



LMASE February Newsletter

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President's Message - 2009

Dear LMASE Members -

Spring has come early to the South! We hope you're enjoying this week's warm weather and brighter mornings.

LMASE's THREE THEMES FOR 2009

As a reminder, the Board established that our goals for 2009 would be to focus on: 1) management of the chapter; 2) communications; and, 3) membership/InterAction.

With regards to chapter management, we are excited to host our City Group Chairs at the first-ever LMASE Leadership Conference in Atlanta, February 26 and 27. We are pleased that each City Group - along with a few groups interested in becoming formal City Groups - will have representation at this conference. The focus of this event will be to equip your City Group Chairs with the leadership skills and in-depth information needed to most effectively manage our chapter, ultimately providing you with the best programming and membership benefits to date.

With regards to communications, this now-monthly chapter e-newsletter will be distributed the first week of the month, starting in March, to provide you with more timely information on the activities across LMASE. Another new initiative for 2009 you will hear more about are the "business meetings" to open each of your City Group meetings, all in an effort to keep you informed of chapter-wide and local LMASE governance. This ground breaking, yet incredibly simple idea, was brainstormed by Lee Watts and Tom Helm, the LMASE Board members responsible for helping all the City Groups run consistently and smoothly.

With regards to membership/InterAction, look for a rollout soon!

ANNOUNCING THE LMASE MINI-CONFERENCES

In last month's President's newsletter, we let you know that the Board voted to cancel this year's LMASE Conference in September. We are proud to announce that plans are underway for the first-ever LMASE Mini-Conferences, which will take place in three cities across the Southeast this fall. Instead of asking you to pay travel and hotel costs to reach one location for the annual conference, this year we are going to bring the conference to you! We are planning one-day, mini-conferences in Florida, North Carolina and Texas. (To be sure, knowing that we had this new concept in mind made the tough decision to cancel the annual conference easier.) Also, don't forget that we will still host our annual SELMA Awards and our annual meeting via a Webinar. More information will follow soon!

MARKETING DURING THE RECESSION

One of the most serious concerns our members have expressed over the last few months has been how to market their firms during these tough times. I'll close today with an inspirational note on this topic. As the current leaders of the LMASE, we can confirm that the dialogue among, and abilities of, our members is revealing very creative and effective responses that will change our industry and benefit us all once the storm calms. This includes revolutionary discussions on making business development departments profit centers that generate enough new legal business to pay for their own operations - and then receiving credit for even greater returns. No layoffs needed there! Further, we are seeing marketing department executives joining community boards like their corporate C-suite counterparts - to themselves develop business - and an array of other tactics that focus on improving the bottom line. All in all, our members are focused, seizing new responsibilities and striving to have an even greater impact!

We welcome your ideas and are here to serve you.

Dave

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Get Connected, LMA Connect

The LMA Listserv has gone dark. And, as this door to communicate via old technology closes, a new one opens with new features, possibilities and strategies for you to stay connected to your fellow LMA colleagues. Now is the time to break into LMA's new technology frontier and sign up for LMA Connect.

To access LMA Connect, simply log into the LMA Website (<https://www.legalmarketing.org/>) and click LMA Connect in the navigation menu. Once you arrive to the LMA Connect page, key in your username and password (the same ones you use to log in to the LMA website) and get started.

Once you have logged in, you will be directed to the "EGroups Home" page. Here you will see the various legal marketing discussions/topics. Click on any one of them to see various posts for that particular discussion. For additional materials, click on the "File Number" which will direct you to the Library filled with various presentations and white papers submitted by the various authors.

Also, on the "EGroups Home" page, there is a green navigation tool bar on the left with various options. You can post a message, search for methods, view your profile (where you can even add a picture of yourself), review messages you have posted, subscribe to the various egroups, add information to your signature line and read LMA Connect's code of conduct.

So what are you waiting for. Sign up and get Connected!

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Legal Marketing Association Southeastern Chapter City Group Events (Past and Present)

February 12 New Orleans/Baton Rouge City Group

The New Frontier of Advertising: A Review of the New Rules
Speaker: Richard Lemmler, Ethics Counsel for the Louisiana State Bar Association

February 12 Orlando City Group

Establishing a Client Feedback Program that Delivers Quantifiable Value
Speaker: Laura Meherg

February 17 Tampa

The Power of Video in Marketing.
Speakers: Ren Scott and Heidi Kempf from Ren Scott Productions

February 18 Birmingham

Cutting Through the Clutter

February 19 Atlanta

In-House Counsel Q&A

February 19 Dallas

Best of Both: What Companies and Law Firms Do Well and What Law Firms Could Do Better
Speaker: Mary Jane Mudd from Full Tilt Communications

February 24 South Florida

Serendipity Isn't a Strategy; Don't Let It Guide Your Career.
Speakers: Linda Hazelton, M.B.A., is the President of Hazelton Marketing & Management
Roberta Montafia, past president LMA,
Moderator: Jayne Navarre, Lawgravity

February 25 Nashville

Advertising Update: The Rules of Professional Conduct as Applied to Websites, Blogs and Facebook
Speaker: Kim Spann, Disciplinary Counsel, Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility

February 26 Austin

State Bar of Texas Resources Roundtable

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23rd Annual International LMA Conference

The early-bird registration deadline of March 4, 2009 is fast approaching! Since LMASE will not be holding its annual conference this year, please support and attend "Change...Now What?" the 23rd Annual International LMA Conference which will be held in National Harbor, Maryland in April. For more information about the conference, please visit <http://www.legalmarketing.org/events/2009>.

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LMASE Member Profile: Susan C. Freeman

Susan C. Freeman is the Director of Client Services at Breazeale Sachse & Wilson and is based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. With over 18 years of experience in developing new business and training others to do the same, Susan carries out many activities to attract new business, retain the current client base and expand on existing client relationships.

Q: What is a "typical" day for you?

Susan: In my role, a typical day might include a dual purpose -- interviewing my clients (the attorneys) and theirs. My main concern on a daily basis, is to host face-to-face interactions with each attorney in the firm in order to map out his own business development plan. I start with asking questions that uncover his communication style, level of comfort with relationship building, willingness and ability to learn new approaches to bringing in business and his overall understanding of how the corporate world works. I must keep in mind, that most attorneys in the firm have never experience the vast array of differences between a law firm and a corporation. An attorney who is successful at developing new business knows he must not "pitch" but instead, "catch." I strongly and constantly stress the fact that listening and uncovering new information about that which is most important to the client, is the first, and probably most critical step in developing relationships that bring in new business.

I work with the attorneys in charting their course for action whether by relationship selling or reputation selling, whether by true business development or by traditional marketing. We create a vision and then a written plan of action that we implement throughout the year. I must be realistic in my assessment of each attorney's skill set, willingness and ability to partner with a client -- not vend.

Another aspect of a typical day would include the all important survey of a client's satisfaction with specifically, an attorney and generally, the firm. I establish my own face-to-face (if at all possible) exchange with a firm client to learn more about that client's opinion of what the firm does well, what the firm does not do so well, what the firm does not do at all and why. This client feedback initiative has opened many doors to others in the firm. Many times, I find that a client has more open, honest and direct with me, a non-attorney, a business person, than with the attorney working on his files. Most clients are not attorneys and thus, cannot truly measure what "great legal work" is. However, they are business people and are, keen on what great client service is -- they must measure their own customer service levels within their marketplace. Because I am a non-attorney, they are less reluctant to share the good, the bad and the ugly. Frankly, in the legal world, there is no bad news...only good news and opportunities for improvement. I feel that if a client is willing to share a concern with you in advance of departure, you're fortunate to have been given an opportunity to improve service. Most days, I train attorneys to assess the legal and business needs of prospects and clients and then I help them execute, by applying what they have learned.

In one sentence, describe your job.

Susan: It is my job to ensure attorneys meet with their clients to listen, learn and offer viable solutions -- transitioning the firm from a practice of law to a business of law.

Why and/or how did you get into legal marketing?

Susan: A little over six years ago, I moved from Boston back home to Baton Rouge. After a number of fruitful informational interviews with key business leaders in town, I realized that relationship selling was not yet widely practiced. With their help, I learned more about the landscape in Baton Rouge business community. With little opportunity in the city for that type of post, I accepted a traditional marketing position at a local law firm.

What do you consider your most important achievement in legal marketing?

Susan: Through establishing rapport and honing my relationship sales training skills, I have achieved a level of trust with the attorneys and the staff within the firm, such that they all come to me for information and for action, from small yet significant matters, to more daunting endeavors. They know I will politely and respectfully push back where I am the expert and inversely, I will swing into action on those issues they know best. I also take pride in the fact that we, as one firm, have overcome the barrier of being territorial and our attorneys now work to grow and protect the clients' best interests. Many have been very successful in expanding client relationships by bringing new work to others outside their own practice area, broadening and deepening existing client relationships.

In your job, what is your biggest challenge?

Susan: My greatest challenge is really an opportunity to grow and serve, rather than any kind of burden. That challenge would definitely be ensuring that I, and the attorneys, manage our attention -- not only our time. As one firm, we must have focus and discipline to appropriately afford the time, money and consideration necessary to discover that which is most important to our prospects and clients. This is the first step in bringing in new business. I always remind them that we must offer clients two things: great legal work (the price of admission) and excellent client service (that which differentiates).

What do you like most about your job?

Susan: The thing I like most would be the people with whom I work -- the attorneys, and for whom I work -- their clients. I have to reach deep inside to be sure I communicate in a way that is meaningful to each individual in order to relate with that person, strengthening connections, building trust and enhancing relationships. I work with some fantastic, brilliant legal minds, which makes my job fun, exciting, and at the end of the day, rewarding in every way.

What books do you recommend to fellow LMA colleagues?

Susan: Creating Rainmakers: The Manager's Guide to Training Professionals to Attract New Clients (Jun 23, 2006) by Ford Harding and The Lawyer's Field Guide to Effective Business Development by Bill Flannery (published by the ABA).

If a college student were to ask you for advice about a legal marketing career, what would you say?

Susan: "Listen, learn and say thank you! Then, listen some more!"

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Member White Paper

In an effort to share best practices in legal marketing, this newsletter will feature "white papers." Submissions of original content are welcome from LMASE Members, with a word count of 500 to 700 words. Our "white paper," this month is by Nicole David, Director of Events for the Baton Rouge Area Chamber, and President of Project Office Party (POP), an online resource designed specifically for office parties, client events and the people who plan them. Nicole can be reached at 225-614-5913 or www.projectofficeparty.com.

EVENTINTERVENTION: Taking Par out of Your Next Party

An EVENTINTERVENTION is the act of interrupting the way we have always done things in relation to events to discover innovative party ideas and develop new ideas needed to alter the course of ineffective entertaining. Below are a few simple ideas for taking the PAR out of your next party.

Host fewer parties with bigger impact

Most organizations recognize the importance of showing employees and clients they are valued. In tough economic times, organizations may not be able to celebrate every birthday, holiday, or milestone. Many have less money, fewer employees, and everyone is tasked to the max. Hosting larger bi-monthly or quarterly events is a smart approach to keeping morale up while conserving company resources and maintaining productivity.

Shake it up

When looking for new event ideas, use all of your resources. Ask people you know about some of the most memorable parties they've attended and what made them so special. Get ideas from television shows, magazines, books, or art. Take all of these ideas, shake them up and see what floats to the surface. It's fun to pull different elements from a variety of events to create a unique and memorable occasion.

Change of scenery

A change of scenery can breathe new life into tired party and event traditions. Explore new locations in your office. Host a party in the reception area rather than the conference room, or on a roof top rather than in the break room. You can also create an interesting flow and encourage interaction between departments if you disperse the fun. Serve drinks in the accounting department, hors d'oeuvres in marketing, and desserts in the copy room.

Set the mood

To make a party seem less like an office party, do what you can to change the mood from work to play. Lose the shopping mall starkness of fluorescent overhead lights and add lamps or candles to create a warm atmosphere. Also, remember to infuse your event space with music that complements the party vibe.

The most important mood to remember is your own. As the party planner, you set the mood for the event. If you appear stressed out or uninterested in being a guest at the party, others will notice and you run the risk of reducing the fun factor. Ask for volunteers to help you get everything done to alleviate overload on event day.

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