

French Business Law firms: which communication strategy may be considered?

Strategy has become mandatory for French Business Law firms. How to build a communication strategy? On which base?

Focus on a shifting profession ...

The Business Lawyer profession is currently changing and Law firms are facing new challenges.

Here are the four main ones:

The first challenge, of course, concerns the growing competition between Foreign Law firms that recently opened in France but also between French practices spreading after splitting.

On top of that the increasing number of newcomers operating on the verge of Law such as certified public accountants, wealth advisors and private bankers has also enhanced Law firms competition.

The second challenge addresses the professionalization of in-house lawyers which has partly desecrated the profession.

The third challenge facing lawyers is the wave of new technologies that have deeply swayed working patterns. Lawyers need to be open-minded and adjust to an era of unprecedented technological revolutions. Their survival depends on it.

The last main challenge for French lawyers is their coming into the "Business World" involving Communication and Marketing tools which have turned to be critical to their Business growth and survival.

The Lawyer profession is a regulated activity which has to avoid Commercial tools such as Advertising (prohibited by the French Code of Ethics). But the tough economic conditions met by lawyers nowadays will anyway force them to work around the constraints of this Code of Ethics.

This evolution spurs law firms to rethink their Business development and their durability, as any other businesses, yet in respect to this Code of Ethics.

In this framework, Communication has become a decisive must-have involving key questions such as “how to build a communication strategy?” and “On which base?”

Yet, in a mobile sector such as the Business lawyer’s, it is critical to find the anchoring point grounding the communication strategy.

From Corporate Identity to Communication

For law firms as for any businesses, the anchoring point is Corporate Identity.

What does Corporate Identity mean and more specifically for practices?

Shall we reduce a Law firm identity to its activities, know-hows, sales, growth rate and market shares?

Or reduce it to the pool of men and women of the firm? Or to their vision of the profession, their management method, their philosophy, their culture, their ethics?

Identity is what makes a firm special. This is why it is significant to lead a deep reflection to define its main elements. Identity precedes the image and the

relevance of a reflection over it, offers, if it's fully explored and considered, many advantages for Law firms.

Regarding Human Resources, Identity unifies. It helps retaining Partners and Associates and attracting new talents because in a collective Life Project which would suit each actor's expectations, Identity is a critical leverage to strengthen corporate bonding, to enhance trust and therefore growth.

In respect to Business Development, Identity provides a balance strength for Law firms, because in spite of the diversity of its actors, messages, events and changes affecting it, Identity lies in its core.

Also, it secures credibility and durability to Law firms which, unfortunately, is not a trademark of French Business Law firms.

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ABOUT SACHINKA AND ANNE BASSI

Sachinka is a company specialized in Strategy, Human Resources and Communication dedicated to regulated professions, especially lawyers.

Anne Bassi has worked as a Tax lawyer for nine years before creating Sachinka.

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