even talk to you. They are looking at your website, the articles you write, the places you speak, the deals you work on and more. Prospects are looking to see if their impression of you and what others say about you match up. Public relations efforts can help with this credentialing process.



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Credentialing opportunities are becoming more important as we see generational changes in business. It used to be that a lawyer could take prospects out to an event and woo them into choosing his or her firm. Today, buyers of legal services want to understand your values, work ethics, solutions and culture in their discovery process. PR gives you the opportunity to validate the characteristics the buyer is looking for through media impressions.

Why is **media exposure** such a potent way to establish the credentials of a professional service provider? It has long been said that the value of a story placement in a reputable publication is four times more valuable than an advertisement. Why? Because the media outlet serves as a gatekeeper, vetting your information and determining it to be credible.

To ensure effective collaboration between PR and business development, the PR team will have to know which companies and sectors your practice is targeting. Once they have all the needed information, the PR team can help identify opportunities for the attorneys to get in front of prospects and track hot topics for the lawyers to comment on or write about. They can also target key publications that raise a professional's public profile.

## Leading with Thought Leadership

Another example of interdisciplinary collaboration is a thought leadership campaign.

The returns on integrated thought leadership campaigns can be substantial. The best content marketing campaigns include conducting research, writing papers and articles, publishing these materials on your website and through appropriate media outlets, **giving presentations**, and sharing your insights with clients and prospects. To do all of this, you need access to all areas of your marketing team, including team members such as a project lead, PR pro, business developer and marketer. Each of these professionals brings a different approach and skillset to the table, all of which are needed to ensure maximum reach and exposure.

## Other Key Takeaways

There are numerous other ways in which different members of the marketing department can work together. For example, social media should not be the sole responsibility of marketing. Strong social media programs combine PR and content marketing. Content marketing develops the content of posts, while PR can expand the reach of social media through strategic sharing with media and industry influencers.

Business development and content marketing can collaborate on pitch materials by incorporating principles of storytelling. Prospects are much more likely to take interest in and retain your sales pitch if you can tell a good story. Easily understood and effective narratives leave an impression, and that is exactly what a business development professional aims to do.

Collaboration doesn't have to be complicated. It just takes a little strategic thinking. Collaboration is also not contingent on the size of your firm or its internal structure. It is about intentionality. Look for opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and peers. Ask questions. Seek advice. Bounce ideas around.

As we move into the last quarter of 2019, take some time to think about how your team is functioning and how you can break down silos and integrate your marketing efforts in new ways. I would love to hear your tips for how you ensure collaboration on your team. Reach out to me at [mmccormick@jaffepr.com](mailto:mmccormick@jaffepr.com) or 281.975.9447.