



Taking Your Legal Marketing into Your Own Hands

If you're at a law firm with a marketing department, congratulations! You have the support and resources that most solos and small firm lawyers can only dream of.

But, unless your name is on the door or you're already a major rainmaker, it's a safe bet that the firm's marketing team isn't spending much time helping you achieve your personal marketing goals. More than likely, that responsibility falls on you.

If that sounds like your situation, I've compiled my best advice for any attorney who is looking to take their marketing matters into their own hands.

The first question I ask lawyers is:



How do you get your clients?

If you get your clients from Google searches or advertising, by all means, invest in heavy-duty SEO, pay-per-click, advertising, and other methods that target people who don't already know you.

But if you're like most lawyers (and most of our clients) – especially those who represent businesses rather than individuals – you probably get most of your business through referrals, whether from current or former clients or from other lawyers. That means your marketing strategy should focus on staying in touch with that network and making sure they know what you're up to, that you're doing good work, and that you're staying current on developments in your practice area.

The most effective way to maintain relationships with those who send you business is to maintain a relationship with them. Dinners, lunches, happy hours, golf matches, theater outings, thoughtful gifts – the kinds of things that, before the pandemic, we all tried to do on a regular basis but somehow never felt like we're doing enough.

The truth is, though, that unless you have unlimited energy and no family obligations, you can't possibly maintain meaningful personal ties with all your law school classmates, former professional colleagues, opposing counsel, old college roommates who are now in the C-suite, previous clients you've lost touch with, and all the other people who could possibly refer you work.

If you have the bandwidth to do a lot of personal networking, by all means do it. It is incredibly effective and, not insignificantly, good for your physical and emotional health. But even networking dervishes have their limits.

Bridging the Gap

Another way to stay in regular contact with your network is through content marketing, which can include (but isn't limited to):

- Blogging about developments in your practice area
- Email newsletters and alerts (yes, you can do these quite inexpensively, even as an individual)
- Social media, especially LinkedIn
- Writing for legal and trade publications
- Speaking to legal and trade associations
- Webinars

Is an email alert or a webinar as warm and fuzzy as a delicious dinner at Bob's Steak & Chop House? No, it is not. But how many of the latter can you do before you a) have a heart attack or b) are destitute?



A consistent content marketing program can help you bridge that gap.

Some examples:

- Stay visible on LinkedIn, try your hand at Twitter (if you haven't already), and even make yourself known professionally on Facebook. I know many people stay away from "work stuff" on Facebook, but the occasional post that reminds people you're a lawyer and you know what you're talking about is perfectly appropriate.
- Consider creating a quarterly (or even more frequent) email newsletter that will be sent to your contacts. You can create a well-designed, branded email template through providers such as Campaign Monitor and MailChimp.

Your Most Valuable Business Development Asset

If you don't already have an up-to-date list of names, phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses for your professional network (i.e. clients, prospective clients, and referral sources), start building that now.

Your network is your most important business development asset, so know who's in it.

Don't feel bad if the idea of putting that list together is daunting. It is the single biggest hurdle most of our clients face when they start working with us, so you're in some very good company.

Starting today, begin compiling and maintaining that list. And remember: it doesn't have to be perfect or comprehensive to be a great start.

Google Thyself

Make sure your online presence is up-to-date. After all, if someone says, "You should call Jane Doe," the first thing that prospective client is probably going to do is search for "Jane Doe lawyer" on the internet.

Take a look at what they're seeing. Even if all you have is a LinkedIn profile and your firm's website bio, look at those and see what impression they make:

- How's your photo? Is it a recent professional portrait, or is it a selfie with your ex cropped out?
- Is the narrative up-to-date, or does it still read like you're six months out of law school?
- Are your most recent presentations and articles included?
- What about noteworthy representative cases?
- Don't forget about association and bar group memberships, your pro bono efforts, and other volunteer work.

Spend some time updating those profiles. Make them interesting and compelling. **If they start with where you were born or where you graduated from law school, rewrite them now.**

Check Out Your Other Profiles

You probably have several other online profiles that you may not even know about or haven't updated in years, including:

- Super Lawyers
- Avvo
- Lawyers.com
- JD Supra
- Martindale-Hubbell
- Justia
- Best Lawyers
- Specialty bar groups

No need to create a separate profile for each one. While Google doesn't love duplicate content, if your business is mostly generated through referrals, your primary concern should be to ensure that your online presence is current, on-brand, and consistent.

Don't Get Overwhelmed

Whenever I meet with a lawyer to discuss how they can start marketing themselves, about 15-20 minutes in, they get this look on their face that says "Oh my gosh. This is too much. There's no way I can do all this and still be a lawyer."

When they give me that look, I say, "Don't panic. You don't have to do all of this right away. What are you doing right now?"

"Nothing."

"OK, then," I say. "Just pick one thing and do that. And then next week or next month, do another thing. If you're doing nothing today, anything you do is an improvement."

I also remind them that they didn't go to law school to be a legal marketer. Their highest and best use is to be a lawyer, so hire help for those things they don't have time for.

We're here if you need us.



Amy Boardman Hunt founded Muse Communications, LLC, in 2016. In 2020, Muse was named the best legal public relations firm in Dallas by the readers of Texas Lawyer. Amy can be reached at Amy.Hunt@MuseLegalPR.com or 214-801-8116.