



Northern Virginia Chapter

2018 IDEA Award Submission: *Friday Fast Five*

The Northern Virginia Chapter is proud to put forward the *Friday Fast Five* as their submission for the 2018 IDEA Award.

The idea for the *Friday Fast Five* came from our Chapter President, Megan Pfeifle, who receives regular newsletters, including the ALA BOLD Bites. She realized that not all articles provided in such newsletters were relevant to the challenges she faced on a daily basis and began thinking other members in the Chapter may experience this too.

Megan presented this dilemma to the Chapter Board with the innovative idea to create a Northern Virginia Chapter specific newsletter. Education has been a focal point this year, and members voiced their desire for additional educational opportunities. The *Friday Fast Five* gave the Chapter the perfect opportunity to create a customized educational platform which would meet their needs.

The mission for the *Friday Fast Five* is simple: the newsletter delivers relevant educational content to our members that could help them with their specific day-to-day firm challenges without taking up too much of their time. By offering relevant industry topics we were sure we could deliver a weekly newsletter members would look forward to receiving.

After the project received the green light from the Chapter Board, the team worked together to implement it immediately. Our project team consisted of our Chapter President, Megan, and our Past-President/Treasurer, Ben Sotelo. During the project preparation, team members communicated via e-mail and telephone calls to brainstorm and discuss costs. We contacted our Business Partner, Accrisoft, to build us a [specialized online platform](#) to archive all of the articles by industry.

The team then began to build an archive by scouring the internet, reaching out to current Business Partners for articles, and asking members for topic ideas. We additionally reached out further than our Chapter and began talking with non-ALA vendors in the legal industry, whose expertise could benefit our members via the *Friday Fast Five*. Everyone we spoke to happily contributed articles or ideas.

Within one month the *Friday Fast Five* launched, with the first edition being distributed on July 14, 2017. The project cost \$735.00 for the online website platform, which was billed as a separate line-item on the budget. No fundraiser was needed since the cost post-platform build was simply volunteer time by our *Friday Fast Five* content committee. Preparing each newsletter only takes our volunteers a few hours per month.



The measurement of the success of the *Friday Fast Five* was easy to see. We began getting immediate feedback about what a great feature it was, not only within our Chapter, but also within Region 2. Leadership from Region 2 received the first installment and recommended we apply for the IDEA award. They were in agreement that such a project truly elevated our Chapter, which was one of our aims. At this same time, a member of Region 2 leadership requested to be added to the weekly mailer because he found the content to be useful. He still receives it today.

Our members voiced that they were getting quick ideas, resources, and support for the challenges they faced. They now had a medium to request or submit topics for continued educational growth. Two member endorsements are attached as Supporting Document 1.

An unintended result of the *Friday Fast Five* was two-fold. First, unbeknownst to us at the time, we had developed a new offering that added value to our Business Partner Program. This year we had already added the inclusion of white papers and blog posts to the Program, but welcoming the Business Partners to contribute articles to the *Friday Fast Five* caught the attention of everyone. Business Partners were excited about creating customized articles to meet the needs of our members. Second, our Business Partners themselves were interested in reading it! Soon, the *Friday Fast Five* delivery spread and became a weekly newsletter sent to both our members and the Business Partners. Endorsements from Planet Depos, a long-time Bronze Level Sponsor, and a legal industry vendor, One Digital, are attached as Supporting Document 2.

The impact of the *Friday Fast Five* was more than we could have imagined. Our Business Partners were getting more exposure and our members were readily getting assistance. When our leadership discussed the offering at legal networking events or with other ALA Chapters, it garnered support, interest, and encouragement. In November, the fire of the *Friday Fast Five* spread yet again and we began distributing it to the Hampton Roads and Western Virginia Chapters, uniting some of the state's Chapters in continued educational growth.

The *Friday Fast Five* is still carrying on like a storm and will be an ongoing Northern Virginia Chapter offering. Our volunteers continue to build an archive of future content for our members. While the Northern Virginia Chapter plans in the future to continue adding resources for our members, the *Friday Fast Five* was the creative first step. We truly feel the *Friday Fast Five* added significant value to not only our Chapter members, but to their firms, our Business Partners, and the surrounding legal community.



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Supporting Documents



Supporting Document 1 – Member Endorsements

Member Endorsements

One of the best benefits of the ALA is the educational tools available to its members and since it isn't always possible to meet every month or attend conferences, having a weekly educational tool is very helpful! The Friday Fast Five has been a wonderful new feature of our Northern VA Chapter and I look forward to the weekly email. I have found the articles selected are very relevant and I appreciate the variety offered as well. I have personally requested specific topics be addressed and the team that oversees the Friday Fast Five has always promptly responded and provided the articles, some within the next weekly Friday Fast Five!

Amanda Moellendick
IP Operations and Records Manager
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I would like to take this opportunity to thank Megan Pfeifle and others of the Northern Virginia ALA who are responsible for the Friday Fast Five. I look forward to receiving these articles every Friday, and have shared several at our weekly meetings with attorneys and staff. Of particular interest are the HR articles, client management and marketing on social media. The practice of law is evolving at a fast pace, and the topics addressed are well thought-out and relevant, all of which provide a great resource to its members and enhance our knowledge and skills as business professionals. Keep spreading the word!

Nancy Duff
Firm Administrator
Duff Kronfeld & Marquardt



Supporting Document 2 – Business Partner and Legal Industry Vendor Endorsements

Business Partner Endorsements

Planet Depos is a proud partner of the NOVA ALA chapter. The chapter continually engages in thought provoking projects like the Friday Fast Five. This innovative project is designed to engage members, legal administrators, and ALA Business partners. The program does a great job getting the word out about hot topics and trends in the law firm management industry. One of the ways this is accomplished is through their weekly communication, which thoroughly describes latest news in the legal market place. Planet Depos is both a contributor and supporter of this excellent program.

Gracemarie Braunburg
Planet Depos
Bronze Level Business Partner

Legal Industry Vendor Endorsements

Working in the fast paced, ever changing field of employee benefits, it is our leading priority to stay on top of industry trends and major market changes. Partnering with the NOVA ALA and backing their commitment to Friday Fast Five has allowed us the opportunity to supply relevant, forward thinking articles that serve as major educational resources—particularly when it comes to cutting-edge human resource management and communication efforts. Through the NOVA ALA, we have been able to provide a wealth of knowledge to members working in various fields to increase their level of confidence and awareness during client interactions. This initiative has shown itself to be quite a resourceful tool for individuals in diverse roles, and we are eager to continue supporting its efforts and growth.

Jon Kennedy
One Digital