

This Month

- **The impact of inherent challenges and the impact on the image in the market place and staff**
- **The importance of the market's perception of the firm**
- **The importance of staff and future recruits perception**
- **The Way Forward**

In last month's article – January 2026 available via MLS [The Messenger January 2026](#) or via my web site www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/January2026 it clearly demonstrated and clarified a whole series of New Years Resolutions and essential business management activities and it has had a pretty good response. More firms are beginning to realise the essentials in business performance, client relationships and their image.

We covered the essential management stock-take –

- knowing where we are in terms of performance and direction,
- the three year strategy,
- perpetual forecasting to enable recovery and exploitation,
- inbound enquiry conversion rates,
- the firm's image in the market and amongst staff and prospective new talent,
- performance as lawyers with the right skills at the right time
- but also efficiency, compliance and regulation management and success,
- the boring IT performance and security
- the drive for added value solutions
- not forgetting client communication – so many are disappointed and are very unlikely to refer their mates

It is also so much better to achieve a 65% new enquiry conversion rate rather than a standard 20% - yes a system but 500 enquiries with 20% conversions is 100 per month. 65% conversions is 325 conversions. In terms of new business at just £500 per deal is £1.6million as opposed to £50,00. Image as well as handling the enquiry.

There is also a challenge with the attitude and retaining key younger staff. Rather than 60% of them looking to leave – because of management style and the firm's market and community image – keep those stars.

Please look them up www.professionalchoiceconsultancy.com/articles/January2026

As law firms we need to be seen as experts across the board and communicating the challenges to our existing clients as well as potential and targeted new ones. Whether it be changes in inheritance, updates for property or commercial benefits, family challenges and so on. It also helps greatly if there is a positive business image for the firm - as well as web site, communications and legal performance.

The Positive Route Forward

One activity that needs a great deal of focus and significant attention is that of the firm's image and brand. We may be good or bad at many things but it goes much further than that and people's perception of our law firm is another very critical measure.

From our own as a business or individual there is often a very selfish perspective. Many law firm leaders may think they have the best performing lawyers with the right skills, lots of clients and key staff but how does the market place really see them and think of them. It is essential within the market place to ensure that the firm and staff members have the right image.

About three years ago I was lucky enough to meet [\(8\) The 'Think Brand - not bland' Guy - Phil Strachan | LinkedIn](#) Phil has over 40 years of brand and branding experience working with businesses of all shapes and sizes to position them effectively and take them to the next level.

The exciting thing is the number of law firms and other professional services businesses that are beginning to listen and seek advice in terms of their brand and image. It fits with business and personal success priorities.

Phil is very clear that most firms in the professional services sector fail to differentiate themselves effectively and stand out from the crowd in what is a very competitive market. They become a "me too" provider as opposed to a "go to" brand. Therefore, missing out on attracting new clients, retaining clients and staff talent, with a consequential loss of financial performance and profitability.

As often cited by me – the image of the firm is key – but as Phil reminds me it is how the firm is perceived in the outside world that is critical. Phil reminds me that branding it is about "the art of managing perceptions". In the eyes of the outside world – perception is a reality based upon exposure and experience of all touchpoints. Performance, web site, client communications and so on.

However, the brand image of the firm may not be how it believes it is seen or how it wants or needs to be seen in order to achieve business objectives and attract and retain the right clients and staff.

Investment & Positive Returns – In contrast in many cases the ID of the firm and key individuals is about how it/they want to be seen as opposed to what could be achieved through some moderation and planning. Firms need to become more future focused and managing their brand image is a key component of brand strategy.

Web site and marketing – letting society know what is going on, business performance as lawyers, compliance and regulations, business performance and strategy achievement, networking, client communications, reliability and availability all critical and needing investment and return.

The current challenge is that so few law firms have a clear sense of their brand identity and what it should be - so are lacking in a brand strategy. We really need to spend time defining the brand strategy – without that the above investments are likely to be misdirected, ineffective and wasteful. Firms need to get into control so that perception becomes reality. Business strategy, planning, regulation achievement, performance (clients, revenue and cash) and perpetual review is part of it but - the market place perception of image is key.

Picture of the Firm

We can all picture the brand of our favourite football club, beer, wine, retailer and so on. Law firms can also consider an image that can become famous. For example Hill Dickinson at Everton.

The impact and benefits of art in the modern workplace far go far beyond its superficial appearance and can lead to a more positive sense of community and more engaged and motivated management and employees at all levels.

The inclusion of art can play a key role in shaping a positive workplace culture. Maybe it will help with stress, burn out, mental health and well-being, staff morale and motivation and job satisfaction. More clients, happier and performing staff and the right performance levels.

Summary

There is such an opportunity for responsive and proactive law firms to enhance their image and performance.

Key players need to look at downsizing their personal egos and to focus on the best way forward for the firm and as people make contacts – staff and clients. We are very much up to date with the world, in terms of client needs and business performance. We understand what clients and potential clients are looking for as well as our key staff.

Potential clients and potential recruits please do understand where we are coming from and where we are going

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