



Business Development for Professional Service Firms

White Paper / Issue 2

It's not just your imagination: professional firms ARE different, and DO have a more difficult business development challenge than most other types of businesses. This is true for no reason other than the fact that you and your staff ARE your product.

Given this obvious challenge, how does a professional firm effectively generate business? First and foremost, we believe that the game is won face to face. Certainly, there are many ancillary marketing related activities that such firms should consider, including:

- Sending out periodic newsletters
- Maintaining a marketing database of customers and prospects for periodic direct mail
- Publicizing key hires and promotions in local media
- Writing articles for general media and industry specific publications



These and other activities add value to the firm's overall visibility, and are no doubt helpful in the aggregate. However, people buy services from people, and usually from people that they have met,

know and respect. Therefore, the obvious challenge becomes one of maximizing direct contact with clients, prospects and referral sources.

How does one accomplish this when most professionals focus on billable hours? Furthermore, we have encountered very few professionals who enjoy making sales calls, or who are particularly adroit at it.

We believe the answer lies in hiring a business development specialist to represent the firm. This person's role would be to make initial contact with prospective clients. He/she would not be expected to secure new client commitments, but rather to create effective and needed leverage for firm partners. As such, their responsibility would be to generate a number of pre-qualified appointments for the professional staff to pursue.

In this scenario, the firm partner or professional can assume the role of potential service provider to the prospect, allowing the business development person to maintain the more traditional sales role.

As you are probably aware, most of the professions have had an ongoing debate for years with regard to the relative effectiveness and appropriateness of hiring such individuals. We come down firmly in the camp of those who believe that such an approach, when well thought out, and with the right individual, will out-produce any other business development effort.

We will be happy to discuss this option with you at your convenience. Look for additional white papers from us on this critical subject.

Truelson Associates has served over 200 clients in its 20+ years of existence. Of those clients, fully 80% of them have been professional and other service providers operating in a business to business mode. Law, public accounting, engineering, architecture, banking, and other financial service providers are heavily represented in that mix.

We offer services in these key areas:

- Strategic planning
- Business development planning
- Management of sales and marketing implementation efforts
- Management/leadership coaching

Unlike most consulting firms, we take a hands on approach to our efforts, functioning as part of our clients senior management team to achieve stated objectives.

We are proud of the results we have achieved for and with our many clients, and are happy to provide impeccable references to substantiate those results.



We are associate members of The Oregon Bankers Association.

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