

Sands Anderson Marks & Miller, PC

SITUATION AND OBJECTIVE

Sands Anderson Marks and Miller, a 70 attorney Virginia law firm with four state locations and one North Carolina office, had, in 2004, revamped its Web site front page, reorganized its content and added search engine optimization features intended to increase visibility and relevance among large internet traffic generators. They had instituted an "email signature" policy that standardized the text format for information sent to clients, other attorneys and vendors.



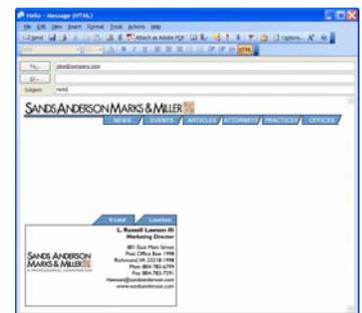
The firm was vitally interested in adding brand identity to its outgoing email traffic, which represented the primary business communication vehicle between the firm and its clients, vendors and components of the legal industry (courts, other attorneys, witnesses and law enforcement officials). Email traffic had recently eclipsed the telephone in numbers of messages sent, and had long ago succeeded standard mail as a communications method.

OBSTACLES

Sands Anderson, however, was acutely aware that neither the Web tactics nor the email signature took complete advantage of the fundamental brand value of their long standing and well-recognized company logotype and mark. Their Information Systems staff were concerned about the "weight" that attached graphics files might add to outgoing email traffic, so no internal initiative was anticipated. Additionally, the Marketing staff realized that the single link in the signature to the Web site home page would not attract significant interest among recipients nor encourage them to explore details about the firm, its attorneys and capabilities.

EXPERIENCE

A demonstration of the LetterMark Web-enhanced Email service to the firm's management staff showed that the goals of brand support, lightweight graphics and Web "connection extension" could be achieved. But it took email from a law firm with similar size and structure, using the techniques of LetterMark email, to catch the attention of the attorneys on the Board of Directors and motivate a buying decision.



The firm ran a one-month test among selected staff and attorneys (a total of 10 users) to explore installation and usability issues, and evaluate system adjustments necessary to deploy LetterMark email to all firm users (c.160 seats). A suite of templates was designed to accommodate a wide range of user-suggested features. With successful trial implementation, the firm scheduled a rollout sequence to bring the service to all five offices, which was accomplished during a two-week period. Marketing staff assumed primary support responsibility, including administration tasks (moves, adds, changes) through LetterMark.Net, the web-based management system.



RESULTS

Attorneys and staff of Sands Anderson now use the LetterMark service for 90% of initial outgoing emails to an addressee. LetterMark template click-throughs are one of the top sources of visitors to the Web site. Moreover, the firm's branded emails set them apart from nearly all other firms and put their image on par with the largest law firms in the country.