



Branding for Lawyers

***Ignore it at
your peril***

In the 1950s when these guys wanted to get divorced, they asked their mate if they knew of a 'decent' solicitor

Professional services branding did not exist and Word of mouth (WOM) referrals were everything!



But in 2012, when these guys want a solicitor, they search the Internet **and professional services branding is the future**



And it's not just the new generations that will force change to the operating and marketing practices of UK solicitors.....

- Consolidation is going to happen, like it or not. 80% of all law firms in the NW employ less than 10 staff (source NWDA)
- The larger practices, multinational players will start dominating the marketplace sooner than you think (source NWDA)
- Solicitors purchasing accident referrals could soon be banned, bringing many practices to their knees (source Legal Services Board)
- Many others are setting out to create major competition within the law marketplacewatch Tesco, Sainsbury's & M&S

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Where am I? > Home > Business > Law

From **The Times**

May 20, 2010

Law firms take up the supermarket challenge

Frances Gibb, Alex Spence

 1 COMMENT |  RECOMMEND? (6)

Solicitors are taking on supermarkets and banks in a High Street war for customers with a "superbrand" network of law firms in England and Wales.

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Cooke's 'lifelong ambition' is brokerage for legal services

Corporate lawyer is mastermind behind firm which will help clients cut solicitors' bills

BY MICHAEL FAHY

Manchester-based corporate lawyer Darryl Cooke, whose decision to leave Hill Dickinson was announced on March 19, is to set up a new business which will play law firms off against one another to deliver cheaper rates for clients.

Crain's understands that Cooke is being backed by a couple of prominent local entrepreneurs to launch a "super" law firm run by senior lawyers which will operate like a brokerage.

Its aim will be to ensure that business owners get a fairer deal when instructing on transactions — particularly merger and acquisitions work.

The firm will offer a traditional equity structure and several lawyers operating at senior levels within larger Manchester firms have held talks about joining.

Cooke was understood to be the highest-paid lawyer at Hill Dickinson after signing a three-year deal in 2007 when he joined from DLA Piper to build the corporate and commercial team at the Manchester office. His deal with the firm was not due to expire until November, but he is currently working a notice period and will leave at the end of July.

He is believed to have become



Darryl Cooke is exiting early from a three-year deal at law firm Hill Dickinson to embark on a new venture to shake up the legal services market

the level of profits received by the firm's equity partners.

Accounts filed last month show that Hill Dickinson's fee income for the year to April 30, 2009 increased by 12 per cent, but the level of profit per equity partner dropped 6 per cent to £294,000.

A person familiar with the situation told *Crain's* that Cooke's new business will be aimed at

'The time for change in the legal profession is upon us. People who can move faster and offer better services will be the winners'

TONY WILSON, KLARIUS

chief executive, and to control the process with the law firm from whom it commissions projects. It also intends to offer services other than corporate law, including the commissioning of litigation and other legal services.

Lifelong ambition

When it announced Cooke's departure, Hill Dickinson said in a statement that he was leaving "to pursue a lifelong ambition".

The firm's managing partner, Peter Jackson, said: "We understand that Darryl has certain ambitions yet to be fulfilled and which cannot be achieved at Hill Dickinson. We are confident that we can continue to build our corporate presence following Darryl's departure. We wish him every success in his new venture."

It declined to provide any additional comment.

When contacted by *Crain's* last week, Cooke said: "I have enjoyed my time at Hill Dickinson and they've come a long way in Manchester over the last few years, but this is too good an opportunity to miss."

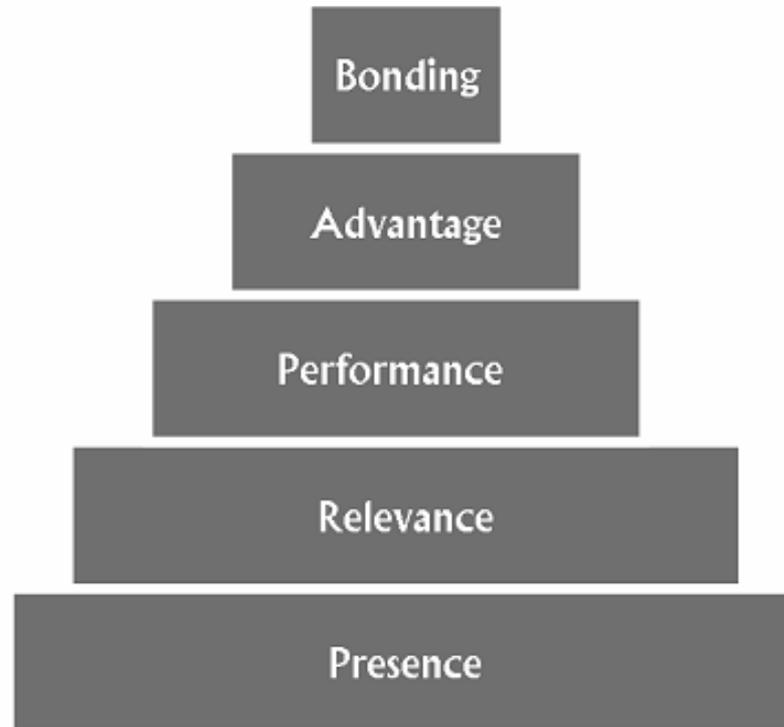
Tony Wilson, the entrepreneur behind automotive parts firm Klarius Group who has been advised by Cooke on several transactions, said he was not one of the entrepreneurs involved in funding the new business, but wished Cooke "every success".

Wilson said: "I think the time for change in the legal profession is upon us. The people who can move faster and offer better services for clients will be the winners."

But before we look at some branding basics , I'd like to share with you some research I've been carrying out on the current brand building some of you are doing

- Web sites are great for explaining what your brand does... but too many solicitor's sites use flash which means many potential clients will not access your web presence
- Many solicitors are paying a lot of money for sponsored links but not providing good location maps or contact information
- Too many lawyers are using web aggregators indiscriminately

So If we agree it is now really key for solicitors to address the branding issue, what are its components and how can move the process forward.



Components of the brand pyramid
Modelled after Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

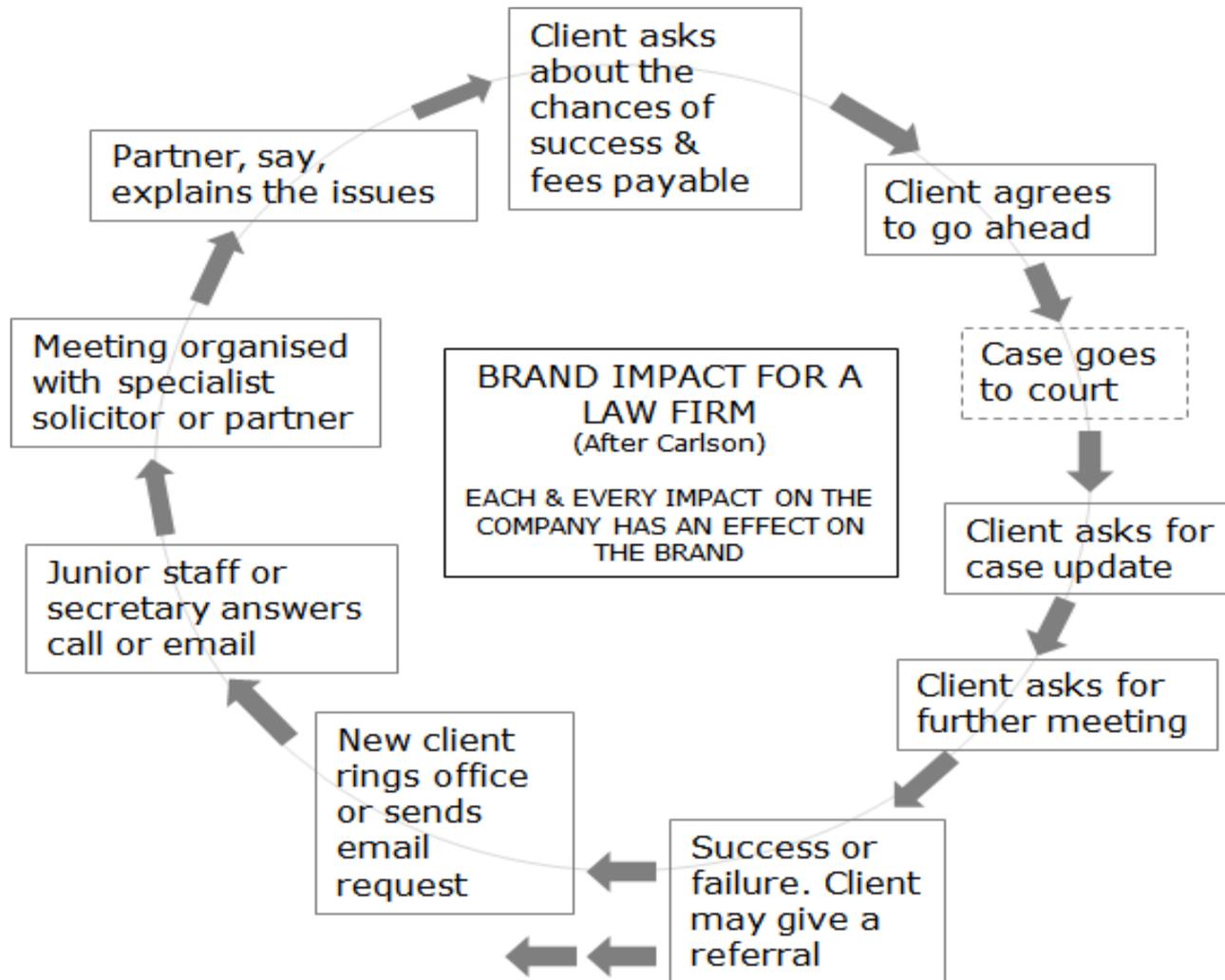
And let us consider too how Professional Services Marketing (PSM) differs from consumer product marketing of chocolate, say



PSM has 7 major differences from the marketing of chocolate bars

1. Client purchases are generally intangible, e.g. a conveyance on a house. The client may never see the conveyance form as they will be kept as security by the mortgagor, usually a bank or building society.
2. Client relationships are similarly intangible
3. The service may be based on the reputation of one person such as *hot shot* lawyer, Nick Freeman, the highly recognised solicitor for North West England celebrity speeding cases.
4. With PSM, it's generally more difficult to compare the quality of similar services unless you are talking a 'commodity' such as conveyances on new houses.
6. The professional services buyer generally cannot return the service unlike a faulty product such as a kettle.
7. There are three extra marketing components to PSM
Process; People; Physical evidence (an office, say)

And although reputation is a truly key component of PSM branding, it isn't the total answer...People & Process matter too



In essence, building a brand helps customers ***shorten their decision-making process***, by creating a perceived knowledge of what they are going to buy, before they buy it. Most people, for example don't think long and hard before buying a Mars bar!

Or put another way, brands offer a greater sense of control and certainty.

So do you think that your clients have greater sense of control and certainty when they buy into you?..... I suspect they don't

So how should we create and use these brand components and marketing tools to stop us from going down the plughole?

- Marketing has to be taken seriously, from the top down. A workable marketing plan needs a vision and objectives. Strategies and tactics are created to meet those objectives
- Don't forget internal marketing either. If your staff aren't happy they will not speak highly of your practice.
- Remember Carlson's moments of truth – everything counts
- Consider your web presence. When researching this project, we found 9 out 10 websites woeful indeed
- Consider your blogging and social media marketing (SMM) capabilities. If they're not great, you need to do something
- A major aspect of blogging & SMM is Thought Leadership, now a key brand component. You cannot expect future clients to *know* that you are clever. You need to prove it

And finally, you've got to react quickly before its too late.
as Philip Clarke and Tesco don't take prisoners!



TESCO

The image shows the Tesco logo in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a vertical gradient from red at the bottom to orange at the top. Below each letter is a dark blue, shadow-like shape that tapers at the ends, giving the logo a three-dimensional appearance. The logo is set against a plain white background.

A photograph of a classroom with several students raising their hands. The background is a dark chalkboard. The text 'Any Questions?' is overlaid in a large, white, handwritten font. Below it, in a smaller white font, is the contact information for Mike.

Any Questions?

please contact Mike on 01204 375500
if you any queries whatsoever



Creative
We are Purepages
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Affordable

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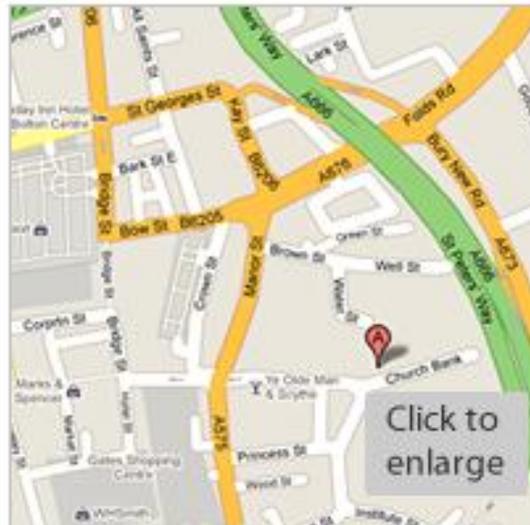
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