



Of Counsel

Crafting a Smart, Scalable Marketing Department for Mid-Sized Law Firms

December 1, 2025

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When it comes to organizing a marketing department, mid-sized and smaller law firms often find themselves in a unique spot. They may not have the sprawling teams or massive budgets of the global giants, but that doesn't mean they can't run a top-notch, effective marketing operation. In fact, with a bit of strategic planning and a focus on the essentials, smaller firms can build smart, scalable marketing teams that punch well above their weight.

Here are some key considerations and tips to make that happen:

Start with strategy, not job titles.

Before hiring, ask what your firm's growth goals are. Do you need to deepen client relationships? Launch a new practice? Expand into a new region? Your strategy should shape the structure. If your firm wants to focus on thought leadership, that might mean hiring someone with a background in content creation or PR. If data and analytics are the focus, you'll need someone who can handle CRM systems and analyze marketing ROI.

Build a team of utility players.

In a smaller department, generalists often provide more value than specialists. Look for professionals who can toggle between writing website copy, running a social media campaign, and helping a partner prepare for a

pitch. A few smart, versatile marketers can accomplish a lot with the right tools.

Don't underestimate project management.

You can have all the right ideas, but without timelines and accountability, execution falls apart. Someone on your team—whether in-house or a consultant—should have strong project management skills to keep marketing campaigns on track, from firm events to directory submissions.

Outsource when it makes sense.

Your in-house team can't (and shouldn't) do it all. Consider outsourcing design, SEO, PR, or even video production. This allows your internal team to focus on strategy, relationship-building, and coordination, while tapping outside experts for implementation.

Invest in the right technology.

A good CRM system, email marketing tools, and analytics dashboards can go a long way in helping a lean team do more with less. But don't buy tech just to have it—buy it to solve specific problems. Make sure your people are trained to use it, too.

Clarify roles with partners.

Many frustrations between partners and marketing staff arise from misaligned expectations. Set clear boundaries and responsibilities. Let partners know what the marketing team can take on—and what requires their input. A simple onboarding memo or lunch-and-learn session can go a long way.

Celebrate small wins.

In a smaller firm, even modest marketing victories—like a newsletter that generates a client call, or a social post that goes viral—should be celebrated. Sharing successes builds confidence in the marketing team and reinforces the value of your efforts. Ultimately, your firm's marketing department doesn't need to be massive to be mighty. With strategic thinking, the right mix of in-house talent and outsourced support, and clear communication, you can build a department that is respected by the partnership, aligned with firm goals, and capable of delivering real results.

And fewer layers mean fewer meetings. That's a win in anyone's book.

—Deborah B. Farone