

attorneyatwork™



REALLY GOOD IDEAS FOR YOUR LAW PRACTICE

MAGAZINE | NO. 1

LEVEL UP YOUR **MARKETING**

SPECIAL ISSUE:
BEST OF
ATTORNEY AT
WORK

LEVEL UP YOUR MARKETING

It's been 18 months since the COVID-19 shutdown ushered in the era of #WFH, social distancing and Zoom fatigue, and we've been pivoting and persevering ever since. Remember those first months when client work threatened to disappear and things got really quiet? When you were wondering whether it was OK to keep on marketing and, if so, how?

Successful Firms Have Leveled Up Their Marketing. We've been living through some unprecedented times, but we've learned a thing or two about surviving uncertainty and chaos. As for marketing during a pandemic? We've learned that firms with the most success have doubled down, increasing marketing budgets, embracing risk, and reaching out to clients in new ways. To compete today—to remain viable, scale your practice or expand your offerings—you must be willing to embrace risk and test new approaches.

"If you want to seize an opportunity, you must take risk. If you want to grow, you must make mistakes. If you want to reach your potential, you will have to take chances. If you don't, you'll be resigned to a life of mediocrity."

—James C. Maxwell

To that end, this inaugural issue of **Attorney at Work Magazine** is aimed at opening your mind to the possibilities. You'll find good ideas and commonsense advice from more than a dozen marketing pros—the best of AttorneyatWork.com—all designed to help you level up.

Our mission, as always, is to help you keep your commitment to creating a law practice you love.

—Joan Feldman & Tatia Gordon-Troy



Attorney at Work P.O. Box 352, Lake Zurich IL 60047
www.attorneyatwork.com | 847.847.7405

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Joan H. Feldman

MANAGING EDITOR

Tatia Gordon Troy

EDITOR

Joy M. White

PUBLISHER

Mark Feldman

Attorney at Work is a registered trademark of Attorney at Work. All content © 2021 by Attorney at Work except where otherwise expressly indicated. All rights reserved

Cover Photo © by Nathan Dumlaio on Unsplash

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Attorney at Work magazine is available digitally free of charge to registered subscribers of AttorneyatWork.com. To subscribe, visit attorneyatwork.com/subscribe

Attorney at Work Magazine is published by Attorney at Work. Attorney at Work's mission is to provide lawyers, legal professionals and law firm business professionals the practical information and inspiration needed to create a law practice and a life you love. Since 2011, contributors to our website—hundreds of industry experts, thought leaders and award-winning writers—have been delivering tips and ideas to tackle the everyday challenges of running a law practice and serving clients so you can keep your practice humming.

This publication is provided for informational and educational purposes only. Author views do not necessarily represent the official position of Attorney at Work. Attorney at Work does not assume any responsibility for statements made by contributors and advertisers in the publication.

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Please contact Mark Feldman, 224.789.0055, mark@attorneyatwork.com

CONTENTS

2 Editor's Note

4 Contributors

YOUR ROADMAP TO GROWTH

6 Writing Your Annual Law Firm Marketing Plan
by Sally Schmidt

10 A 30-Day Business Development Plan for Lawyers
by Jay Harrington

14 How Do You Know It's Time to Hire a Marketing or Business Development Professional?
by Kate Shipham

17 Your Competition Is Lazy: 3 Things Small Law Firms Can Do to Find New Business Now
by Roy Ginsburg

19 Six Business Development Strategies for Lawyers
by Sally Schmidt

21 Business Development Mistakes Lawyers Make (and What to Do Instead)
by Jay Harrington

24 Targeting an Industry Niche: 7 Steps to Build Your Expertise
by Sally Schmidt

YOUR DIGITAL PRESENCE GAME PLAN

28 Quick Ways to Boost Your Visibility and Stay Top of Mind with Clients
by Laura Ernde

32 Law Firm Digital Marketing: 5 Free and Quick Tips to Get Started
by Annette Choti

36 Local Marketing: Get More Clients Now and After the COVID-19 Shutdown
by Mike Ramsey

40 Eight Online Marketing & Business Development Mistakes Most Law Firms Make
by Julie Savarino

42 10 Tips for a More Effective, Personable Attorney Bio
by Gina Rubel

45 A LinkedIn Profile Update: How to Stand Out in 4 Simple, Achievable Steps
by Tea Hoffmann

49 10 Tips for Better Engagement on LinkedIn
by Ari Kaplan

50 Marketing Metrics: What You Need to Know Now
by Mark Homer

BUILDING YOUR BRAND THROUGH CONTENT

54 Dominating Legal Content Marketing
by Ruth Carter

58 Five Best Practices for Law Firm Content Marketing
by Jay Harrington

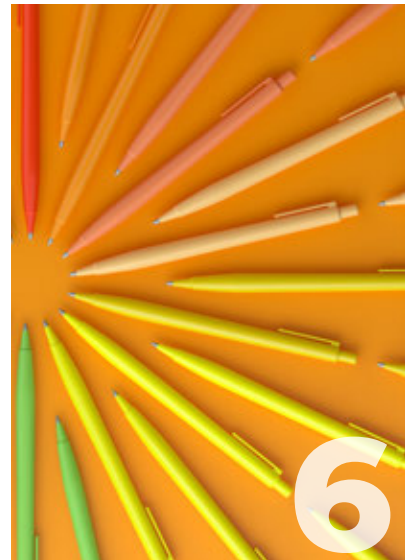
62 Lawyers, You Write for a Living; Now, Write to Build Your Brand
by Tatia L. Gordon-Troy

STAYING IN COMPLIANCE

66 Six Things Every Lawyer (and Marketer) Should Know About Lawyer Advertising Ethics
by Will Hornsby

THE PIVOT

70 Staying Competitive: Tips from Legal Marketing Pros
by Jennifer Simpson Carr



Contributors



Jennifer Carr is Director of Business Development at Furia Rubel where she leads relationship management with prospective, new and existing clients. She tracks market and emerging trends, supports the agency's client value proposition, and assists the agency and clients with establishing competitive advantage, winning new business, and implementing strategies that impact long-term business objectives. Visit FuriaRubel.com for more information



Ruth Carter is lawyer, writer, entrepreneur and professional speaker. Ruth is Of Counsel with Venjuris, focusing on intellectual property, business, internet and flash mob law. Named an ABA Journal Legal Rebel, Ruth is a sought-after speaker and the author of several books, including "[The Legal Side of Blogging for Lawyers](#)." Ruth blogs at UndeniableRuth.com, writes Attorney at Work's "Nothing But the Ruth!" column and tweets @rbcarter.



Annette Choti graduated from law school 20 years ago, and is the CEO & Owner of Law Quill, a legal digital marketing agency focused on small and solo law firms. Annette used to do theatre and professional comedy, which is not so different from the legal field if we are all being honest. Annette can be found on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/annettechoti/) or at annette@lawquill.com.



Laura Ernde is a communications and media relations consultant in the legal industry. Previously, she was communications director at the State Bar of California and covered the California Supreme Court for the state's largest legal newspaper. Laura uses her background as a legal journalist and State Bar communications director to help lawyers and law firms engage with clients and potential clients. Connect with her on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/laurasernde/) or laura.ernde@gmail.com.



Roy S. Ginsburg is an attorney coach and law firm consultant who has practiced law for more than 30 years. He works with individual lawyers and law firms nationwide in the areas of business development, practice management, career development, and strategic and succession planning. Contact Roy at www.royginsburg.com.



Jay Harrington is the owner of Harrington Communications, a thought-leadership PR and marketing agency that specializes in helping law firms build awareness, influence and new business. Jay is the author of "The Productivity Pivot" and "One of a Kind: A Proven Path to a Profitable Practice." He podcasts at The Thought Leadership Project. Learn more at www.hcommunications.biz.



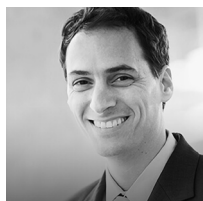
Tea Hoffmann is managing principal at Law Strategy Corp, helping law firms make the changes necessary to become more profitable, strategic and focused. LSC provides training, coaching, retreat presentations and strategic planning. Tea is a former practicing lawyer who has served as a GC for a publicly traded company, a CBDO at an AmLaw 100 firm, and chief strategy officer at an AmLaw 200 firm. Learn more at lawstrategycorp.com.



Mark Homer is CEO of GNGF (Get Noticed Get Found), a digital marketing agency for law firms, and author of the [best-selling book on digital marketing for lawyers](#). GNGF specializes in helping firms build a quality online presence to protect their referrals and grow their leads using an integrated approach of online and offline marketing. Contact him at mark@gngf.com and visit www.gngf.com for more information.



Will Hornsby is an attorney focused on the professional responsibility of innovative and tech-based legal services. After serving as staff counsel in the ABA's Division for Legal Services for 30 years, Will now champions access to legal services through his own law firm. He writes and speaks extensively on issues of ethics, technology and client development. Learn more at www.willhornsbylaw.com.



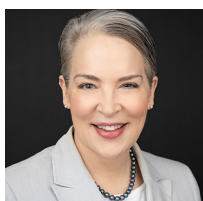
Ari Kaplan is an attorney and legal industry analyst. He is the author of "[Reinventing Professional Services](#)" and "The Opportunity Maker," and he hosts the Reinventing Professionals podcast and the Virtual Lunch on Zoom, and is an international speaker. His firm publishes benchmarking reports on technology trends as well as delivering networking, public speaking, and business development training and coaching. Visit www.AriKaplanAdvisors.com.



Mike Ramsey is the Founder of Nifty Marketing and Nifty Law, which brings digital marketing, website design, SEO and content marketing to firms nationwide, and Managing Partner of Bold+Stone investments in Burley, Idaho. One of the foremost authorities on local search, Mike is the author of "Winning at Local Search: The Nifty Guide to Digital Marketing for Lawyers" and a top-rated speaker at events such as Mozcon, Smx, Pubcon. Follow him on [LinkedIn](#).



Gina F. Rubel is the CEO of Furia Rubel Communications, Inc. Corporate and law firm leaders call on Gina for high-stakes public relations, crisis planning, and incident response support including high profile litigation media relations. Gina is a widely acknowledged expert on legal marketing and law firm PR and is a sought-after speaker and media expert. Her latest book is "[Everyday Public Relations for Lawyers, 2nd Edition](#)." Contact her at FuriaRubel.com.



Julie Savarino holds an MBA, a JD, and is a licensed attorney. Over her 30+ year career, she has built a reputation as an award-winning business and client development and service strategist, coach and content producer. She has served in-house in client and business development positions for Dickinson Wright and Butzel Long, and for accounting firm Grant Thornton. Connect with Julie on [LinkedIn](#) or at BusDevInc.com.



Sally Schmidt, President of [Schmidt Marketing, Inc.](#), helps lawyers and law firms grow their practices. She was a founder and the first President of the Legal Marketing Association, is a Fellow of the College of Law Practice Management and one of the first inductees to LMA's Hall of Fame. She is the author of "Marketing the Law Firm: Business Development Techniques" and "Business Development for Lawyers: Strategies for Getting and Keeping Clients."



Kate Harry Shipham is principal of [KHS People](#), an executive search firm placing business developers and marketers into professional services firms. Her background is solely within professional services firms, initially as a practicing attorney and then as a search and recruiting professional prior to launching KHS in 2017. She is active in the Midwest Chapter of the Legal Marketing Association. Learn more at KHSPeople.com.

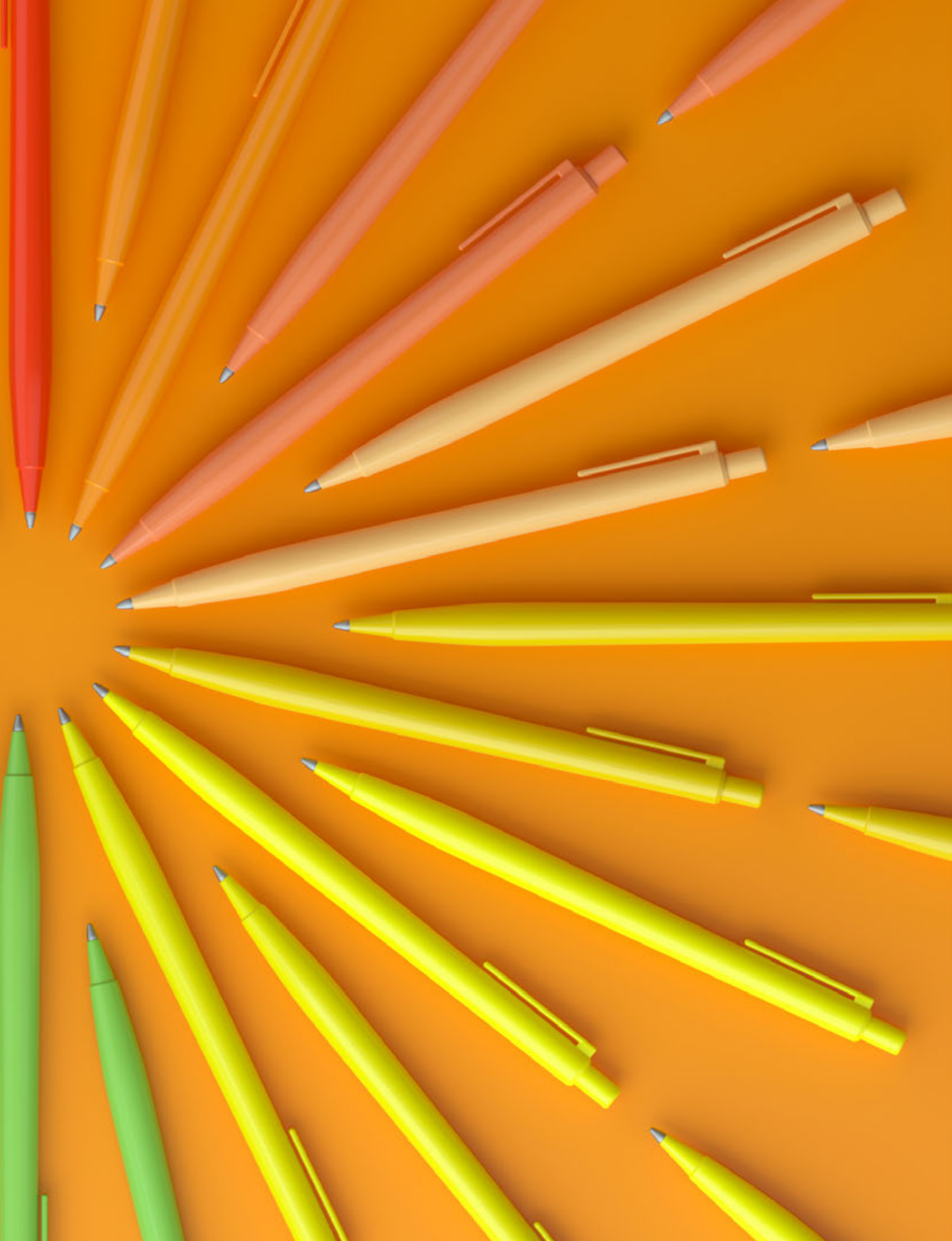


Tatia Gordon-Troy is the founder and CEO of Ramses House Publishing LLC, an author services company designed to help lawyers and law firms independently publish to leverage their expertise and grow their businesses. An attorney, writer, editor, and award-winning publisher, Tatia posts a regular column on [LinkedIn](#) called "Behind the Book," which offers advice to budding authors. Learn more at www.publishingforlawyers.com.

WRITING YOUR ANNUAL LAW FIRM MARKETING PLAN

This is the time of year when many law firms require their lawyers to develop a personal marketing or business development plan. There are many benefits to the process—including research that shows writing down your goals makes it more likely you will achieve them.

BY SALLY J. SCHMIDT



I am a big believer in writing down your plan. A lot of lawyers will tell me they have plans ... but those plans are simply ideas in their heads. Research by Dominican University of California has demonstrated that writing one's goals enhances goal achievement; in other words, if you write down a goal, you are more likely to achieve it.

Creating a Business Development Plan: What to Write Down

Without getting mired in jargon, I recommend the following elements:

1. Goals. These are more aspirational and usually unlikely to be achieved in a year. Examples include:

- "Position myself as one of the top ERISA lawyers in the city."
- "Develop referral relationships with mid-size accounting firms."
- "Learn more about my clients' businesses."

2. Objectives. A lot of lawyers set broad goals but those can be difficult to accomplish without more specificity. So your plan also needs objectives. An objective typically is something that can be accomplished in a year and is measurable. Examples of objectives to match up with the goals above include:

- ERISA: "Engage in three thought-leadership activities in 2018."
- Referrals: "Identify and meet two new accountants."
- Business: "Go on-site to visit a client once a quarter."

3. Strategies and activities. Then, you will need to identify specific strategies and activities to accomplish your objectives. For example:

- ERISA: "Submit a proposal to give a presentation on executive compensation to the local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management."
- Referrals: "Research midsize accounting firms to identify people with a similar clientele. Invite them to lunch to discuss our practices and referral opportunities."
- Business: "Contact XYZ Corp. to schedule a visit in the first quarter of 2018."

Other Benefits of Writing Down Your Plan

In addition to being more likely to achieve your goals, there are many other benefits to a written plan, among them:

- Acting, rather than reacting. A business development plan should help you focus on the activities that will be the best uses of your limited time and resources. Sure, at the end of the year, you may look back and say you wrote some articles or gave some speeches, but were they things you chose to do or things you did because someone asked? You only have so much time, so use it wisely.
- Avoiding "random acts of marketing." Lawyers often get motivated to start "doing stuff" when work is slow. After that litigation matter settles, you feel the need to start calling people or accepting invitations for lunch or coffee. But are you spending time with the right people? In your plan, you should identify the people with whom it makes the most sense to build relationships, so your actions will be more intentional.

- Identifying and promoting your distinctive competence. Your plan should identify the area or niches you want to have people associate with your practice. Then your activities, from internal efforts (e.g., to become a go-to person in your firm) to external activities (such as organizational involvement or webinars), should support your targeted practice areas.
- Tying your actions back to goals. Every potential opportunity you face, from an invitation to join a board to an opportunity to give a speech, should be reviewed against your plan to see if it fits your goals and objectives. Will there be times you diverge from the plan? Of course. But at least the plan will give you a context for making good decisions.
- Providing accountability. Having things written down will help you measure your progress and hold yourself accountable for implementation.
- Sustaining your efforts. The hardest thing about marketing is that it's never really done. A plan will help you identify next steps so you continue your efforts.

Two Important Tips for Success

Finally, here are two tips for making your plan successful.

- First, break your activities down into smaller, manageable steps. If your goal is to build a reputation in liability issues involving autonomous vehicles and your objective is to write an article, start by identifying some potential places to publish it. The next step might be to develop a one-paragraph synopsis of the article to pitch to the media. After that, you could write your outline. Writing an article might seem overwhelming, so take it in stages.

“A business development plan should help you focus on the activities that will be the best uses of your limited time and resources.”

— *Sally J. Schmidt*

- Second, keep your plan handy and look at it regularly. Put it in your top drawer or next to your phone. Calendar a reminder notice to look at your plan on the first of each month and select activities for the next 30 days. While there is some value in simply going through the planning process, the key to your success will be implementation. Find a way to keep your plan top of mind and remind yourself of your commitments. @



A 30-DAY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Your Business Development Plan Should Focus on Genuine Attempts to Help Clients

BY JAY HARRINGTON

Assuming you're not a corporate restructuring lawyer, you may have a bit of extra time on your hands in the weeks, or perhaps months, to come as the economy continues to hibernate.

You've likely heard mixed messages about whether you should be engaging in business development activities while the economy is struggling and the pandemic continues. My take is, yes, you absolutely

should. However, it's critical to understand what types of activities are appropriate for the moment. Just as Justice Potter Stewart struggled to define "obscenity," the term "business development" means different things to different lawyers.

Now is not the time to try to convince people to buy your legal services. Attempts to convince often come off as desperate, unseemly, and tone-deaf. Rather—and this is true in good and bad times—your business development strategy should focus on exhibiting your integrity through genuine attempts to help your clients and prospects.

Helping Is Qualitatively Different from Convincing

When you set out to help, you empower those you hope to serve. They don't feel pressured, and you come across as a trusted advisor. When you set out to convince, you end up doing most of the talking. When helping is your only objective, you ask lots of questions and spend most of your time listening and empathizing. If the problems the client is facing, which will come to the surface through respectful conversation, require the assistance of legal counsel, you'll naturally be in a position to assist.

If you set out to help, the client, now empowered, will leave the interaction feeling like she took a positive step forward, rather than uncertain of whether you just talked her into something she didn't need or couldn't afford. In most cases, genuine conversation marked by empathic engagement won't immediately lead to new business opportunities. But that's true of any business development interaction.

Business development is a long game. Resist the urge to put on the hard sell despite not knowing how you'll get your normal number of hours billed this month. The best way to generate new business, now and once the crisis has passed, is to main-

"Business development is a long game. Resist the urge to put on the hard sell despite not knowing how you'll get your normal number of hours billed this month. The best way to generate new business, now and once the crisis has passed, is to maintain your posture as the confident expert who is ready to serve the client on her timetable, not your own."

—Jay Harrington

tain your posture as the confident expert who is ready to serve the client on her timetable, not your own.

Unless your practice is one that thrives during counter-cyclical periods, plan for and accept the fact that you'll likely take a hit. No one knows how long this economic downturn will last. However, it's essential to focus on what is within your control. You can't afford to sit back and wait, nor come across as aggressive or desperate. It's time to help, and here are some ideas for taking steps forward and setting yourself up for business development success over the next 30 days.

Focus on Less, Not More

Now is the time to organize around your strengths. Demand for legal services is contracting, so you need to differentiate yours. Set aside all the tangential practice areas you've dabbled in over the years, and go all-in on what you do best. When talking with clients and prospects, don't offer them a grab-bag of services to choose from—that reeks of desperation. Instead, explore what challenges they're facing and seek to determine whether

there's alignment between your expertise and their pain points. Regardless of the immediate outcome, the client will walk away from the conversation with a positive feeling engendered by a sense they were being advised by a discerning professional.

Action Step: Complete the following sentence: I help [clients] with [services]. Try to narrow "clients" down to those within a specific industry (or a small number of industries). If you have a consumer practice, such as estate planning, create a demographic profile of your ideal client (net worth, profession, geography, etc.). For "services," focus on one or two of your core services—the things you do best. Organize your marketing and business development around your narrowly defined positioning.

Five Calls per Week

Having genuine, empathic conversations in which you come across as the expert requires that you take the initiative to schedule interactions with your clients and prospects. Many lawyers are hesitant to reach out to clients to schedule business development-related calls. You shouldn't be, as long as you're not framing the conversation as one that involves pitching.

In times of uncertainty, especially when many people have a bit of extra time on their hands and are feeling isolated, interactions with trusted advisors are welcome. If you're setting out to help, not pitch, your clients will be receptive to talking with you. In some cases—though not all—these conversations can lead to new business opportunities, either now or after the world regains its footing.

Action Step: Schedule at least five off-the-clock calls every week with existing, former and prospective clients. Use email to schedule appointments, and phone or videoconferencing software to touch base.

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEP: Focus on less, not more. Complete the sentence: "I help [clients] with [services]."

ACTION STEP: Schedule at least five off-the-clock calls every week.

ACTION STEP: Crank up your production of thought leadership content.

ACTION STEP: Tap your network. (If there ever was a time to make a respectful "ask" of your colleagues, friends, and clients, it is now.)

ACTION STEP: Establish new habits. Start investing in yourself by selling yourself one hour of your time every day.

ACTION STEP: Make yourself visible. Spend 15 minutes every day on LinkedIn (or your social media platform of choice).

Have a series of questions ready, starting with personal inquiries (How are you and your family members holding up?) and easing toward business matters (What are some of the biggest challenges your business is facing from the pandemic?). Don't push or nudge. Add value where you can. Listen carefully. Aim to help, which will trigger the client to ask for your help when appropriate.

Create Thought Leadership Content

One of the ways to reach people at scale is by to create valuable content. You can't be everywhere, but your ideas can be. When someone reads something you've written that addresses a problem they're facing and offers a helpful solution, they'll be naturally inclined to think of you as the right expert to execute the solution.

Action Step: If you're already a prolific content creator, now is the time to hit the accelerator and crank up your production. If you're just getting started, try to write and publish at least one piece in the next 30 days. To make your efforts more effective, collaborate with a client or prospect on an article. (And here are some tips on how to [write better articles](#) during the COVID-19 crisis.)

Tap Your Network

If there ever was a time to make a respectful “ask” of your network of colleagues, friends, and clients, it is now. Using your narrow positioning, specify for members of your network the types of clients you're looking to connect with and the problems you can help them solve. And make your request reciprocal—ask your network how you can help them as well.

Action Step: Make a list of 50 people, from former colleagues to law school friends, and send individualized emails to each (no BCCing the group) asking if they might be able to put you in touch with someone you may be in a position to help. Make it easy on them by clearly spelling out the specific types of problems you can solve and for whom. Close each email by offering to help them reciprocally.

Establish New Habits

Business development is most effective when it becomes habitual. Success results from doing the right thing, at the right time, over and over. Breaking old habits is hard when you're stuck in old routines. Since we've all been thrown out of our routines, now is the perfect time to establish new and better habits—the most important of which is devoting time every day to business development.

Action Step: Start investing in yourself by selling yourself one hour of your time every day to engage in business development activities.

Remain Visible

Opportunities can be hard to come by, and it will be nearly impossible to capitalize on them if you're not remaining top of mind. Creating thought leadership content and scheduling phone calls are two great ways to stay visible. Still, you must supplement those with other activities, such as engaging with others on social media. Over the next 30 days, commit time every day to curate and share content relevant to your audience. Like and comment on other people's posts. Find ways to appear in others' news feeds by staying at the forefront of the social conversations happening in your area of focus.

Action Step: Spend 15 minutes every day on LinkedIn (or your social media platform of choice) with the objective of making one new connection, sharing one piece of content, and liking or commenting on someone else's post. @

RELATED ARTICLES

[“Law Firm Marketing 101: Identifying Your Ideal Client”](#) by Jay Harrington

[“Sell Yourself One Hour of Every Day”](#) by Jay Harrington

[“Four Ways to Use LinkedIn to Become a Thought Leader”](#) by Jay Harrington



HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S TIME TO HIRE A MARKETING OR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL?

Many smaller firms operate without one until someone realizes the firm's growth is curtailed.

BY KATE HARRY SHIPHAM

The marketing and business development (BD) function in law firms is an established, credible business service. Unless a firm acquires a marketing department as part of a merger, these departments are built—carefully and thoughtfully—over



time. But many smaller firms operate without one until someone realizes the firm's growth is curtailed because fee-earners are the ones doing all the heavy lifting. Sooner or later, all firms—even solo practices—find themselves asking “when” to hire a marketing or BD professional, closely followed by “how” to hire and whom.

Signs It's the Right Time to Hire

If you are answering “yes” to one or more of these five factors, then it's likely time to embark on hiring your first marketing or BD professional:

“A common failing is writing the entire marketing or BD function in one job description, rather than one well-considered role that meets immediate needs, from which you can grow.”

— *Kate Harry Shipman*

1. Your firm's market position or pipeline has shifted negatively, and you're not sure how to reverse that trend.
2. You have senior or named partners who have been key to generating revenue and who are leaving the firm in the coming years. Their successors do not have the same “rainmaker” abilities.
3. You have lawyers and partners who are showing an appetite or aptitude for acting on their own individual BD goals but don't have coaching and support to make them successful.
4. You have key lawyers and partners who are frequently talking about a website overhaul or a brand refresh but do not have the expertise or time to advance the projects.
5. You have non-marketing professionals, such as a paralegal or office manager, maintaining some marketing or BD activities, but no marketing or BD leader setting the strategy.

Common Missteps

Having identified the need to build a marketing or BD function, it's important to avoid some common missteps in implementing that plan:

■ **Confusing marketing and business development.** Many firm leaders do not understand the difference between marketing and BD. Many firms also define these functions very differently. Know where you need the most assistance and name it according to your specific needs and firm. For example, heavy-hitting BD activities include:

- Developing individual and practice group strategic plans aimed to increase revenue
- Developing customized pitch and proposal work (including coaching partners on pitch preparation)
- Conducting analysis of various markets and competition
- On the other hand, duties typically associated with the marketing function include:
- Brand enhancement
- Materials that support that brand
- Website messaging and content

■ **Asking for too little or too much experience.** Understand the level of seniority you need for this position and overall function. Do partners need to be guided and coached on this function (which indicates a more senior strategist) or do they need help in executing on their already identified goals (which suggests a mid-level professional)?

■ **Writing an unrealistic job description.** When writing the job description, think about how you want to prioritize responsibilities. A common failing is writing the entire marketing or BD function in one job description, rather than one well-considered role that meets immediate needs, from which you can grow.



■ **Lack of strategy.** Think about your recruiting strategy. Do you know enough about the role to identify the right candidates? What are the most important qualifications? Prior experience? Technical expertise? Cultural fit?

You Can't Know What You Don't Know

The danger lies in attempting to build a marketing or BD team despite a lack of experience with the field. Avoid missteps by seeking advice from those experienced with defining and recruiting the right marketing and BD team for a firm like yours. At the same time, ask peers to share what they've learned in building out their departments.

I add this for your consideration: Marketing and BD professionals provide a different way to grow the firm, both through existing and new streams of revenue. They are not restricted by a finite number of billable hours. They are professionals focused on building relationships who will supplement your lawyers and who have the liberty of taking a long-term view of the firm to achieve and—hopefully—exceed its strategic goals. @



YOUR COMPETITION IS LAZY: 3 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO FIND NEW BUSINESS NOW

Competitors Make It Easier
for Small Law Firms to Find
New Clients

BY ROY S. GINSBURG

The findings of Thomson Reuters fourth State of U.S. Small Law Firms survey were summarized on Attorney at Work in the post [“Small Law Firms Still Struggling With Finding New Business and Managing Administrative Tasks.”](#) That title accurately reflects the overall state of the world of small law firms. We’re going to focus here on the struggle to find new business since that is my sweet spot in the legal consulting world.

According to the survey, only 29% of firms have implemented changes to address the challenge of new client acquisition.

Put another way, more than 70% of small law firms are doing absolutely nothing new to find clients. Incredible!

Getting New Clients Boils Down to Three Simple Steps

If you're in that 70% and you're wondering what to do, just spend one hour on the web. You'll find that we consultants all say the same things, only in different ways.

For instance, I say that business development is a three-step process. You need to ensure that new clients or referral sources:

1. Get to **know** you.
2. Get to **like** you.
3. Get to **trust** you.

This is easy enough to understand. Of course, it's the execution of the process that separates the great rainmakers from the mediocre ones.

Qualities of Great Rainmakers

Contrary to what you may believe, the execution winners are not the "life of the party" personality types. They are *all* personality types. And they all have one thing in common: They follow what I call the three "Ps."

- They make business development a **priority**.
- They are **persistent** in their efforts to obtain business.
- They are **patient** to wait for the results of their efforts.

Focal Areas for Making It Rain

In today's small law firm world, lawyers wanting to make it rain should focus primarily on two areas: networking and digital marketing. The amount of effort in each area will usually vary by the practice area and geographic location.

Networking. Admittedly, in today's pandemic times, certain traditional networking activities have been placed on the back burner. But not everything is gone. You simply need to find something that works for you and stick to it.

Digital marketing. If you do just one thing different (e.g., start blogging, update your website, invest in SEO and Google Ads, etc.), you'll be way ahead of the game. Remember, 70% of your competitors will be doing nothing new to enhance their digital marketing. And imagine the payoff if you do more than one thing!

The Good News: Competitors Make It Easier for Small Law Firms to Find New Clients

I've always maintained lawyers have it pretty darned good. We have a monopoly that seriously limits competition. And the competition for client acquisition that we do face is lazy. So get off your you-know-what and get some new business! @

RELATED ARTICLES

["8 Legal Practices Growing in 2021 and Beyond"](#)
by Michael Rynowecer

["How to Stay Afloat as a Small Law Firm: Panic Is Not an Option"](#) by Conrad Saam

["3 Things to Do When There's Not Enough Work"](#)
by Theda C. Snyder



6 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR LAWYERS

Even when the usual lawyer business development tactics are off the table, there are always things you can do to stay in the game.

BY SALLY J. SCHMIDT

If you think marketing is hard during a pandemic, business development has an extra layer of difficulty. Most lawyers generate business by building relationships, usually through personal contact. Unfortunately, many opportunities for contact—from entertaining to visiting to attending conferences—have been off the table or vastly changed.

Yet clients are still hiring lawyers. While the edge right now goes to the incumbent, there remain things you can do to put yourself in a position to generate new business. Here are six strategies to consider.

1. Cross-Sell

Any conversation about lawyer business development should start with existing relationships: Are there opportunities to do more work for the clients or referral sources you already have? Start by preparing a “gap analysis” for a specific client, reflecting past representation (both substantive and geographic) as well as areas where you have not represented the client. Then put together a client team that includes people who can cover the services and jurisdictions that are blank on the chart. For example, if the client doesn’t use your firm for HR matters, brainstorm with an employment law colleague on ways that person can be introduced to the client (e.g., a gratis Zoom call on RIFs).

2. Be Visible

If you want to be on the short list for new files or referrals, you will need to be top of mind. Send out substantive information and helpful tools to prospects on a regular basis. If you do this more than your competition, you will have an edge. People are more likely to contact someone they haven’t worked with before if their current lawyers are not providing the same useful content.

3. Make Proactive Pitches

Many companies are using the pandemic as an opportunity to reassess their legal needs and relationships (read: budgets). This could be a great time to see if you can throw your name in the hat. Ask for an opportunity to submit a proposal or make a virtual pitch for new business. Nothing ventured, nothing gained!

4. Expand Institutional Relationships

When lawyers were traveling, attending conferences, or entertaining contacts, it usually meant that attention was focused on one or a small number of people from the targeted entity. Since most contact is virtual now, you can involve more people. For example, offer to [provide a webinar](#) for a company’s entire legal department or host a virtual roundtable for all the workout officers at a bank you’d like to represent. You can expand your network even when working from home.

5. Respond Immediately to Inquiries

If you receive a request for proposal or invitation to pitch, or even a simple inquiry about an issue, a prompt response may be the thing that puts you at the top of the list.

6. Set up Conversations

Finally, do your best to connect people and have conversations. Plan a virtual meeting with some contacts from a specific industry; share intel on what you’re hearing or what you’re seeing in their space and invite them to talk to one another. Pull some referral sources into a Zoom happy hour to talk about how their practices have been affected by the coronavirus and where they see opportunities. Maybe now is even the time to start thinking about socially distant get-togethers with select targets. Everyone is craving some safe socialization.

Stay Vigilant with Business Development Efforts

It’s hard to imagine that you can implement lawyer business development when you’re feeling somewhat isolated and your usual practices are constrained. But there are still ways to develop relationships and new business despite the restrictions on activities. Be persistent, be helpful, and stay vigilant with your efforts. ☺



TOP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISTAKES LAWYERS MAKE (AND WHAT TO DO INSTEAD)

Why do some lawyers succeed at building their practices while others struggle?

BY JAY HARRINGTON

Mistake No. 1: Lack of Positioning

Positioning relates to how you describe your service offering to the marketplace. The purpose of defining your positioning is to differentiate yourself from the competition. The more narrowly you position yourself, the fewer alternatives there will be to the expertise you offer.

“High rates and high-stakes work go to the professional who specializes—and makes their specialization clear through market positioning.”

—Jay Harrington

Too many lawyers position themselves broadly, suggesting that they can solve problems across many different domains for many different types of clients.

They're under the mistaken belief that the more options they provide, the more opportunities will come their way. However, the exact opposite is true. Clients want to hire the expert, and it's not credible (or ethical) for a lawyer to suggest expertise in a wide variety of practice areas and across numerous industries.

You develop expertise through repeated observation and problem-solving for the same types of clients. From a surgeon who does 10 hip replacement surgeries every week, to a lawyer who deals only in UCC disputes for automotive suppliers, high rates and high-stakes work go to the professional who specializes—and makes his or her specialization clear through market positioning.

Mistake No. 2: Lack of Planning

Most lawyers set annual business development goals, often relating to the amount of revenue they want to generate in a given year. Far fewer take the critical next step of reducing their goal to an actionable plan. Every ambitious goal is really a series of smaller ones.

If you want to accomplish something significant, you must think big and then act small. For example, if you want to have a more robust referral network by the end of the year, you must determine the steps that must be taken—every month, every week, every day—required to build one. If you want to publish more thought leadership content, you must plan an editorial calendar for the year that will allow you to create effective content. Most lawyers want the same things—more clients, more revenue, more autonomy—but those who achieve their goals create systems that allow them to make consistent progress. Think of each goal as a series of dominoes. Each domino represents an action you must take in furtherance of your goal. You must methodically and systematically line up and then knock down each domino over the course of the year.

As best-selling author James Clear wrote in “Atomic Habits,” “You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.”

Mistake No. 3: Lack of Consistency

Most lawyers favor a sporadic approach to business development, revving up when times are slow or when evaluation time is near, and letting it slide during the busy season. The problem is lawyers often overreact and overcorrect when times get too slow. They engage in a bluster of business development activity that brings in work—often more work than they can handle from clients who are a poor fit. Then they stop all business development activities to focus on the work they have.

Then the cycle repeats.

Lawyers who ride this up-and-down cycle typically lack an understanding of the sustained level of business development

activity that is required to keep them, and, ideally, others in the firm, busy on a consistent basis. The key to business development success is to do the right thing, the right way, at the right time by forming a business development habit and investing in yourself every day.

By forming a business development habit, you ward off procrastination that tends to creep in when client work gets busy. You'll avoid the temptation to put off business development until it becomes imperative when things slow down. Prioritize the time necessary to make consistent progress. Don't spend all your time trying to bill hours. Sell yourself an hour of your time every day to build a practice. It's the best investment you can make.

Mistake No. 4: Lack of Visibility

New business opportunities are unpredictable. It's hard to know when a client will need a lawyer for litigation or to assist with a transaction. Moreover, research shows that buyers of sophisticated services, such as legal services, get more than halfway through a buying decision before inviting a service provider into the conversation. So, lawyers are often unaware they are under consideration because more of the vetting of their services is happening online.

Lawyers miss out on business development opportunities because they don't remain visible enough to those they hope to serve. You can't expect that someone you met at a conference six months ago will think of you for a referral opportunity.

To remain visible, you must continually engage in activities, such as thought leadership marketing and LinkedIn-relationship building, to remain top-of-mind. Having strong and memorable positioning also helps. By increasing your visibility, clients

will be more likely to think of you when critical moments requiring the assistance of legal counsel arise.

Mistake No. 5: Lack of Confidence

As you begin the transformation from a lawyer who wants to develop business to one who actually does, it's critical that you begin to see yourself as the type of lawyer who is capable of building a practice. Your actions will then follow your beliefs. Every time you take action in accordance with your beliefs, you embody the identity you seek.

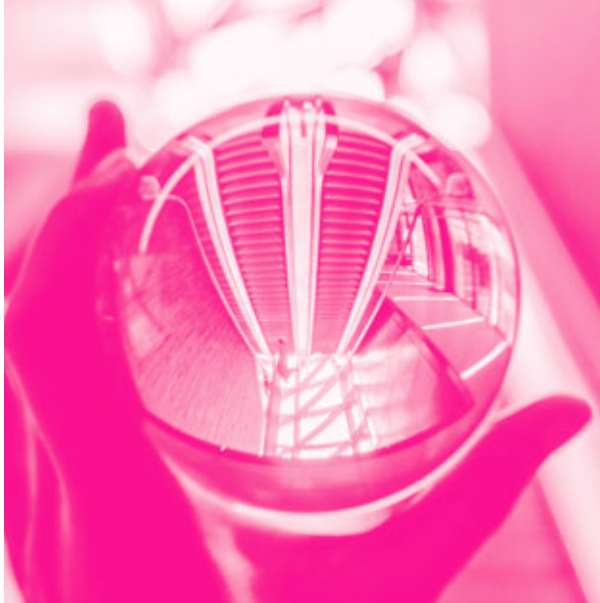
Even if you're just getting started, you must act "as if" you are what you want to become. If you don't have clients of your own—but want to build a practice—you need to act as if you do. That doesn't mean you should mislead anyone about your past experience. It means that you must project confidence and engender trust that you're the right expert for the job when you have opportunities to interact with prospective clients. If you approach such conversations from a defensive posture, a prospect will sense your unease and be repelled by it. Your measured confidence will have the opposite effect. You must be willing to say no to poor-fit clients, to stand your ground, to discuss fees upfront, and not make unwise or unmerited concessions.

When you believe in yourself, you create the conditions for others to believe in you, too. @

RELATED ARTICLES

["Four Productivity Building Blocks for Happy, Effective Lawyers"](#) by Jay Harrington

["Journaling: Your Work-Life Balance Tool"](#) by Bull Garlington



HOW TO TARGET AN INDUSTRY NICHE

If you're concerned about your practice and looking for an effective business development technique, I have a suggestion for you: Develop an industry focus.

BY SALLY J. SCHMIDT

Marketing to an industry niche (as opposed to focusing on substantive expertise) can lead to substantial new business opportunities. Some studies show that clients care more about what you know about their *business* than what you know about the *law*. That's largely because your knowledge of the law is an assumption—table stakes.



“Include something in your firm bio and LinkedIn profile about your industry focus. While it certainly helps to have experience, of course, you can indicate a ‘special interest in’ or ‘passion for’ the area without overstating your capabilities.”

— *Sally Schmidt*



Major industries, like health care, construction, or transportation, have been discovered and covered by law firms. But industry subcategories (like medical practices, marine construction, or short-line railroads) or niches within an industry (such as labor and employment work for hotels) often present untapped opportunities.

How to build industry expertise and position yourself as an expert in 7 steps

If you're interested in developing industry expertise or positioning yourself as a subject-matter expert within an industry, below are some thoughts on how to make it happen.

1. Evaluate potential opportunities

First, take some time to research areas to make sure they're worth your investment. I recall a lawyer who wanted to pursue a niche of trademark issues related to T-shirts. Unfortunately, there were no clothing manufacturers in his city. Here are some considerations for you:

- The size of or your access to the industry
- Growth potential
- Competitors—how many firms have a strong position in the space already?
- Conflicts (legal or business)
- Services required
- Existing experience or clients in the industry
- The firm's reputation in the industry
- Opportunities that will be presented—for example, legislative, regulatory, or economic changes

Not all of these are prerequisites, but they can give you a leg up.

2. Determine the extent of your commitment

You will need to make a major commitment to see results. How much of your practice would you like this to become? It could range from a small percentage of what you do to your entire practice.

3. Identify contacts

Start your journey with the low-hanging fruit—existing relationships. Does your firm have clients you can start to work with or learn from? Do you know other people serving the industry—consultants, bankers, accountants—you can tap for intel or referrals?

4. Identify industry organizations

A major key to success in industry marketing is plugging into appropriate groups. Identify, join, and find ways to get involved in related associations, from serving on committees to providing thought leadership. The beauty of industry organizations is you sometimes find yourself as the only lawyer, or one of just a few lawyers, in the group.

5. Develop a description of the practice

Include something in your firm bio and LinkedIn profile about your industry focus. While it certainly helps to have experience, of course, you can indicate a “special interest in” or “passion for” the area without overstating your capabilities. List the areas in which you can provide assistance as well as your outside activities (i.e., association membership and thought leadership), which will serve to underscore your commitment to the area.

6. Create a recurring activity

How will you make yourself visible and stand out in the industry niche? There are many things you might consider.

The most effective will give you opportunities for ongoing contact, for example:

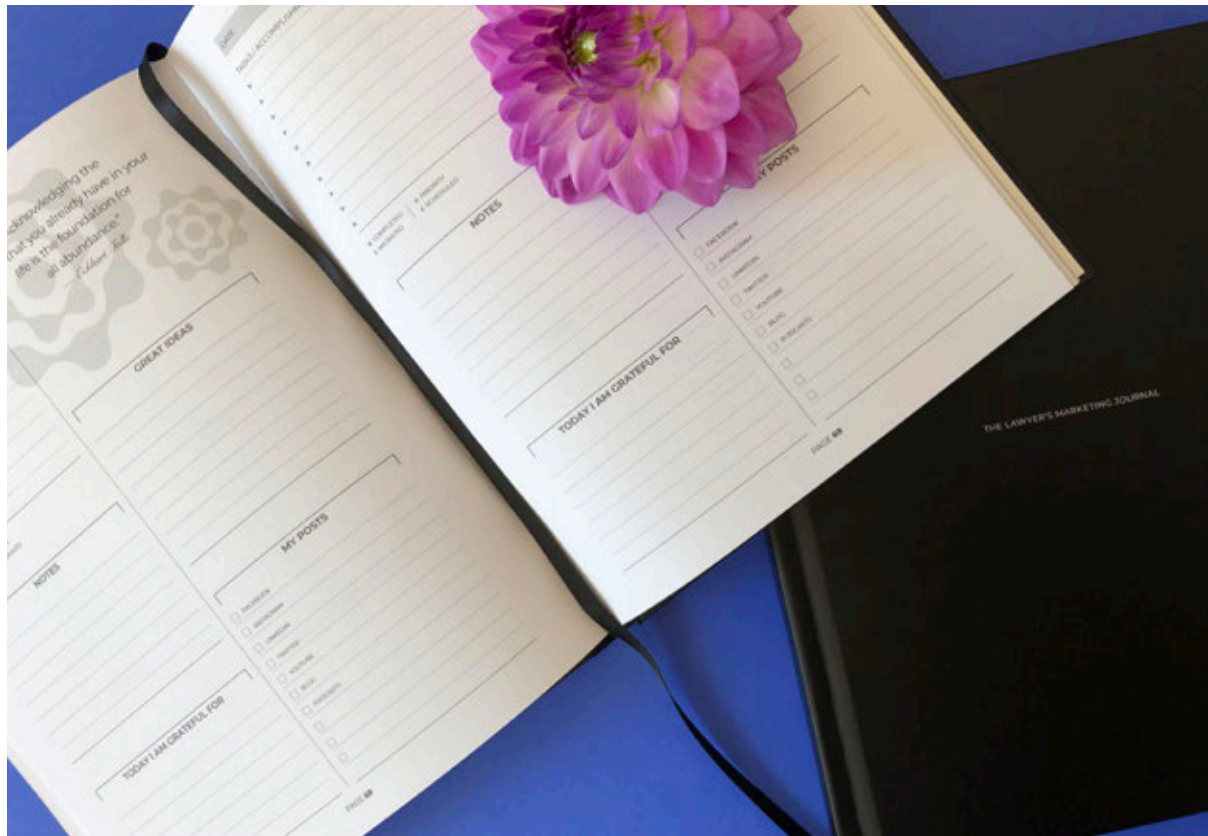
- A blog
- An annual industry research report
- A webinar series
- A podcast
- Leadership in an industry organization
- Relationship-building with industry advisors
- An industry advisory board

7. Team with colleagues

Finally, consider whether you can increase your odds of success with a multidisciplinary approach. What other services does the industry need outside your areas of expertise? Even if you don’t formalize an industry group, you should identify go-to people within your firm and even with outside advisors.

In highly competitive industries, clients might not want their lawyers working with others in their industry. However, most businesses appreciate an industry focus—knowing that their lawyer understands their issues and speaks their language. And when it comes to business development, it works! @

INTRODUCING The Lawyer's Marketing Journal



Remember that marketing plan you put together and haven't gone back to since? This new guided journal from Theda C. Snyder, author of *Women Rainmaker's Best Marketing Tips*, will help you turn those ideas into action. And, for a limited time, Attorney at Work is offering this beautifully designed hardcover journal at the pre-sale price. Don't wait to order yours.

ORDER YOUR MARKETING JOURNAL TODAY!



FIVE QUICK IDEAS TO BOOST YOUR VISIBILITY

Remember thinking working from home—even some of the time—would give you more time to work on marketing and increase your visibility? Perhaps try something new? Now it seems like there's never enough time in the day to juggle work as well as all the new responsibilities the pandemic has brought. On top of that, you may feel hidden away while working from home. With that in mind, here are quick ways to improve your visibility online—and stay top of mind to potential clients—that don't require a huge investment of time.

BY LAURA ERNDE



1. Freshen Up Your Bio

Your digital presence is more important than ever, so don't let it get stale. I recommend reviewing your bio at least a couple of times a year, if not quarterly. Check the bio on your website as well as LinkedIn. Those are bound to be your most visible pages on the internet, so you want them to accurately reflect who you are and what you do.

When you review, ask yourself these questions: Is it easy to read? Does it reflect your latest accomplishments? If you were a potential client reading it, would you want to work with this person? (See page 42 for great ideas to get you thinking about how to improve your online bio.)

2. Rock a Virtual Meetup

Even as in-person events return, many will include continue online with a virtual component. It's easy to set aside an hour here or there to attend an event without the hassle of traveling. Even better, seek out opportunities to lead a webinar on a timely topic of interest to potential clients. Smaller meetups or Zoom breakout rooms offer more visibility. But even on a larger webinar or Zoom call, look for attendees you already know or new people you'd like to connect with. Reach out after the event with an email or to schedule a phone call.

3. Be Active on LinkedIn

You want people to visit your LinkedIn bio and get in touch if they need your help, right? But when it comes to social media, the operative word is "social." The more active you are on the platform, the more likely it is that people will notice what you're doing. And while some people prefer Instagram or Twitter or the latest new platform, LinkedIn is the most popular social media site for lawyers. This makes sense, given that it's designed for professional network-

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEP: Update your website bio and online profiles to reflect who you are now.

ACTION STEP: Attend an online conference where your clients will be and check out the virtual networking sessions an small group sessions to make a real connection.

ACTION STEP: Put LinkedIn on your daily schedule and set a goal to participate—react, comment, post or share.

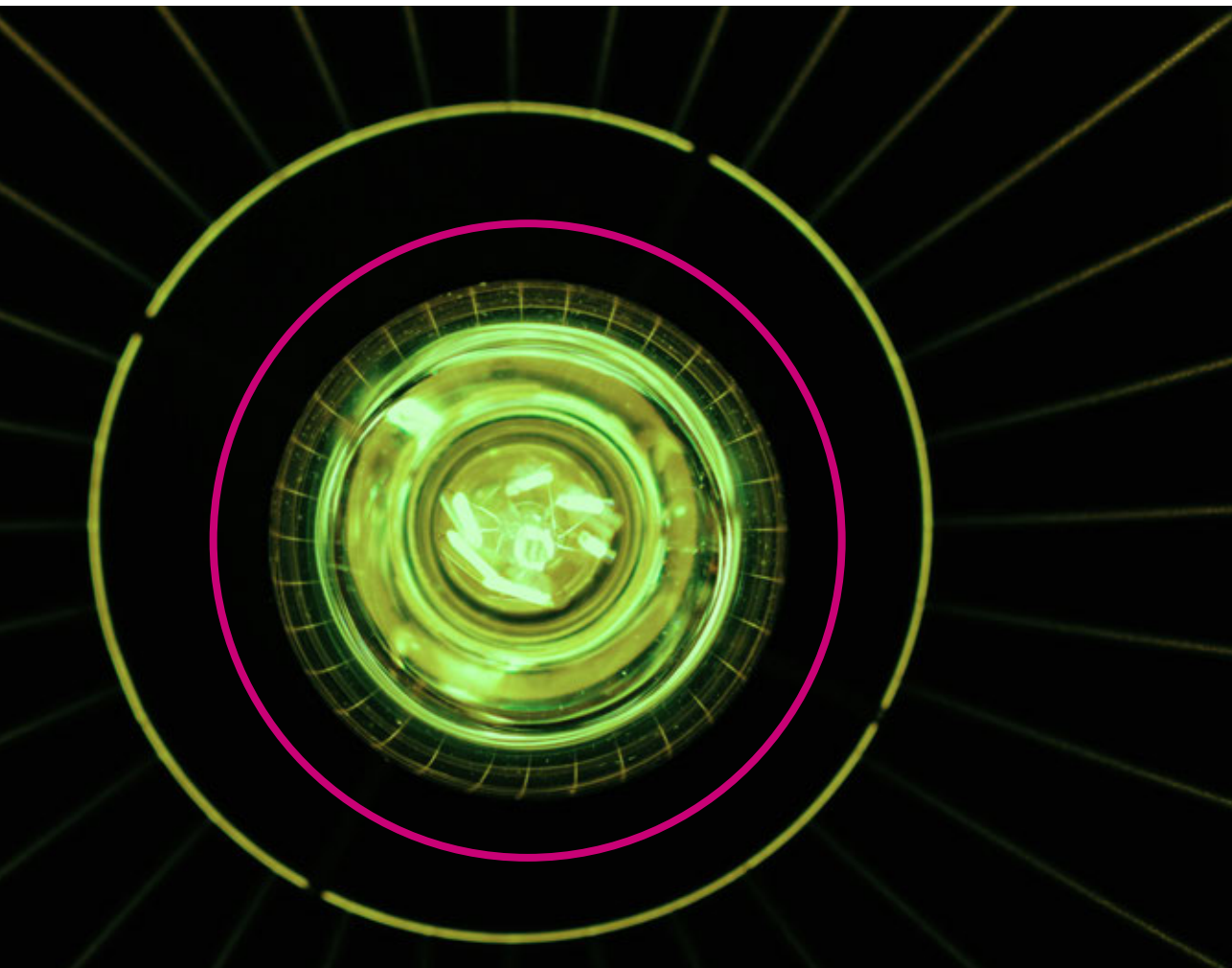
ACTION STEP: Create something—an article, a video, a blog post—that will help you clients (and don't forget to share it!)

ACTION STEP: Dig into your personal "archives" and repurpose articles you've written or presentations you've given.

ing. Try logging on for 15 to 20 minutes a day. React and comment on your colleagues' posts. Share an informative article or news that your network might find valuable. It can be as simple as that.

4. Build Trust by Creating Content

One of the best ways to showcase your thought leadership is by creating content that appeals to your target audience. Identify the challenges your clients are facing and create content that will be helpful to them. For lawyers in many practice areas, COVID-19 has presented numerous opportunities for educating clients about new laws and how to deal with the many challenges the pandemic presents.



If you're intimidated by the idea of writing a blog post or article, remember that you aren't writing a law review article or dissertation, so it shouldn't require much research. Break up the task into smaller pieces. Start by jotting down a few topics you've been discussing with clients recently. Later, sketch an outline that you can fill in when you have time. Or, work with a professional writer who can speak with you about a topic for 30 minutes to an hour and provide a draft you can edit to your liking.

5. Repurpose Content

If you don't have time to create new content, perhaps you have a library of older blog posts, podcasts, or webinars you can

repurpose. Can you update it for COVID-19 times and republish it on your website or LinkedIn page? Or, let's say you recently presented a webinar on applying for a PPP loan. Can you turn that into a blog post, contributed article, or guest post?

When you publish an article, don't forget to share it on social media, with a sentence or two to summarize. And if you wrote about something a while back that suddenly becomes relevant again due to recent news or events, by all means, share it again. @



QUICK AND FREE TIPS TO JUMPSTART YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING PLAN

You've written down your goals. You feel good about your objectives. Now, what can you do quickly—and cheaply—when your marketing is solely up to you?

BY ANNETTE CHOTI

If you are getting started in digital marketing for your law firm, you likely feel completely overwhelmed. In many cases, hiring a marketing agency to manage your website, blog, social media and email list can prove financially impossible. If you have the time and are willing to learn, however, you can make a lot of progress on your own.

Five Quick and Free Steps to Get Started on Law Firm's Digital Marketing Plan

To get started on a more comprehensive digital marketing plan for your law firm, start with these steps:

1. Maximize Google My Business

Google My Business (GMB) is one of the most important and powerful SEO marketing tools that exist, and it's completely free. Not only is it the place most online potential clients will find your law firm, but Google integrates the information it obtains from your GMB page with your online presence throughout the internet to gain a clearer picture of what legal services you provide. This helps the Google bots understand your law firm better, and helps you gain traction to the top of the search engines.

GMB gets the No. 1 spot in your digital marketing plan because it also links directly with your Google reviews, making this a powerful business card for your firm online. Your reviews and ratings are then linked to your GMB profile, making it easy for potential clients to see your legal services. You can also place articles (blog posts) on your GMB page directly, which helps Google and potential clients understand your law firm, your accolades, recent successes and more. Additionally, with a strong GMB listing, your law firm becomes eligible for placement in the coveted 3-pack of Google's search results.

Do not overlook setting up and building out your GMB page as much as possible.

2. Update to Voice Search

Now more than ever, people search with their voices instead of their keyboard. Voice searches are gaining in popularity, and with some free steps, you can optimize your law firm to be found in voice searches through Alexa, Siri, Google, Echo, and more.

“Business development is a long game. Resist the urge to put on the hard sell despite not knowing how you'll get your normal number of hours billed this month. The best way to generate new business, now and once the crisis has passed, is to maintain your posture as the confident expert who is ready to serve the client on her timetable, not your own.”

— *Annette Choti*

Make sure that you have updated all of your law firm's information on all available platforms, such as Google. Consider adding descriptions to your location that would connect you to a specific geographical location or area. Use phrases such as “personal injury attorney near me” in your descriptions, meta tags, meta titles and internal linking.

Make sure to optimize all your “rich snippets,” which are just detailed information gathered from your website and online presence. Consider using Schema to optimize for these rich snippets. Test out your law firm voice search on different devices to see where both you and your competition rank. Many law firms are not yet working on gaining traction in voice search, so you can edge out your competition here for free.

3. Get Creative with Social Media

Does your law firm have a Facebook page? A Twitter account? A LinkedIn page? An Instagram account? While many of these platforms do tend to favor players that pay for advertising, you can gain a large follow-

ing and provide an incredible amount of value to potential clients on all these social media platforms for free.

Consider getting creative with your social media. You may have a Facebook account for your law firm, but can you create another Facebook group that will help you generate leads? If you are an avid motorcycle rider and practice personal injury law, perhaps you can create a Facebook group for motorcycle enthusiasts in your area.

The Facebook group will act as a way for these like-minded individuals to gather and discuss their passion, but also provide you a captive audience that will ultimately use your legal services if they are ever in a motorcycle accident.

Think outside the box when it comes to social media by creating new Facebook groups. Use these platforms to consistently provide free and valuable content.

People do business with people, and when people are looking for an attorney, they will remember you through your social media posts and interactions.

4. Build an Email List

If you don't already have an email list for your law firm, you should start to develop one immediately. An email list is a collection of warm, prospective clients or previous clients interested in your law firm. Take advantage of this by sending a weekly or monthly newsletter. You can include recent accolades or court cases your law firm has won, or even your firm's recent charity work. Many email service providers offer a free startup package.

Curious how to get people onto your email list? Create a valuable "opt-in" that prospects can only receive in return for giving

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEP: Set up and optimize your GMB page.

ACTION STEP: Make sure your law firm can be found in voice search.

ACTION STEP: Develop a social media strategy. (Start with just one social media platform.)

ACTION STEP: Create an email list, gather subscribers through a valuable opt-in, and email them regularly.

ACTION STEP: Create a blog for your law firm's website.

you their name and email address. (Be sure to educate yourself on how to do this so that you aren't perceived as a spammer.)

For example, if you are an estate planning firm, provide a checklist of everything you should talk to family members about during the holidays. If you practice business law, provide a small booklet on the differences between business entities to help new entrepreneurs understand their options.

A reliably solid opt-in is an FAQ booklet that helps answer clients' most common concerns. Once you have these potential clients on your email list, be sure to send emails regularly to help them remember you.



5. Publish Blog Posts Regularly on Your Firm Website

The best way to gain online visibility is to publish consistent and valuable blog posts on your website. Blog posts alert Google that your firm's site is providing consistent content to potential clients and is not stagnant. Blog posts also give you something to visit with your potential clients about on social media and in your email list.

Find content ideas for your website that will help your potential clients with their frequently asked questions by making sure you find keywords that are optimized for SEO. If you have a WordPress site, installing Yoast SEO is free. Yoast can help you make sure you are developing good SEO

practices and strategies for your blog posts to be seen by the Google bots and indexed correctly to get you to the top of Google.

Finally, make sure to include social media icons on each of your posts so that your readers easily share it on social media. @

RELATED ARTICLES:

["How to Set Up a Private Facebook Group for Networking and Referrals"](#) by Laura Ernde

["Five Steps to Starting an Email Newsletter"](#) by Laura Ernde

["Protect Your Referrals: Claim and Optimize Your Directory Listings \(Starting With Google My Business\)"](#) by Mark Homer



LOCAL MARKETING: HOW TO GET MORE CLIENTS NOW—AND LATER

SEO is a constant. We like to say it is a marathon. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone over the past year in some way, and continues to have a big impact on law firms. What you do now will continue to affect your business for months in the future. By implementing the following local marketing strategies, you will help position your firm for survival and success.

BY MIKE RAMSEY

In April 2020, hundreds of lawyers joined Nifty Law's webinar, "How to Get New Leads and Clients Now and After the COVID-19 Crisis," hosted by Nifty Marketing and Attorney at Work. The program featured a team of experts from Nifty along with guest Billie Tarascio of Modern Law. Below is an updated summary of the five tactics we discussed that should always be part of your law firm marketing strategy.

1. Fix Major Listings, Starting with GMB and Google Posts

Here's why we stress that managing your Google My Business (GMB) listing is critical. The chart on the next page shows that 50% of the actions taken on this law firm's GMB listing were done off the website (calls, directions, chats)—meaning the people who called or reached out for information never went to the law firm's actual website. For some law firms, we have seen this number as high as 75%.

Google Posts and COVID-19

Since people who find your GMB listing may never see your website, you must use Google to inform them of your COVID-19 office situation. Google has added an entire "Covid-19 updates from business" section. You need to make sure you keep these items up to date. How can you do this? From the home section of your GMB account, use the COVID-19 update section to notify people that you are still open and can do things virtually.

2. Make Reviews Part of Your Customer Experience

Reviews should be a big part of your overall marketing strategy (pandemic or not). The average law firm has 50 reviews on Google. This is a benchmark to compare your firm's listing to. If you haven't built a system to encourage new reviews from every client you work with, now would

be the time to think through that and get some steps in place.

3. Get Your Website in Order

The most important thing you can do with your website during this crisis is to make it wildly obvious to prospective clients that your firm is open. This should be one of the easiest things to implement. You should be very clear on what steps you have implemented to be compliant with current CDC guidelines and how you are making sure you are maintaining a safe atmosphere for people to come into your office.

- **Idea No. 1:** Put a banner on your site that shares the above information. This should take no time at all to implement.
- **Idea No. 2:** Set up a dedicated page with details on how you are available and the steps your firm has taken to continue providing top-notch service despite the pandemic. It is an easy way to connect with potential clients and really stand out in your market.

4. Get Local Links, Likes and Shares

You need to be producing content that will generate links, likes and shares. This means better, relevant content. For example, the Ramos Law Group did just that with its blog post "COVID-19: Child Custody Possession Schedule Under Shelter-In-Place Order in Texas."

The firm's lawyers saw a need and asked: **What important questions are our potential clients asking right now?** Then they put together a piece that added immense value for family law clients and published it on their site. As of this spring the article:

- Is in 23 featured snippets.
- Has had 21,072 total visits (14,643 organic).
- Has had 382 social clicks.

Those are fantastic results for a single piece of content. And the firm did it again with a similar piece that met another need and had similar, if not better results.

This isn't a one-off, lightning-strike accident. You can do it as well. Start asking what your potential clients need most right now. What are their biggest fears now? What questions are they desperate to find answers to? Then answer those with great content—and make it easy to find.

5. You Must Start Paying for Traffic

Earlier this year, Nifty Marketing participated in a conference with Google as a co-presenter. The Google rep leaked the following stat: **50% of all clicks on Google go to ads.** Yes, 50%. What did this mean during the first months of COVID-19?

Across all our law firm clients, we observed a **28% decrease in organic traffic** and new

client leads. Fewer people were organically visiting sites, but here is what we saw with *digital advertising*:

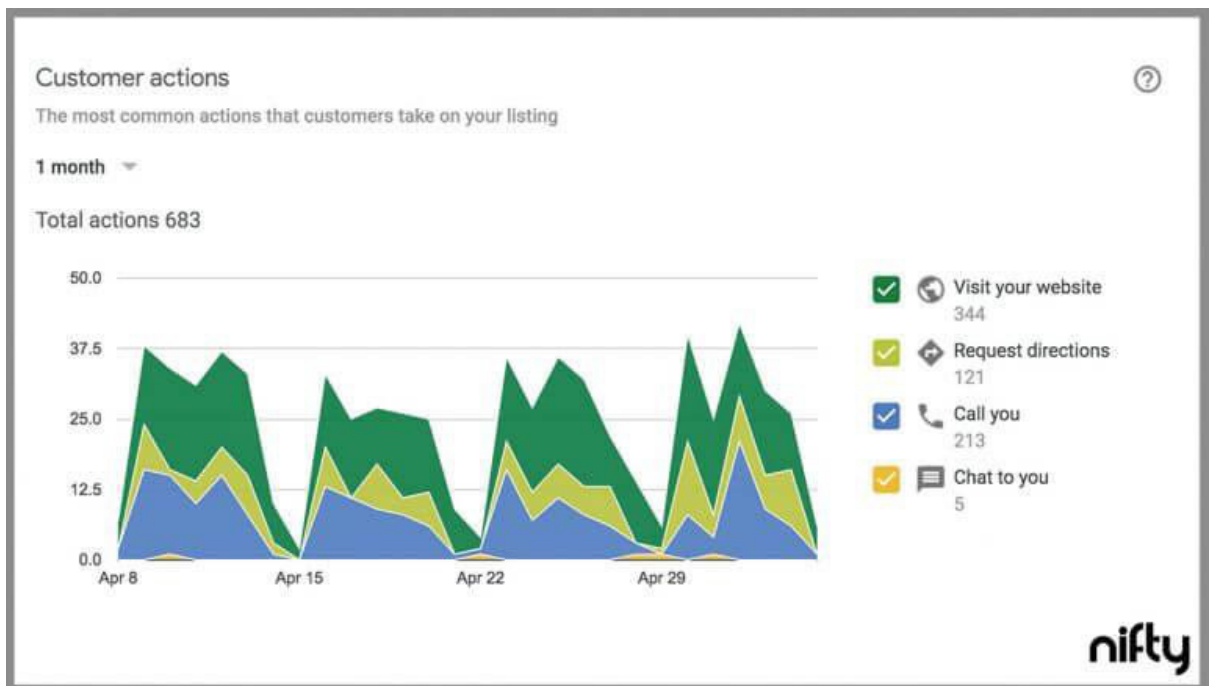
Google Ads

- 4% decrease in clicks
- 22% increase in market share
- 10% increase in leads
- 1% increase in spend (total clients)

Facebook Ads

- 16% increase in ad reach
- 27% increase in ad clicks
- 8% decrease in spend (total cost)

When COVID first struck, ad buyers were able to get in front of more eyeballs, get more leads (on Google) and more clicks (on



Facebook), all while spending pretty much the same amount of money as before.

As some firms panicked and started pulling their ad budget, it allowed those who stayed in the space to stretch their budgets further. Ad inventory also decreased in price due to lower competition from reactive law firms.

Keep in mind that your ad's wording can greatly slow down the approval process. For example, using "COVID-19" or "Coronavirus" in Google ad text typically flagged a disapproval, whereas in some cases using the word "pandemic" received approval. Take note of Google's notices and be careful and smart with the wording in your ads. Ultimately, what has allowed law firms to not only survive but thrive during the pandemic is a level-headed and innovative approach to marketing efforts. For example, in September, Google announced the

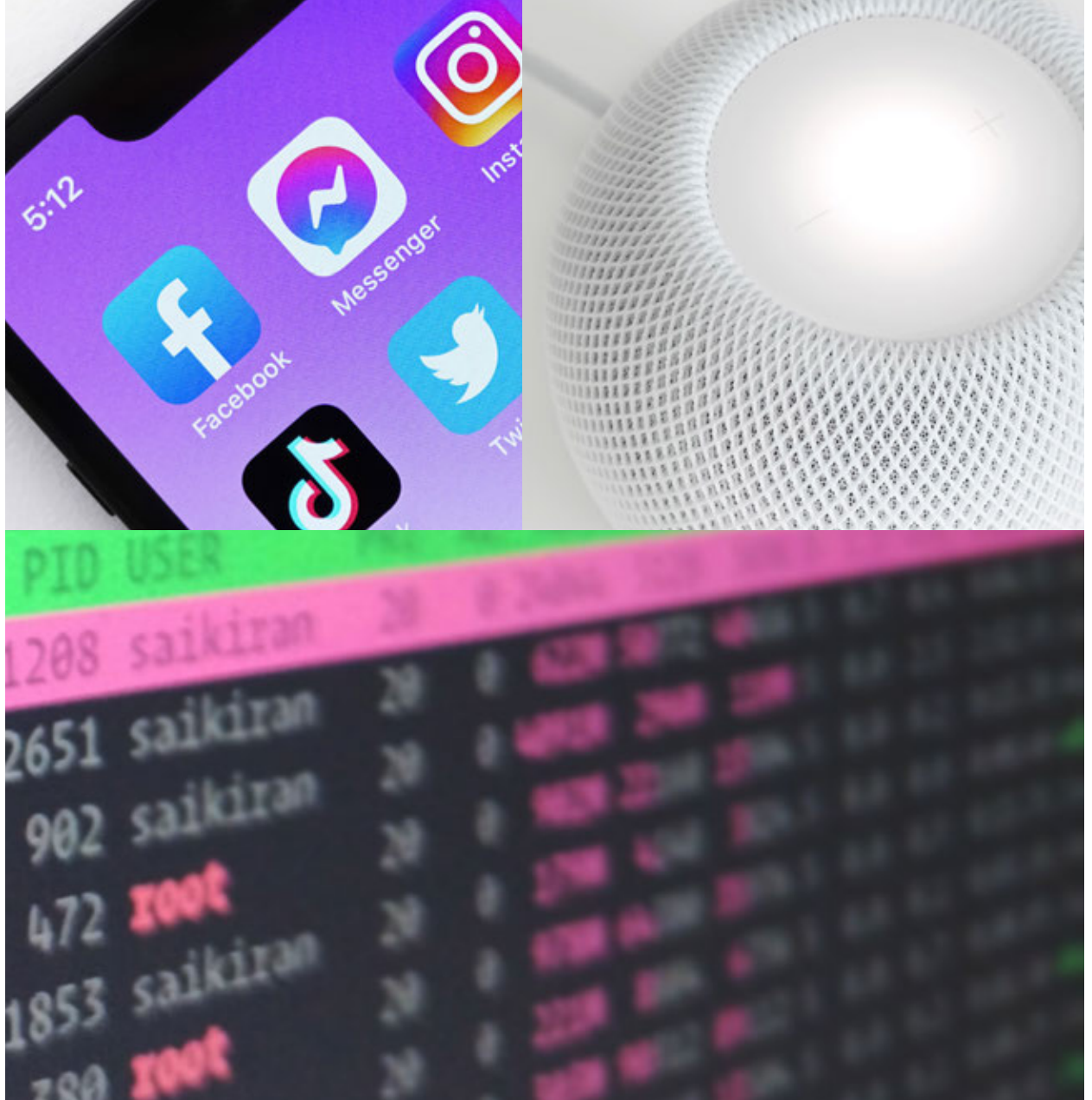
launch of a new pay-per-call ad platform called Local Services Ads. Law firms who adopted this opportunity quickly were able to dominate the top of Google search results (even above traditional Google ads), while also building trust with prospects by earning the coveted 'Google Screened' badge.

Remember, Data Is Essential to Sound Marketing Strategy

Let's end with a quote from Harvard Business Review: **"On average, increases in marketing spending during a recession have boosted financial performance throughout the year following the recession."**

We aren't saying to spend marketing dollars blindly. Rather, look at what's working for other law firms, based on data, and spend marketing dollars where it counts. @

The image is a screenshot of a website for Ramos Law Group. The header includes the firm's logo, navigation links (HOME, PRACTICE AREAS, LOCATIONS SERVED, RESOURCES, ABOUT US, BLOG, CONTACT), and a phone number (713-5...). The main content area features a large title: "CoronaVirus (COVID-19) Impact To Child Custody Visitation & Access During Spring Break and School Closures". Below the title is a sub-header: "Posted Mar 17, 2020 by Ramos Law Group, PLLC | Child Custody, News, Parental Alienation Syndrome, Visitation and Access". The article's featured image is split: the left side shows a classical building facade, and the right side is a dark graphic with white text that reads: "TEXAS SUPREME COURT UPDATE - 03/17/2020 CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT TO VISITATION & ACCESS DURING SPRING BREAK & SCHOOL CLOSURES".



ONLINE MARKETING MISTAKES MOST LAW FIRMS MAKE

Firms and lawyers who have not optimized their key, strategic online assets and websites are at a distinct, competitive disadvantage—a disadvantage that will only increase with time.

BY JULIE SAVARINO

Since the pandemic began, most law firms and other professional services firms have NOT been doing these eight things::

1. Optimize their websites for voice search.

Most firms have not optimized their websites for voice search even though there are now billions of Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant devices out there, and billions of users asking these devices billions of questions each month. Every law firm should make sure its website and service(s) and product(s) can be found by voice because the questions people ask Alexa/Siri/Google are more structured than those that are typed.

2. Claim their Google knowledge panels.

If your firm has not (and each individual lawyer has not) formally claimed its knowledge panels on Google, you are missing out on myriad benefits, including increased search results and search engine optimization opportunities.

3. Update, communicate or enforce their social media policy (and, once back in the office—the policy on the use of personal mobile devices at work). Most law firms' social media policies are not up to date. Nor do they include guidelines on the permissible use of personal mobile devices at work, which (pre-pandemic) accounted for approximately five to eight hours of work lost per week for the average employee.

4. Effectively brand their social media posts.

A few major firms brand their social media posts very effectively, such as Bain & Company, EY, PwC and Morrison & Foerster, among others. But most do not. Check out Bain & Company on LinkedIn to see how every graphic the firm's posts is customized using the colors of the firm's brand and how all the posts have a similar look and feel. Bain also inserts branded borders or firm logos within images before posting them. Most firms and

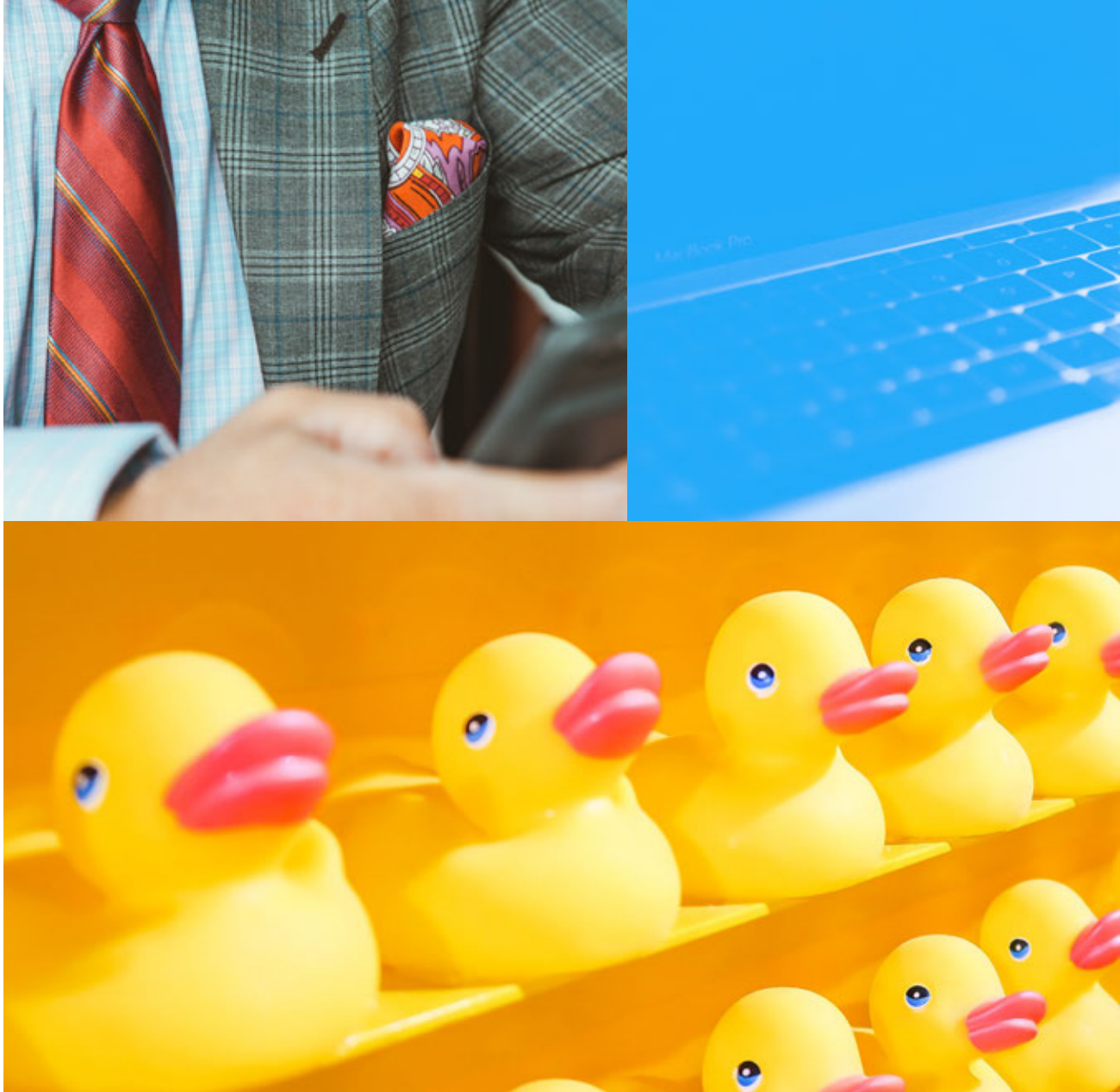
professionals do not brand the majority of their social media posts, which can be as simple as applying a common border to all images before posting.

5. Educate everyone in the firm on how to increase the number of followers on key social media platforms. Very few firms and firm leaders ask (or require) all their lawyers and staff to connect to almost everyone else in the firm on LinkedIn, nor do they train them on how to do it. And most firms fail to offer training on how to effectively and ethically increase followers on the firm's main social media pages. ([Here are five great tips.](#))

6. Educate all lawyers on how to optimize their LinkedIn connections for new client development purposes. Most lawyers have a very limited amount of non-billable time available to spend on LinkedIn and use LinkedIn sporadically and in a haphazard manner. But, before the pandemic and since, some lawyers have optimized the use of their LinkedIn connections, have benefited from doing so, and have a competitive advantage.

7. Publish on Amazon. Whether publishing existing firm content or new content, the benefits of publishing on Amazon are tremendous, but few law firms do so.

8. Participate in podcasts. Staying relevant in a mostly remote world is important for many law firms, but many outsiders still perceive law firms as being old-fashioned. Podcasts are a tactic to consider: the market for podcasts is growing every year; the demographics of listeners skews affluent; speaking is great training and exposure; and podcasts can be a talent attraction and retention magnet that lawyers value (especially younger lawyers and those with a consumer-facing practice). Approximately 100 million people expected to listen to podcasts in the United States in 2021. @



10 TIPS FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE, PERSONABLE ATTORNEY BIO

A good bio can help to bring in new business. A bad one can put you out of the running.

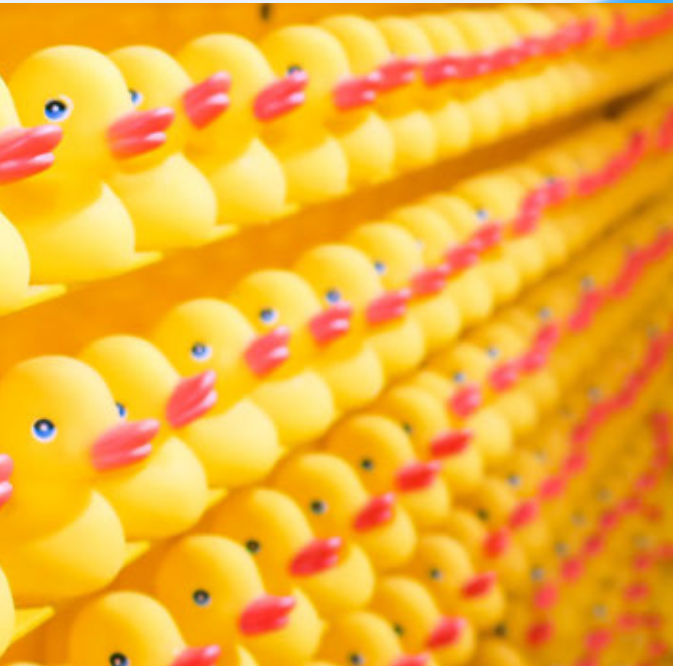
BY GINA RUBEL

Creating an effective attorney bio for your website can have an immediate, positive impact on both your personal book of business and your firm's bottom line. A personal bio helps interested parties get to know you and validate your legal prowess, long before they pick up the phone to call. But how can you make sure your bio captures your target clients' attention? Here are tips



“Your bio is not an obituary. Provide just enough information so a client can say: ‘This person has the skills I need; let’s talk to them.’”

— *Gina F. Rubel*



for writing an effective, credible and personable attorney bio.

Attorney Bio Must-Haves

Data tells us the type of information law firm website visitors expect from an attorney bio. Every bio should include the attorney’s formal name, title (partner, associate), city and state, detailed contact information, and social media links (as long as those social media profiles are kept up to date), and a professional headshot.

Plan to update your bio at least annually. Industries shift and practice areas change. Review the overview and experience, hon-

ors and activities, and insights and presentations to make sure your most recent accolades and experiences are included. A common mistake is to include outdated information, which can make you appear out of touch and out of date. If you have information that is compelling but the dates suggest it is stale, consider removing the dates.

Beyond the Basics

A good bio can help to bring in new business. A bad bio can put you out of the running before you even know you were in it. Once you’ve double-checked your dates and made sure the basic information is accurate, review and revise your bio with the following tips in mind.

- 1. Know your audience.** It is important to know your legal services buying audience—your current and past clients, prospective clients and referral sources. While other audiences, such as the media, opposing counsel and prospective new hires, are important, it is the retention and acquisition audience that you should focus on in your bio. Just as you would not address a judge without first knowing their background or a jury without having conducted voir dire, know your audience and address their wants and needs in your bio.

- 2. Heed the six-second rule.** You have six seconds to make a good impression. Use it wisely to differentiate yourself. Be concise and specific, unique and memorable. Online readers want short sentences and short paragraphs. Think bullet points. Your bio is not an obituary. Provide just enough information so a client can say: “This person has the skills I need; let’s talk to them.”
- 3. “I” is OK.** It’s permissible and often prudent to use the first-person vernacular, but use it wisely. Convey how you serve the needs and interests of your clients and prospects and that you understand their industries.
- 4. Don’t make them guess your industry or practice area.** Be sure that your industries or practice areas are obvious and unmistakable to the visitor who only scans the page. GCs care less about where you went to law school than the recent matters you have handled successfully. Emphasize case studies and victories won for clients to demonstrate your successes. Answer: What do I bring to the table?
- 5. Repurpose.** There are many places to find valuable content for your bio. Reuse approved client testimonials, review your Chambers rankings, and seek feedback from attorneys you work with. The favorable things that others have to say about you serve as de facto reviews and testimonials to your legal prowess. You may even have accolades on LinkedIn that you can repurpose if your state’s ethics rules allow it.
- 6. Focus on benefits and demonstrate client service and value.** Remember the adage, “What’s in it for me?” Answer these questions: What differentiates you from other lawyers? What are the benefits of working with you? How do you make your clients’ lives easier? Why should they hire you?
- 7. Show, don’t tell.** Demonstrate that you are a leader in your field instead of simply stating it. Provide specific examples that illustrate how you are the best lawyer in your field. Demonstrate your knowledge and let your accomplishments speak for themselves. Include client names when relevant and when you have client permission.
- 8. Avoid legalese.** Read your bio out loud. If it sounds like something you’d never say, then rewrite it.
- 9. Be personable.** This is a relationship business. Adding a bit of personality (while remaining professional) to your bio shows that you are human. Here are some questions to answer that can help bring out your personality: What made you decide to practice law? What types of matters are you most passionate about? What issues are keeping your clients up at night? What are your greatest strengths as an attorney? Why do your clients like working with you?
- 10. Mind the robots.** Remember that many “bots” search your bios, too, as they index the web. This is where search engine optimization (SEO) comes in. Use descriptive language based on how your audience searches for your services. For example, don’t just say “Jane is a lawyer.” Instead, say “Jane is an employment lawyer in Philadelphia.” ©



LINKEDIN PROFILE UPDATE: HOW TO STAND OUT IN 4 SIMPLE, ACHIEVABLE STEPS

When your business is running on virtual connections, a stale profile isn't going to cut it.

BY TEA HOFFMANN

Dismissing LinkedIn as the “boring” social media network, many professionals are content to slap an outdated photo on their profiles, dash out a nondescriptive tagline, and call it a day (then promptly forget about the platform for another 16 months). According to a recent survey, more than 80% of lawyers report underutilizing LinkedIn as a professional development tool. Nonetheless, it remains the most widely used social platform for B2B

businesses. According to the survey, 68% of in-house counsel use LinkedIn regularly for professional purposes, from networking with colleagues to connecting with outside counsel and finding professional and business-related news.

The Four Things Your LinkedIn Profile Needs

LinkedIn is important. In a profession that is increasingly running on virtual connections, a stale profile isn't going to cut it. If you haven't touched your profile in years, giving it a much-needed face-lift may feel daunting. Fortunately, though, your LinkedIn profile is a living, breathing document. You can change it gradually and update it on an ongoing basis.

To help you get started, here are four simple, achievable steps to dust off your LinkedIn profile so it shines.

Step 1: Start at the Top

Before you get into the meat of your profile and network, start with a few key areas. Consider these your digital first impression.

Your Profile Photo

You have one chance to make a good impression. This starts with your [profile photo](#). Just as you would not show up to a client meeting looking messy or unkempt, do not simply upload a grainy, cropped iPhone photo taken at a cocktail party. Instead, opt to use your firm bio photo or, if you don't have one, hire a photographer to snap a few professional headshots. Here are a few key DOs and DON'Ts:

- DO use a professional shot.
- DO select a photo that shows your entire head, neck and shoulders. This should take up about 60% of the circle.
- DON'T select a photo that shows only your face.
- DON'T use a photo that includes your spouse, your dog, or your children.
- DON'T use a photo taken with your iPhone.
- DON'T select a photo taken at a party or social event.

It may feel unfair, but if you use a bad photo, people won't take you seriously. Invest in a high-quality, professional shot that reflects your authority and competence.

Your Background Photo

The header image across the top of your LinkedIn profile marks your second chance to make a good impression. As such, do not rely on LinkedIn's default photo of a molecular structure. This will make your profile appear lazy and unfinished. Good background photos include items such as:

- Your firm logo.
- The courthouse in your county.
- The skyline of the city where you live and practice.
- A scene that is relevant to your practice area. (For example, if you are a construction lawyer, find a high-quality stock image of a construction site. Or, if you practice maritime law, find a pleasing image of a seascape.)

Your LinkedIn Profile Headline Description

Your headline statement is what appears directly beneath your name and rounds out a connection's first impression of you. This statement is vital, as it tells your

connections (1) what you do, and (2) what makes you different. When you write this statement, do not merely list your position. Instead, explain what you do in a way that reflects your values and your mission.

To illustrate, let's look at an example: an estate planning attorney at a midsize law firm. Here are two different headline descriptions:

Description 1: Associate attorney at Dewey, Cheatem, and Howe.

Description 2: Attorney helping families plan for their futures, prevent conflict, and protect their assets so they can preserve their legacies.

Now, you tell me: Which is better?

The first description tells us absolutely nothing about what this attorney does. Not to mention, a potential client searching for estate planning attorneys will never find this person because the description is vague. On the other hand, the second line is highly descriptive, captures the attorney's values, and tells clients and referral sources exactly what he or she does and stands for.

Your tagline is your chance to shine. So don't hold back! Use adjectives, be descriptive, and don't be afraid to show off a little. It will serve you—and the people you serve—well.

Your Contact Information

One of the greatest missed opportunities is leaving your contact information blank. Include your email, phone number, or both so that prospects know how to reach you. If you make them work too hard to find you, then you will lose them.

“Include something in your firm bio and LinkedIn profile about your industry focus. While it certainly helps to have experience, of course, you can indicate a ‘special interest in’ or ‘passion for’ the area without overstating your capabilities.”

— *Tea Hoffmann*

Step 2: Tell Your Story

Once you polish your digital first impression, it's time to tackle your “About” section. This is your chance to demonstrate your unique angle—that is, why clients and potential referral sources should choose you over your competitors. In writing this section, imagine you are at a cocktail party and someone asks you what you do. Your “About” section should read like your response:

- Write it in the first person.
- Use complete sentences.
- Include a few notes about what makes you stand out. Have you tried 100 cases? Are you trained in ADR? Do you have three decades of experience in the same practice area? Are you board-certified in a given practice?

Keep in mind that the more information you include—and the more detail you involve—the easier it will be for someone to find you in an organic search.

Step 3: Share Your Experience

When you tackle the “Experience” section in your LinkedIn profile update, resist the

temptation to simply bullet out your various employers and positions. Once again, imagine what you would tell people at a professional networking event: What did you do in a given position? What specific responsibilities did you manage? What unique contributions did you make?

When listing your skills, think beyond the traditional buzzwords like diligence, responsiveness, and sound judgment. People expect you to demonstrate these skills. (Who wants to hire a lazy, unresponsive lawyer with poor judgment?) What you want to emphasize are traits that people would not necessarily expect you to have. Do you have Six Sigma experience? Are you tech-savvy? Have you analyzed a budget? Completed diversity training? Are you a time management expert? Do you know how to code?

Think about what gives you a unique competitive edge and delineate these skills.

Step 4: Engage

Your LinkedIn profile update will get dusty quickly if you don't engage. As with any social platform, consistent activity boosts your searchability. Not to mention, an engaged presence on LinkedIn builds your reputation as an authority and a thought leader, allows for engagement through comments, connections and shares, and keeps you apprised of new developments in your industry as well as career moves your colleagues are making.

If you are already swamped, the thought of taking on yet another task will probably feel impossible. But it doesn't have to. Staying engaged on LinkedIn can be simple, so long as you have targeted, specific goals:

- When curating and sharing content, stay in your zone of expertise. Only follow pages and people who are relevant to your industry and practice area to avoid content overload.
- Check your notifications at least twice a week and designate a set time to respond to them to avoid constant interruptions in your workday.
- Post content that is valuable to your connections. Avoid topics that are needlessly polarizing or incendiary.

Lean into LinkedIn

Success on LinkedIn is achievable and attainable. The best way to make use of it is to engage actively. Make a habit of checking your profile to keep it fresh and updated and engage in relevant and meaningful discussion. Before long, your incremental efforts will pay dividends in the form of new connections, relationships and business opportunities. @

RELATED ARTICLES:

[It's a Social Network: First or Third Person for Your LinkedIn Profile?](#) by Nancy Slome

[Get More Referrals From Your LinkedIn Profile](#) by Ruth Carter

[Make LinkedIn Recommendations Your New BFF](#) by Susan Kostal

[A Simple Three-Month Strategy for Lawyers Who are New to LinkedIn](#) by Jay Harrington

[Anatomy of a Successful Bio-Driven LinkedIn Campaign](#) by Susan Kostal

[LinkedIn: Take Time to Tell Your Story](#) by Susan Kostal

10 ADVANCED LINKEDIN TIPS TO EMPOWER YOUR MARKETING



BY ARI KAPLAN

While many in the legal community have a LinkedIn account, they don't typically maximize the potential of their interactions. This infographic highlights 10 easy ways anyone can improve their performance and generate immediate results. It is divided into three themes: generosity, consistency and engagement.

Generosity. LinkedIn allows you to connect with others by simply reviewing your contacts and offering to make introductions. It also gives you the chance to post an update on behalf of someone seeking a new career opportunity.

Consistency. Developing a regular publishing cadence on LinkedIn, routinely tagging others in posts, and following up with fellow members of certain groups can all build momentum on the system and enhance your level of interaction.

Engagement. One of my favorite features of LinkedIn is its filtering feature, which I frequently use to reach out to alumni of my college or law school when I travel. The high response rate to my random invitations to coffee may surprise you, but they always turn out to be meaningful contacts. Similarly, I regularly call those who send me invitations to connect to convert the click of a button into a true conversation. @



MARKETING METRICS: THE STATS THAT MATTER

If you are planning to revamp your marketing efforts in the coming year, it's important to focus on your key metrics now. You need a baseline to measure new marketing investments against—and a system for tracking them—*before* you spend too much time and money on any new marketing tactics.

BY MARK HOMER



Which Marketing Metrics Should You Track?

Even if someone else in your practice is driving your marketing efforts, or you use an outside agency, you need an understanding of this topic. Too many law firm owners spend thousands of dollars every month on marketing activities without understanding what metrics could determine the investment's success. What's more, they don't know if those metrics are moving them toward their business goals.

Start with Your Most Repeatable Lead Source. If you want to grow your practice with confidence, you must build and manage a consistent flow of prospects. So, the

first question we ask is where most of your firm's leads come from, and the month-over-month consistency of those leads. If they give a solid answer, we try to map out where the majority of clients (not leads) are coming from and the costs involved in obtaining a new client with that method.

Unless they have dedicated in-house marketing staff, most firms can't readily supply this information. The few that are confident where most prospects come from don't typically have a sense of the consistency. And even fewer are confident that the source driving their leads is the same source that drives most of their clients. That may seem counterintuitive, but when you are not keeping an eye on the metrics, the investment driving the most leads is often not the best source of clients.

Marketing Metrics Concepts

Let's talk about "what and why" you should be tracking.

1. Identify the source. Understanding where your leads are coming from will help you focus efforts on the most productive marketing tactics. With the right marketing strategies and proper tracking in place, you will also start to discover that many people do not come to your firm from one source alone. It might start with a referral, followed by a visit to your website where they might sign up for your newsletter, and you may remarket to them with a branded Facebook ad. Finally, the process ends with them calling you one month later.

2. Track your information. I heard one lawyer say that they "just have a feeling" about where clients are coming from. In a profession where the devil is often in the details, your clients do not want to hire a law firm that "just has a feeling about how they should win a case."

Hold to the same standard for your business and your hard-earned marketing dollars. Build proper ways of tracking your marketing efforts into your firm's systems and operating procedures. Yes, it will take effort, but law firms and marketers are fortunate to have access to great call-tracking tools, legal CRM tools, and practically free web analytics software from Google. When set up right, you may never again have to ask, "Where did you hear about our firm?"

Until that is all set up, you should at minimum have a paper or online form that you, your staff or your answering service fill out every time someone contacts you asking questions like:

- Where did you find us?
- Have you seen our website?
- Have you contacted any other firms?
- Have you worked with any law firms in the past?
- Were you referred to us by anyone?

3. Assign value to clients. In addition to tracking where your prospects are coming from, you need to determine how much an average client is worth. If your firm has very different practice areas and services, you will need to do this for each of those. This average client value is crucial to help measure the true value of your marketing investments to your firm.

4. Analyze your marketing methods. After a few months of consistently tracking where clients are coming from, you can start to evaluate which marketing tactics have the most promise and adjust those tactics. Comparing your goals against the outcome of your marketing strategies every few months will allow you to shift the budget to

areas that seem to hold more promise. You might even shift a little budget to a newer marketing tactic that you want to test out.

How to Figure Out Your Return on Investment

One of the top questions I get is, "But how do I measure the actual return on investment of our marketing investment?" ROI is the number everyone wants at their fingertips. However, it isn't easy to get an exact ROI number for your many marketing activities. Also, getting an exact number is often more expensive to track and calculate than the benefit it provides.

An approximate ROI, however, can provide immense value when comparing different marketing tactics or future investments. You need to understand this metric and the components to track, so you can get enough of a measure of ROI to be able to make smart business decisions.

ROI is just like it sounds: How much money did I invest and how much money did I get out of it? To calculate ROI, then, you need to know:

- How much was invested in the marketing activity
- How much revenue was received from the new client/cases
- What it cost to provide the services for the client/cases

The ROI formula. To determine ROI, you take the profit made on a clients minus the cost of acquiring that client, and divide that sum by the cost of the investment. Typically, ROI is given as a percent, so the equation would be multiplied by 100. So, if you made \$20,000 in profit, subtract \$5,000 in marketing costs, and divide by \$5,000, your ROI percentage is 300%.

ROI FORMULA

(profit from new clients – cost to acquire new clients)

cost to acquire new clients

= %

Similarly, earn \$20,000 on a client and spend \$15,000 to acquire them, and your ROI is 33%.

The biggest hurdle when determining ROI is that many of these metrics are not understood or readily available in law firms. Many firms don't know the average revenue of a new client, let alone that client's average short- and long-term profitability.

Gathering Your Firm's Financial Data

Most marketing campaigns run from three months to a year, so we will help you find a few quick averages that will give you rough numbers to use when thinking about ROI. Ask your bookkeeper or dive into your QuickBooks files and grab this data:

- What was your total revenue last year?
- How many clients did you bill last year?
- What was your operating profit last year? (Operating profit is a good number to use here because it shows the profit made less the costs to actually service a client, but does not include expenses for depreciation and interest from items that may not be affected by any new clients.)

If you have been in business awhile you can also gather:

- Over the past 10 or 20 years, what was your total revenue?

- Over the past 10 or 20 years, how many clients did you bill?
- What was your operating profit over the past 10 or 20 years?

These numbers will help determine some rough averages to help you calculate the ROI of current marketing activities or evaluate potential ROI.

- **To get your recent average revenue per client:** Divide the total revenue by the number of clients.
- **For your short-term profit per client:** Multiply the operating profit (as a percent of total revenue) by the recent average revenue.

If you have been in business awhile:

- **To get your lifetime average revenue per client:** Divide the total revenue from the past 10 or 20 years by the number of clients you billed over the past 10 or 20 years.
- **For your lifetime average profit per client:** Multiply the operating profit over the past 10 or 20 years (as a percent of total revenue) by the long-term revenue.

Those averages should provide enough directional numbers to help with your marketing ROI calculations. @

DOMINATING LEGAL CONTENT MARKETING

What's your marketing goal for your law firm this year? Mine is to get back in the habit of creating quality content on a consistent basis. So I've made the commitment to blog and create other new content every week. Here's how I'm doing it.

BY RUTH CARTER



Effective Legal Content Marketing Requires a Written Plan and Commitment

One predictor of a successful content marketing plan is a written content marketing plan. After reading Joe Pulizzi's book "Content Inc.: How Entrepreneurs Use Content to Build Massive Audiences," I used my notes to craft my 2021 plan. I'm mostly building on what was working for me before I fell on the content creation wagon:

- Personal blog post (Undeniable Ruth): Every Tuesday
- Question of the Day YouTube video: Every Wednesday

- Carter Law Firm post (legal blog): Every Thursday
- Instagram post: At least twice a week
- Ruth and Consequences newsletter: Every other Wednesday

Does the day of the week matter?

I asked friends who are professional content marketers whether I would get more readership if I published my legal blog on Tuesday and my personal blog post on Thursday. Their resounding response was that the day of the week I published didn't matter. Instead, the key is to be findable when someone needs my help on a particular topic.



CONTENT MARKETING BOOKSHELF

- Content Inc., 2nd Edition, by Joe Pulizzi
- Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating Ridiculously Good Content by Ann Handley
- Killing Marketing: How Innovative Businesses Are Turning Marketing Cost Into Profit by Joe Pulizzi and Robert Rose
- The Legal Side of Blogging for Lawyers by Ruth Carter
- The Storytelling Edge: How to Transform Your Business, Stop Screaming into the Void, and Make People Love You by Joe Lazauskas and Shane Snow
- One of a Kind: A Proven Path to a Profitable Law Practice by Jay Harrington
- Public Relations for Lawyers, 2nd Edition by Gina Furia Rubel
- Women Rainmakers' Best Marketing Tips, 4th Edition by Theda C. Snyder

Start small. If you're just starting to do legal content marketing, don't feel like you have to be active on every platform. Instead, start small. Pick one type of content to create. It's better to do one thing well than many things poorly.

Make Time to Create Legal Marketing Content

Since recommitting myself to content marketing, one thing I've been reminded of is that every post takes longer to create than I expect. Being creative doesn't just happen. It takes time to mull over ideas, so it's important to schedule time to create, says Jay Acunzo.

Robert Rose recommends that you create six months' worth of content before launching a blog. That is not what I did. Since my goal is to release content weekly (because it contributes to best results), I have to schedule time to create every week.

Capture Ideas When They Percolate

I've been saying "life is blog material" since 2010 when I started my first blog. For example, every client conversation is potential fodder for legal content. If I can explain a concept to a client, I have the verbiage to discuss the issue in layman's terms (without the client's specifics, of course) for a blog post or video.

For example, I frequently receive inquiries from potential clients who need help moving their corporation from California to Arizona because I wrote a blog post about it. (The process is more complicated than it needs to be because of California's red tape.) My most recent prospect asked what it would cost to have me assist with this. I drafted an email with information about the filing fees, publications fees and

my time. Then I saved the email as a Word document so that I can turn the information into a blog post later.

My Content Marketing Tips

- **Write once, create twice.** Copying text from my emails into Word documents for future blog posts is something I'm doing more of lately. Repurpose your work whenever possible.
- **Find a place to organize your ideas.** To keep my content ideas organized, I use a spreadsheet for each of my blogs to capture general ideas for posts.
- **Promote your content.** Additionally, I have a spreadsheet where I track which topics and types of content I post to each of my social media platforms — Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn — because promoting your work is a substantial part of content marketing. As Andy Crestodina says, "The best content doesn't win. The best promoted content wins!" @

RELATED ARTICLES:

["YouTube Videos: A Marketing Dream for Lawyers"](#) by Ruth Carter

["Applying the 80/20 Rule to Your Content Marketing"](#) by Susan Kostal

["Books Every Lawyer Must Read Before Opening a Law Firm"](#) by Ruth Carter

["Best Practices for Content Marketing"](#) by Jay Harrington

["Five Ways to Integrate Content Marketing Into Your Schedule"](#) by Jay Harrington



BEST PRACTICES FOR LAW FIRM CONTENT MARKETING

Yes, your firm's website launch is important. But what's comes next?

BY JAY HARRINGTON

Blockbuster dominated the video rental business by offering convenience and selection—more stores and titles than its competitors. Then Netflix came along offering even cheaper prices and more convenience by delivering straight to your mailbox. Then it became more dominant by streaming content straight into living rooms.

What has allowed Netflix to avoid becoming “Netfixxed” by its competition is not conve-

nience or pricing, though. It's content, as Netflix invests billions into original programming.

When it comes to capturing consumers' limited, closely guarded attention, content remains king. The same principle applies for law firm websites.

What You Do After Launching Your New Website Matters Most

Massive time, attention and resources go into conceptualizing, designing and developing websites to ensure that what's launched into the world is of high quality. But what happens after launch? Too often, far too little thought goes into developing a sustainable strategy to produce content that aligns with the interests of a firm's target market and creates engagement that leads to new business.

When it comes to content marketing, many law firms confront the issue as if it is a binary, either/or scenario: Should we be creating more content at a low level of quality or less content at a high level of quality?

For firms looking to make an impact with their content, this question poses a false dichotomy. There is, of course, another alternative, which is to produce a high level of content at a high level of quality. If you are hoping to make an impact with content marketing, there is no choice other than to do more, better.

Five Best Practices for Law Firm Content Marketing

Smart brands understand that old-school, mass-market, interruptive styles of marketing no longer work. Consumers of all types of products and services, from light bulbs to legal services, are finding new ways to consume information. Consumers are

ignoring brands that are interjecting what they want people to hear and see, rather than creating stories consumers want to hear and see themselves.

Rather than one-off ad campaigns and self-centered marketing materials, law firms that produce content that inspires, educates and entertains their target market, while using a consistent, authentic editorial voice, are succeeding in breaking through in today's crowded marketplace.

The best law firm content marketing—whether in the form of website content, articles, video or audio—focuses on the client's needs and not the firm's preferences.

As with any marketing initiative, law firm content marketing must start with a smart strategy in place. Here are five best practices—focused on both quality and quantity—you should focus on to build a powerful online brand presence for your firm.

Quality: Start with Strategy

1. Become a “lighthouse” for your clients. As a law firm content marketer, your job is to help your audience discover new (timely and relevant) things they're interested in via the content you provide. In yesterday's world, it was enough to inform audiences what was happening at the moment. In today's world, which is one of information parity due to the dissemination of knowledge and information across the internet, you must explore what's coming next. You must help clients gain new insights, identify new solutions to problems, and anticipate new trends in their industries. Law firms that become a “lighthouse” for clients and prospects—the lawyers who shine a beacon of light on what's to come—will gain trust and be perceived as an essential resource. In other words, if you can help your audience meet an essential need (even if they're not

aware of it yet) through your content, then you'll create brand affinity.

2. Quality first, SEO second. SEO changed irrevocably the day Google released the "Penguin" algorithm update in 2012. And for smart, savvy content marketers, it was a change for the better. No longer are brands able to game the system through keyword-stuffed articles and backlinking strategies. Today, a law firm's SEO strategy should not focus on technical exploits but should emphasize quality content that engages and informs visitors. When it comes to content marketing and SEO, don't focus on what you do, but rather focus on answering the questions of those whom you wish to do it for.

3. The best content tells a story. Elevating quality content over SEO gaming tactics begs a question: How can law firms best engage their audiences? The answer is storytelling. Great content resonates with an audience by helping them meet a need and telling your law firm's story in the process. What sets a story apart from mere content is its ability to engage someone's brain. But, stories connect emotionally, not just intellectually. They convey insights, but wrapped in an interesting narrative. Your ability to tell stories, through your firm's brand and its content, is the ultimate differentiator in the crowded marketplace of ideas.

Quantity: Stay Organized and Have a Vision for the Future

4. Publish on a regular cadence. Why do TV shows, podcasts and radio programs (not to mention great websites like Attorney at Work) release content on a consistent schedule? Their readers, viewers and listeners have expectations that must be met if content producers expect to hold the

audience's attention. Even if you're producing high-quality content, if you're doing so sporadically then you'll be out of sight and soon out of mind. In addition, by producing high quantities of high-quality content, you'll have a body of work for Google to judge you by as its algorithm tries to determine if your site is an authoritative one.

5. Use an editorial calendar. An editorial calendar is at the epicenter of an effective law firm content marketing strategy. Instead of a scattershot, one-off approach to content marketing, an editorial calendar helps you manage and streamline your content workflow, allowing you to map your content to your audience's needs. A good calendar allows you to look into the future at what content needs are coming down the road, and assign editorial responsibility to those inside or outside of your firm. More than anything, a calendar can help you capture the big picture of your content strategy, and adjust it as necessary to meet market needs.

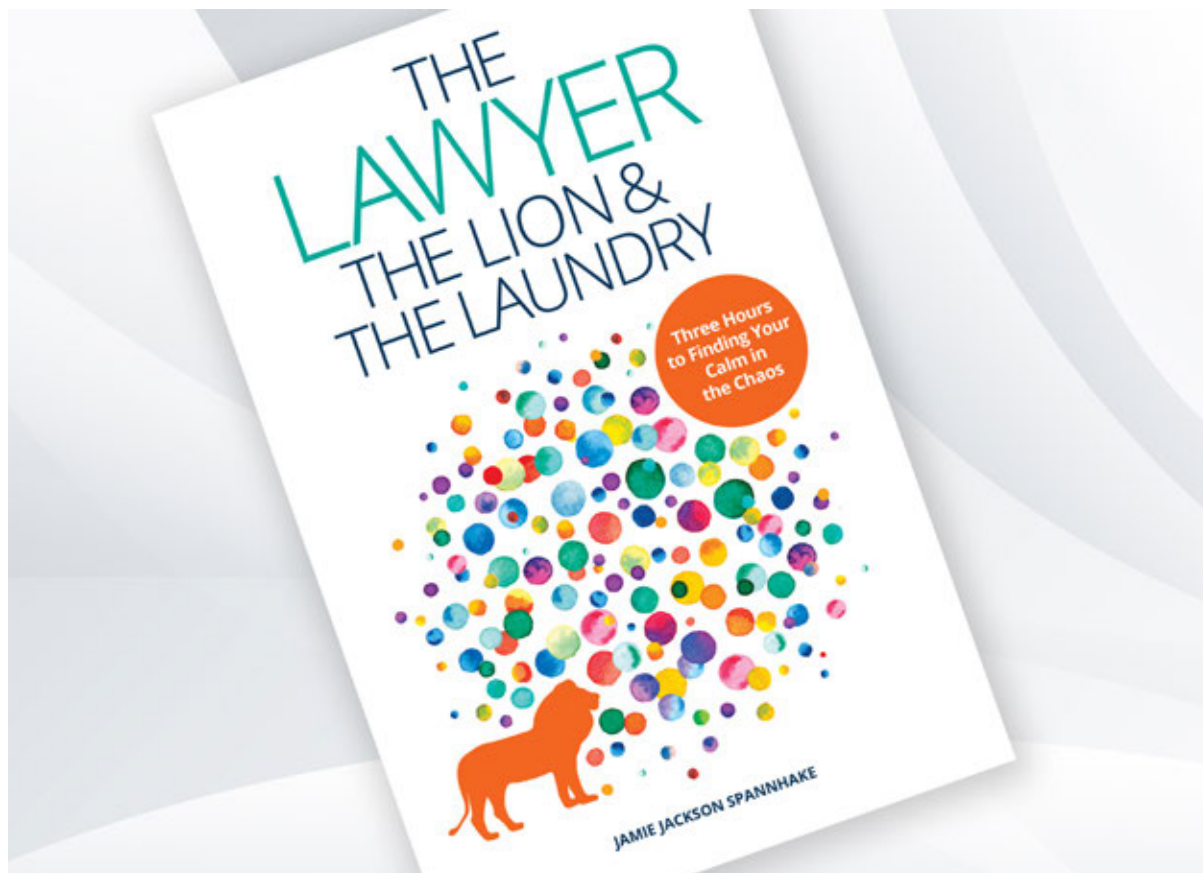
Content Remains King

A website in itself does very little to aid in business development, lead generation or brand awareness unless just as much—if not more—attention is paid to content as it is to design and development. Content is the fuel that attracts people to your site and keeps them engaged and coming back for more.

Yes, a website launch is important. But what's next? What you do next will determine whether you launch an online brochure or a vibrant, interactive environment that engages your audience and leads to new business opportunities. @

THE LAWYER, THE LION, AND THE LAUNDRY:

Three Hours to Finding Your Calm in the Chaos



Even When Life is Good, it's Exhausting

Are you a busy person? Are you a professional as well as a parent, a colleague, and a giver? Are you looking for calm in the chaos? Join lawyer and wellness coach **Jamie Jackson Spannhake** for an enlightening journey that will help clarify your desires and priorities so you can reclaim your time

[ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!](#)





LAWYERS, YOU WRITE FOR A LIVING; NOW, WRITE TO BUILD YOUR BRAND

We all know that attorneys are taught to think, speak, and write logically and analytically. But what if you could use those skills that you learned from law school and perfected in practice to promote your firm, market your skills, and position yourself as an expert in your chosen field?

BY TATIA L. GORDON-TROY



I'm talking about using your writing skills for more than just briefs, memos, and interrogatories. It's time to use those writing skills to build your brand and broaden your reach. Publishing articles in well-known periodicals or writing a book for lay people or fellow attorneys can lead to public-speaking engagements, conference panel participation, and, most importantly, additional clients. All of which can help elevate your brand.

Being a published author, even a self-published one, carries a certain amount of prestige. It also can help you reach your target market, promote the collective experience within your firm, and position yourself as a thought leader.

“It’s not enough to simply count on referrals from colleagues to get by. You have to be a good attorney, a good marketer, and a savvy business owner in this competitive profession.”

— *Tatia L. Gordon-Troy*

But What Should You Write About?

For most people, including lawyers, making the time to write isn't a problem, it's figuring out what to write about. If you have no idea where to find your inspiration, ask yourself, “What does my ideal client need to know?” “What does my primary audience need to know?” Below are some approaches to this conundrum:

- “The FAQ Response”—Collect the questions clients routinely ask you; write up your responses, then use those as a starting point for a more in-depth article or a book chapter.
- Personal Experience—Write based on firsthand knowledge or research. Provide anecdotes, advice, or ideas based on your experiences using actual examples.
- Your Own Cases—Review the last three to five memoranda of law or legal briefs you drafted. What were the substantive topics you addressed? Are any of those areas ripe for a legal trade or industry publication article, or is there enough to outline a book?
- The “Who Cares” Factor—If someone can benefit from your knowledge and experience, then it is worth sharing.

Even an article you have written for your blog or for another publication can be a starting point. Consider updating or ex-

panding it into a chapter for a book on the subject. Something you've already done could be the jumping off point for something bigger.

How About Writing a Book?

Because the practice of law has changed dramatically in the past decade or so, an attorney's approach to it must change as well. It's not enough to simply count on referrals from colleagues to get by. You have to be a good attorney, a good marketer, and a savvy business owner in this competitive profession. A book is a great marketing piece for you and your firm—a quality lead magnet; it's the new business card for the 21st century.

There are several business-related reasons why attorneys write books, and each of them relates to growth: (1) to move into a new and growing market; (2) to build authority in your niche; (3) to build and expand your practice; (4) to attract new clients for your services; or (5) to diversify your income.

Could you accomplish the same with a brochure or a list of FAQs on your website? Not really. Clearly, a book is nothing like a brochure, which is designed to be a concise description of the content typically found on a firm's website. A book is more like FAQs on steroids. It allows you to express your legal expertise on a subject, share your opinion, and educate your audience.

Many people, including attorneys, harbor misconceptions about publishing, so let's dispel a few here:

1. Legal books need to be hundreds of pages. No. The length of a book serving the legal community has changed. You do not need to write a 2,000-page tome to be taken seriously. Do you have a niche

topic that spans only 50 pages of content? Then that could be a book.

2. I'll make money off my book. Mostly likely not. Here's where your purpose for writing the book becomes important. Think of it this way: Writing a book is an investment in your firm's future. It's about the reach your book might have and the opportunities that could present themselves to you and your firm.
3. I can't practice and write a book. Yes, you can. You simply need to commit to the task and start by developing an outline. Alternatives to writing involve recording your thoughts as they occur to you, then having them transcribed, or hiring a writer to pull the information out of you and then massage it into a book.

Less Time? Consider Writing Articles for Publications

Many articles run between 500 and 1,500 words—a more surmountable challenge for a busy lawyer. The real challenge is getting your article idea in front of the right person at the right periodical so that your article gets read by the right potential client base.

Could you simply post articles to your social media accounts such as LinkedIn and Facebook? Sure, you can, and that is a great way to build a following. But your ultimate goal should be to get in front of your ideal clients; and to do that, you need to be published beyond your own outlets. Getting your work published in periodicals that target your ideal client ensures that you'll have a better chance of reaching that audience with your message.

Embrace Editorial Guidelines

Most, if not all, periodicals offer guidelines for submissions. Typically referred to as

editorial guidelines, these instructions are posted to their websites or can be requested by sending an email to the editor.

Editorial guidelines commonly address:

- Length of article: the minimum and maximum word count (an optimum number of words per article might also be listed)
- Editorial calendars, which include topics, themes, article types, and required submission dates broken down by publication date
- Copyright ownership (temporary or permanent)
- Inclusion of an author's biography and headshot
- Compensation (if any)

Make sure you comply with the editorial guidelines to maximize your chances of having your article accepted. But remember that complying with the posted guidelines doesn't necessarily mean your article will be published as is. Changes to articles are made for numerous reasons—in-house style and punctuation are probably the more common reasons. Other more extensive changes can occur—from reorganizing paragraphs, to rewriting your intro, to cutting a chunk of text in order to make the article fit within a given space in the layout.

If the thought of having anyone make even minor changes to your writing without your approval makes your skin crawl, now would be the time to rethink this option. Writing for publication calls for checking your ego at the door. Getting free promotion by publishing your articles in a periodical requires that you give up some control over what finally gets published.

Where to Search

To find appropriate places for publishing your articles, you'll find these tips helpful:

- Google the publications you're interested in and check the website for its circulation and demographics.
- Find five to 10 publications that meet your needs. Periodicals are constantly looking for fresh content to fill their pages, especially when they publish on a daily or weekly basis.
- Read and review several previous editions to get a feel for the types of articles that are typically included.
- Locate the executive or managing editor's name and contact information.
- Prepare and submit your article pitch—a summary of the article you'd like to write for the publication. Be sure to explain why the periodical's audience would benefit from reading your article and why you're the right person to write such an article.
- If you are seeking a legal audience, contact your local bar or specialty bar associations. For a national legal audience, there are news sites such as Lawyerist, Above the Law, Attorney at Work, and Nolo. For a non-legal audience, try periodicals that are community based. Take a closer look at the ones delivered for free to your mailbox regularly.

No matter how you approach it, writing for promotional purposes is a long-distance run and not a sprint to the "more clients" finish line. Stay focused. Write clearly and succinctly, write consistently and prolifically, and, above all, write to educate your audience. In the interim, be patient. @

LAWYER ADVERTISING ETHICS

SIX THINGS EVERY LAWYER (AND MARKETER) SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

When it comes to the regulation of lawyer advertising, an ounce of understanding can do two things: (1) knowing about the rules can prevent disciplinary trouble, and (2) understanding these rules can maximize your marketing messaging. While it is impossible to go through the various state rules in this article, I can provide a brief framework to help understand the six most important issues.

BY WILLIAM HORNSBY



1. Not all market messaging is governed by the rules

You make connections by joining a civic group or nonprofit board. You contribute to the symphony, public broadcasting, or a pro bono program that recognizes your sponsorship. You write an article for the bar journal or present a CLE program. You post videos on Instagram providing tips to want-to-be lawyers.

These activities could be part of your marketing plan and may result in business someday. So as long as you avoid communications that are “commercial speech,” the ad rules should not apply. Courts have defined commercial speech as “that which beckons business” or “proposes a commercial transaction.”

Expanding your brand through communications that are not encumbered by the rules should enable you to broaden your outreach. Remember you may encounter some grey areas. When in doubt, assume the rules apply and make every effort to comply.

2. The ABA Model Rules do not govern your communications

The purpose of the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct is to assist the highest court of each state when those courts consider and then adopt their Rules of Professional Conduct. Even though every state has adopted portions of the ABA Model Rules, no state has adopted the ABA Model Rules governing lawyer advertising and solicitation verbatim; and no two states have an identical set of rules.

The ABA Model Rules tend to allow more permissible conduct than the rules of most states. It may be tempting for lawyers to try to rely on the Model Rules. However, a lawyer who opts for the Model Rules over the applicable state rules is at risk of dis-

ciplinary action. Therefore, lawyers should never rely on the ABA Model Rules to guide their advertising endeavors. Instead, they must rely on the rules that have been adopted in their state(s).

3. The rules are the rules

No one should be surprised that technology moves faster than policy-making. When it comes to lawyer advertising, the opportunities to participate in new platforms far outpace the regulation of those communications. When the internet emerged as a commercial vehicle in the mid-1990s, lawyers wondered if it was ethical for them to advertise on the internet. A substantial number of states issued opinions that basically said it is ethical for a lawyer to advertise on the internet as long as the way the lawyer advertises is ethical! This may sound like double-speak, but it tells us that we must comply with the rules regardless of the limitations imposed by the various internet outlets.

More recently, The New York State Bar Association’s Social Media Ethics Guidelines indicate that the state’s rules apply to social media, and if the platform does not enable the lawyer to comply, the lawyer should avoid using that medium. When discussing Twitter, for example, the Guidelines note that “structural limitations, such as the limitation on the number of characters that could preclude disclaimers, do not provide a justification for not complying with the ethics rules governing lawyer advertising.” In other words, the rules are the rules and they must be obeyed.

4. There is no least common denominator

From time to time, I hear lawyers and marketers from multi-state firms say that they just comply with the rules of the most restrictive state, the “least common denom-

inator,” so to speak. The problem with this logic is that the state rules are not linear, from the least to the most restrictive. The rules are often simply different. For example, if a firm were to comply only with the rules of Texas, it would not necessarily include the disclaimers required by Alabama, Missouri, and Mississippi. It is important for firms with multi-state practices to understand how the state rules differ and comply with the rules of each state in which they advertise.

5. Available resources

It should surprise no one that the rules are often written in legalese. Fortunately, there are resources to help us understand their application to specific advertising issues. Most states, but not all, include comments immediately following each rule. Comments tend to expand on the rules, giving examples and make reference to other related rules. A few states do not include comments. If you need to understand the rules for one of these states, try to find a state with an identical or similar rule and take a look at the comments from that state.

Ethics opinions are issued by the ABA, many states, and some metro bar associations. These opinions, which are sometimes prompted by a lawyer’s request, apply the rules to a specific question.

For example, Virginia Legal Ethics Opinion 1885 addresses the ethics aspects of a lawyer participating in an online matching service. California Formal Opinion 2016 196 addresses when blogging is or is not advertising. One caution here: When researching ethics opinions, make sure they address the current rules and are not opining on rules that have been amended or omitted.

The disciplinary or regulatory office of most states now offers ethics hotlines, staffed by counsel with expertise in the ethics rules. These hotlines are helpful for relatively

straightforward questions that can be answered without in-depth research. Note that some states restrict the use of their hotlines to lawyers who are admitted in the state and do not respond to marketing staff who are not lawyers.

While some firms have what they call their “ethics guru” among their partners, other firms may want to consider getting input or an opinion letter from an outside lawyer with expertise in professional responsibility. This may be particularly valuable when the firm is considering something novel or untested with its messaging.

Hundreds of lawyers with expertise in ethics are members of the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL). Its website maintains a directory of members, with information about the various services they provide.

6. Realize there are more questions than answers

As noted, technology moves faster than its regulation. The same is true of marketing ingenuity. As a result, we need to understand there are more questions than answers at any given point.

Sometimes, we can look at analogies. I often ask the question: “What is this like in an analogue world?” Websites are like billboards on steroids. Matching sites might be like complicated directories. From there, we can look at how they are different and then try to solve the puzzle of compliance for those issues no one has yet addressed.

What about geo-fencing, meta-tagging a competing firm’s name, or collaborating with a client on the content of an online review? Realize that not only are there more questions than answers, but as issues arise, states may vary in their approaches to innovations. @



OPPORTUNITY IN CRISIS: INNOVATIVE WAYS LAW FIRMS ARE STEPPING UP CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

With no similar circumstance in modern history from which to learn, how have firms supported clients through a monumental global shift in working relationships?

BY JENNIFER SIMPSON CARR



“It’s not enough to simply count on referrals from colleagues to get by. You have to be a good attorney, a good marketer, and a savvy business owner in this competitive profession.”

— *Jennifer Simpson Carr*



Times of crisis and uncertainty always present opportunity. Turmoil forces us to think differently as humans and as organizations. While law firms may not have all the answers—let’s face it, there is no playbook for the COVID-19 pandemic—law firms that are flexible, agile and innovative can best serve their clients and stand apart from their competition. And law firms that resist the impetus for change will risk failure. With no similar circumstance in modern history from which to learn, how have firms supported clients through a monumental global shift in working relationships?

This spring, Furia Rubel’s Jennifer Carr asked a dozen business development

professionals about the steps their firms have taken to support clients during the pandemic and deepen relationships. Here are some innovation strategies in play.

Anticipating Changing Needs

Innovation: Issue-spotting and anticipating potential needs are cornerstones of good client service. It becomes even more valuable to clients and a critical factor in building trust and strong relationships during periods of uncertainty. Connell Foley LLP understands the need to think ahead for its clients, especially in uncharted territory.

Mary Che, vice president of marketing, Connell Foley (Roseland, N.J.) “Anticipating client needs has always been a key component of good lawyering. But the pandemic created a sense of uncertainty and urgency, the likes of which most businesses could not have imagined. It was immediately evident to our firm that our role was to anticipate the questions and issues that our clients were going to face and provide them the information and resources they needed—before they could even ask the questions. Among the steps we took was creating a dedicated multidisciplinary team tasked with following state-level legislative developments that could directly affect our clients’ operations. Frequent communications on these developments ensured information reached our clients as expeditiously as possible and allowed us to act as

a sounding board for them as they tried to understand the various mandates and regulatory guidance for their specific industry. In addition, given the preponderance of employment law issues and the questions we knew clients would have once stay-at-home orders were lifted, we developed a comprehensive 'Re-Opening Handbook' to guide businesses through the considerations they would need to address in preparing to reopen their workplaces. Clients appreciate knowing that their outside counsel will guide them through even the most challenging times."

Becoming a Trusted Resource on the Ever-Changing Legal Landscape

Law Firm Innovation: Accessing patent data, tackling the changing court schedules and following judicial deadline extensions are just a few variables that businesses and lawyers are handling during the global pandemic. Licks Attorneys use their website as a one-stop resource to provide its global client base with up-to-date information that impacts case management.

Vivian Coco, head of legal marketing and client relations, Licks Attorneys (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). "Licks Attorneys has invested in developing the capacity to conduct an exclusive search and real-time data analysis of the Brazilian Patent System's official database, enabling anyone visiting our website to obtain in seconds essential and strategic information regarding the country's patent landscape. We are also developing a series of different Business Information dashboards tailored to our client's specific needs, concentrating all relevant information concerning their patent portfolio in Brazil."

Bruna DeRegina, communication manager, Licks Attorneys. "Because most of our clients are foreigners with business interests

in Brazil, Licks Attorneys created a dedicated page on its website entitled 'COVID-19 Legal Lab.' This is a multiphase project designed to keep our clients informed about the legal and regulatory consequences of the COVID-19 crisis in Brazil. The first phase entailed compiling articles—many written by our team members—regarding the legal and commercial aspects of COVID-19's impact, maps of Brazil's lockdown measures, and details of how the Brazilian court system functions during the epidemic. In this, the second stage of the project, we are surveying—and updating—the operation of most important Brazilian courts, including extensions of judicial deadlines and updated court schedules, and the time limits and proceedings of the Brazilian Patent Office."

Creating Custom Solutions to Client Challenges

Law Firm Innovation: While the pandemic created some universal challenges for clients, nuanced challenges exist for every type of client—both corporate and consumer. Beyond simply understanding the issues, creating custom solutions to assist clients during difficult times builds trust and loyalty. Cowen | Rodriguez | Peacock is doing just that.

Delisi Friday, director of marketing and business development, Cowen | Rodriguez | Peacock (San Antonio, Tex.). "2020 forced us to be flexible, creative and problem-solve. Our firm has two clients: our actual clients and the referral attorneys we partner with on cases. For us, we had to problem-solve for our clients, but we also had to be creative in how we marketed our firm to attorneys without being tone-deaf. With our clients, we ran up against technology issues. Virtual hearings and depositions inevitably became our path to continued momentum in our cases, so we had to train our clients in how to use it. We created short videos we shared with our

clients on how to add Zoom to a phone or a computer, as well as how to use it. Our office would set up 'test run' sessions where we would make sure the client knew how to use Zoom for their upcoming deposition. The other hurdle was how to do this with clients who didn't have a smartphone or tablet. This forced us to buy tablets, set them up in advance with Zoom, and then send them to clients in advance to learn and use.

"When it came to potential referral attorneys, we knew there would be firms struggling with cash flow because the pandemic was so disruptive on law firms everywhere. If a solo attorney had to make a decision to take out a loan to fund a client's surgery, we wanted to be a solution for them instead of a loan. But how do you offer a partnership without it coming across as inauthentic or patronizing during an already difficult economic time? Our decision was a carefully worded commercial in our Trial Lawyer Nation podcast. And in 2020, we partnered with law firms across the country on wrongful death cases, strictly from new business generated from our podcast, which made 2020 our most successful year for new business."

Embracing Virtual Opportunities to Deepen Cross-Border Relationships

Law Firm Innovation: Many firms have mulled over how to maintain personal connections with clients during a period of forced virtual operations. McMillan LLP embraces virtual opportunities to serve and educate clients, as well as to deepen relationships while many people continue to work virtually.

Hans Chang, marketing and business development manager, McMillan LLP (Vancouver, B.C.). "One unique opportunity that we took advantage of during this

COVID era is reimagining 'client visits,' which have become much more time- and cost-efficient. As the pressure to visit clients in person has all but disappeared, it's become much easier to check in with our clients much more frequently and meaningfully. To that end, we have increased client-targeted education programs, workshops, and check-ins with institutional clients that have teams all over the world, which increases client satisfaction and generates more cross-selling opportunities. Along the same vein, because physical distance has carried much less meaning in the past year, we could more easily connect with associate firms and referral sources from all over the world. This has helped tremendously in our international business development efforts by allowing us to reach farther without reaching deep into our pockets. We saw tangible results from our targeted international business development efforts using a virtual platform."

Harnessing the Power of Online Collaboration

Innovation: Online collaboration tools allow organizations to enhance communication, efficiency and productivity on projects and among team members. Eversheds Sutherland harnesses these online platforms' power to collaborate with clients on matter management.

Eric Gruis, senior client service manager, Eversheds Sutherland (Washington, D.C.). "Most law firms already have access to one or more platforms for building online client collaboration sites. These resources are often critically underutilized and can be a tremendous way to connect with clients and help them manage matters efficiently in a remote work setting. Clients can generally access these platforms from anywhere, including on mobile devices, and the capabilities go far beyond simple file-sharing.

We've built sites to collaborate with both clients and co-counsel to manage pleadings, trial calendars, task lists, budgets and correspondence across multiple active matters through one virtual dashboard. The challenge with these sorts of efforts is always driving behavioral change to get people to use the site. But with the pandemic sending people scrambling for ways to make work-from-home work, this might be the easiest time to achieve that behavioral change."

Leveraging the Skills of Legal Operations Management

Law Firm Innovation: A critical component of any successful organization is leveraging top talent to create opportunities for long-term growth. Business professionals within law firms play a more important role than ever before in the ability for firms to advance business operations and client service offerings. For the first time in the firm's history, Lathrop GPM LLP named a business professional to a practice group leadership position.

Jasmine Trillos-Decarie, chief client officer, Lathrop GPM (Denver). "At Lathrop GPM, we are continually reviewing our management structure to ensure we have the right people, in the right positions to expand upon the value we deliver to our clients.

Earlier this year, our firm named Kate Tompkins the leader of the IP practice group. What's innovative is that Kate is a business professional. She is focused on ensuring the IP practice operates efficiently and strategically supports the firm's clients. Our IP Practice Group structure lends itself to having a business professional manage the group so the attorneys can focus on what they do best, serving clients and bringing in new business."

Prioritizing Client Feedback

Innovation: A formalized approach to obtaining client feedback provides an important opportunity to understand your clients' needs and expectations, as well as understand how your firm is performing through the client's lens. During a time of disruption and uncertainty, identifying opportunities to proactively assess potential client pain points through their relationship with the firm can help to assuage unnecessary client stress and frustration. Empowering individuals within the firm to identify issues that arise in routine processes provides opportunities to make adjustments that create greater client satisfaction in the long run. Bell, Davis & Pitt, P.A., is doing just that.

Brandi Michelle Hobbs, client strategy officer, Bell, Davis & Pitt (Charlotte, N.C.).

"Client service interviews, when done well, can be a valuable way to find out how individual clients feel about the experience they are having with your firm. Absent direct client feedback, identify individuals or teams primarily responsible for each step of the client journey—intake, billing, client relations, and so on—and discuss with them the issues that arise in the normal course of business. If your clients are frustrated, these conversations will help identify sources of friction and ways to relieve it.

Collecting this information has always been important but never more so than after a period of significant change and disruption. This could be a firm merger, turnover within the firm or client company, or—as many of us have recently experienced—suddenly adjusting all of your firm's processes due to a global pandemic."

Providing Cost Certainty Without Compromising Quality

Innovation: Cost predictability and certainty are of significant value to most clients when embarking on a matter, especially in times where decision-makers are pushed to reduce spend. Offering cost certainty without compromising on the quality of service provides clients with confidence in their hiring decision. Miles Mediation & Arbitration understands the need for cost certainty in alternative dispute resolution.

Marcie Dickson, former CMBDO, Miles Mediation & Arbitration (Atlanta). “At Miles Mediation & Arbitration, we elevated the quality of client service by adding an ‘elite concierge team’ that collaborates with customer success, marketing, operations and finance to ensure a seamless and enjoyable experience for every client. We also listened intently to clients about what they needed from us to expedite case resolution in a more cost-effective manner.

With this feedback, we developed several innovative programs that addressed our clients’ critical needs, including launching a flat fee online dispute resolution platform: ADR On Demand, which enables each party to pay a small fee to mediate a lower value claim for three hours. ADR On Demand has a separate panel of neutrals that handles these cases, and each case is assigned to a neutral via randomized selection.

The response from clients has been phenomenal; they appreciate the opportunity to control costs, all while receiving the same high-quality service they would expect from our primary panel of neutrals.”

Taking a Personal Approach to Thought Leadership

Innovation: For years, studies have shown that content that an organization’s employees share reaches exponentially further than the same content when the organization itself shares it. In fact, recent studies show that content travels as much as eight to 10 times further. Engaging lawyers and staff to share firm content with their networks through personalized outreach pays in dividends. Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP knows the value of this strategic and thoughtful approach to content.

Chris Postizzi, director of marketing and communications, WilmerHale (Boston). “With the outbreak of COVID-19, our lawyers have truly embraced the idiom ‘content is king.’ Not only have our lawyers upped their game with the amount of thought leadership they produce, but they are now keenly focused on the resulting metrics of those efforts. We work closely with the lawyers to analyze the data and let it drive the topics and timing of the thought leadership being produced. We have also seen a shift in the lawyers’ willingness to be more targeted and personal with the way they share content with their networks, be that through a significant increase in the adoption of social media or through the simple, yet very effective, approach of sharing content with their clients with an accompanying personalized note.

“One of our more effective communications that came out of the pandemic was the creation of a daily news roundup focused on COVID-19. This roundup is not overly branded or disseminated to a broad marketing list but is instead shared with a targeted audience of very interested clients and other firm contacts. Many of our lawyers take the time every day to share the roundup with their personal networks

directly with an accompanying note that is not necessarily work-related. Sharing thought leadership broadly with our entire network remains important, but the personal outreach between our lawyers and their contacts has been one of the great outcomes from what has been a very challenging year and will be something that I am confident will continue going forward.”

Staying Connected

Innovation: Especially in uncertain times, it is important that clients feel connected even if the connection method has changed. Cades Schutte LLP is finding innovative ways to stay in contact.

Erika Galarneau, marketing and business development manager, Cades Schutte (Honolulu). “Our firm, similar to many others around the world, was suddenly faced with challenges since in-person gatherings and meetings were no longer an option. It has been especially important during the pandemic to find innovative ways to stay connected with our clients and friends and act as a resource for any COVID-related legal issues they have. We immediately started by creating a Coronavirus Response Team and a dedicated page on our website (we were the first firm in Hawaii to launch this). This has been a useful resource for our clients and helped them get in touch with our attorneys that specialize in various subject matters, like employment law or litigation.

“We also strived to continue delivering value to our clients. For example, our firm holds an annual half-day CLE event every year that our clients look forward to (and also find helpful for earning CLE credit, especially in ethics). This year, since we could not hold the event in person, we converted it to a webinar. The result was actually very favorable; we ended up having double the number of participants as our usual in-per-

son version of the event. As a result, we are rethinking how we can hold the event in future years, potentially doing a hybrid version with in-person and virtual elements. The pandemic has definitely created challenges, but it also has helped our attorneys think outside the box and discover new business development opportunities.”

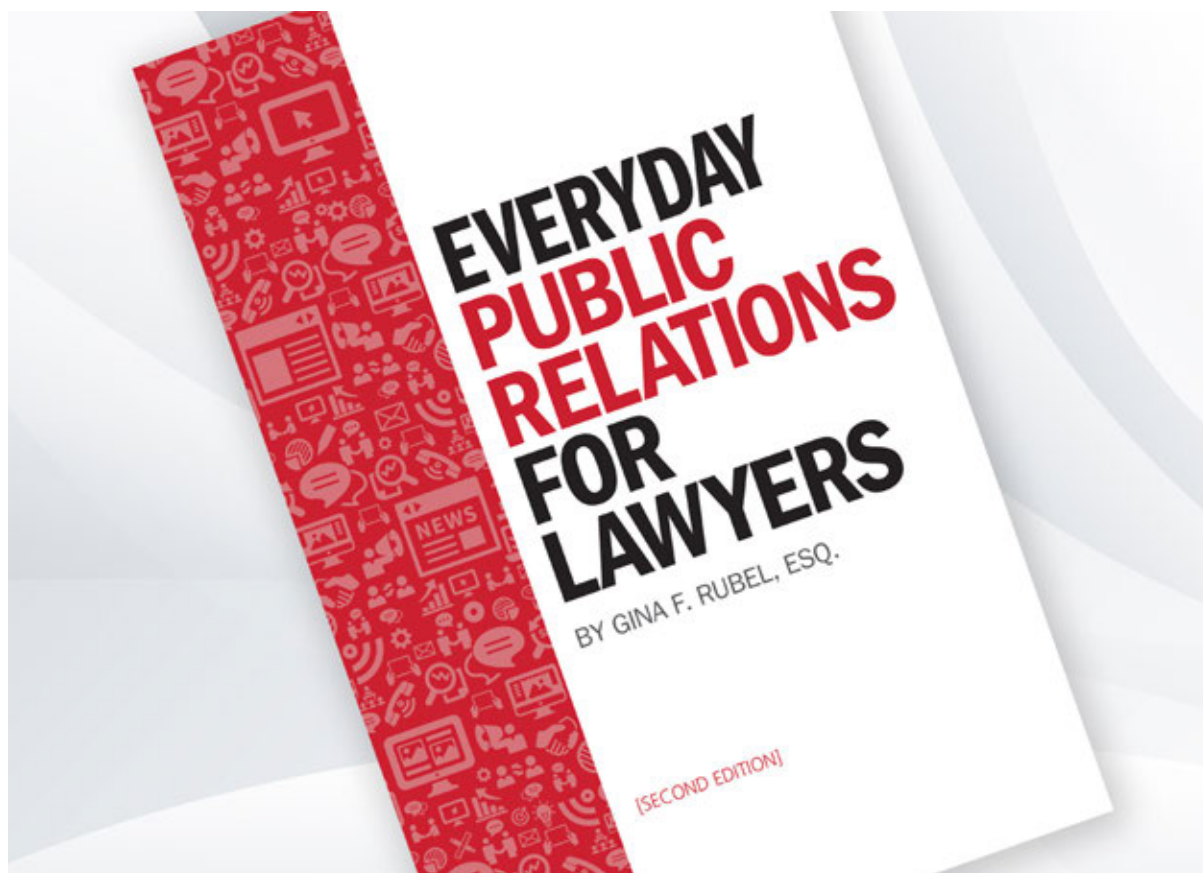
Transitioning to Interdisciplinary Approaches

Innovation: Law firms have historically lagged behind corporate counterparts with respect to adopting a client-centric approach to service, though the COVID-19 pandemic significantly amplified the voice of the customer for law firms, big and small. Pryor Cashman LLP took notice and adjusted.

Mike Mellor, chief marketing and business development officer, Pryor Cashman (New York). “While obviously horrible, the pandemic created even more empathy in how we connect with our clients and the myriad struggles they face. We had a number of clients in life-or-death situations with their businesses, and I was so proud of our attorneys, who rallied together in novel ways to add value and offer a sense of stability and direction. Clients don’t care who forms the company or who does the securities work. They want to know someone has their best interests at heart and can help them to make sense of an upside-down world. Our team created focused ‘speed-round’ sessions with different audiences, including medical owners and restaurateurs, and brought in attorneys from the firm’s finance, ERISA, labor, insurance and corporate groups to offer information on what clients needed to know and do during the next 30, 60 and 90 days. The feedback was amazing and humbling. It felt so good to be able to offer light and a few options to folks who were backed into a corner. Times like these are when relationships are truly forged.”

UPDATED SECOND EDITION

Everyday Public Relations for Lawyers



Written by Gina F. Rubel for lawyers and legal marketers, this no-nonsense, easy-to-read book delivers hands-on advice on all critical aspects of modern public relations — from the dos and don'ts of media relations to controlling the message to harnessing the power of the internet and social media. You will learn the basics of strategic PR for business development and firm growth, along with templates and checklists you can use to execute your plan.

[ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!](#)





SUBSCRIBE TO
**ATTORNEY AT
WORK**