



CLASS ACTION

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Marketing Your Law Firm:

Setting Yourself Apart From Your Competition

By Sandy McGee, Office Administrator, The Schroeder Group, S.C., Attorneys at Law and Amy Westrup, Marketing Director, Weiss Berzowski Brady LLP

When you think of law firm marketing do you picture the scales of justice, a gavel or even law books? Hopefully not, if your firm wants to get the attention of potential new clients. Law firm marketing should be about setting yourself apart from your competition.

How do you sell or market your firm? It's different for every firm depending on practice areas, the size of the firm, its location and its target audience.

Start with an Identity. If you know who you are, then chances are you know where you want to go.

Branding. Branding is more than getting the name out there. Branding differentiates your firm from the others. It begins the marketing process with potential clients before they ever need an attorney or firm.

Establish a Marketing Plan. A marketing plan can be as simple as setting goals (projects) for the year, a timeline and a budget or as elaborate as developing the strategic plan of the firm, and each individual lawyer's business development strategy.

Establish a Budget. Marketing insiders will say a budget should be 3 to 5 percent of a firm's revenue. While this might be practical for some firms it might be impossible for others. Do what makes sense for your firm.

Marketing Items to Consider when Planning your Budget.

- logo design and print materials
- web site
- brochure
- radio
- print ads
- telephone book ads and listings
- client newsletters and legal updates
- tickets for sporting and cultural events
- affiliation dues
- community involvement

- attorney requests and entertainment
- promotional items
- sponsorships
- seminars/speeches
- open houses
- professional announcements

Regardless of your marketing budget be creative, be cost conscious, be selective. And remember, you don't have to do everything.

Marketing resources:

Legal Marketing Association – www.legalmarketing.org

The Law Marketing Portal – www.lfmi.com

FindLaw (marketing section) – www.findlaw.com

American Marketing Association – www.ama.org

Association of Legal Administrators – www.alanet.org

How does public relations fit into the marketing mix? Public relations plays an integral part in the marketing plan of a firm. In

fact, the public relations component is probably more important than actual advertising. Public relations allows your firm to establish itself as expert advisors in the eyes of potential clients. How does a firm successfully implement an effective public relations media plan?

First, understand what will make you a favorite in the eyes of the media:

Do Your Homework. Make sure you are familiar with the publication and/or reporter before talking to anyone regarding story ideas. Know the editorial calendar.

Relationships are Key. Work to have face-to-face meetings with reporters; know their preferences and always follow-up to make sure they have all they need.

Deadlines Drive the Press. Return calls promptly. Be

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Marketing Your Law Firm

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reachable. Be cognizant of deadlines. Never make promises you cannot deliver.

Always consider the press angle. Remember, just like all of us, reporters run out of ideas and are grateful when a good story comes to them from an outside source.

Problems can equal opportunity. If your firm has been left out of a story, suggest a follow-up article.

Know your firm. Be able to give quick answers about your firm during an interview. Approach every interview as a business transaction, and know nothing is ever "off the record."

Second, take advantage of traditional methods of public relations:

- Press releases
- Story pitching
- Announcements
- Firm "news"
- Reporter meetings
- Publishing
- Speaking engagements

Third, utilize new media methods:

- News tracking
- Books and internet
- Content creation and leverage
- E-mail and audio/video opportunities
- On-line publications

There are two items public relations professionals should never do. First, never ask to see or proof a story before it's published. Second, never let your guard down; always protect your firm, your clients, your lawyers and yourself. To successfully implement public relations into your marketing mix build relationships, establish

a reputation and seek results.

Public Relations Resources:

- www.businesswire.com
- www.prnewswire.com
- www.newspage.com

Helpful Professional Service Providers:

GRAPHIC DESIGN

- **Thiel Design**
John Thiel
www.thiel.com

Complete branding capabilities – logos, brochures, letterhead, and copywriting

- **Spark**
Khristine Klimowicz
www.sparkms.com

Complete branding capabilities – logos, brochures, letterhead, and copywriting

WEB DESIGN

- **LinkZero Technology Solutions**
Thomas Brophy
www.linkzero.com

Web design, custom business applications, E-commerce, database development, website hosting and maintenance, copywriting and content creation, technology consulting

- **Mojo Web Productions**
Patrick McKenna
www.mojoweb.com

Web design, custom business applications, E-commerce, database development

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Added Incentives Inc.
Daniel Friedman
www.addedincentives.com



ATTENTION!

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!!

If you are interested in becoming a member of the WALA newsletter committee,

- please e-mail Tammy McCormack at:
tamccormack@mbf-law.com
- The first meeting will occur in April to prepare for the June 1st newsletter.

This is a great way to become active in WALA if you are not already or a great way to meet others within the organization.



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