

Sokolove Law: Still Pioneering After All These Years

This year, 2016, will mark 38 years since the founding of Sokolove Law. In celebration of the occasion, we thought it would be great to reflect upon how far we've come in the last (almost) four decades and to look ahead to the future of the business of law and our continued role in it.

When asked what best describes Sokolove Law, the words innovation, ethical compliance, and achievement immediately come to mind. From the airing of our first television advertisement to the formation of our network of national partnerships, we have pioneered the legal marketing industry.

Yet, resting on our laurels never was, nor will it ever be, an option. Each milestone reached only serves as an incentive to continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of our co-counsel firms and our consumer clients. The roots of this collective work ethic — to constantly strive to do better, to be better — go deep; the seeds were planted long ago by our founder, attorney James “Jim” Sokolove.

Innovation:

noun in-no·va-tion\i-nə-va-shən\
the act or process of introducing new ideas, devices, or methods.

Synonyms: modernization, cutting edge, change.

Not long after the Supreme Court's 1977 decision in *Bates v. State Bar of Arizona*, Sokolove Law began advertising. It was always Jim's belief that lawyer advertising provides a much needed service to consumers. The mantra: Give consumers information and give it to them straight, make the public aware of their legal rights, and remove barriers that prevent people from accessing lawyers.



Despite the stigma associated with legal advertising and the negative opinions voiced both inside and outside the legal community, we persevered. When other plaintiffs' lawyers wouldn't dream of putting their names or faces on a television ad, Jim was more than happy to do so. In response to the argument that legal advertising is tarnishing the image of lawyers, Jim would boldly remind his peers that the image was in trouble long before advertising; it was in trouble because of an elitist attitude, high fees, and a failure to meet the needs of the client.

Starting with print and Yellow Pages advertising, our efforts quickly expanded into other mediums like local, and later national, television advertising, direct mail, Internet, mobile, and social media, as well as various public safety programs, like the successful Cycleline direct mail campaign targeting injured motorcyclists.

Recognizing that most clients don't like to travel far to see a lawyer, the idea for a New England affiliation of law firms

to handle clients outside of Sokolove Law's geographic area was born. What began with one co-counsel firm and one product line — auto accidents — grew to include over one thousand co-counsel firms across the country handling hundreds of different case types, including medical malpractice, nursing home abuse, asbestos exposure, and numerous dangerous drugs and medical devices.

Beyond conquering new mediums through which to advertise, we also sought to innovate in other areas, mining the business world for a chief executive to lead the firm in business development and to run it like the business that it is. The recruitment of seasoned marketing, business operations and legal compliance professionals soon followed.

Other advancements included adding a dedicated research arm to the business development team to keep the pipeline filled with new opportunities; strengthening the operations department by building first-rate customer contact and quality assurance units to help

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Founded by partners Frank Davis and John Norris in 2003, Davis & Norris LLP is a full-service boutique litigation firm dedicated to representing injured and defrauded individuals across the country. The firm focuses its practice primarily on class action and mass action cases to remedy corporate misbehavior.

Based in Birmingham, Alabama, the firm has represented thousands of plaintiffs in several high-profile class and mass actions, including the Anniston PCB toxic tort case. This case settled for over \$300 million on behalf of thousands of individuals affected by PCBs manufactured by Monsanto. The global settlement in that case (a total of over \$700 million) is the largest toxic tort settlement in the history of the United States.

Shortly after the Anniston PCB decision, firm partners Davis and Norris became involved with a group of other US attorneys to represent over 1 million Vietnamese victims who were poisoned during the Vietnam War by Agent Orange.

A lawsuit was filed against the chemical company manufacturers of Agent Orange, but after a fierce 4-year battle, the case was ultimately dismissed.

The firm is currently involved in dozens of class action lawsuits across the country seeking relief for consumers who have been defrauded by false representations, and who have been charged illegal fees by debt collectors.

Davis & Norris joined forces with Sokolove Law in 2011 to launch an extensive marketing campaign to educate victims of Santander Consumer USA's aggressive and harassing debt collection efforts and their rights under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). Our marketing efforts reached thousands of consumers and yielded nearly 3,000 cases for the firm.

"We admire firms that are willing to take on the tough cases, fight hard, and set an example for other firms," says Sokolove CEO Mike Skoler. "For that,



and many other reasons, we are honored to be working with the lawyers of Davis & Norris."

Davis & Norris partner John Norris had this to say about partnering with Sokolove: "The Sokolove Law firm has unique expertise and experience in targeted marketing campaigns. Their professionalism and hard work yield real results. We could not be happier with a marketing partner."

Operations Update

Tracking Automation Boosts Efficiency

We constantly look for new ways to innovate our processes and make it easier for our co-counsel firms to comply with our strict risk management requirements. To improve efficiency and reduce loss issues, we recently implemented two automated tracking solutions: Email and FedEx status tracking.

As part of our standard services, we send lead emails to firms as soon as leads are assigned to our co-counsel. We also send client sign-up documents to firms within days of receiving the signed paperwork back from a client.

In order to ensure firms have received all emails and documents, we require some type of receipt acknowledgement. In the past, we had to solely rely on co-counsel staff to provide the acknowledgement. This process was not only inefficient, but

could also result in potential risk issues and/or lost business for our firms.



Email Status Tracking

Our new comprehensive email status tracking system allows us to automatically track each lead email. For every email recipient, we collect real-time data each time an email is processed, delivered, and opened. This means we can monitor lead emails autonomously and are no longer dependent on obtaining receipt acknowledgement from your staff. Emails that have not been opened by any email recipients within a week of delivery date will be sent again automatically.

In order for email status tracking to work, certain email settings on co-counsel's end may need to be enabled. We will work with firms to assist with this process, as needed.

FedEx Status Tracking

We recently integrated FedEx with our CRM, which allows us to automatically track the status of each FedEx package and its contents. For every package, we receive a daily data feed from FedEx with tracking information. Once a firm receives one of our FedEx packages, our system automatically acknowledges the receipt of the documents for each case that was included in the package. We no longer need to inconvenience your staff to acknowledge receipt.

We hope these updates will be helpful to your firm.

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increase conversion rates, and bringing the media and digital marketing teams in-house to lower costs while increasing our capabilities, to name just a few. We focus on the upfront work, so our co-counsel can focus on what they do best: litigating cases.

Ever the innovator, Sokolove Law remains unyielding in its exploration of unique and inventive strategies in case generation, testing new ad platforms and methodologies that accommodate the ever-changing modes of media consumption. As of late, we have embraced a mobile-first approach to web communication and have established dominant positions on social media channels typically used by consumers whose only access to the Internet is a tablet or smartphone. While remaining a leader in television advertising, we continue to stay on the cutting edge of digital marketing trends, utilizing the latest ad tools, technology and compelling creative content to stay ahead of the competition, keep costs low, reach more consumers, and increase lead volume.

Ethical:

adjective eth·i·cal\`e-thi-kəl
being in accordance with the rules and standards for right conduct or practice, especially the standards of a profession.

Synonyms: principled, respectable, just.

One area in which Sokolove Law has refused to compromise is ethical compliance. As the first truly national law firm, we pay meticulous attention to state-by-state requirements for legal advertisers. By marketing ethically and efficiently to the widest possible audience, we are consistently able to increase the pool of potential cases for our co-counsel firms, while providing them with the peace of mind that national compliance can provide.

Once taboo, legal advertising is now considered by many to be a necessity,

particularly in the high stakes world of mass tort litigation. Today, there is no shortage of legal advertisers. From law firms that advertise, to legal marketing services and lead generation companies, the numbers have grown exponentially over the last few years.

The upside? Injured clients now have greater access to legal help. And lawyers have more opportunity to get their message out to the legal consumer.

The downside? The infiltration of the legal industry by unscrupulous individuals who have no regard for the injured client, nor for the ethical rules governing legal advertising and client solicitation. While the lure of “guaranteed results” and cut-rate fees is enticing to many law firms seeking to increase their client base through advertising, it is the experienced marketing partner who consistently delivers on its promises, is honest about the quality of its results, who cares about your client as much as you do, and who operates within industry rules, that should get your business. In a highly regulated industry such as ours, there is no room for unethical marketers that flout the law and jeopardize the integrity of the entire profession.

Achievement:

noun achieve·ment\ə-`chev-mənt\
something that has been done or achieved through effort: a result of hard work; a great or heroic deed.

Synonyms: performance, acquisition, victory.

As we look back over the last 38 years, a lot has changed since we launched our first television ad. One thing that hasn’t wavered, however, is our commitment to the Sokolove mission: “To reinvent how people obtain legal services in order to provide everyone, irrespective of ethnicity or income, equal access to the civil justice system and within it, superior quality of representation and service.”

Although plenty of hard work remains, we are proud to say that through our own tireless efforts and those of our exceptionally talented co-counsel firms, we have accomplished what we set out to do — help more people gain access to the civil justice system. Each year, Sokolove Law fields hundreds of thousands of calls, emails, chats, form-fills and posts from consumers seeking legal assistance. Together with our co-counsel firms, our efforts have resulted in billions in settlements for our clients and billions in attorney fees for our co-counsel.

We thank all of our co-counsel firms for their hard work and dedication over the years and for entrusting us with one of the most important aspects of their business. Wishing you all a healthy and prosperous 2016.

under investigation

Sokolove Law is currently investigating potential litigation and case generation opportunities for injuries or losses arising from the following:

▶ **Electronic Cigarettes**

Serious injuries have been linked to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems, promoted as a safer alternative to regular cigarettes. Potential hazards include burns, scarring, other serious injuries and death caused by battery failure, device overheating, and exploding cartridges. We are also investigating claims of respiratory illness or other lung disease from inhaling e-cig vapor containing the flavoring substance diacetyl, and other harmful chemicals.

▶ **Proton Pump Inhibitors**

Currently investigating claims of chronic kidney disease in people taking the popular heartburn drugs known as proton pump inhibitors (PPIs).



SETTLEMENT AMOUNT	CASE TYPE	CO-COUNSEL FIRM
~\$6,100,000	Medical Devices	Levin Simes, LLP – San Francisco, CA
\$8,400,000	3 Birth Injury Cases	Miller Weisbrod, LLP – Dallas, TX
\$4,750,000	Medical Malpractice	Abramson, Brown & Dugan – Manchester, NH
\$3,875,000	Birth Injury	Gershon, Willoughby, Getz & Smith, LLC – Baltimore, MD
\$3,750,000	Cerebral Palsy	Donahue & Horrow, LLP – El Segundo, CA
\$2,480,000	6 Birth Injury/Erb’s cases	The Graham Law Firm, P.A. – Florence, SC
\$2,327,965	5 Birth Injury/Erb’s cases	Blume Donnelly Fried Forte Zerres & Molinari – Chatham, NJ
\$2,033,929	4 Stockbroker Fraud Cases	Oakes & Fosher, LLC – St. Louis, MO
\$1,850,000	Cerebral Palsy	Holton Law Firm – Memphis, TN
\$1,455,000	5 Nursing Home Cases	Kralovec, Jambois & Schwartz – Chicago, IL
\$1,100,000	Medical Malpractice	Duffy & Duffy, Esqs. – Uniondale, NY
\$975,000	FLSA	Pogust Braslow Millrood LLC – Conshohocken, PA
\$912,000	FLSA	Pogust Braslow Millrood LLC – Conshohocken, PA
\$750,000	Medical Malpractice	Duffy & Duffy, Esqs. – Uniondale, NY
\$600,000	Erb’s Palsy	Donahue & Horrow, LLP – El Segundo, CA

Co-counsel Opportunity

National Auto / General Liability Campaign

In the spring of 2016, Sokolove Law will launch a 12-month national marketing campaign to target Auto/General Liability claims. The campaign will have a multimillion-dollar national budget and a multichannel media strategy. Participating firms will contribute a prorated share towards the national budget and in return, will receive exclusivity for their territory.

Limited states are available. To find out if your state is available, or for more information, call us at 800-305-4009.