MPF FEATURED RESOURCE
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BRINGING SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE INTO
THE BUSINESS OF LAW

John Remsen, Jr.
President, TheRemsenGroup

ALA’s 2014 Annual Conference & Exposition
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
May 20, 2014 • 10:15am – 11:45am ET
John Remsen, Jr. is widely recognized as one of the country's leading authorities on law firm leadership, management, marketing and business development. After serving as in-house marketing director at two major law firms, John formed TheRemsenGroup, a consulting firm that works exclusively with law firms to help them develop and implement long-term strategic objectives to improve cohesiveness, performance and profitability. Since 1997, he has worked with over 260 law firms and thousands of lawyers. Most of his clients are mid-size commercial law firms, ranging in size from 15 to 200 lawyers.

John is a frequent speaker and author on law firm leadership and marketing topics. He has spoken at national and regional conferences of the Legal Marketing Association, the Association of Legal Administrators, American Bar Association and numerous state and local bar associations. His articles have appeared in such well-respected publications as ABA Journal, Asian Lawyer, Florida Bar News, For the Defense, Law Practice Management, Law Practice Today, Lawyers Weekly, Legal Management, Marketing for Lawyers, Marketing the Law Firm, Managing Partner, New York Law Journal, Rainmaker's Review and Wisconsin Lawyer.

In the late 1990's, John served on the national Board of Directors of the Legal Marketing Association (LMA) and was President of its Southeastern chapter for three years. Under his leadership, the chapter was recognized as LMA's Chapter of the Year in 2001. In addition, he was Executive Editor of Strategies, LMA’s monthly newsletter. He also served on The Florida Bar’s Standing Committee on Advertising for six years and was the only non-lawyer appointed to serve on its 2004 Advertising Task Force.

In 2001, TheRemsenGroup launched The Managing Partner Forum, the nation's richest source of information and the most highly acclaimed conference series for leaders of mid-size law firms. More than 825 managing partners from 700 law firms in 41 states have participated in 22 leadership conferences. Designed exclusively for law firm managing partners, the MPF has expanded from its original geographic base in Florida to present programs in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Philadelphia, St. Louis and San Diego.

In 2007, John was appointed to serve as a core member of the ABA’s Law Practice Management Section. In 2008, he was appointed to serve on the ABA’s Education Board. Since then, he has contributed numerous articles to various ABA publications and has been a featured speaker at ABA meetings and conferences throughout the country.

In 2013, John was elected as a Fellow of the prestigious College of Law Practice Management in recognition of his twenty five years of demonstrated expertise in law firm leadership and management. Founded in 1994, the College honors those who “inspire excellence and innovation in law practice management.” Membership is by invitation only and includes just 200 individuals.

A native of West Palm Beach, Florida, John holds an MBA degree from The University of Virginia (1985) and a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Florida (1980). Prior to attending graduate school, John was Executive Director of The Florida Council of 100, an organization consisting of Florida’s top CEOs and business leaders.
Bringing Sustained Excellence into
THE BUSINESS OF LAW

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JOHN REMSEN, JR.
- President, TheRemsenGroup
- President & CEO, Managing Partner Forum
- Previous:
  - Gunster, Porter Wright
- More than 280 law firms since 1997
- Speaker:
  - American Bar Association, Association of Legal Administrators,
    Legal Marketing Association, MPF Annual Conference
- Education:
  - MBA – University of Virginia
  - BSBA – University of Florida

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION TECHNOLOGY
- Instantaneous
- Anonymous
- Great benchmarking data
- Results will be distributed after the conference
TEST QUESTION:
Which Movie Title Best Describes How Your Firm’s Owners Are Responding to the Changes in the Marketplace for Legal Services?

1. A Perfect World
2. Grumpy Old Men
3. Lost in Space
4. The Hangover: Part 2
5. Gone with the Wind

How Many Lawyers at Your Law Firm?

1. < 20 lawyers
2. 20 – 50 lawyers
3. 51–100 lawyers
4. 101 – 250 lawyers
5. > 250 lawyers
LONG-TERM TRENDS

- The Economy Is Globalizing
- Technology Is Expanding/Improving at Breakneck Speed
- Clients Are More Demanding
- Competition Is Much More Aggressive
- BigLaw Is Getting Bigger
- Disruptors Will Continue to Proliferate
- Record Level of “Merger & Acquisition” Activity
- Successful Law Firms Must Be Run More Like Businesses

ROGERS ADOPTION / INNOVATION CURVE

Where Do You Believe that Most Lawyers Are on the Adoption Curve?

1. Innovators
2. Early Adopters
3. Early Majority
4. Late Majority
5. Laggards
Lawyer Personalities

- Highly skeptical
- Hate change
- Risk averse
- Love autonomy
- Low resilience
- High sense of urgency

Source: Dr. Larry Richard – LawyerBrain, LLC
IT’S TIME TO WAKE UP & SMELL THE COFFEE

The greatest obstacle to success in the new economy isn’t competition, client price pressure, technology, commoditization, or globalization.

It’s our own reluctance to embrace proven business principles because we are deluded into thinking that law cannot be both a profession and a business.

THE BUSINESS OF LAW
- Finance and Accounting
- Information Technology
- Marketing and Business Development
- Human Resources
- Leadership and Governance
- Strategic Planning and Implementation
- Firm Owners Who Get It

LONG-TERM INVESTMENT
- Clients
- People
- Firm
KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL CHANGE

- Be Flexible. Take It Where You Can Get It
- Focus on Just Three Things
- Achieve Genuine Buy-in and Support from Leadership
- Monitor and Establish Accountability
- Measure and Reward Desired Outcomes
- Start with Pilot Projects
- Trumpet Success Far and Wide
- Know that Mistakes are Deal-Killers

Vision Among Owners
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

Firm Size, including Succession
Practice Mix
Client Mix
Geographic Footprint
Vision Among Owners
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Firm Size, including Succession
Practice Mix
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1. One
2. Two
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Strong, Passionate Leadership
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.
Managing Partner / CEO
Firm Administrator / COO
Departments and practice groups
Administrative team
Training and development
Job descriptions
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Job descriptions:
1. One
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Does Your Firm Have Job Descriptions for its Key Leadership Positions?
1. Yes, across the board
2. Yes, but spotty
3. Yes, but for staff positions only
4. No
5. Other
**Strategic Plan & Implementation**

Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Keep it simple, stupid.
- Just three major goals
- Monitoring and accountability
- Rewards and recognition

Does Your Firm Have a Firm-wide Strategic Plan?

1. Yes, recently developed
2. Yes, but more than three years ago
3. No
4. Work in progress
5. Not sure
If Yes, What Grade Would You Give Your Firm for Implementation?

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. D
5. F
6. Incomplete

Streamlined Decision-Making

Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Managing partner / CEO
- Executive committee
- Functional committees and task forces
- Capable of making decisions and moving on
- Trusted and competent administrative team
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Internal Communication
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Up, down, across and diagonally
- Frequent and broadcast in different ways
- Regularly scheduled, well-run meetings
- Client teams and practice groups
- Firm retreats and social events
- Face-to-face is always best
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Firm-First Culture
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.
Solid Firm citizenship
Positive, go-the-extra mile attitudes
Adherence to firm policies and procedures
Sharing and teamwork
Departments and sections
Client teams and industry practice groups
Leadership by example
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- Leadership by example

1. One
2. Two
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Great Client Service
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.
- Genuine care for clients and their success
- Accessibility and responsiveness
- Knowledge of business and industry
- Client site visits
- Client feedback program
- Invite clients into the firm
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Does Your Firm Have a Formal, Ongoing Client Feedback Program?
1. Yes
2. Hit or Miss
3. No
4. Other
Efficient Billing and Collections
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Time management training
- Billing strategies and techniques
- Aggressive collections practices
- Retainers, late fees and credit cards
- Good clients pay their bills

Good clients pay their bills
Selective Client Intake
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Firm-wide policies and procedures, including engagement letter
- Intake committee
- Strategic conflicts of interest
- Retainers, late fees and credit cards
- Background and credit checks

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5%
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11%
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1. One
2. Two
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Associate Training and Development
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Recruiting and retention program
- Mentoring and feedback
- Formal training and development
- Access to clients
- Track to partnership
- Two-tiered partnership structures

1. One
2. Two
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5. Five
6. Six
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Marketing & Business Development
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

Client feedback programs
Client teams and industry practice groups
Individual marketing plans
Social media and search engine optimization
Marketing staff

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
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Information Technology
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Time and billing practices
- Case management systems
- Shared forms and documents library
- Knowledge and client relationship management
- Laptops, iPads and iPhones
- Cyber security

1. One
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Aligned Compensation System
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

Look beyond the numbers
One size fits all?
Shared (or sunset) origination credit
Rewards for non-financial contributions

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four
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Bringing Sustained Excellence into the Business of Law
ALA 2014 Annual Conference – May 20, 2014

**Tackle Difficult Issues**
Grade your firm on a 1-10 scale, with 10 as the highest score.

- Chronic under-performance
- Bullying and bad behavior
- Retiring senior partners
- Incompatible practice areas

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**Does Your Firm Have a Two-Tiered Partnership Structure?**

1. Yes
2. Moving in that direction
3. No
4. Other

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KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL CHANGE

- Be Flexible. Take It Where You Can Get It
- Focus on Just Three Things
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TIPS FOR FIRM ADMINISTRATORS

- Be a catalyst for change
- Do your homework
- Ask smart questions
- Show precedent
- Use facts and statistics
- Circulate articles and white papers
- Pick your battles very carefully

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ManagingPartnerForum.org
- AmericanBar.org
- DavidMaister.com
- CorcoranLawBizBlog.com
- LawyerBrainBlog.com (Larry Richard)
- LegalMarketing.org (LMA)
Your opinion matters!
Please take a moment now to evaluate this session.