

# Briefing

## *Interview*

### **Elizabeth Chambers**

Freshfields' marketing and BD chief on how to win the marketing game

## **MARKETING TOMORROW'S FIRM**

APRIL 2013

## *Feature*

### **From brand new to brand you**

Rebrands, personal brand, marketing methods, digital... It's all inside

## *Research*

### **Is your firm brand X?**

We quiz the top legal marketing people on whether firms 'get' brand

## *Industry views*

### **Raising your profile**

Mashing up BD and CRM data and much more

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# Can law firm brands be better?



**Brand is what you want people to think of your business, but it has to be based on what they already think. It's incredibly important to law firms right now,**

**alongside all the other facets of marketing, because the heat is on to capture new markets and dominate old ones.**

That's why for the first time we've made an issue of **Briefing** about marketing (a more BD-focused issue comes to you in September), and we've researched the top 100 legal marketing and BD directors. Do marketing and brand matter more than ever, now that everyone wants a piece of your action? Find out on p21.

We've also got a wide-ranging interview with **Freshfields' queen of brands**, chief marketing and BD officer **Elizabeth Chambers**, a feature including thoughts from marketing chiefs at **A&O, Ince & Co, Mishcon de Reya, Nabarro and Norton Rose**.

Plus we have wise words from issue sponsor **Thomson Reuters Elite** and analysis on who should be your next hire in the marketing department.

I hope you enjoy this issue – and feel free to email me what you think, good or bad, at [rupertw@lsn.co.uk](mailto:rupertw@lsn.co.uk).

**Rupert White, editor of Briefing**

## Interview:

### Elizabeth Chambers, Freshfields



Rupert White talks to Freshfields' global marketing and BD supremo about marketing the big brands, and who should do it

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## Feature:

### From brand new to brand you



Polly Botsford reports on why marketing is key to the success of tomorrow's firm, and finding the marketer in everyone in the business

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## Survey:

### Does your firm get brand?



**Briefing** finds out what legal marketing chiefs think about the importance of the marketing mix in making competitive law firms

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## Briefing jobs



A range of great marketing and BD jobs on the **Briefing** jobs page. Pass it on... or perhaps not

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# Industry analysis index

**In Briefing we bring you relevant industry analysis from some of the legal sector's leading voices.**

*This month's industry views:*

Combining information from customer relationship management and enterprise relationship management gives marketing and BD people unrivalled insight into clients and their firms' connections to them, according to issue sponsor **Thomson Reuters Elite**.

*Plus:* Where will the marketing people of the future come from, and what will they be like? Marketing/BD recruitment firm **Totum Partners** gives us an answer.

This month's interview with **Elizabeth Chambers at Freshfields** was transcribed by:



*Photography of Robert Boardman: Jonathan Goldberg*

## *Briefing Industry Interview* **Better connected**



**Joe Przybyla of Thomson Reuters'** BD software team talks about how law firms can get more out of the relationships their people already have

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## *Industry Analysis* **Rise of the specialists**



**Tim Skipper** at marketing and BD recruitment firm **Totum Partners** looks at this year's marketing and business development trends

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*The Briefing Interview*

# Queen of brands

*Rupert White talks brand favourability, global law firm marketing challenges and hiring the next generation of marketing and BD people with Freshfields' chief marketing and BD officer, Elizabeth Chambers*



## Are people like Elizabeth Chambers the future of legal business services?

She certainly represents the kind of person legal needs more of, if it's to learn how to behave more like its clients. An American by birth, she took a 10-year tour of duty at McKinsey in the US from 1988 to 1998, then moved to strategy and BD at Readers' Digest. Roles at Bank of America and US firm Bingham McCutchen followed, and then the big move in 2006 to Barclays, as CMO for first Barclaycard and then global retail and commercial banking, where she remained until November 2009.

After a career break in 2010, she went back to legal, joining Freshfields in March 2011, bringing experience in managing professional services reputation and brands, some corporate directorships under her belt (roles first begun while at Barclays, running joint ventures with other high street brands) and consulting stripes. Very much, then, the corporate figure.

Compared to the melee of modern financial services, which is at the cutting edge of marketing methods and technology, legal is often seen as a bit backward – which makes marketing the modern law firm the big challenge of our times, because the need for really great marketing and BD capability is more important than ever. Law firms need to become more like their clients in terms of technical capability and in the kinds of people doing the work in marketing/BD departments.

“Brand is more important today for Freshfields, and for many other firms like us, because we need to grow in new markets where the client base is less experienced of us – or has never heard of us.”

Brand now matters more in legal, but how the concept of brand is applied and what it's for depends on the market you're in, says Chambers. “In the markets where





our awareness is very strong – the UK, Germany and Europe generally – we focus on both awareness and favourability, as strong awareness must be maintained. But the relative emphasis is on favourability.”

Beyond this core audience there are varying degrees of brand building to be done. Freshfields has had a presence in the US for 30 years, but the firm's still relatively unknown to a large swathe of Fortune 500 GCs, she says. To fix this, the firm's investing in brand awareness there to “directly support targeted business development and client-specific outreach”. Ditto markets such as China, Africa, Latin America or the CIS. “You have to think audience by audience, market by market,” says Chambers. “You have one brand, but the way in which you're activating that brand and bringing it to life in relevant, practical terms is going to differ based on the starting point.”

Chambers separates the concepts of brand and reputation, relating brand to the firm and reputation to its fee earners, echoing the corporate idea of brand: a business's reputation is more than the people in it (though growing partner profile is still a big part of what marketing does, she says).

This isn't new to legal, but partners often merely play lip service to it in reality. So it's useful at Freshfields to make that distinction internally, she says, while ensuring that brand and reputation work “in concert”.

“What you're delivering to your clients needs to be consistent with what you're saying about your brand, and what you're saying about your brand needs to be grounded in what your clients are saying about the service and the work that you're doing.”

Even at a big corporate firm like Freshfields, much of the marketing mix still boils down to the basics. Freshfields rebranded between 2009-2011, which was about freshening the firm's corporate identity based on client

research. “It was vital to connect the brand to how everyone behaves in the firm,” she says, “to explain very clearly and succinctly to our people that ‘this is what our clients said they care about, this is where they said we were different and better than the competition, and this is your role, every single member of the firm, in delivering that,’” she says. “We've had a lot of success with that simple approach.”

## **Wanted: a new, digital kind of marketer**

Perhaps there's nothing new under the sun, but the legal business still has a lot of lessons to learn from ‘the outside world’. As Chambers says, it's about applying a classic marketing discipline. But to get more of that outsider juice, you need more marketers and BD people from other sectors. Better still, you need people from the sorts of businesses in your client base. You also need fewer generalists to get the best results, in some areas, and “be brave enough to bring in different types of talent”, she says.

“When you drive a bit of specialisation, you're able to hire with a clearer brief in mind and attract superior talent in each area. My senior people wear many hats, but deciding to have specialists has enabled us to get a better calibre of person in some of the senior roles.”

Freshfields is increasingly looking for people who can bring in distinctive skill sets, particularly around data analysis, she says. “Increasingly what we're trying to do [in marketing] needs to be data driven: looking at the client base, understanding where we're growing our business, getting to see what research is telling us. That relies on people being fairly analytical.”

Up there with analytical people are those with strong digital backgrounds. There are still lawyers in Freshfields' marketing and BD department, but the firm also needs people

who hail from the client's world.

"People from financial services bring a commercial streak. A lot of our business is with financial institutions, so having an underlying understanding of what a bank does, what the products are and how a bank makes money is really helpful."

A critical goal is to hire people who understand client service, says Chambers, because that provides a solid base to start from. Plus, hiring from bigger, more mature businesses (in marketing terms), like banks and accountants, pulls intelligence on new and best practice into the firm.

"Those folks have seen what 'good' looks like in other arenas. Even in our digital roles we're bringing people in who were running corporate comms, internal communications and web development functions in large corporates. What's needed is a knowledge of digital but also knowledge of how to get something digital deployed in a large, complex matrix – a multi-divisional enterprise. Freshfields has been very open and supportive of bringing in people with different backgrounds."

## Working together

Getting a better mix of legal and non-legal backgrounds into business services is not easy, because partners often resist input from outsiders, especially those who want to reform or modernise.

Chambers says she hasn't experienced

this at Freshfields, perhaps because partners are heavily involved in marketing and BD recruitment, she says, and more than the usual amount of time is spent personally on-boarding staff. But, really, it also seems to come down to making sure your hires already have an inherent 'fit' for legal – so some things never change.



*"People from financial services bring a commercial streak. A lot of our business is with financial institutions."*

Elizabeth Chambers, Freshfields

"You're always looking at how effective the person is going to be, not just at the experience and knowledge they have. How strong will their influence be, how resilient are they? Succeeding in our firm requires lots of stakeholder management, a healthy amount of emotional resilience, strong influence skills, a very positive, can-do attitude. People who rely on command and control or who



have an unsophisticated way of putting recommendations won't succeed."

Decision making in most law firms is generally not as short or simple as in a corporate business, as Briefing readers know well. Chambers therefore wants people with good "navigational skills" on her team. "Often the map is not laid out in front of you. They need to be their own energy source and get on with it, even in the face of some sometimes confusing and mixed inputs.

"And we're looking for really effective communications skills, so it really helps if somebody's fantastic in written and oral communication, because that's what we trade in. And to be blunt, I am hiring for smarts – because that makes an enormous difference in somebody's ability to get on with the people in this building."

One of the big reasons business services leaders like Chambers need super smart people is to keep business services influential with fee earners, as well as with other departments.

Marketing and BD at Freshfields has parity with any other business services area in the firm, she contends – good positioning compared to many law firms. But, she argues, you can't worry about whether marketing is losing or winning compared to IT or HR, because you have to see business services as a whole, working together with fee earners. It's one big enterprise, she says, not one function versus another.

Whether this is really true only those inside the firm can say, but it's a mindset that Chambers says is vital to making a big corporate firm work properly. "It's probably

because I've had a long career in a corporate setting, but working hand in hand with other business services functions is the ticket. How do we work really effectively with IT? How do we deliver communications to all our people and stay completely lined up with what HR is trying to do? In a role like mine you're going to be more effective if you view things this way."

*"You're always looking at how effective the [new] person is going to be, not just at the experience and knowledge they have."*

Elizabeth Chambers, Freshfields

## **Market to your clients like they market to theirs**

If only most of legal was like this. But to make it so, Chambers' view is that it's down to the business services leaders themselves to change things.

"You have to be the person to educate the rest of the management team about the importance of [everything from] brand to client experience, delivering a clear proposition, winning business through excellent communications and so on. If you're not effective at playing that evangelical, educational role with your peers, you're never going to have the stature that you need to

shape the agenda or command investment.”

Fortunately Chambers has some useful tips for marketing heads who want to create change in their firms: demonstrate strategic thinking, become a measurement guru to bring hard facts to your marketing arguments, build lots of relationships across the business where you can show demonstrable, practical value, and be “functionally excellent”.

“One of the things a lot of law firm marketers should invest in is being functionally up to date. They should understand what the latest thinking is around digital marketing to consumers, for example, because even if they don't need to use it every day they need to be able to think about the lateral impact on our business and its possible impact on clients. You have to be current.”

This leads to a point that other marketing leaders can muse on if they want to demonstrate strategic thinking: market to your clients like they market to theirs. “Many of our biggest clients are international pharma, telecomms, retailers, banks and insurance companies. They expect digital. They expect to be communicated with in a highly personalised way, and in a way that recognises how time-poor they are.

“If you're in a bank and you see very professional marketing there, customer intelligence, large-scale data analysis and so on, you want your law firm to bring some of those things to you. You want to feel like [your firm is] operating at, or at least aspiring to, the same level of excellence.”

This is one of the big drivers towards hiring more specialists. Financial services businesses have to be great at understanding customer data, data protection and how to get the most from the latest marketing techniques, says Chambers. And, because digital marketing is measurable marketing, clients want you to measure their behaviours and respond

accordingly.

## Our digital (marketing) future

The web has transformed many business areas, marketing more than most, and leveraging digital communications is fundamental to Freshfields' ability to reach new markets and take market share from competitors.

But it's not just changed the way a firm markets its services. In line with Chambers' views on why marketing must work hand in hand with other business services areas, one place where marketing and HR collaborate is in graduate recruitment. Chambers says the firm's efforts on Facebook have made an “enormous difference”, but that traditional channels have also been freshened and updated with digital tools.

Another example is in working with KM. Freshfields has an “expansive” content-based approach to engaging clients, distributing the firm's latest thinking to them. This will increasingly be done digitally, says Chambers, which is “both appealing to clients in terms of where, how and when they want to consume media, and it allows us to get things out the door in a way that's timely, efficient and very measurable”.

In the near future, Chambers also wants to see the digital revolution have more effect inside the firm through more effective collaboration and knowledge sharing, and she says the corporate social networking system Yammer is used internally as part of this effort.

“Freshfields has projects that cut across practices and sectors and offices, and digital/social media-style tools can make a huge difference there. We're putting even more investment in the next year into communicating among ourselves internally. I'm not talking about having an intranet, I'm



talking about really innovative ways of getting information in front of the fee earners so they're better informed, have simple tools for cross-selling, for example, and can try new ways of getting this [knowledge-related] stuff in front of their own clients, often more informally." Chambers mentions that the firm is working on an app to enable better secure

networks such as LinkedIn, she says, refreshing in an age when some firms see LinkedIn contacts and activities as owned by the firm or, worse, something to be avoided altogether. While most client decision makers occupy a demographic a little outside the bracket most in touch with social media, she says, this is changing fast, and the firm has to adapt.

"This is the best possible way of staying in touch with your clients. When clients move, when they get promoted, when they have changes in their life, you'll find out about it and you can reach out – that's great client service. We're also trying to educate people about what it can do and what it can't do, and what some of the pitfalls are. We rely heavily on people having a good professional sense around confidentiality."

This is strategic marketing thinking – delivering marketing from every corner of the firm, seeing past the challenges of social media to its long-term benefits.

Chambers says she's now looking at making more of the firm's digital output interactive, to create more conversations and enable Freshfields content to evolve and be less static. There are inherent challenges in that, she says, such as around what constitutes legal advice and staying "robust and fully authoritative" while the conversations happen.

"Do I think that's going to happen overnight? No, But I think offering that facility and fostering the ability to form little communities on the back of our content is probably the next place we'll be going."

Let the Freshfields conversation begin... ●



*"Freshfields has projects that cut across practices and sectors and offices, and digital/social media-style tools can make a huge difference there."*

Elizabeth Chambers, Freshfields

knowledge sharing in the firm for just this purpose – something itself enabled by the rise in use of tablets and other mobile media consumption devices.

Freshfields is also embracing use of social



*Feature*

# From brand new to brand you

Brand is back in fashion in legal marketing – but it's not what it was. From rebrands and refreshes to the rise of the power of the personal brand, marketing tomorrow's law firm is a tougher game than ever. Are you ready? Polly Botsford reports





## **If possession is nine-tenths of the law, brand might be nine-tenths of success.**

**Why? According to global research company Acritas the combined revenue growth of the leading legal brands over a five-year period to 2011 outperformed the remainder of the global 100 by more than 50%.**

So far, so impressive. But there's more: star brands – firms whose brand reputation is proportionately much higher in relation to their size – reached revenue growth levels 80% higher than the rest. In a nutshell, if a firm has a strong brand it will punch above its weight – potentially far above its weight.

As competition bites and consolidation increases, gaining competitive advantage is high on partners' agendas (alongside overcapacity, a volatile economic outlook and new entrants to the legal market, to name just a few key issues). For firms with ambition, or simply those that want to survive, that means winning a marketing war.

Law firms recognise this, and to talk about brand is common nowadays, particularly in high-ranking legal businesses. And despite the downturn none of the firms spoken to for this article was cutting its marketing budget or marketing resource. In fact, marketers say the downturn has opened the door of the partners' meeting room – they now see the point, with more urgency.

Laura Shumiloff, group director of corporate communications and marketing at Norton Rose says: the downturn "has made our job easier. We have a stronger hand". The only marketing trend that shows a level of cost sensitivity is the lack of enthusiasm for outsourcing parts of marketing, such as to PR agencies, external publishers and so on (though

firms tell us this is more to do with quality control than cost).

Proof of the importance placed on brand and marketing also lies in the emergence of indices and other external measures, such as the Sharplegal Index compiled by Acritas. Sharplegal was only started in 2007 but it, like others such as Superbrands, have become part of the way firms benchmark themselves.

## **Getting the brand back together**

Budgets aren't limitless, even if they're not being cut, so it's a question of how to use those resources. Marketing strategy is about deciding on emphasis and priority – do firms want to focus on building a brand to find new markets, or do they want to strengthen relationship marketing with existing ones – or both?

Ince & Co's strategy is to focus on "making the most of our market share" says Jane Biddell, director of marketing there. She says the firm is "interested in developing our message rather than creating a new message", and says working on existing relationships is key for many reasons, such as the fact that clients often develop new business lines for which a firm may not have been considered.

But a fair number of the top firms have re-branded through the downturn to find a 'new them'. Allen & Overy embarked on a brand refresh in 2009, which meant getting to grips with what its brand meant to people internally and externally, what the firm wanted it to mean, and working out how to close the gap. As part of the research phase of the refresh, a list of A&O brand assets as perceived by clients was compiled, then benchmarked against what clients really wanted from a law firm through an interview process. Out of this gap analysis emerged a brand.

"It was about being bold, being an advanced

law firm. That underlies everything we do,” says Richard Grove, director of marketing, BD and communications at A&O.

Mishcon de Reya also looked at their brand in 2008 and undertook a four-month brand positioning exercise. Elliot Moss, director of business development at the firm, explains why: “What we aim for is that when you meet a Mishcon lawyer, you know what that means. [So] we talked to people inside the firm, to our clients, to the board. We put it all together and we came out with what Mishcon stands for. Then and only then can you work out what the external articulation of it is.

“For us, we wanted to convey the fact that 90% of our business is businesses, even though we were famous for the famous people we represented. So we churned it all up. What came out was our strapline: ‘It’s business. But it’s personal.’”

The current level of merger activity (Herbert Smith Freehills being a recent example) is likely to carry on pushing rebrands on the legal market.

Those marketers who emphasise the importance of brand argue that once you know what you really are, rather than what you think you are (thinking about your brand is a course in firm self-awareness), it’s easier to communicate it to the world.

The right range of platforms and channels should then present themselves. Tried and tested are seminars and training – both great ‘contact points’ with targeted clients. In the most recent Acritas survey, GCs said these two elements (along with referrals) were law firms’

most effective marketing tools.

As an example, Ince & Co runs a series of global seminars on specific sectors and has made them into regular, social and meaningful events. Biddell says it’s the contact that comes out of those that matters most.

These two platforms have developed quite considerably: becoming more targeted,



*“We talked to people inside the firm, our clients and the board [to find out] what Mishcon stands for. Only then can you work out the articulation of [the brand].”*

Elliot Moss, director of BD, Mishcon de Reya

with built-in longevity, often with a thought leadership piece to run alongside an event, or with accreditation.

Nabarro has been training clients’ GCs since 2009 – but not on technical points, as Clare Jones, BD and marketing director at Nabarro, explains. It’s coaching, behavioural skills training and networking for them and their teams. “It’s about their career ambitions and the challenges they face. GCs have a pivotal





role to play in a corporate, but they want to up their game. We are helping them achieve that.”

This year’s programme focuses on influence training, novel in itself. “It’s about them, not us. We want to ‘get’ their world,” says Jones.

### **Are you a thought leader?**

More risqué ideas involve advertising and sponsorship. Norton Rose put out an advertising campaign in Australia on billboards to and from airports, focusing on the firm’s enviable global reach. When Freshfields sponsored the 2012 London Olympics it broke a taboo, stepping on to ground where only household brands have trodden before.

But the biggest growth area is thought leadership, with most firms doing it or

planning to. A&O’s ‘50° east’ report, for example, is three dense but accessible, stylish publications based on interviews with 1,000 business leaders. The report received 250 pieces of press in 30 countries, generating 30,000 requests for copies.

Grove at A&O eulogises about thought leadership as a platform. “To be invited into a client’s boardroom you need to be able to talk about the business at a strategic level. You need to have something to say. That’s what thought leadership does. It is a talking point – as long as it is genuine insight. It also plays to lawyers’ strengths, who are clever and articulate people.”

Though it can be expensive, Grove argues it’s money well spent, because the reports have a long shelf life of potentially one or two years (‘50° east’ was launched back in 2011). And the best ideas for thought-leadership work is often

what's about you – SJ Berwin sits its BD people within practice areas to get that proximity and familiarity, for example.

You don't always need to come up with the PR, though. Sometimes the firm is the story. This can play badly, but it can also deliver good PR. Norton Rose has discovered that its merger mania (the imminent integration with US firm Fulbright & Jaworski will be its fifth in three and a half years) has been a story that could work for the firm – it did, after all, make it into the Financial Times. As Shumiloff explains, “thanks to the hard work of our team on this and a strong rapport with the board, we got some fantastic coverage”.

## The rise and power of the personal brand

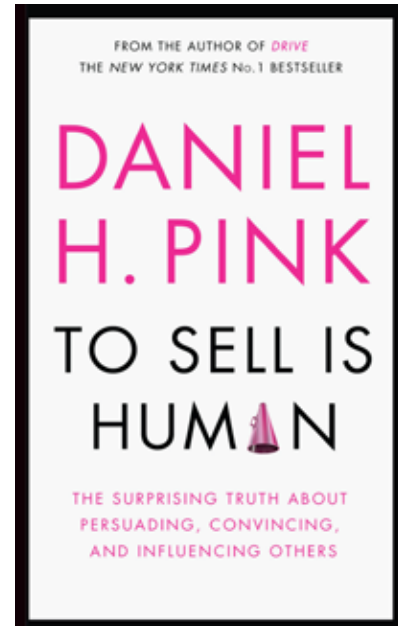
But there's a new rising legal marketing star – the lawyers themselves.

Getting everyone in a firm to think about how they present to the outside world, on social media and the real world, is highly reminiscent of a new buzz phrase on the sales and marketing circuit: ‘non-sales selling’. Coined by the American Dan Pink, author of the bestselling book *To Sell Is Human*, it's a process whereby every human being at some level engages, influences and persuades others into certain behaviours all the time – we are all selling, and selling ourselves.

This is a very useful proposition for law firms, because one of the stumbling blocks for the legal marketer is trying to convert often introspective and private lawyers into visible and visual brand ambassadors. The ‘non-sales selling’ idea means that lawyers can be more confident that they can sell themselves and the firm ‘as they are’, and don't have to become a salesman to do it.

This is arguably even more important in an age of the personalised brand, as Jones at

Nabarro explains (though she points out this is her opinion, rather than her firm's strategy): “Personal marketing is absolutely vital in all of this. If you look around, the personal brand is where it is going. LinkedIn membership has gone from three to eleven million in the UK in the last year, for example. We are all becoming



our own brand, and that cannot be more true than in professional services. In legal services, we talk about the trusted adviser, and this is how we want to be seen.”

Jones has identified a level of intensity social media brings that can be useful to a firm. “This is the age of the individual. Firms have avoided a star culture because they fear such people will quickly move on – but you can't help that. Firms need to take more risks with individuals.”

Whether it's about big brand or personal brands, law firms usually create a unique culture, whether deliberately or not, which gives them an inherent advantage – if they can turn it into something usable. With marketing's help, the best firms are fostering that culture and demonstrating its value to the world. ●



Data is how the marketing function can increase its own credibility within a firm (blind them with science!) and there are some natural points at which information is gathered during the marketing pipeline. Here are some of the facts that matter

- **Monitor the brand** Acritas also suggests regular brand health checks because brands become out of date with their surroundings: “brands are constantly changing status, particularly in a highly competitive marketplace. It is critical to keep a regular check on a firm’s brand health as well as that of its competitors and to review its marketing strategy in the light of emerging trends, competitor activity and the firm’s offering”



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## Business development executive – FFW

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## Graphic designer – FFW

*London* Working in a creative team of three (with the digital & brand marketing manager and online marketing assistant) you will take a lead role in the firm's creative output. Excellent graphic design and software skills required.

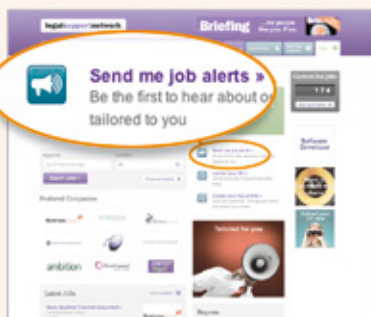
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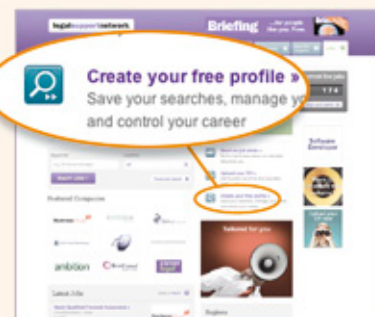
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# Does your firm get brand?

**How important are brand and marketing in a more competitive world? And do law firms' leaders understand their importance?**

Rupert White finds out what law firm marketing chiefs think about the importance of the marketing mix as part of the LSN Top 100 Director Research



**Brand and marketing are more important than ever as firms try to steal market share and lever open the newest markets. But do those most senior at the best firms appreciate this is really the case?**

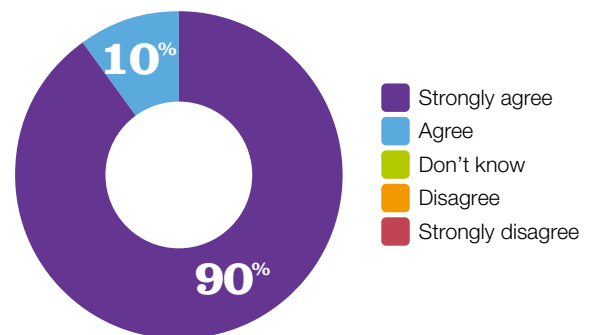
For our latest top 100 director research on the top 100 law firms' marketing heads, sponsored by recruitment firm **Ambition**, we asked people to agree or disagree with the statement: 'As competition for top work increases, differentiation moves towards value not capability, and client decision making shifts away from the GC, a firm's marketing efforts and its brand are now more important than they've ever been.'

The results were overwhelmingly in agreement – though a fair few respondents argued that GCs aren't losing their power, and in some cases are becoming more central in the legal purchasing process.

Across the top 100 marketing chiefs (see the end of this article for our sample stats), 47% strongly agreed with the proposal that brand

and marketing are more important than ever, 34% agreed and only 15% answered 'don't know/it depends'. Just two people disagreed with the statement.

*Brand is more important than it's ever been (top 25 marketing directors)*



Brand is vital to cracking and dominating markets. One magic circle marketing head says that their firm's leaders "see this 'brand more important' point in different terms: they view it as more important because we are trying to

grow in new markets and to know and have stronger brand and reputation in them”.

And it's in the top 25 firms that agreement was strongest – there wasn't a single person who answered outside the 'strongly agree/ agree' categories.

Not many respondents took issue with our statement about the decision-making centrality of the GC – though those who did were firm in their opinions. “Our law firm's leaders don't believe that ultimate decision making is moving away from the GC, in most cases. I suspect the GCs don't agree with that premise, either!” says one top 10 marketing head.

But more than one respondent pointed to a change in the firm-client relationship having an effect on how firms must sell themselves. One marketing head at a top 50 firm agrees that GCs are now part of the buying process, not the whole of it.

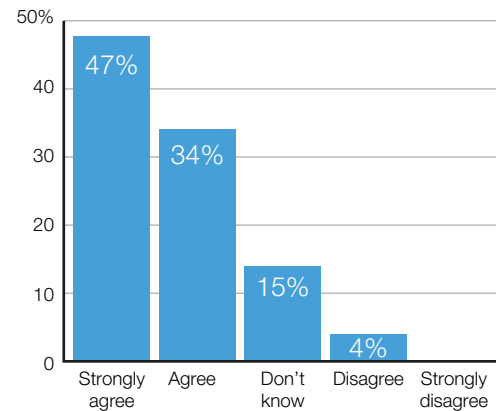
“There is strong anecdotal evidence that individuals other than the GC are involved in the procurement of legal services. It follows that relying on a single, strong relationship is no longer enough. A firm must ensure its brand is recognised by those decision makers, and that marketing initiatives are designed to develop relationships with the wider 'C-suite' and other key stakeholders,” he says.

This leads some to argue that law firms need more contacts across more areas within clients.

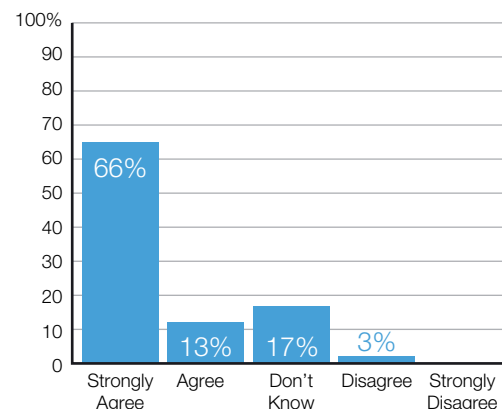
“There's a recognition that relationships need to be institutionalised and spread broadly across many people in a client's organisation,” says one top 50 law firm marketing head.

“We also appreciate the need to find different ways to help our clients beyond day-to-day legal advice, and we differentiate by leveraging our insight, network and innovative ideas in our sectors and within our client relationships to do that.”

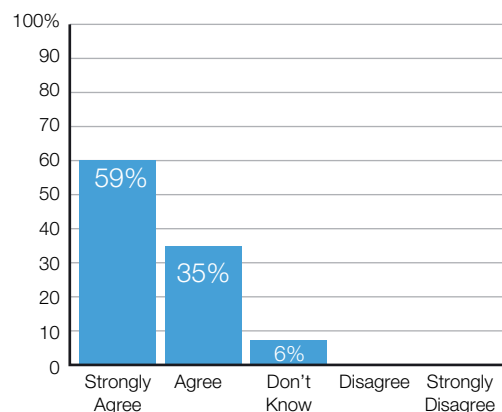
Brand is more important than it's ever been (top 100 law firm marketing directors)



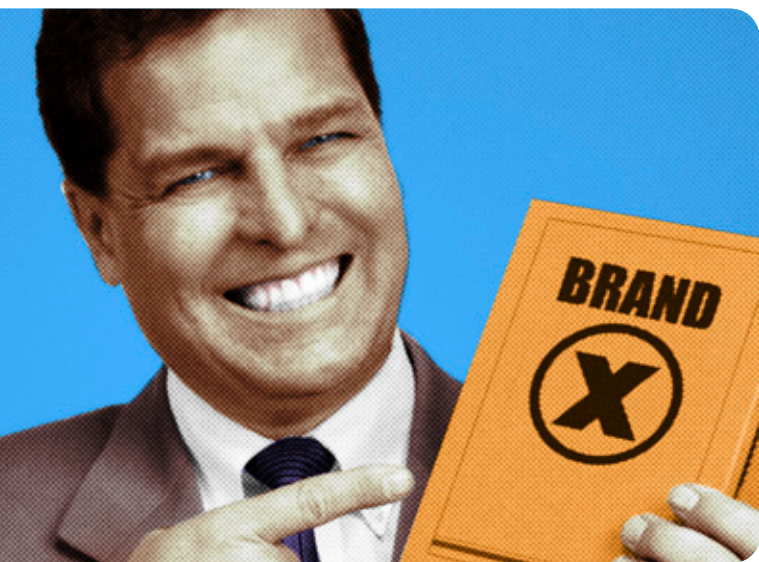
Brand is more important than it's ever been (top 50 law firm marketing directors)



Brand is more important than it's ever been (bottom 50 law firm marketing directors)







This demand for more value springs out of our research. Many respondents said value now rules the roost, and that client decision makers have much more sophisticated demands.

"I'm not sure if I agree that client decision making has moved away from GCs, it is certainly however the case that GCs are much more sophisticated today than in the past and their demands of their law firms have become more exacting," says another top 50 marketing chief, for example. But capability is still key, argues another: "Value without capability is not value. A brand must not only stand for something – it must deliver."

It's interesting to note that much further down the top 100, things are a little different. Senior lawyers don't seem to be quite so connected with marketing, and still think they sell purely on the capability of lawyers.

Some examples of this include: "Decision makers do not appreciate this, no," and "No, it is still assumed that capability is king. Partners in many cases still believe that their ability alone will win them the work."

And the most amusing answer we got: "I have seen it said that 'lawyers are to marketing what Julian Clary is to cage-fighting'. I hope that is no longer true, if it ever was. Successful

senior decision makers in law firms recognise the need for good quality marketing practices alongside and part of the firm's broader offering of expert legal services."

But this view isn't all from the bottom of the top 100. One magic circle chief says that "in general there is a long way to go for many firms" to appreciate the importance of brand and marketing.

It's a view shared across the responses, but often not at anyone's home firm. In other words, law firm leaders in general 'don't get marketing', but they do wherever the respondent is.

Andrea Williams, Ambition's managing director, says of the research results: "More firms are investing in the future and hiring high-quality marketing directors. Some firms have even been brave enough to bring in new blood from outside the industry.

"As to client relationships, partners have conflicting opinions on brand value versus capability value, but we are seeing a growing consensus about the value of sharing client relationships across a business to take full advantage of the clients' business potential.

"And being able to measure the success of marketing campaigns is an increasingly attractive element of the marketing function for partners, and highly effective marketing functions are totally aware of this."

Maybe lawyers are finally getting marketing – all that's left is the residue of when they didn't, the echo of a more conservative time. Or perhaps they don't yet 'get it', but marketing chiefs have lowered their expectations... ●

*Sample: 48 responses across the 100, with twice as many responses coming from the top 50 as the bottom 50 firms.*

*Find the list of the top 100 marketing/BD directors at*

[www.lsn.co.uk/marketing/top-100](http://www.lsn.co.uk/marketing/top-100)

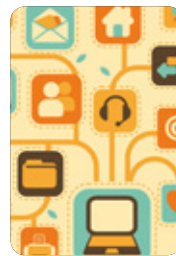


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**Joe Przybyla** of Thomson Reuters' BD software team on getting more out of the relationships your people already have

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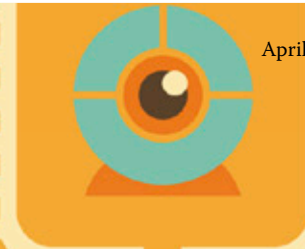


**Tim Skipper** at marketing recruiter **Totum Partners** looks at the big marketing and BD trends, especially hiring

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*Briefing Industry Interview*

# Better connected

Briefing talks to Joe Przybyla of Thomson Reuters' business development software team about how law firms can get more useful revenue-generating information out of the relationships their people already have

**For international and global firms, winning business and marketing the firm have to be global concerns – not easy in a firm with thousands of people and millions of potential connections.**

Law firms think they win all their business because of the strength of their relationships, but there's a lot more to it than that, says Joe Przybyla of Thomson Reuters Elite. "How does a firm realise who they know in the marketplace? You can have a fairly good idea of work that was done by your lawyers in Hong Kong, say, and you might assume that those lawyers are the ones who have all the best relationships in Hong Kong. However, there may be other people within the firm that have relationships in Hong Kong – you just don't know it. That's going to be the differentiator for many firms: to have access to the necessary information to go after a newer market.

"You need to be able to gain this insight without effort, to identify the critical information that goes beyond the 'relationship', towards who has the relationship and how strong they are."

It's about understanding the network of relationships that already exist among people in a firm that usually remain hidden, or invisible amidst a lot of other information. And this should work as seamlessly as possible with a firm's customer relationship management system, says Przybyla – it's simply not effective enough to be really competitive if you think of those two areas as separate.

Delivering that data mix in a usable way isn't easy, but when it happens you can build marketing behaviours that specifically support BD activities.

For example, using a combination of an enterprise relationship system like ContactNet (CN) and a CRM (Thomson Reuters Elite makes Contact Manager, but CN can be integrated with other CRMs) a firm can analyse the strength of relationships with potential clients, understand a lot about what those targets are interested in, host very tailored



*"You need to be able to gain this insight without effort, to identify the critical information that goes beyond the 'relationship', towards who has the relationship and how strong they are."*

Joe Przybyla, Thomson Reuters Elite

events or deliver highly targeted content to them, and track and measure their reactions and interest.

Many firms claim to be able to do this, but mingling the knowledge of people at potential clients the firm knows best (latent ties to the firm) and customer knowledge (the potential for usefulness to the client) can only be



achieved with the right tools, says Przybyla. "In doing that you've leveraged actual information around the real relationships within the firm." It's also easier to relate which activities turned into what business, because you're not just using CRM data, he says. It's the benefit, in a way, of a 'mash up' of BD and marketing tools.

The inherent inability to always completely prove which activity turned into revenue might be something that keeps marketing a little further down the value chain in some firms, says Przybyla. But using the right tools and combining relationship data with customer information improves this, and can deliver hard evidence for marketing's success.

And as Elizabeth Chambers, chief marketing and BD officer at Freshfields, says in our main interview in this issue of Briefing, law firms need more people who 'get' analytics, who want to create more data out of marketing to deliver much more value to the firm's internal clients and to create better, more successful marketing and BD activities.

More data behind marketing might prove to be a disruptive force in legal, because it has a disruptive influence on the autonomy of lawyering. To make corporate-style marketing and BD work in law firms, information needs to be shared, which is fundamentally disruptive in some law firm environments.

"It can force transparency within the firm, which is very uncomfortable. Some lawyers believe that their relationships are theirs, while the firm believes otherwise. So you have this struggle to move to a more sophisticated type of marketing in legal right now, where you need that data in order to do anything."

Firms sometimes struggle to get the data

the business needs out of lawyers – but using tools that understand who knows whom as well as who knows most about what in a firm can bypass this problem.

The real trick, says Przybyla, is then to get all this information in front of people in a coherent, usable way. "You need to see every thing a lead is doing, and I think we are probably developing those tools faster than the

*"It's about being able to put as much relevant information in front of the lawyers and BD and marketing, because they need to consume that data, analyse it and then execute on it."*

Joe Przybyla, Thomson Reuters Elite

competition is right now. It's about being able to put as much relevant information in front of the lawyers and BD and marketing, because they need to consume that data, analyse it and then execute on it.

"So just like in your personal world, such as using Flipbook or Twitter to aggregate your data, you're getting information from a wide range of channels but you only see or hear what's relevant to you. Our approach is no different, and that's where legal is going."

Find out more about  
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*Industry Analysis*

# Rise of the specialists



**The world's gone specialist, it seems. Tim Skipper at marketing and BD expert recruitment firm Totum Partners looks at 2013's marketing and business development trends**

**It's now clear that client need is one of the key drivers impacting law firm marketing and BD. Finding new business and winning places on panels remains vital, but there is growing recognition that more is required if firms are to meet a host of sophisticated client requirements.**

Key items clients require of their firms now include:

- Offering alternative pricing arrangements – fixed, blended rates, and so on
- Project managing more effectively
- Understanding clients' commercial drivers (including appreciation of P&L and so on)
- Managing relationships proactively
- Fully understanding the client's sector, and work with the client as a business adviser

These are interrelated – you can't offer innovative pricing if you've no clue how to project manage or improve efficiencies. But the last point is perhaps the critical starting

point for meeting these needs. If you don't understand your client's sector, it's very difficult to manage the relationship effectively.

## **External pressures and the rise of sector-specialists**

Many firms have responded to this by implementing a more sector-focused internal structure that sits alongside the practice groups. As a result we're also seeing the emergence of many more industry-focused, sector-specific marketing roles.

We've recently worked on several roles specifically dedicated to 'clients and markets,' a clear indication that to focus on delivering a client relationship programme you cannot sit in isolation from a firm's focus on more effective sector-based marketing initiatives. Many firms are now looking for candidates



with experience in certain sectors rather than practice groups.

A good example of this is in energy/infrastructure, which often sees a role in a firm dedicated to this sector as well as the project finance practice group in a combined role. When searching for candidates, sector knowledge is a big plus in someone's CV.

These sector-specific roles are very appealing to our candidates, offering them the opportunity to be the eyes and ears of their market, to drive the agenda and adopt the role of specialist adviser. The rewards can be appealing too: specialist knowledge tends to command higher salaries. We're also seeing continued need for generalists, particularly in smaller firms that do not have the budget or capacity for specialist teams, but we think these trends are significant enough to make developing some specialist knowledge, even in the remit of a broad role, a key advantage.

This view is reinforced by the fact that more firms are also employing specialists across specific skill-sets, for example, in project management, key account management or pricing. These roles may still be relatively new, and sit aside from the development of the sector-focused positions, but it is another trend that demonstrates the extent to which the world of legal marketing and BD is becoming more specialist.

## Internal pressures and the return of brand

Legal marketing is evolving against the backdrop of growing consolidation and competition. UK firms are embroiled in something of a merger frenzy, while boutique firms are constantly launching. Most recently this has been characterised by the launch of boutique firm Signature Litigation by two

partners (and several associates) from Hogan Lovells. More are in the offing.

With pressure from all angles, firms are realising that they need to have a compelling brand proposition, to maintain profile and position in a tightening market.

In pre-recession years we would have recruited marketing specialists who focused on advertising and events for practice groups, as well as PR and internal communications. Such marketing activities would not have been particularly targeted, and ROI would have been difficult to measure. Perhaps not surprisingly, such roles disappeared when the market deteriorated.

Instead, the downturn brought with it a rising interest in BD/bid management roles – people who could target new areas of business and also manage the increasing complexity of competitive tendering. The chief objective became maintaining top line revenue and employing marketing/BD people who made a tangible difference in a tougher market.

These roles are still in demand, but there's a rebalancing occurring as classic marketing skills – profile building, thought leadership, brand development, PR, media relations, digital marketing and so on – make a comeback. This is reinforced by the measurability of such marketing activities.

In this environment, there may be a sense of the marketing/BD division splitting entirely into different skills, sectors, and specialisms. But ultimately, the objectives of all such roles remain the same: to add value to client relationships and give lawyers the tools to understand competitors and clients more effectively.

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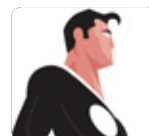
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