

Building a Brand

BY J. SCOTT VICTOR, TMA GLOBAL CHAIRMAN



As we celebrate TMA's 28th anniversary at The Annual in Orlando, we should proudly reflect on the global brand that TMA has become. TMA serves approximately 8,300 members in 55 chapters around the globe, including 23 outside of North America. TMA's premier certification program includes nearly 800 CTPs and CTAs throughout Australia, Europe, Japan, and North America. Worldwide, TMA is the most-recognized brand and the key resource for professionals engaged in the restructuring industry.

It has been a privilege to serve as TMA's 2016 chairman and 2015 president, and I have had the pleasure of attending multiple chapter, regional, national, and global events during that time. As my term nears the end, I reflect on how TMA has helped me with my own personal brand, built over 33 years, first as a bankruptcy lawyer and then as a special situations investment banker. My leadership positions in the Philadelphia Chapter, where I served as president 2004-2005, helped raise my profile and led to roles at TMA

Global, which, in turn, provided me with exposure to a broader network and opportunities. Serving as president and then chairman of TMA Global further enhanced my personal brand by providing me with a global platform. From Toronto to São Paulo, Prague to Rome, London to Sydney, and all around North America, I've continued to meet restructuring professionals who leverage TMA for personal brand development.

Developing your personal brand is essential for advancing your career and developing as a leader. Whether you are a turnaround practitioner, attorney, lender, investment banker, investor, or other related professional, personal branding is one of the most critical factors in your success. Your personal brand represents the value you consistently deliver to your clients. It is a full-time commitment to defining who you are. This is the mindset you must adopt and the level of accountability you must assume to define, live, and manage your personal brand. View your personal brand as your trademark, an asset that you continuously mold, shape, and protect. Your personal brand must be managed with the intention of helping others benefit from having relationships with you and being associated with your work and the broader industry. A personal brand is a prerequisite for leadership.

However, personal branding is not a self-promotion campaign. Rather, your personal brand starts with demonstrating excellence in what you do by delivering consistent technical expertise and exhibiting honesty, integrity, and ethical and professional behavior. Speaking at industry events and publishing articles

builds on this critical foundation of expertise and integrity.

Another requirement is to network, network, network. Social media is helpful, but there is nothing better than face time to build relationships, which are the key to business and professional development. You can be great at what you do, have the utmost integrity, and lecture and be published, but if you don't have solid relationships, you won't get referrals. There is nothing better than doing deals together to build strong relationships. The next best way to build referral relationships is getting involved in the industry. Volunteer and demonstrate your interest and willingness to get involved.

While there are several organizations in our industry, many of which I have supported, I found TMA to be a great place to facilitate the building of my personal brand. As a chapter-based association, TMA allows you to start locally. Attend local chapter events, volunteer for a chapter committee, and serve on the chapter board. Participate in affinity groups like TMA NextGen or TMA NOW and build on your engagement. From the chapter level, continue to build on leadership by becoming a trustee and then joining the Executive Board. It's a long journey but well worth every step.

TMA Global is well positioned for continued growth and success worldwide. I am honored to have kept up the legacy of my recent predecessors, Judge Kevin Carey, Tom Kim, and Ron Sussman. I wish my successors, David Cohen and Milly Chow, the greatest success in their leadership roles. I also want to thank CEO Greg Fine and the fantastic staff at TMA Global in Chicago for making me look good. ■