

## All I Really Need to Know about Law Library Marketing I Learned Watching Commercials During the Super Bowl

No, this is not an article about networking the general counsel, managing partner, chief judge, or the dean with football stories at the coffee maker. It's an article about applying the sophisticated marketing techniques used in the glossiest and most elaborate television commercials to market your law library.

Why? Because the Super Bowl audience, including this sports fan, remembers the exact details of these targeted, quick, polished, and costly commercials long after they forget the football game. Law librarians can apply these sophisticated marketing techniques and spend significantly less money on their law library marketing efforts by targeting law library marketing messages to specific market segments and by keeping the messages short and smart.

### Target a Specific Market

Generalized law library marketing efforts sometimes miss their mark. A senior partner, legal administrator, general counsel, chief judge, or tenured professor is not going to respond to the same pitch as a summer associate, law secretary, or evening law student. Other fee-earners and the other internal professionals in a firm or corporate legal department respond to completely different messages about the law library. Identify the audience and sell a distinct library service packaged for their unique needs.

Highly experienced fast-paced senior partners need rainmaking research services. Litigators want everything vetted and reduced to the salient points 15 minutes ago and the judge is waiting. Pressured novice associates need practice-area-specific research products at their desktops. Paralegals, law clerks, and students want basic and relevant research materials. The non-lawyer marketing, finance, human resources, recruiting, facilities management, and computer professionals in your shop don't even know they need the benchmarking and competitive intelligence, management, business, product, and labor law information you access daily. Tenured professors want it with current and *Blue Book*-style footnotes. Legal administrators want statistics and spreadsheets. Market different law library products directly and differently to each of these unique market segments.

**The KISS Technique for Quick, Smart, and Glossy Law Library Marketing—That is “Keep It Short, Smart and Speak to the Audience.”**

### Keep It Short

Taking a cue from the Super Bowl commercials, keep the message short. One-page cheat sheets and 15 minute presentations will be better remembered than a long detailed brochure or an hour drone. Attach one-page executive summaries to annual reports and to budget reports. As a National Library Week goodie, a law firm librarian distributed placemats made of laminated sheets — with proofreading symbols on one side and the firm's cite-checking style guide on the other—to associates and paralegals who often ate lunch at their desks because they were so busy cite-checking and proofing briefs.

### Keep It Smart

Taking a cue from the Super Bowl commercials, keep the messages smart. Avoid institutional and corporate culture faux pas. Know your product.

Look to your organization's culture for clues to your commercial's style. When National Library Week scavenger hunts or taking the managing partner or dean to lunch at the club are not your organization's style, determine the target audience's point of view towards marketing. Understand your market segment's comfort level for comedy or theater, soft or hard sell. Be as funny and allegorical, or as earnest and literal, as the market will bear.

Back up your marketing message with research. Stay up-to-date with trends in law librarianship. Read the law library literature and attend tech shows, AALL and Chapter meetings. Do your homework and know the product. Independently study new products and the vendor's brochures. Compare notes with colleagues.

Energetically position your library's product to fulfill your market's needs and desires. Find out what they want from the library by reading what their literature tells them they should expect. Senior level partners, corporate officers, professors, and deans do not read the law library literature. Their newsletters often give a skewed or superficial view of libraries using legalese instead of library terminology. Read the Association of Legal Administrators (<http://www.alanet.org/>), American Bar Association Law Practice Management

Section (<http://www.abanet.org/lpm/home.html>) or IOMA management newsletters your audience reads.

BNA's Institute of Management and Administration site (<http://www.ioma.com/>) does a great job reporting on the management trends, concerns, and statistics law firm managers see in its publications and in other management publications such as *Of Counsel*. The law library Webzine *Law Library Resource Xchange* (<http://www.llrx.com/>) is another good source for marketing ideas, statistics, and product comparisons.

### Keep It Speaking to the Audience

Taking a cue from the Super Bowl commercials, use the audience's own terminology. Put your marketing message in terms the audience will recognize even if it is imprecise for law library usage.

An intellectual property law firm launched its OPAC describing it as meeting the “standards and specifications” of the American Library Association and the Library of Congress. In a law firm, your patrons are “fee-earners.” Your staff-to-fee-earner ratio is “leveraged.” Document delivery fees are “recoverables.”

### Keep It Glossy

Taking a cue from the glossy Super Bowl commercials, use color and graphics in your marketing materials. This is a media-savvy age. If your firm, corporation, or school has a strong graphic identity, take advantage of this opportunity to identify with your organization by adapting the same style, logo, colors, and typeface to your library's message. If you need graphics, copy them from AALL's Public Relations Committee (<http://www.aallnet.org/committee/pr/>) and the Special Libraries Association public relations site (<http://www.sla.org/pr/index.html>)

### Keep at It

And by the way, do not ignore those chance-marketing opportunities at the coffee maker. The senior partner may be a Super Bowl commercial fan too. Feedback on your marketing efforts is all part of your law library marketing strategy.

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