

Meet the Editors of the Mid-Market Report: Lizzy McLellan and David Gialanella

If you work in a midsize law firm, chances are you closely follow law.com's *Mid-Market Report*, which launched in 2018 under the direction of American Lawyer Media (ALM) business of law editor and reporter Lizzy McLellan and ALM's assistant managing editor of regional brands David Gialanella. David and Lizzy, who have been with ALM for many years in roles with the *New Jersey Law Journal* and the *Legal Intelligencer*, respectively, were excited when ALM leadership recognized a need to provide news specific to the midsize firm, and they both took a great interest in launching and managing the publication.

We asked David and Lizzy about the origin of the *Mid-Market Report*, the content readers can expect and the trends they see among midsize firms.

Q: David, the Mid-Market Report is about to celebrate its second anniversary in February. What was the genesis of the Mid-Market Report, and how did you and Lizzy get involved?

The *Mid-Market Report* (*MMR*) came to be because members of ALM's editorial leadership, led by Hank Grezlak, saw a great need for a publication that would provide business of law insight and strategy for midsize law firms. There were no national publications devoted to covering midsize law firms (which is defined as 40 to 200 lawyers, although our coverage goes beyond that in terms of size). Lizzy and others writing for *The American Lawyer* have a deserved reputation for covering the nation's (and the globe's) largest law firms, and colleagues writing for regional publications such as the *New Jersey Law Journal* and the *Legal Intelligencer* have done a very good job covering the many midsize law firms that exist in those markets. But there was a need for a national product about and for midsize law.

We give a good measure of credit to Hank for both his conceptualization and his support – and his work, as he writes for *MMR* nearly every week. It's a testament to how valued the product is within ALM. Personally, I have to give a ton of credit to Lizzy for being a big thinker as well as a detail-oriented person. She's been tremendous to work with, and *MMR* wouldn't have developed into the product it is without her dedicated involvement.

Q: Lizzy, what was the intention of the Mid-Market Report when you launched in 2018? How has the Mid-Market Report evolved since then?

In our roles as legal reporters and editors, we frequently heard from midsize firm leaders that their businesses faced unique issues and offered competitive advantages over Big Law competitors. Our goal with *MMR* is to provide the business of law intelligence



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readers expect from ALM but tailored to the midsize firm audience.

Since we launched, the whole team that works on *MMR* has become familiar with dozens of midsize law firms we didn't know about before. We've introduced regular market focus features, which analyze the legal landscape in mid-market cities, and we've looked to include a greater number of midsize firms, including niche firms and boutiques, in our coverage.

Q: Who are your readers? What do you want them to gain from reading MMR?

Our readers largely consist of midsize law firm leaders and business and marketing professionals at midsize law firms. These are the people thinking about strategy and innovation, but they may also be practicing law. We hope we can provide some insight into the strategies firm leaders are or should be using, and help them realize that you don't have to be a big firm to think big. We want our readers to come away with executable intelligence on a host of practice- and firm-management issues that affect law firms of all sizes. We want to serve any firm leader or lawyer who may be wondering how it's done down the block – or across the country.

Q: What trends have come across via the Mid-Market Report's law firm leadership Q&A columns?

One thing that has become abundantly clear from these Q&As is that midsize law firms are doing a lot of innovative things, and that doesn't just mean implementing costly technology. Firms are getting creative in how they implement business roles and organize their C-suites. And some midsize firms have been especially enthusiastic when it comes to alternative fee arrangements.

Q: What issues are particular to the midsize firms?

Many issues facing law firms don't depend on size (diversity, recruiting and retention), while some do (management structure, for instance, might depend on just how big the firm is). The firms we cover vary in many ways. They're well known in their markets but perhaps not well known beyond locations where they have offices. Often, they've been in existence for a century or more. Some, on the other hand, are boutiques that focus on a certain practice area. There's more to set them apart than they have in common, but with almost all of them, there's a tangible sense of pride that they are "not Big Law." They believe they offer comparable expertise at far better rates. From a recruiting standpoint, they believe their work-life balance is better, particularly for millennials. Our coverage sheds light on these issues.

Q: What sections are typically covered in the Mid-Market Report and at what frequency?

Nearly every week, we have a main feature, a recap summing up some of the most-interesting midsize firm news being reported around the ALM chain, a Q&A, a contributed column on business strategies, and our "Who Got the Work" and "Midsize Moves" columns. As for feature topics, we brainstorm stories we want to tackle on a regular basis, and we have a loosely defined schedule of when we want them to run. But sometimes we adjust our editorial calendar to accommodate especially timely topics or so we can delve deeper into a topic that created a lot of buzz.

Q: What are your preferences for story ideas?

Email is probably the easiest way to reach us. We love talking with all sorts of sources, as long as they're able to speak with us candidly about challenges and strategies they face within their firms or in the market as a whole.

Q: Looking into 2020, what are some of the trends in mid-market law firms that you plan to cover?

We'll definitely be looking to talk with firm leaders about succession planning, which seems to be a challenge that reaches crisis level at some firms. Additionally, we'll continue to ask market watchers how firms should be preparing for an eventual economic downturn and whether they are financially strong enough to outlast it. Litigation funding, changes in legal operations, client relationships and C-suite reorganization are other topics we will continue digging into.



Lizzy McLellan



David Gialanella

Many thanks to Lizzy and David for their time and the insights they have shared. The Mid-Market Report is at <https://www.law.com/mid-market-report/>. You can sign up to receive the newsletter by [clicking here](#).