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Law firm branding: Is it time to consider modernizing your firm's brand?

By Marissa Luznar

Client expectations are shifting, technologies are evolving, and new competitors are always emerging. Your brand should reflect these continuous shifts to the industry in a way that celebrates your firm's foundation and evolution. After years of the same, static messaging it might be time to ask – is a rebrand right for our firm?

What actually is a law firm's brand? A brand is so much more than your firm's logo, color scheme and website. It's the embodiment of your company's identity. Your brand communicates your firm's unique value proposition, culture, capabilities, work style and so much more. For this reason, a rebrand is not something that should be taken lightly. There is a great deal of work involved, it will challenge senior leadership to think critically about the firm's future and it typically requires a monetary investment. However, the upside of rebranding, if done correctly, can be just as significant as the effort. A rebrand is not only an opportunity to revisit and reimagine your firm's external messaging, but it's also an opportunity to look internally at your firm's vision, culture and core values.

When is it time for a rebrand? Maybe you're looking to stand out from your competitors, maybe you're shifting into a new practice area or launching a new business initiative – whatever the plans are for your law firm, any rebrand strategy should begin with the firm's business goals in mind. Usually there is some combination of reasons behind a rebrand, but whatever your "why" may be, it's critical to keep it front and center throughout the rebranding process.

Reasons to rebrand:

- Succession of leadership
- A merger or acquisition
- A need or desire to accelerate growth in a new market
- Current branding is no longer accurate
- Failure to differentiate yourself from the competition

Reasons NOT to rebrand:

- To cover up or distract from a problem without addressing the issue
- You want a better website



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- A change to the head of marketing
- You read an article that said companies should update their brand every 3-5 years
- You don't like your logo or brand colors

Can a law firm embrace the future while still honoring the past? Yes! And it's usually recommended. If a law firm has been around for any period of time, it likely has built some level of recognition and (hopefully) trust with its clients and prospects. A fear of alienating current clients or turning your back on this hard-earned reputation is what stops many law firms from embracing the benefits of a rebrand, but the truth is, an evolving law firm

should embrace this opportunity to modernize their brand rather than risk being viewed as stagnant.

History equals experience, and all clients want to work with an attorney and a firm that is experienced. Don't let the name fool you, a rebrand is not typically a reinvention of your organization. A successful rebrand honors a firm's established legacy while focusing on the new or improved services that are offered to your clients. By finding that balance between past, present, and future, you help to ensure the brand's longevity.

Is it time to consider modernizing your firm's brand? The answer to this question is based entirely on your firm's circumstances and business goals, but don't let the idea of rebranding become so daunting that you stray away from it. A rebrand is an opportunity to elevate current and prospective clients' perceptions while introducing your firm to new audiences. If you do choose to refresh your law firm's branding, lean into the opportunity. Develop a well-crafted marketing campaign that tells your firm's story. Remember, a new brand is an opportunity to reintroduce your firm to clients, prospects and colleagues. So, what would you do with a second chance to make a first impression? ■

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