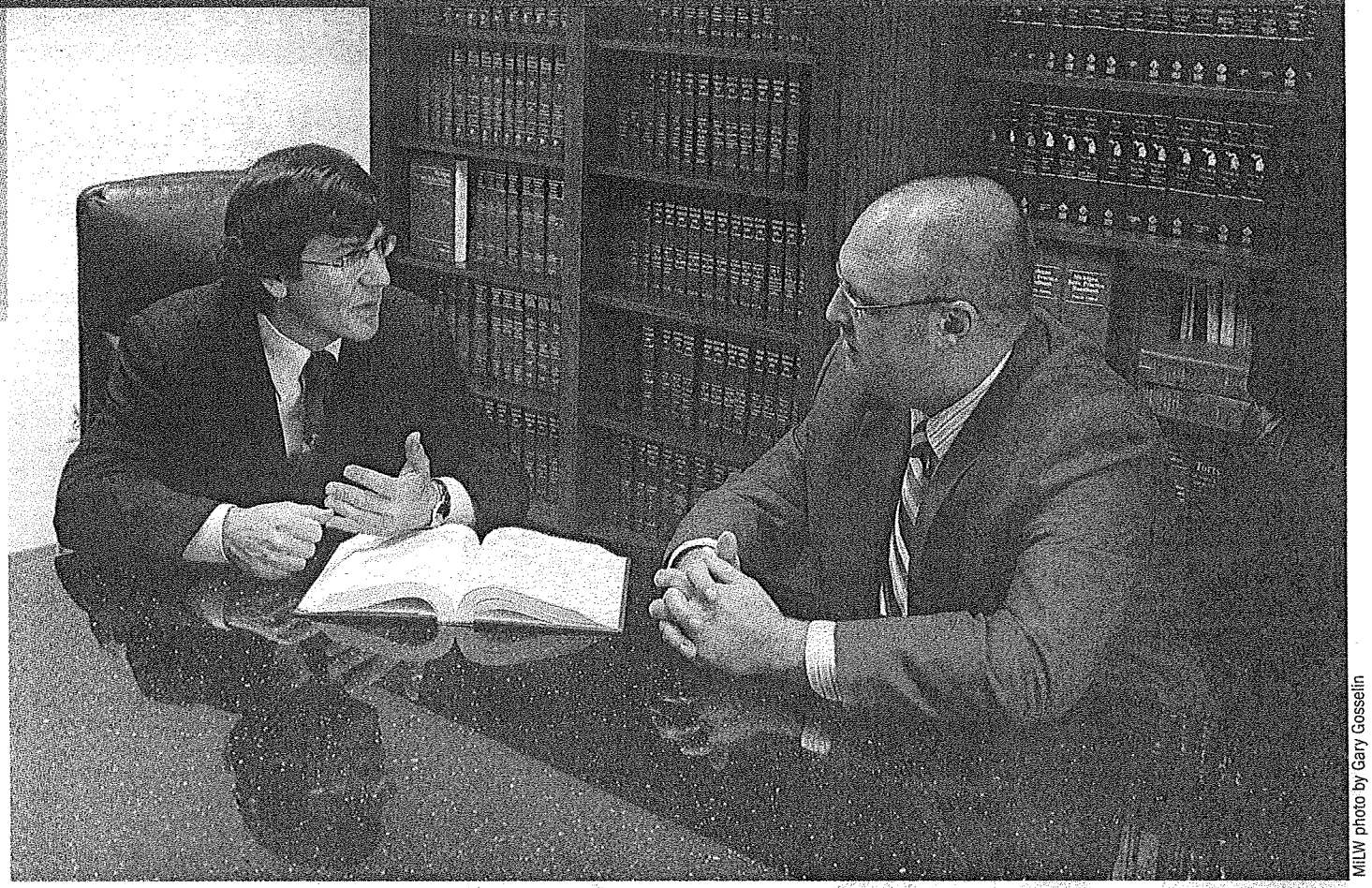
Mantese & Rossman, P.C.

Gerard V. Mantese, managing partner



MILW photo by Gary Gosselin

Gerard V. Mantese (left) and partner Mark C. Rossman place great emphasis on client communication and flexibility.

Sometimes an innovation can be a simple as getting back to the basics and honing in on what clients want.

Mantese and Rossman, P.C. has done just that, with a laser-focus on communicating every step of the process in addition to offering a variety of billing options to fit the clients' needs.

Hearing time and again from clients that other attorneys they dealt with were not communicating properly, or at all sometimes, and that their need for billing alternative weren't being met or even addressed, the firm sharply focused on those areas.

"One of the things we hear most often is, [clients] want to be kept informed; what's being done in their case, what's the cost, what are the options and what is the prognosis," said managing partner Gerard V. Mantese. "If the case is shaky because witnesses didn't come through, we tell them that, and when things are going good, we tell them that too.

"With us, we're on the phone, sending e-mails, sending mail," Mantese added. "And for some clients, we send them every piece of paper involved in the case. We get a surprising number of calls from people who are unhappy [elsewhere] because they just don't know what's going on."

The firm has implemented a very precise litigation plan, with details about potential contingencies like additional discovery costs or potential heavy briefing, in order to avoid surprises to the client.

Mantese & Rossman is aggressive in filing dispositive motions earlier in the process and often gets good results early on and gains momentum, Mantese said. Often, thousands are saved in discovery, and the proactive approach often helps address the outcome and assess settlement options.

The firm, which has six attorneys and four staff, also diversified its practice, which focuses on business litigation. It now does some construction litigation, complicated divorce proceedings, ERISA, bankruptcy and represents several banks.

Recently, its attorneys worked on a large, high profile autism insurance case against Blue Cross Blue Shield — and won.

"Other firms ask, 'How do you have such a diversity?' And it's that way because we have the energy level to master the different areas of law," Mantese said.

The firm has varied its fee structure depending on the needs of the client, including flat fee, contingency and a mix of hourly and contingency.

"We think it's imperative to be courteous and professional and not get involved in nasty skirmishes on timing of depositions and procedural maters that do nothing but waste the client's money," Mantese said. "It makes no sense to pound your chest and yell out a Tarzanian roar if you're not saving money."

Mantese and partner Mark. C. Rossman own their building on Big Beaver in Troy, and are now planning to build a mock courtroom in the facility in order to better train and prepare for those times when court is absolutely necessary, Mantese said.

— GARY GOSSELIN

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