

2 Ways To Keep Your Attorneys Up to Date on Legal Industry Trends



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"It's foolish to follow trends."

After all, you have a law firm to run. You have client matters to attend to, employees you'll need to manage and the logistics of successful practice management.

Trends are the absolute last thing on your mind.

But trends management is one of the first things you should be focused on if you're trying to grow your practice rapidly. The most obvious question though is why.

Your attorneys aren't focused on trends

Most attorneys are focused on the day-to-day minutia of work. They're focused on client matters, hourly billings, business development, etc. In fact, most attorneys [lose six hours a day](#) on non-billable work.

Trends aren't on their radar.

Most associates are just trying to make it through their day with some semblance of productivity and efficiency about them. They want to take good care of their clients, serve their firm, boost their careers. The kind of details they're *supposed* to focus on.

The majority of attorneys fall into [one of four roles](#).

- **Finders** are rainmakers
- **Binders** are connectors and master networkers
- **Minders** are managers and bureaucrats
- **Grinders** are the workhorses of the firm

Most attorneys are expected to be grinders. Of these four attorney types, minders are the attorney types who are most likely to be focused on trends.

This means you'll have to help your attorneys along.

Okay, why?

Staying on top of trends gives you the responses you need to perform as expected:

1. You can identify the trends you'd like to accept, reject, monitor or ignore.
2. Spot threats, opportunities and potential issues that will make a significant impact on your firm.
3. Create firm-wide buy-in on any trend, topic or issue under consideration.
4. Trends management is a helpful add-on your firm can use to keep their teams healthy and operating cohesively.

Of these, the most significant motivator is buy-in.

We've all heard stories about attorneys refusing to turn in their timesheets on time or in the correct format (which affects firm revenue). Or, any other issue they simply refuse to comply with. This is the underlying issue at play for many firms.

Buy-in changes all of that.

If you'd like to get the attorneys aligned with the initiatives at your firm, you'll need buy-in. How do you get buy-in consistently from your attorneys?

You give your employees the chance to weigh in on key issues. If there's no weigh-in, there's no buy-in. Here, see for yourself.

So how do you do it?

What are some practical steps you can follow to keep your attorneys up-to-date on legal industry trends?



Tactic #1: Elevate your firm's mavens

Mavens are information collectors. They're the employees who have a vast amount of knowledge and wisdom. You'll want to cultivate and elevate the mavens in your firm. Provide these employees with access to helpful information sources (e.g. research libraries, subscription tools, books, courses and training aids).

Then, ask these mavens to share their knowledge.

Give them the opportunities to share their knowledge with the firm. If you notice a paralegal has the makings of an exceptional researcher, approach them with this opportunity (and more money). Set clear guidelines on these trends.

- Schedule a weekly meeting where these mavens, share trends with financial impact (with firm leadership)
- Share competitive information, trends outlining which attorneys/firms are passing us by
- Outline a shift in client attitudes (e.g. our clients are looking for a lower cost replacement)

See what I mean?

Tactic #2: Connect with key influencers and thought leaders

Legal publications have to stay on track.

They need to stay on top of the twists and turns taking place in the industry. What does this mean? They're more likely to hear about impactful trends and updates before you do. But more importantly, they have context.

They know which trends matter more.

They're not infallible of course, so you'll need to temper their advice with your own knowledge and experience. This doesn't mean you have to be directly connected either. Here are several ways to connect with these publications.

- Subscribe to their email list or follow them on social media. You'll receive a steady stream of trends and updates via their content
- Connect with editors, journalists, and influencers personally. This enables you to identify the unknown, unknowns – trends taking place that others can't see
- Follow/subscribe to data aggregators like [Statista](#), [ALM Intelligence](#), [Martindale](#), [AALL](#), and others to curate data you can use to build an instantly responsive, future-proof firm

Future-proof firms follow trends

It isn't foolish to follow legal industry trends. As we've seen, the reality is actually the opposite. Staying on top of industry trends gives you the responses you need to perform as expected.

There's value here.

You can identify the trends you'd like to accept, reject, monitor or ignore. Spot threats, opportunities and potential issues that will make a significant impact on your firm. Create firm-wide buy-in on any trend, topic or issue under consideration. Use trends management to keep your team healthy and operating cohesively.

It's the low hanging fruit most firms ignore.

If you're looking for growth you'll need to look down the road. With trends management, you'll have the tools and resources you need to future-proof your firm, no foolish mistakes necessary.

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