

# LAW PRACTICE **Front** LINES

INTELLIGENCE, INSIGHTS & TACTICS FOR YOUR LAW PRACTICE

MARKETING MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY FINANCE



## WHAT REALLY WORKS?

All the right moves. Not all firms can align their marketing with their practice areas. Some gallop to the fore by branding their culture and style instead. How? With a message that conveys their personality—and impeccable execution. Floaty pens help, too. Lots and lots of floaty pens.

Turn the page to learn the strategy behind Goldberg Simpson's aggressive and quirky campaign.

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# What REALLY

## Branding a Firm's Progressive Personality

**W**hen your firm and your lawyers are creative and dynamic but the practice mix is fluid and



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eclectic, what value proposition do you sell? Your overall style and innovative approach is the key—but the message and execution must be consistent *and* thorough.

**WHO** Goldberg Simpson, a 30-lawyer firm in Louisville, KY.

**BACKGROUND** Goldberg Simpson is a midsize law firm by the standards of the Louisville market. It competes aggressively with the city's large firms—although it isn't really built along a traditional full-service model. This firm is more like a collection of opportunistic boutiques: a group of small, efficiently run, largely independent practices brought together under one roof by some dynamic leaders.

Sure, the firm has the typical range of business-oriented legal services, including sophisticated corporate and litigation practices. But it also closes 3,000 residential real estate deals per year; has an insurance-defense practice down the hall from a catastrophic personal injury plaintiff's practice; and handles high-dollar divorces and high-profile adoptions. It also represents wealthy families in trust

and estate matters, while defending headline-grabbing criminal cases. It's like a restaurant that serves lobster and chicken nuggets ... and sushi and grits. The mix makes no logical sense—until you realize that the synergy is not between the practice areas, but the lawyers themselves. They're all hard-charging, Type-A personalities. In each area, they either lead the pack or they don't bother practicing there.

In addition, management views the firm as a business and, in professional services, the best businesses have the best people. So Goldberg Simpson puts equal emphasis on attracting *and* retaining top professionals, which means a strong focus on building a defined culture—and having fun. They're high-energy, but not high-strung. Loud-mouth jerks or raging egos are quickly shown the door.

**MARKETING GOALS** The firm wanted a campaign to increase its visibility and name recognition, one that would differentiate it by conveying its strengths and thereby drive new business and improve lateral hiring. But how do you brand a firm as eclectic as this one? Clearly you can't focus on a specific practice area—but you *can*

**GOLDBERG** <sup>SM</sup>  
  
**SIMPSON** <sub>P.S.A.</sub>  
A Law Firm that Really Moves. <sup>SM</sup>

# Works

## LAW FIRM MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

market the culture and personality.

We wanted to show the business community that Goldberg Simpson is a young, vibrant, very cool business firm, a smart choice for executives seeking sophisticated services provided in an agile, personal, cost-effective manner. For laterals, we wanted to showcase the firm's unique culture so that top lawyers feeling frustrated working in stuffy firms would see Goldberg Simpson as the alternative. We wanted to convey the firm's sense of excitement, that it's creative and progressive—a firm on the move, where the most interesting and innovative things are happening.

The tag line to convey the firm's overall style and innovative, fast-paced approach became clear. *Goldberg Simpson is: "A law firm that really moves."*

**IMPLEMENTATION** We started by revising the firm's bland logo to a bold and colorful one conveying the "moves" theme. And we also created an additional half-dozen versions with cutout silhouettes of things that move—including racehorses, jet planes, arrows, motorcycles and even running lawyers. To create interest and reinforce the brand, every lawyer's pack of business cards alternates with different versions of the logo.

We developed advertisements that, among other images, showed a suited lawyer as a smiling jockey on a race-

horse or wearing race helmets by the water-cooler. These ads are supported by a series of running-lawyer billboards along the main highways heading downtown, helping to promote the firm's relocation to a hot suburban corridor with the giant caption "We moved so you wouldn't have to."

To have additional fun with the "moves" theme, we created floaty pens with the image of a running lawyer that were so hot we've had to reorder. We changed the firm's Web site to

while doing things that "really move"—dribbling basketballs, tossing volleyballs, carrying field hockey sticks, riding bicycles and more. Every time you turn a corner at lunchtime, you'll see another happy sports team dribble, jump, hit, toss or play something.

**RESULTS** We hadn't fully launched the campaign before the results began to show. The local newspapers wrote a number of articles, and the firm attracted two more best-of-class partners who

admitted the ads and billboards brought the firm to their attention and persuaded them to join.

There's a palpable excitement coursing through the firm. With Goldberg



show the smiling managing partner running, while a small runner moves in the corner. Interior pages repeat the horse and helmet ads, and retouched headshots place the lawyers in front of horse races and running tracks.

To further generate conversation, in the summer we glued Goldberg Simpson logos to hollow cicada shells that clung to downtown trees. It was a rare once-every-17-years opportunity.

Having a "moves" theme offers the opportunity to further stir up the campaign to create a splash that the city will talk about. So to visibly and memorably connect the firm to "movement," we are hiring small groups of high school sports teams to walk around downtown Louisville wearing Goldberg Simpson T-shirts

Simpson on the town's collective lips, all the firm's employees see how much greener the grass is here. Now that the firm owns a clear theme, ongoing executions are easy and all the firm's members are looking for new "moves" ideas. One idea that was a natural for them was to become a primary sponsor of both the local triathlon and the Moscow Ballet's Louisville tour—we even created a ballerina logo for the promotional materials, as well as print ad materials showing dancing lawyers. High-quality resumes are pouring in, as new people seek to jump on board the speeding Goldberg Simpson train. **LP**

Ross Fishman ([www.rossfishmanmarketing.com](http://www.rossfishmanmarketing.com)) specializes in marketing training and creating differentiation programs for law firms worldwide.