From the Great Jakes Blog

# Building a culture of marketing

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People often ask us, "Who's your best type of client?" In the early days of our company, the answer would have been easy: "The ones with the biggest budgets."

However, in our old age, we've learned a few lessons. And chief among those lessons is that firms with a strong culture of marketing are our best clients. They are most appreciative of the websites we create for them (not to mention the advice we provide them).

## Why does culture matter?

It matters because a good website requires lots of good content. And without a culture to facilitate the creation of good content, your website will end up feeling like an empty shell – no matter how pretty the design is.

The websites that we're building today are so much more than online brochures. Today's websites essentially are publishing platforms for attorney-generated thought-leadership content (like articles, presentations and blogs). Unfortunately, it isn't easy to consistently create quality content for your website. And it certainly doesn't happen spontaneously. Successful firms weave content creation into their firm culture.

## How do you build a culture of marketing?

I really can't say. However, I can tell you that I've observed common characteristics among firms with a strong and successful culture of marketing. Here are a few:

- **High level buy-in.** To build a culture of marketing, a firm's leadership needs to wholeheartedly endorse marketing. One clear indicator of this is if the CMO or marketing director serves on the executive committee or is otherwise a part of the firm's leadership.

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▸ **Professional marketing leadership.** Legal marketing is a profession that requires years to learn and master. If your marketing director was recently the office manager (or a paralegal), chances are that your firm isn't really dedicated to building a culture of marketing.

▸ **Incentives for marketing.** It takes time for marketing efforts to yield clients. Thus, in order to nurture a culture of marketing, it's important that people are incentivized to perform the incremental work of marketing (like writing and speaking). Credits towards billable hours work well.

▸ **A decent budget.** Money certainly isn't everything. However, firms with a successful culture of marketing are generally willing to spend the money to do it right.

Has your firm built a strong culture of marketing? If so, I'd love to learn how. Please leave a comment.