

The logo consists of the word "BOOST" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. It is positioned inside a dark teal, irregular blob shape. This dark teal shape is partially overlapping a larger, light blue, irregular blob shape that also contains the word "BOOST" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

**BOOST**

Where Law Firm Growth Minds Meet

# Summary Report

Senior BD Leaders Think Tank:  
The evolving role of business  
development in Saudi law firms

Riyadh, KSA – 7 May 2025



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# Foreword

On 7 May, we hosted a Business Development and Marketing Think Tank in Riyadh, bringing together senior BD professionals from international, regional, and local law firms operating in Saudi Arabia. The roundtable-style discussion was designed to openly explore the evolving nature of business development within the Kingdom, sharing strategic insights, practical experiences, and addressing common challenges.

We were genuinely amazed by the passion participants expressed for their roles, as well as their deep and nuanced understanding of the Saudi market. Their insights into local market dynamics, combined with their strategic approach to client relationship management, highlighted their sophisticated grasp of the unique opportunities and competitive pressures within this rapidly developing landscape.

The dialogue was notably focused on what clients truly value in their relationships with law firms. The group highlighted the importance of personal interactions, tailored strategies, and understanding the intricate expectations clients have in a highly competitive and fast-paced environment like Saudi Arabia. Despite ongoing regulatory changes, which inevitably introduce complexities for law firms, there was clear recognition of best practices in BD and marketing strategies to navigate these challenges effectively.

Given the depth and enthusiasm of our conversations, we left the session feeling there was so much more to explore. We look forward to returning to Saudi Arabia to continue these vital discussions, confident that the insights shared can continue to shape the future direction of BD and marketing within the region.

Our warmest thanks to all participants who generously contributed their experiences, perspectives, and passion, making this Think Tank a truly impactful event.

*Barbara & Jeanne-Sophie*

Co-Founders of BOOST



# Discussion points

## Professional insights and market awareness

Several insights stood out during the discussion, particularly regarding the local market context and how this shapes BD roles:

- **Client engagement:** There was unanimous agreement on the importance of in-person client interaction in the Saudi market. Relationship building remains a cultural imperative, and professionals find face-to-face engagement both more effective and more valued by clients.
- **Market intelligence:** BD professionals demonstrated strong awareness of ongoing market shifts. They are expected to understand the dynamics between legacy firms and new entrants, and they closely track opportunities arising from mega-projects and national investment initiatives.
- **Policy and regulation:** Participants spoke confidently about the impact of recent regulatory developments, such as Saudization and new conflict-of-interest rules, which are already influencing how firms engage with certain clients or sectors.
- **Forward-looking perspectives:** There is a general anticipation that the legal market will experience consolidation, particularly among smaller Saudi firms. BD teams are beginning to prepare for this by strengthening firm positioning and identifying strategic partnership opportunities.

## Challenges and observations

The session also surfaced several recurring challenges and areas of contrast:

- **Partner engagement:** Across the board, securing meaningful partner involvement in BD was seen as a hurdle, particularly within smaller or less structured firms.
- **Referral strategies:** While some firms are deploying incentives to drive referral generation, this remains an underdeveloped area with clear opportunity for impact.
- **Data and structure:** There remains a marked difference between international firms and local firms in terms of structured BD strategies. That said, a number of Saudi firms are remarkably advanced in their data use, showing a strong ROI focus in their marketing and BD activities.
- **Adoption of data-driven approaches:** Despite general appreciation for the value of data, only half of the professionals reported using it consistently as part of their decision-making processes.



# Looking forward

## Career development and influence

A final area of discussion revolved around the career trajectories of BD professionals and the recognition of the function:

- Most attendees entered legal BD roles serendipitously rather than through planned career pathways. However, their non-legal backgrounds have become a clear strength in shaping strategic client approaches.
- While BD professionals are not yet consistently present at board level, there is a clear trend toward greater influence and integration in firm-wide strategic decisions.

## Closing reflections

This Think Tank session provided a valuable snapshot of the growing maturity and strategic relevance of the BD profession in the Saudi legal market. It also reinforced the need for:

- Better integration of client and market data into daily decision-making.
- A more systematic approach to partner engagement and internal alignment.
- Continued investment in BD professionals as strategic enablers for law firm growth.

BOOST remains committed to empowering BD professionals across the Middle East with platforms for exchange, support, and upskilling, and we look forward to continuing these conversations in the months ahead.



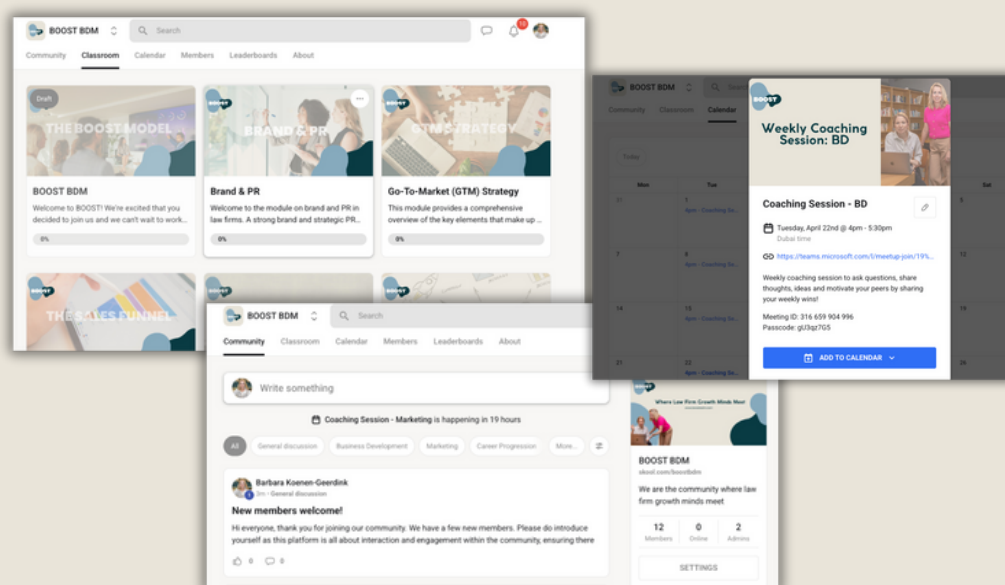
# About BOOST

BOOST is a unique training and community platform dedicated exclusively to Business Development and Marketing professionals within the legal industry. We empower our members by providing expert-led learning, meaningful networking opportunities, and strategic insights tailored specifically for law firms.

Founded by industry professionals who deeply understand the evolving demands and intricacies of legal business development, BOOST is designed to elevate the role of BD and marketing from operational support to strategic drivers within law firms. Through engaging workshops, interactive think tanks, and comprehensive online resources, our platform addresses key professional challenges, from client relationship management and business generation to brand positioning and digital transformation.

BOOST members become part of an exclusive community where best practices are shared, new ideas flourish, and professional relationships thrive. Our mission is to support continuous professional growth, foster proactive industry dialogue, and enhance the strategic impact of BD and marketing professionals globally.

Want to join BOOST or learn more about us? We'd love to hear from you; get in touch today and discover how you can be part of shaping the future of business development and marketing in the legal sector at [hello@boostbdm.com](mailto:hello@boostbdm.com).





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