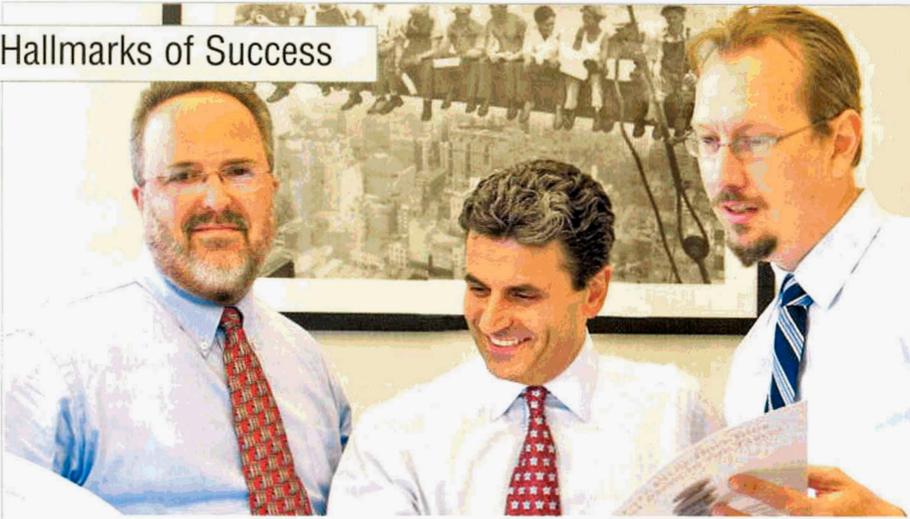


Hallmarks of Success



Using a strategic marketing plan to create a more compelling value conversation and leverage opportunities.

a small firm, it is one that is committed to growing alongside its clients."

The new look has attracted a lot of attention and created the opportunity to talk about things that the firm might not have spoken about to particular clients, according to Partner Warren Bergstein. "This has led to discussions about other industries we work in and broadened our referral opportunities. Clients and referral sources have gotten the impression that AKM is getting larger and branching out. There is an overall sense that we can be a key part of clients' overall financial lives, helping with planning, and strategic decision making, as well as with the more mundane and traditional areas."

To stress that point, Katz notes that there is one client who had a lot of funds in various accounts and had designated in his will how he wanted those funds disbursed. "After reading the short discussion of estates and trusts in our marketing materials, he contacted his CPA with a number of questions. He was very concerned that some funds be available for various purposes at present, but wanted to keep his bequests

intact. With our help, he created a trust, which gives him greater control and greater flexibility.

Another client had worked with one of the firm's partners on tax matters only for over 30 years, notes Mond. "The marketing material raised some interesting questions for him and he contacted his AKM partner. The client with a diverse set of business interests received income from many different sources. As the client himself had difficulty tracking it all, he wondered how his selected executor (his son) would address this. He also wondered whether there was a better structure for managing his interests. After consulting with AKM, an LLC was created, with the client as managing partner and several of his beneficiaries as minority partners. The approach is far more streamlined, the client's son has a better understanding of the diverse interests, and the tax implications have been favorable."

SHARING. RATHER THAN SILOING

Alan Adelman, the firm's senior co-man-

aging partner, indicates the partners feel that what's growing for them and is of great value to their clients is the "financial "quarterback" approach mentioned in the brochure. "We've always said that service is number one, two, three, and four with us. Now, we've found more practical ways to act on this commitment. There is an increasing involvement in all areas of clients' financial lives: planning, investment, insurances, retirement planning, and the like, that dovetails nicely with the generalized nature of the practice."

An interesting outgrowth of this approach, and the marketing plan, is a greater tendency of the partners to share, adds Katz. "A real danger in partnership organizations is 'siloing,' where you effectively have as many different businesses as you have partners. This usually does not make the most business sense for the firm and deprives clients of ready access to the depth and breadth of expertise that exists within the firm."

He emphasizes that AKM has worked to break down these barriers. "There's greater sharing of information than ever before, and partners have an increased tendency to collaborate on client work. Each client still has one principal contact at the firm, but other partners more frequently help in areas where their expertise is greater," Bergstein adds, "If somebody calls me now and says 'can you do X, I know we can do X. It may not be me personally doing it, but the whole firm working together.'" In addition, to Adelman Bergstein, Katz, and Mond, the other partners are Jack Gold, Stuart Hammer, and Craig Venokur.

Mond notes that the firm has a wide range of services that it now can perform for almost any client including business management, family office, technology, trusts and estates, and small/family/closely-held business involving structures and governance, exit and succession planning, accounting, financial statements, and tax.



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