

A night-time photograph of the Denver skyline, featuring numerous illuminated skyscrapers and a bridge in the foreground. The image is set against a dark blue background with white geometric lines forming a jagged, mountain-like pattern at the top.

RECOVER | **REFOCUS** | **REUNITE**
PATHWAYS TO INCREASING PROFITABILITY

2010 LEGAL MARKETING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 10-12, 2010 | HYATT REGENCY | DENVER, COLORADO

Photo: Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau

2010 Conference Rationale
Build the business case for your attendance

www.LMAconference.com

LEGALMARKETINGASSOCIATION
LMA[®]
THE AUTHORITY FOR LEGAL MARKETING



In today's economy, no matter what your seniority, most of us have to justify the cost and time of attending industry events.

Often the people you report to do not automatically understand the importance of the benefits received by conference attendees. This document will give you some tools you can use to help build the business case for your attendance at the upcoming 2010 Annual Conference. At the end, you'll find a customizable letter that you can tailor and submit to your manager. We hope you find this information useful.

Note: If you wish to attend as part of a group – you should co-ordinate your efforts with your colleagues.

› UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATIONS: HOW YOUR MANAGER MAY MAKE THE DECISION TO APPROVE YOUR ATTENDANCE



Even in difficult economic times, most companies still have a training budget. You'll need to make the case that the best use of that budget is your attendance. Even if there is "no budget" your manager (or your managers' manager) will still likely have some discretionary funds they can tap into. In this instance, you may need to convince not only your immediate manager of the benefits of your attendance – but you may also need to help them convince their manager of the reasons why you should attend.

They will be looking for you to convince them of several things

- › There are clearly defined benefits to attendance (ROI)
- › The expense is reasonable
- › The time out of the office is well spent

“At Patton Boggs, we enjoy what we do - solving problems, finding opportunities, dealing with the cutting issues of our time. Whether it's vision and strategy, creative and tactics or the talent in the industry, LMA is at the center of it all.”



Stuart M. Pape
Managing Partner
Patton Boggs LLP



Mary C. Kimber
Chief Marketing Officer
Patton Boggs LLP



› UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS THAT IMPRESS

The two main benefits of attending the LMA Annual Conference are **networking** and **education**.

Although **networking** is a very important benefit, it can be difficult to quantify the value to your organization. Many attendees report that hearing of solutions or approaches to problems while in a networking environment is often the most valuable aspect of a conference – but it's speculative and hard to measure.

So rather than focus on the social aspects of networking, instead focus on **specific education**, the **actionable learning that will directly benefit your organization**.

The best way to do that is to:

Link specific published conference sessions and speakers to address specific challenges you're facing and link that education to specific actions that you will take that will benefit your organization.

Details are vital. Some details you'll need to identify include:

- » **Session content.** Review the conference program and identify the sessions that have particular relevance or resonance to your organization's current situation. Specifically identify sessions which promise...
 - » Examples of successes delivered by speakers from other firms in your category.
 - » Information regarding challenges that your manager / firm is specifically facing.
 - » New technologies and tools that you're not using or have not fully evaluated.
 - » To help you reduce costs or "do more with less."
 - » To ensure that you avoid mistakes: Candid sessions will help you avoid repeating costly marketing mistakes made by other companies.
 - » To help you do even more with what you already have. Learn how to maximize the value of your existing initiatives.
- » **Best practices.** Many of the sessions are geared towards benchmarking best practices. Your attendance and report means that your manager can get a clear picture of what the competition is doing.
- » **Training.** Which workshops are right for you? All are designed to teach a specific group of attendees a special skill or set of tools and approaches that are immediately actionable back in the office.
- » **Vendor contacts.** The LMA Annual Conference showcases more than 60 vendors who have tools that you can evaluate for potential future use, or can help you control and reduce costs. The Annual Conference will be your "one stop shopping" experience for solution provider evaluations saving you time out of the office and the expense of attending multiple conferences. You'll also get insight from these vendors as to what tools the competition is using.



› QUANTIFYING THE BENEFITS

Although you might understand the benefits of the sessions, your manager may not. Therefore, to be most effective in justifying the conference, you will need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization’s knowledge and skill requirements and the conference program.

Do not presume that your manager will be able to automatically make those distinctions.

To support this process, use the following Benefits Worksheet to help you and your manager focus on the benefits. We suggest looking at the Conference Brochure, highlighting programs that will address your needs, and bringing the brochure, along with this worksheet to your manager for joint decision-making. The following are some examples:

› BENEFITS WORKSHEET

Your Organization’s Current Need	Specific Conference Programming That Meet That Need
To reduce marketing costs	
To extend the ROI of our marketing activities	
To learn directly from other firms how they are effectively marketing themselves and how we differ from them.	
To generate new business	
To position ourselves as “thought leaders”	
To gain ground on our competitors	
To evaluate new trends in legal marketing	

› BEWARE “INNOVATION”

As marketers, we love to innovate! However we advise caution if planning on using “We need to innovate” as a justification in this current economic climate. This year’s research has shown that most organizations are in “Recover and Refocus” mode and we have developed the program accordingly. The term “innovation” may create the impression that you will return from the conference with risky, costly or disruptive ideas that have little immediate benefit to your organization.

Rather – this conference offers tested and proven tools that are easily actionable and have tangible benefit.



› JUSTIFYING THE EXPENSE

Calculating the Actual Expense

Before you can even begin to justify conference expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. To do so, you can use the following Expenses Worksheet.

› EXPENSES WORKSHEET

Expense	Guideline	Cost
Conference Registration	Early Bird pricing expires January 10th 2010	\$
Pre and Post-Conference Class Registration, if applicable	Optional	\$
Materials Fees	None	\$ included
Flight	Try a Web travel service to get a quick estimate	\$
Lodging	www.LMAConference.com/hotel (rooms as low as \$209/night)	\$
Transportation: Airport to/from Hotel	taxi? Car rental? Super Shuttle?	\$
Food Per Diem	LMA Conference fee includes breakfast, lunch, snacks and cocktail receptions. Evening meals are not included.	\$
subtotal	\$	
total number of employees going		
multiply subtotal by total number of employees going = total	\$	

“The opportunity to network with peers across the country and gain valuable competitive insights from the LMA Your Honor Awards are key benefits of the annual LMA conference.”



Jill Weber
Chief Business Development Officer
Leonard, Street and Deinard



> TIME WELL SPENT

This conference is very hard work!

Your manager needs to understand that, far from being a pleasant diversion, you will be working as hard during the duration of the conference as you would in the office. Your day will start at 7am with preparation and breakfast before the first session begins at 8.30am. You'll be working through lunch and will be hard at it until the conference wraps up at 5.30pm. No social events take place during conference programming time.

Advance preparation and goal setting

Identifying what you want from the conference is essential – but also don't forget to ask what your manager wants from the conference. Request to interview your manager before you attend the conference and ask them for specific information they want you to receive, or questions they want answered – then pledge to do all you can in those three days to obtain it. Using the Benefits Worksheet provided above can help you manage and address their expectations.

Learning that benefits you and your peers: Your manager and colleagues will get a full report on your attendance and what you learned

Explain that you'll take detailed notes at the conference and provide a post-event report and meeting within 2 weeks to your manager and colleagues that will communicate and share both the key lessons learned (as applicable to your organization's needs) and the specific action points you recommend taking based on your learning experience.

Your commitment to share the knowledge you received with others on your with the team will dramatically increase the ROI of your attendance. Additionally, by tangibly demonstrating the lessons learned from the Conference, leadership should be more willing to fund your participation in the future.

The best reports encourage people to come and ask you further questions. There is rarely much value in a 10-page report. Instead, a two or three page summary, with URLs and pointers is more impressive. Another option is to offer to meet with your superiors for a recap the first week after the conference. Also, making presentations to others in your group who did not attend is an excellent way to deepen your education while also sharing valuable knowledge and techniques. The Annual Conference provides a copy of all presentations after the conference for you to download and use to share knowledge.

“My attendance ensures that my firm and I stay on top of the critical business issues in our industry.”



Maggie T Watkins
Chief Marketing and Business Development Officer
Best Best & Krieger LLP



Implement, Implement, Implement

It's essential to convey that this conference is not abstract book learning. We demand that our presenters provide practical takeaways you can use back in your firm. Your sessions will be packed full of proven and tested real-world tips, tools and techniques that will benefit your firm. If you've attended other LMA events and can attribute real tangible value to your attendance then be sure to mention them.

Value for money

Hiring a single consultant of the caliber that presents at our conference could cost your firm many times the cost of your admission, and you'd get only one person's advice rather than a whole faculty of experts, peers and competitors.

Unique – once a year opportunity

There is no other event like the LMA Annual Conference for value and depth of learning. You must convey that you simply will not be able to get this level information in one place anywhere else in the next 12 months. That leaves your firm one year *behind* its competitors, and therefore at a disadvantage.

Safety in numbers

More than 1000 people attend the conference every year, from Marketing Assistants, to CMOs to Marketing Partners. This is a testament to the fact that the event continues to deliver value year-on-year.

The LMA Annual Conference is in its 24th year. It's been "battle tested" unlike newer, more "speculative" conferences

"LMA Annual Conferences excel in identifying new business development methodologies – they truly present the best and the brightest in the very fast moving world of legal marketing and business development. Equally important, Conferences excel at providing practical content, perspective, and motivation such that legal marketing professionals feel empowered to help their firms develop and execute upon business development plans that make a difference."



Scott Sorrels
former Marketing Partner
Bryan Cave Powell Goldstein

A Customizable Letter To Your Manager

We've taken the opportunity to put together a letter, below that – if appropriate – you should feel free to customize and use in support of your attendance

Re: 2010 Legal Marketing Association Annual Conference - March 10 - 12, 2010 • Hyatt Regency • Denver Colorado

Dear

I would like for you to consider approving my attendance at the above mentioned conference. I attach the conference agenda and have - in this memo - briefly outlined the direct business benefits to the firm of my attendance. If anything needs clarification or elaboration, please let me know and I will be happy to provide additional detail.

I appreciate that my attendance will represent a considerable investment in terms of time and money so you'll also find a breakdown of expected costs and my plan for keeping the expense to an absolute minimum. You'll also read my plan for providing you and the team with a full post-conference report to ensure we get maximum value from the investment.

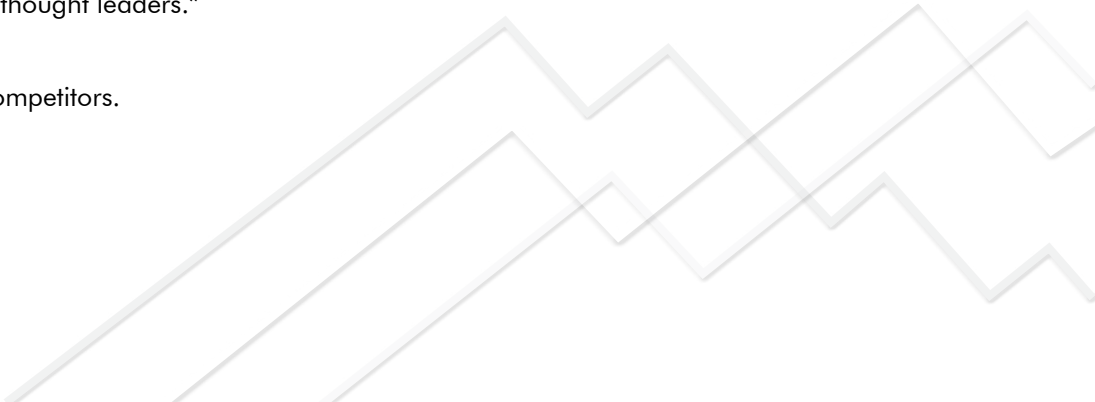
The LMA Annual Conference is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for the entire legal marketing community to learn from the leading practitioners in the sector. The event is in its 24th year and regularly attracts more than 1,000 attendees from firms just like ours.

This year's event is especially important because in such changing economic times, we need to learn how to best respond. No other conference provides the quantity and quality of educational and tactical programming that will be presented by this Annual Conference.

The conference is an intensive 3 day program of plenary education and specific hand-on learning sessions that are designed to be immediately actionable back at the office.

Below, I've outlined some of the immediate marketing challenges that we're currently facing. Alongside you'll find the conference sessions that I believe will help give us the solutions:

<add / edit / insert / delete as appropriate>

1. We need to reduce marketing costs.
 - a. Insert session detail
 2. We need to extend the ROI of our marketing activities.
 - a. Insert session detail
 3. We need to learn directly from other firms on how they are effectively marketing themselves.
 - a. Insert session detail
 4. We need to generate new business.
 - a. Insert session detail
 5. We need to position ourselves as "thought leaders."
 - a. Insert session detail
 6. We need to gain ground on our competitors.
 - a. Insert session detail
- 

Other benefits:

- » My attendance at this conference enables us to:
 - » Learn examples of successes delivered by speakers from other firms <specify>
 - » Develop more revenue from existing and potential clients
 - » Get up-to-speed on new technologies and tools that we're not using nor have fully evaluated.
 - » Help us reduce costs and "do more with less"
 - » Ensure that we avoid costly mistakes: Candid sessions will help us repeat costly marketing mistakes made by other firms
 - » Learn how to maximize the value of our existing initiatives.
- » Obtain best practices. Many of the sessions are geared towards benchmarking best practices. My attendance and report means that we can get a clear picture of what the competition is doing.
- » Evaluate vendor contacts. The LMA Annual Conference showcases more than 60 vendors who have tools that I can evaluate for potential future use, or can help me control and reduce costs. The Annual Conference will be my "one stop shopping" experience for solution provider evaluations saving time out of the office and the expense of attending multiple conferences. I'll also get insight from these vendors as to what tools the competition is using.

Full post-conference report

Should you agree to send me to the conference you can be assured that within 2 weeks of my return I will have provided you with a full post conference report / meeting outlining the specific lessons learned and my recommendations.

Expense

The cost breaks down as follows:

Conference Registration*	\$	Lodging	\$
Workshop Registration*	\$	Evening Meal	\$
Materials Fees	None	Transportation to / from Hotel	\$
Flight	\$	Total	\$

*Conference Registration Fee includes materials, breakfasts, lunches and all post-conference receptions

I believe that the specific benefits to us of my attendance at this year's conference represent an appropriate use of our training budget. I am confident that my attendance will pay dividends and I will work tirelessly to ensure that they do.

I would like to spend some time with you in the next few weeks to find out what your requirements for my attendance would be and ensure that your expectations are met.

I very much appreciate your consideration of my request. If you require any further information at this stage, please let me know.

Sincerely,