



TEAMWORK ON THE LEGAL FRONTLINE

The Strategic New Roles of
Marketing and the Library in Big Law

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INTRODUCTION

Law Firm Librarians and Marketing Departments have been under-utilized and under-appreciated in law firms, and while that persists in some places, the savviest firms and partners understand how vital these two groups are to their success.

In the realm of modern law, librarians and marketing staff are working together more closely and being viewed more strategically. Executive suites that once were dominated by partners now include marketing, pricing and information professionals who are actively involved in setting policies and mapping the firm's future.

To better understand the synergies and opportunities between law firm librarians and marketing/business development staff, LAC Group surveyed sixteen global firms to identify best practices, skill gaps, optimal staffing levels and trends looking forward. Participants included C-suite executives, firm management and professional library and marketing staff.

The findings are summarized in this report, and they are characterized by three essential new requirements for law librarians and marketing departments:



THE NEED TO ADD VALUE

Traditionally, marketing departments and law libraries have been support functions, responsible for responding to attorney requests. People in these roles today must be willing to venture into the firm's practice areas to offer guidance and proactively share their own knowledge and ideas.



THE NEED TO REDUCE COSTS

Even the most venerable law firms have become cost-conscious. Law libraries, once a prominent showcase in firm offices, have been greatly reduced as publications go digital. Some back-office staff are being moved from prime offices in major cities to less costly locations. We see ongoing spend management initiatives as another new reality in big law and the library and marketing departments as stewards of costly resources and advisors on their optimization.



THE NEED TO DEVELOP GREATER SYNERGIES

Staff in libraries and marketing departments are working together in new ways, sharing ideas and information in support of new business development and enhanced client service. The days of working in silos and “guarding turf” must continue to give way to greater teamwork and collaboration throughout the entire firm.

As a provider of library outsourcing and other knowledge and information services, LAC Group has been on the frontlines with law firms for over 25 years. This survey is another way we strive to understand the challenges and opportunities they face, to help them compete more effectively on complex and dynamic battlefields.

Competitive Intelligence (CI)

57% of firms surveyed rely on both marketing and the library to provide Competitive Intelligence (CI) research and analysis, whereas only 14% keep CI efforts solely in marketing.

Competitive Intelligence support should be considered as important as other marketing and business development initiatives in winning new business. CI initiatives include focusing on specific clients and industries and developing standardized templates to deliver reports and news alerts to client and industry teams.

78% of CI requests come directly from partners, 54% from practice groups and 40% from non-attorney groups like business development. Attorneys are hungry for CI. They often bypass the business development teams by going to the library or outside consultants for support. We see this as an opportunity for business development and the library to work together to develop controls and processes to manage costs and track requests.

Social Media

Firms are using social media in conventional ways: Touting client wins, inviting clients and prospects to seminars or making firm announcements. Social media is also useful for tracking client activities and keeping tabs on trends as well as competitors, but other innovative uses could be explored to gain a competitive advantage. The most popular social media outlets are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Business Development

Business development departments are moving away from disparate siloes in favor of cohesive, client-focused initiatives, with increased accountability thanks to performance-tracking metrics. Firms are becoming more selective and strategic about their business development efforts, looking closely to determine campaign effectiveness, monitor the return on investment of marketing dollars and assess why and how particular business opportunities are won or lost.

Team-Based Selling

Firms are taking a more team-based sales approach to business development, rewarding team members who can drive business to the firm. Collaboration brings new insights and ideas to business development efforts and loosens the control that individual attorneys often hold over clients, facilitating the institutionalization of client relationships within the firm.

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LAW FIRM LIBRARY TRENDS

We find that legal librarians – in comparison to their corporate, medical and government counterparts – perceive themselves as being secure and indispensable. Yet even attorney reliance upon their support and expertise may not be enough to escape the increasing pressures of cost-cutting mandates to leverage virtual resources, minimize physical space and reduce staffing levels.

Other research confirms this – the following is from an ARK Group Conference on Best Practices & Management Strategies for Law Firm Library, Research & Information Services, February 2015:

90%

of firm librarians validate that physical libraries are shrinking significantly.

80%

indicate that the research workload has increased while staffing levels have decreased in the past 3 years.

These trends are leading to new delivery models for research and other information support, such as librarians being “embedded” into practice groups and LAC Group’s own Library as a Service® platform.

Information Resource Trends & Technology Innovations

Information providers are expanding the availability of information but also controlling and restricting some content accessibility. Technology is driving innovation in the way attorneys practice, interact with clients and use research services. In response, research and other information service vendors are increasingly bypassing the library to market directly to attorneys and other firm stakeholders.

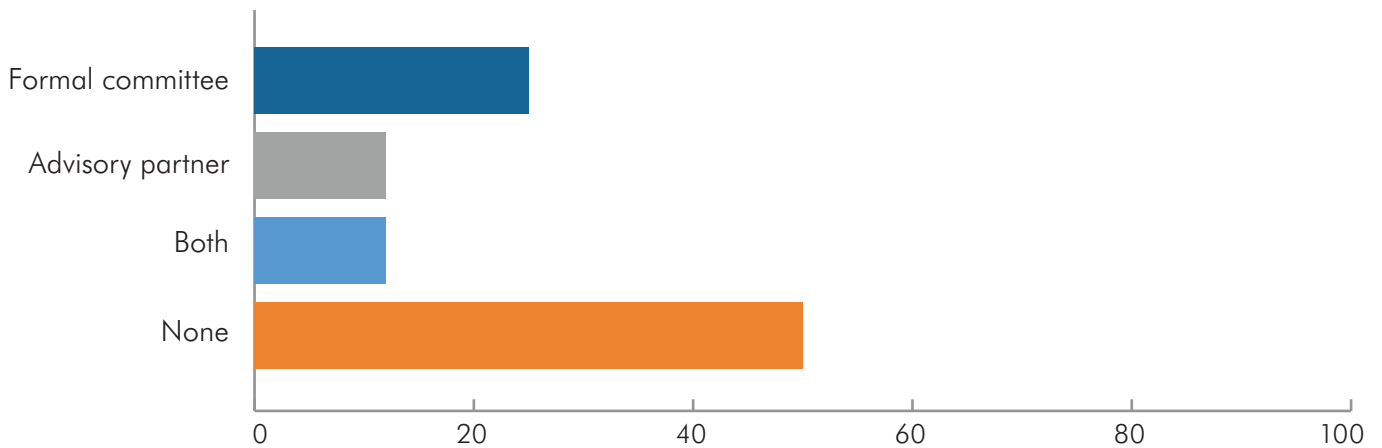
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SURVEY FINDINGS AND RESULTS

1 | Few marketing departments are guided by formal committee or advisory partners.

Direction comes from multiple sources, indicating that business development must serve many potentially competing interests.

- Only 25% have formal committee advising their department.
- Less than 13% of the respondents have an advisory partner.

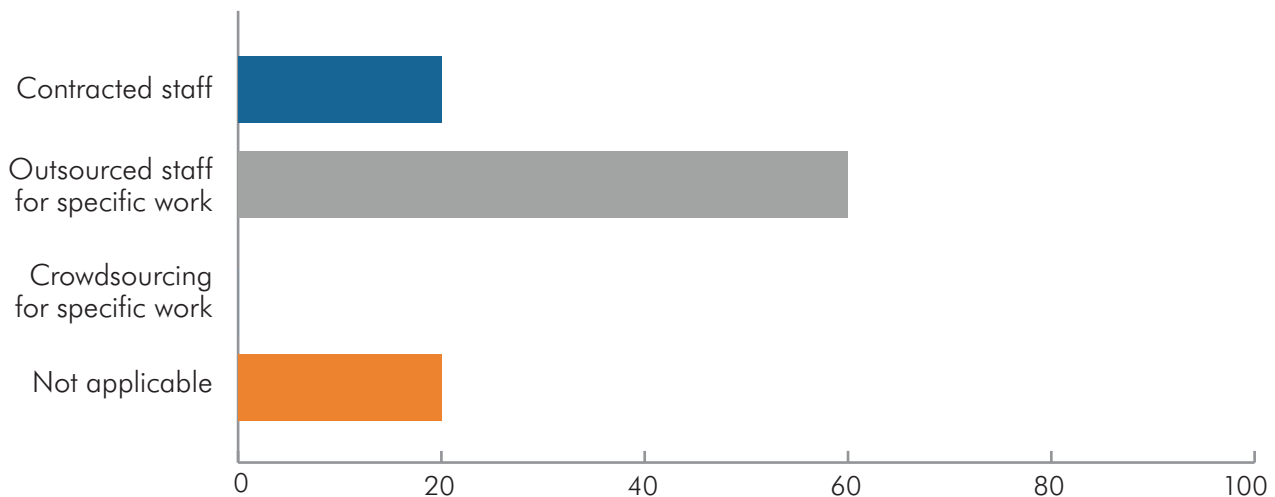


2 | Competitive Intelligence is where the library and marketing departments converge.

- Over 57% say that CI support is a joint responsibility between the library and marketing.

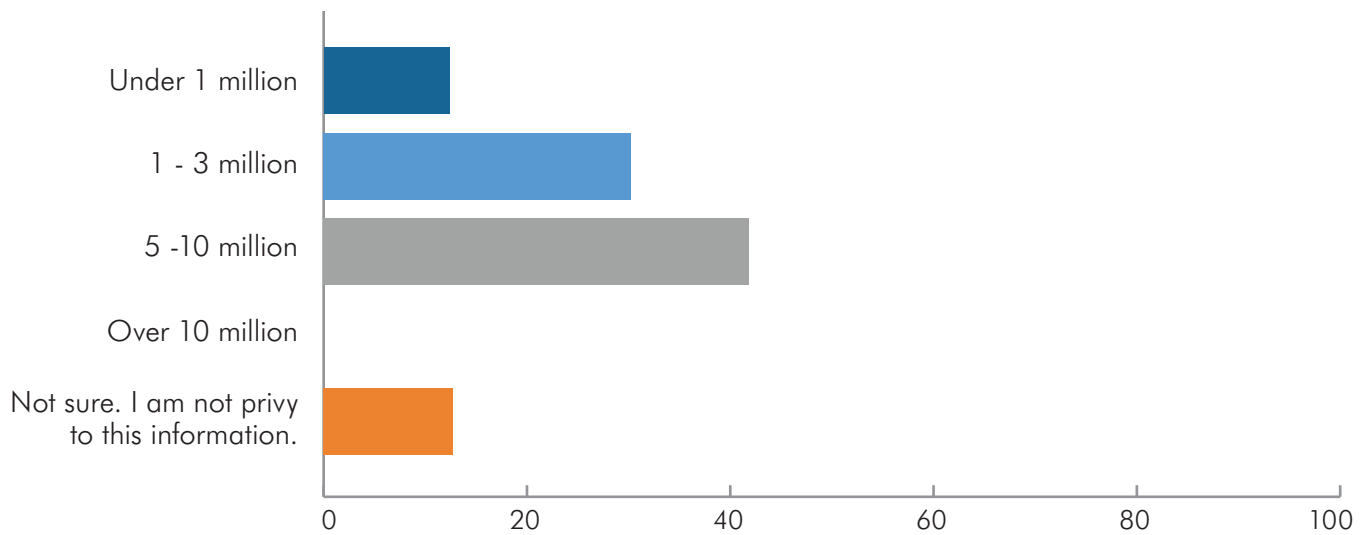
Answer Choices	Responses
CI support formally resides in the Market Dept.	14.29%
CI support formally resides in the Library Dept.	28.57%
CI support is represented in both the Marketing and Library Departments	57.15%

- 60% use outsourced staff to support or augment competitive intelligence, or contract staff that work on site or virtually.



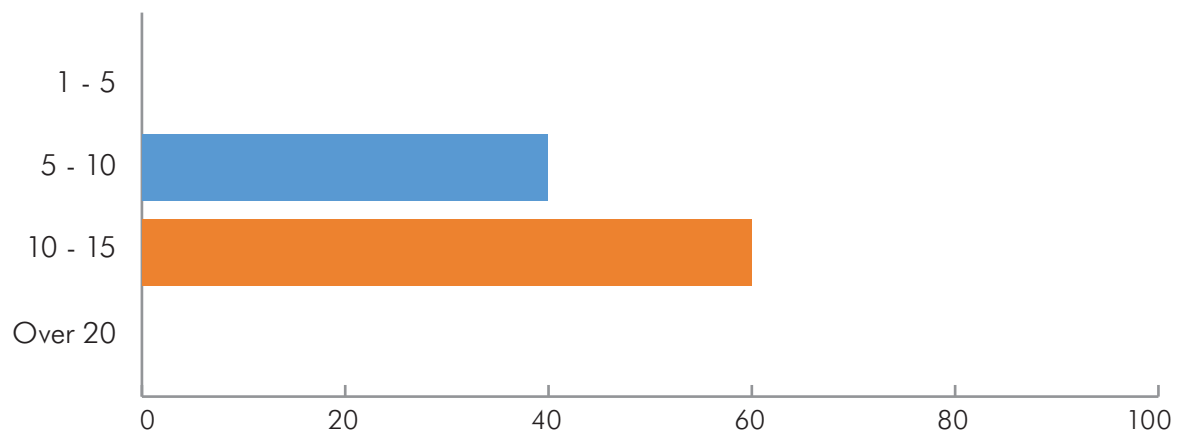
3 | Firms are investing in staff, resources and technology for business development

- 29% spend between \$1 and \$3 million and 42% are spending between \$5 – 10 million.



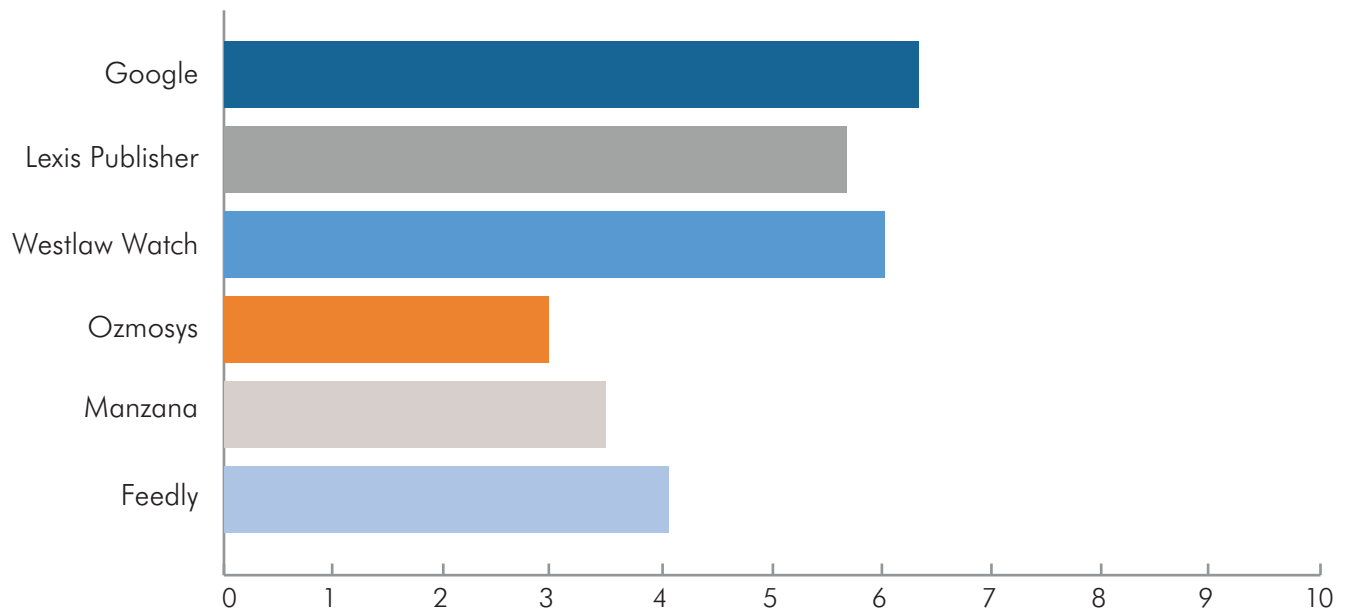
4 | Business development teams attract senior level staff

- 40% employ 5-10 senior level people, 60% have 10-15 managers or higher.



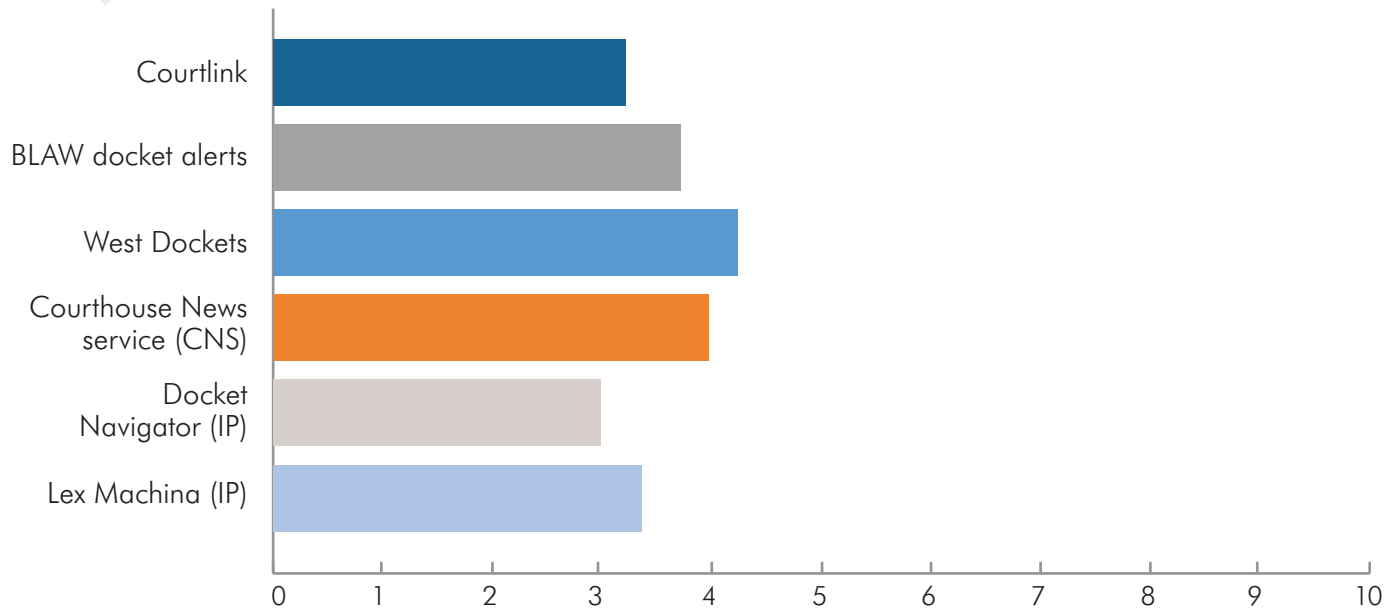
5 | Staying abreast of competitors, clients, trends and industries is a critical task.

- Nearly 86% rely upon tools such as Google, LEXIS Publisher, Westlaw Watch, Ozmosys and Manzama to monitor current information and developments on key competitors, clients and industries and spot trends.



6 | Monitoring litigation activity of clients and potential clients is also critical

- West Dockets ranked highest for litigation news.



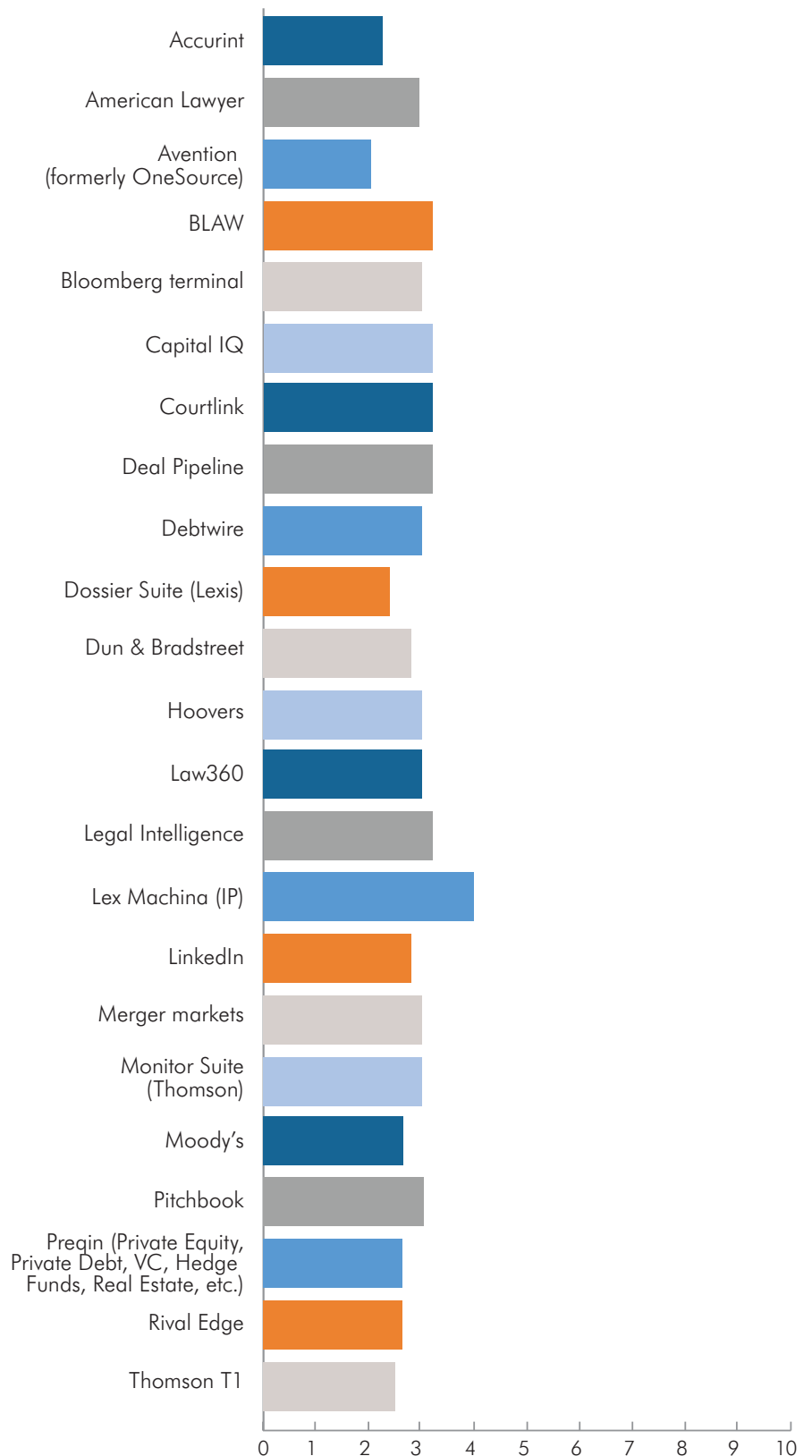
- 80% percent monitor litigation involving their clients or as a tool to find new clients.

I use alerts to monitor development on present litigation involving my firm's clients.	66.67%
I use alerts to monitor any new litigation involving my firm's clients.	100.00%
I use alerts to monitor new litigation for potential clients.	66.67%
I use alerts to monitor any new litigation involving clients, and find out when opposing parties or presiding judges are involved in new litigation by setting up an alert on a litigant, attorney or subject matter.	100.00%

7 | A variety of information resources are used to support business development activities.

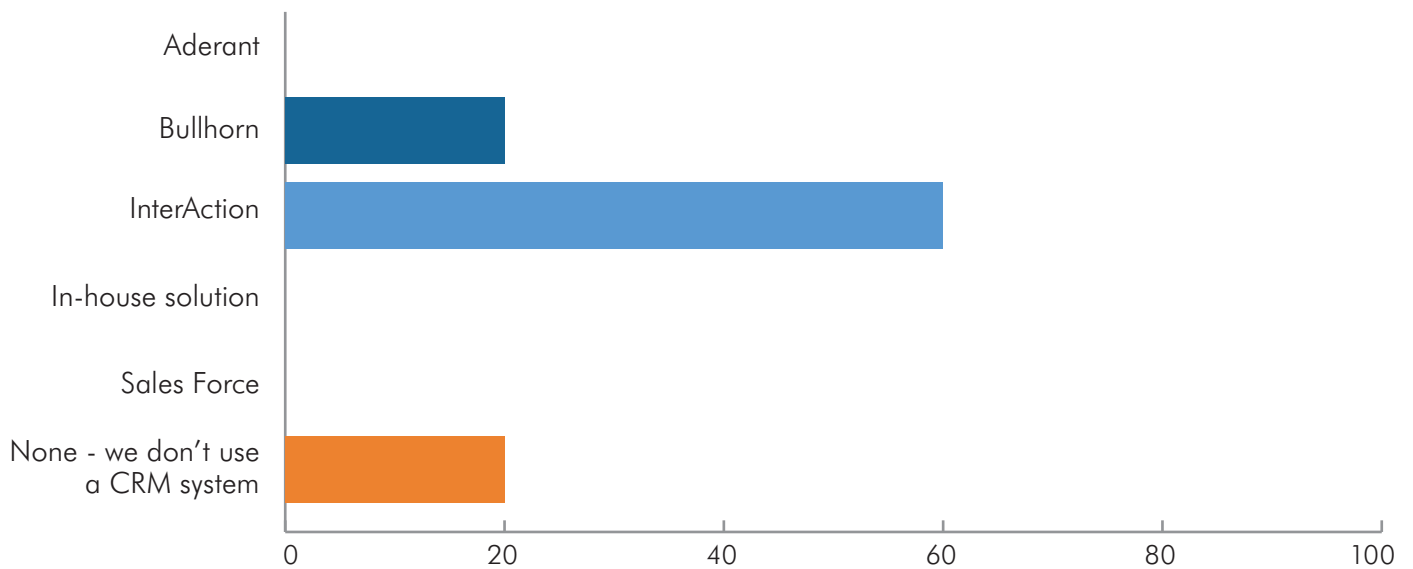
- Respondents identified Lex Machina as the most highly rated resources for business development and competitive intelligence research.
- Social media networking is an important business development activity, with over 50% employing a dedicated social media specialist.

Information Resources used for Competitive Intelligence, Market Research and other Business Development support.



8 | Use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems remains mixed

- Approximately 60% use InterAction, while 20% have no formal CRM system.
- Training is done occasionally, with 25% claiming no formal CRM system training.



- 75% cite challenges in using the CRM system regularly and effectively.

Encouraging attorneys to use the CRM to update their data regularly	50.00%
Managing client data held in the CRM system	50.00%
Using the CRM system effectively	75.00%
Knowing where to find the right information and who to contact if I have questions	50.00%
Getting attorneys to follow through and communicate	25.00%

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ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Empower the Role of Competitive Intelligence

We think it is important for firms to define and set expectations for CI support, since the function is becoming a third pillar in marketing and business development. Although librarians are excellent information sleuths, not all have the appropriate training or subject matter expertise to provide comprehensive competitive analysis and research.

Many firms assign a CI analysis role to senior librarians and even embed the individual into the marketing department, with a dotted line back to the library. In our experience, once this role is formalized, demand explodes, creating other problems in managing requests, but usually business development teams will wonder how they ever got along without the support.

Leverage the Library to Evaluate and Acquire Content

We recommend that library staff be more proactive as internal business development consultants, not only to investigate and acquire tools and resources, but to support and better understand the practice group's needs. Armed with this understanding, the library can provide a critical evaluation of vendor product offerings, initiate and manage trials and monitor usage. Once the contracts are in place, the library can manage licenses to ensure compliance, promote capabilities and arrange for training.

Identify and Implement Adequate Resources and Training

Firm investments in electronic resources and content can be significant, yet often people in business development and other areas of the firm have limited exposure to all that's available. We recommend that the library work more closely with marketing to achieve a better understanding through tactics such as support pages on the firm's intranet, including the library research team on business development initiatives, and conducting regular promotion and training of available resources.

Implement CRM Support for Data Integrity

LAC Group recommends additional CRM support, assigning “data stewards” from each practice group for managing attorney input and quality control. It is important to build a process and implement tools for collecting and managing client data and assuring quality. Equally important is establishing and documenting protocols and standards to ensure adoption throughout the firm.

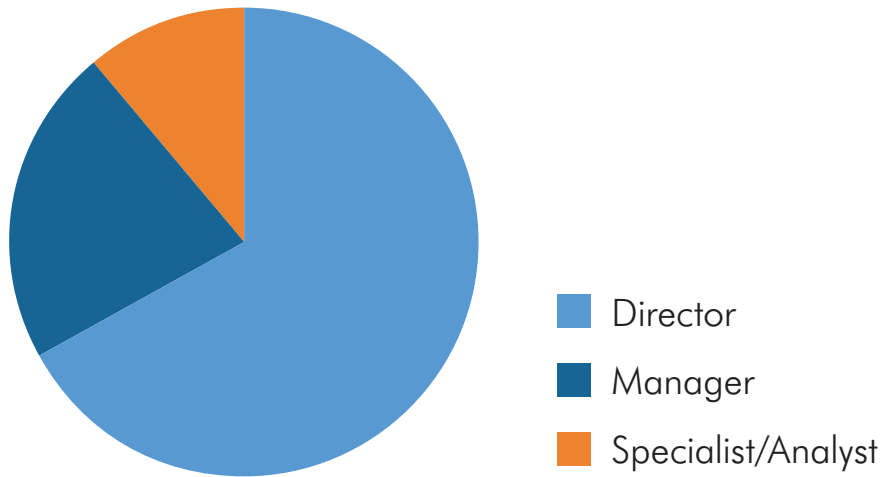
Monitor and Measure Outcomes for Continuous Improvement

Compiling data that track outcomes of the firm’s business development efforts would be helpful in auditing and assessing joint marketing/library team performance, both collectively and for individual contributors. These metrics inspire cross-team sharing and support while providing much-needed ammunition for the battle to secure budget for staff and resources.

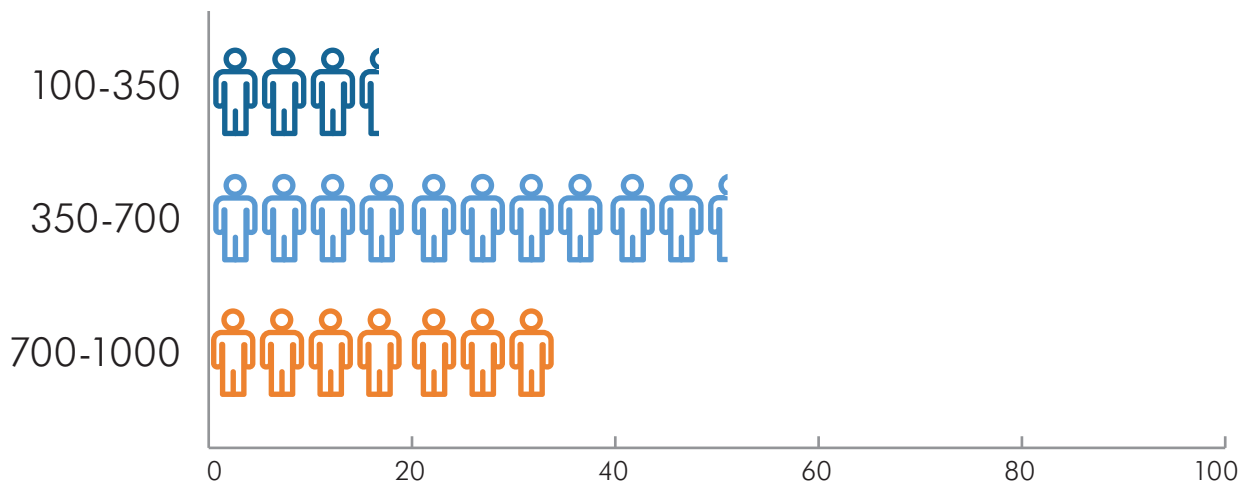
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SURVEY RESPONDENT PROFILES

Respondent Role



Firm Size (Number of Attorneys)



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ABOUT LAC GROUP

LAC Group enables organizations to secure the library and information sciences talent and resources they need for permanent staffing, temporary assignments and special projects. LAC Group has worked with a significant number of AmLaw 200 law firms to conduct assessments and road-mapping exercises for developing strategies for information resource management, knowledge management and competitive intelligence.

As a leader in wholly managed services, LAC Group runs the daily operations of libraries and media centers at major law firms and other large organizations. LAC Group is the creator of Library as a Service® which offers access as-needed to skilled researchers, subject matter expertise and other information services. Learn more at www.lac-group.com.

