



ALA Business Partner News

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Business Partner Interview: ABA Retirement

5 Questions with Michael Moniz, Vice President, Divisional Sales Director, ABA Retirement Funds Program

1. What value does the ALA community offer to your organization?

The ALA community allows the ABA Retirement Funds Program (“the Program”) to effectively reach firm administrators – a key group of decision makers in the legal community. The ALA community offers us the opportunity to speak with professionals who truly understand the value of the products and services we bring to the market. Whether through a print advertisement, email campaign or one of the many conventions we attend, we are reaching the right people to help us bring the Program’s valuable benefit to the legal community.

2. What priority do you place on face-to-face engagements, and what has your experience been with ALA for both current and new customer interaction?

There is no substitute for face-to-face meetings in our business. ALA does a great job designing meetings that maximize face-to-face interactions. In fact, I often use ALA’s meeting structure as an example on how things should be done when I’m speaking to representatives from other legal associations. We have always enjoyed ALA’s annual and regional conferences because they afford us our best opportunity each year to speak with current clients and prospects.

3. What can an ALA member do to improve business partner relationships for their firm?

I think it is very important that ALA members take the time to meet and understand all of the business partners. I know it can feel like an awkward sales situation sometimes, but if ALA members simply express they are just looking, a business partner will understand and only provide them with the information they need. It may be that an ALA member is not interested at the time but could become interested in the future. From a business partner perspective, we would appreciate the opportunity to speak with ALA members even if they are not actively looking for our services. This interaction may be the difference in getting invited to submit a future request for proposal versus getting entirely overlooked.

4. Why is it important for members to regularly engage with an existing business partner?

This is important because most business partners – as is often the case with the Program – are constantly changing and improving their products and services to meet the changing needs of clients and prospects. An ALA member may initially have a limited understanding of a business partner, and become aware of the breadth of capabilities over time and through regular engagements. Additionally, a business partner can be a valuable resource for industry information even when a specific product is not yet needed. Over time, business partners can become trusted advisors in their particular field and develop a mutually beneficial relationship that can help a firm fulfill a particular need.

5. How can small firms, or even satellite offices, share new solutions and ideas with partners from central offices or headquarters?

As a representative of the Program, I am all for good ideas regardless of the source. I think most business partners feel the same way. In this situation, I think it is important for a small firm to reach out through their local chapter and ALA headquarters if they do not have a business partner contact of their own. These groups will help connect them to business partners who have already been vetted and are in

a position to listen to a new idea while helping with a viable solution.

MICHAEL MONIZ



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