Natasha Jarosckak's Blog: Do Midsize Managing Partners really know how their firm is fairing?

Posted by Natasha Jarosckak Mar 20, 2015

I had the fortune of attending American Legal Media’s Managing Partner Breakfast in Pittsburgh, PA on Tuesday March 17. This is the fifth year that ALM has hosted this event for Managing Partners in which national and regional insights into the legal market are shared.

This year’s event was sponsored by Thomson Reuters and attracted 40 leaders from 28 local firms (most of which were midsize). Kim Desmarais from Peer Monitor presented quantitative information from Peer Monitor with qualitative information weaved throughout from PALaw’s annual Managing Partner survey. The result was comprehensive look into managing partners view of their firm’s outlook in contrast to what statistical data outlines is actually happening. Fascinating!

One thing that remained true through the presentation is that the individual outlook of the Managing Partner is often more positive than what data indicates. For instance, on one particular slide, Kim showed data from the survey that showed that 57% of respondents felt that partner profits would increase. However, the Peer Monitor data proved that partner profits in midsize firms actually slightly decreased year over year. The participants present in the room seemed to be surprised at what the Peer Monitor data showed, which lead me to wonder if Managing Partners really have a handle on actual firm data. If the answer is no, how can Thomson Reuters address these issues and provide Managing Partners with the data to help make intelligent decisions to keep their firms growing into the future? With the emphasis the company is placing upon innovation and new ideas, this question could be an interesting one to pursue further. If you have any ideas or suggestions, feel free to place them in the comments section below.