

SMOCK♦STERLING

Strategic Management Consultants



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John Sterling is a Partner with and the co-founder of Smock♦Sterling Strategic Management Consultants. He has over 25 years experience in the areas of strategic management and marketing. John has a depth of experience in and knowledge of the professional services industry and has developed expertise in several industries throughout his consulting career (including healthcare, metro newspapers, and consumer products). John's qualifications for serving law and professional service firms include:

- Strategic management, market research, and marketing planning assignments for approximately 200 law firms, including the following recent examples:
 - Leadership of the strategic planning process for one of Wisconsin's leading law firms – a highly participative process that led to broad agreement on a new firm wide strategic direction.
 - Conduct of proprietary market research projects focused on due diligence regarding the market reputations of potential merger partners. These research projects have been carried out on behalf of leading law firms actively pursuing firm combinations in major U.S. cities.
 - Research driven profiling of merger and acquisition candidates – driving short list development, informing initial contact with potential partners, and highlighting issues for further investigation and negotiation.
 - Leadership of a project involving detailed analysis of prospective merger partners' finances, cultural alignment and strategic synergies – enabling both firms to evaluate the feasibility of the potential merger quickly, discretely and with a consistent focus on facts.
 - External market research and strategic plan development for a large practice group within a national law firm. John helped this practice identify profitable market segments and – using our proprietary strategic planning methodology – helped the client develop strategies to grow its business in those areas.
- Strategic management and market research assignments for several professional service organizations outside the legal profession – including brand/corporate identity research, national and international practice area strategic planning, and other proprietary research projects.
- A member of the Board of Directors and President of the Strategic Management Association in Chicago – and, a Contributing Editor to *Strategy & Leadership* – a leading journal focused on strategic management topics and research.

John led the strategic planning for a client recently awarded the Richard Goodman Strategic Planning Award given to the process that most *"approaches strategic planning in a way that directly increases the organization's performance."*

Prior to joining Smock♦Sterling, John was a Senior Consultant with Ernst & Young's Great Lakes Strategic Management and Marketing Group and was a Senior Policy Analyst at The University of Illinois at Chicago.

John has a B.S. in Advertising, magna cum laude, from the University of Illinois - Urbana/Champaign and an M.B.A. with honors from the University of Illinois at Chicago with concentrations in Strategic Management and Marketing.