

BEST PRACTICES

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Strauss Troy Co., LPA projects its new image

By Jeff Wallner
Enquirer contributor

In the early 1980s, James Heldman networked with clients by handing out matchbooks imprinted with "Strauss Troy & Ruehlmann" on the cover.

Today, Heldman hands out credit card-sized 2 gigabyte flash drives that launch a video presentation of the 59-year-old law firm now known as Strauss Troy Co., LPA.

As part of an aggressive re-branding effort that started two years ago, the firm also introduced a new logo and a sleeker, more user-friendly website. The result so far: Strauss Troy has added staff and grown into a 45-lawyer firm that's claiming a niche with mid-sized, privately held companies in the region.

"Boy, have times changed," said Heldman, now president of the firm.

Undergoing a major remake wasn't all that difficult, even though "lawyers, like a lot of professionals, have egos," he said.

"Our senior attorneys who've been around for a long time said,

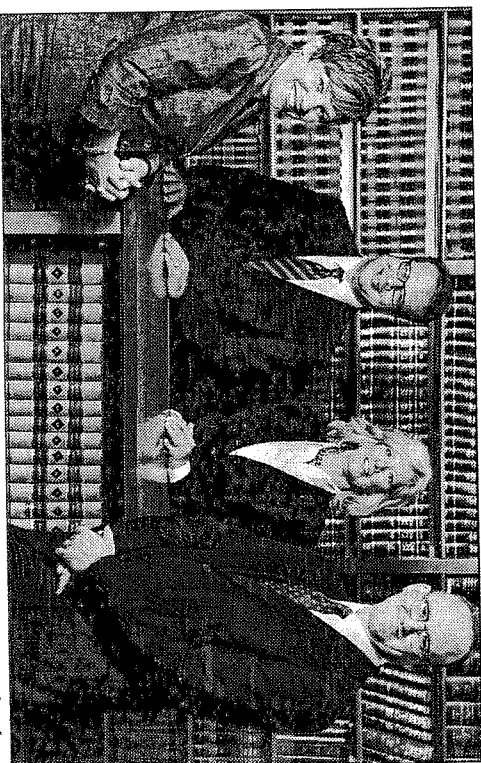
"We haven't done this in the past, why do this now?" " Heldman said. "But they realized we need to be progressive and move forward. It wasn't a difficult sell. There was tremendous buy-in."

To help with the transition, Strauss Troy last year hired consultant Pam Gilchrist, a corporate communications veteran, to advise the firm on its marketing strategy. Gilchrist has led strategic communications initiatives for three Fortune 500 companies.

"I was given a lot of trust to do research and present my findings," Gilchrist said.

Her team conducted internal focus groups, surveyed all of the attorneys in the firm and gathered anecdotal client feedback. "The biggest thing was getting to know the culture, getting to know the success drivers and to capitalize on those," Gilchrist said.

In conjunction with its re-branding, Strauss Troy also expanded with the addition of new shareholders. Erinn McKee Hannigan, who practices exclusively in domestic relations, and Bill Williamson, who has a di-



Strauss Troy has changed its name to Strauss Troy Co., LPA, launched a new website, introduced a new logo and recently expanded in a few of its core practice areas all as part of an aggressive rebranding effort designed to better the 59-year-old law firm for its future. Some of Strauss Troy's senior attorneys were resistant to the changes at first, but then realized their importance. THE ENQUIRER/CARRIE COCHRAN

verse background in real estate, corporate law and estate planning.

"One of the reasons we're on such a solid growth track is the personal service we provide to clients," Williamson said. "It's always been a trademark of the firm."

Strauss Troy also hired Matt Fellerhoff, a former Hamilton County Municipal Court judge who will practice in property rights matters and real estate law, and Steve Schilling as an associate.

"We're constantly looking for growth," said Heldman, who

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Strauss Troy Co., LPA law firm is committed to community.

» Employees formed the "Make a Difference" team in the early 1990s to support local charities and community endeavors.

» The firm held its eighth annual "Freedom Writers" essay contest for Cincinnati Public School students in May. The topic was reducing high school drop-out rates. The top 20 writers won tours of Paul Brown Stadium and a meeting with Bengals head coach Marvin Lewis.

» For the fifth consecutive year, Strauss Troy is sponsoring the Market-on-the-Square, where vendors sell flowers, fresh produce, meats and cheeses. The market runs every Tuesday through Sept. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Fountain Square.

practices mainly in corporate and business law. Besides the lawyers, the firm employs about 50 support staff.