

BLAND, POMP,  
STALEY, STOLID  
& FRUMP

ONE COMMERCE PLAZA  
MIDTOWN  
U.S.A.

*Proposal from  
Sally J. Schmidt:*

*First, Make  
Partners  
Accountable*

Since the lawyers at Bland, Pomp have not done marketing planning to any great extent in the past, the most important—and most difficult—aspect will be simply getting it done. Therefore, I suggest they proceed with the limited (i.e., internally generated) information available to develop a marketing action plan for 1991 which sets out specific, tactical action items which the lawyers can implement and, presumably, evaluate. In addition, I recommend that the firm establish a method of accountability for marketing efforts.

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General Eisenhower once noted, "Planning is everything; plans are nothing." While he may have exaggerated the distinction—I believe it is extremely important to have plans in writing—the planning process alone is invaluable, and includes a situation analysis, identification of key issues, and a written plan of action. These sections are outlined below.

### I. SITUATION ANALYSIS OF BLAND, POMP

#### A. STRENGTHS

Fifth-largest firm in region  
Washington, D.C., presence

Good leverage  
Relatively high revenue generated per lawyer

Outstanding lawyers  
Reputation of firm  
Outstanding clientele

Collegiality (based on reasonable discrepancies in partner earnings; lockstep-based partner compensation system)

#### B. WEAKNESSES

Reliance on the telecommunications industry

Lockstep system/bonus pool does not clearly communicate what gets rewarded

Reliance on out-of-town referrals for business

Overall revenue flat

Corporate department is on the decline

Awkward size of the firm (perception on behalf of the lawyers)

Reliance on three partners for the majority of work

#### C. OPPORTUNITIES

Washington, D.C., expansion

Smaller, locally owned businesses and entrepreneurs

Parochial nature of Midwest

#### D. THREATS

Large national firms opening offices in Midtown: potential reduction in lawyer referrals; threat of losing good rainmakers and lawyers to national firms establishing offices here

Slowdown in the telecommunications industry

Local companies being purchased by out-of-town entities

Reliance on Mr. Countryclub for referrals; his age (63)

### II. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

The three key issues, which are reflected in the marketing goals outlined below, seem to be:

1) Retaining existing clients, referrals, and lawyers, given the threat of national law firms.

2) Building the corporate practice.

3) Generating a greater level of activity and visibility for the other lawyers in the firm.

*(continued on page 33)*

(continued from page 31)

### III. 1991 MARKETING PLAN OF BLAND, POMP

**GOAL 1:** To ensure that valuable lawyers—and clients—remain with the firm.

**Rationale:** The danger that the national law firms present to the firm is not limited to the possible loss of referrals; it includes a potential threat to the firm's talented legal staff as well as its existing clients. Any effective law firm marketing strategy will begin with a focus on people and existing clients.

#### Strategies/Activities:

1. Conduct client satisfaction interviews with the top 25 clients of the firm, to ensure their satisfaction with the firm's services, uncover potential areas of need, and assess their perceptions of the national law firms.

2. Develop a plan to transition existing clients from good rainmakers to good client "binders," both to ensure proper service and to free up the attorneys' time for business development (e.g., Mr. Cable and Mr. Countryclub).

3. Create a special task force to study the firm's partner compensation system to be certain that the partners view the system as fair and that expectations are understood.

4. Organize an all-lawyer retreat, to emphasize the firm's positive attributes, communicate its plans for the future, and solicit the input of present and potential partners regarding ways to improve.

**GOAL 2:** To develop additional corporate clients.

**Rationale:** The firm needs to develop a greater base of corporate clients, both for ongoing work in the corporate area and to replace the existing clients being taken over or acquired by out-of-town entities. Owners of smaller, local companies or entrepreneurs will want a local firm, will need sophisticated counsel, and eventually will require a full range of services. The key is to identify businesses with the potential to grow.

#### Strategies/Activities:

1. Create a marketing group for small businesses, including lawyers with experience and interest in working with small businesses and entrepreneurs, and representing each appropriate practice area, including litigation, corporate, tax, trusts and estates, venture capital, etc.

2. Make assignments within the group for activity and visibility in appropriate organizations or groups, for example, Midtown Entrepreneurs Association and Midtown

**GOAL 3:** To expand the firm's telecommunications practice.

**Rationale:** Although the industry in general is in a slowdown, the firm has the potential to expand this practice because of its small number of existing clients, its significant experience in the industry, and its Washington, D.C., capabilities.

#### Strategies/Activities:

1. Have the accounting department develop a "cross-selling chart"

*To expand the corporate client base, identify local businesses with the potential to grow. These companies will need sophisticated, local counsel.*

Chamber of Commerce Small Business Section.

3. Identify a topic of concern to entrepreneurs and small business owners with which the firm has good experience (e.g., venture capital) and plan a series of small meetings (roundtable discussions) for entrepreneurs and small business owners (maximum of 12 attendees per meeting).

4. Do two follow-up mailings to this targeted group on developments—legal or general business—which are of interest or concern to them.

5. Identify a bank, a venture capital firm, and an accounting firm with strong reputations and experience working with small businesses and entrepreneurs. Set up informal meetings with key people from each entity to discuss each other's services, areas of mutual interest, or potential referrals.

on the three major telecommunications clients. This would show the percentage of each client's revenue that is derived from each different practice area (e.g., tax, lobbying, FCC, general corporate). With this information Mr. Cable can develop a plan for cross-selling other corporate services to these local telecommunications clients, specifically by introducing lawyers from other specialty areas to his clients.

2. Develop a plan to promote Mr. Telco in the telecommunications industry, including his becoming active in the appropriate association of the telecommunications industry, speaking before appropriate groups, and writing for appropriate publications.

**GOAL 4:** To gain greater visibility for the firm and to position the firm, and its lawyers, as good "community citizens."