

How clients find your business in the modern world

Long gone are the days when hanging a shingle was sufficient to bring in new customers. The same goes for the maze of law firms vying for real estate on the local telephone book pages. In the modern world, customers are savvier in determining who to trust with their legal needs and hard earned money. They want to know more about your practice and what you offer.

When determining how to best spend your marketing dollars, it's useful to examine how today's potential client is most likely to find your firm.

Your website is often the first doorway to a new client. An internet presence is vitally important in today's marketplace. According to a study conducted by [Yelp](#), about 85% of consumers use the internet to locate local businesses. That means the newly separated gentleman around the corner will likely look for a divorce lawyer on the internet. The recently arrested woman across town will probably turn to the internet for a criminal defense attorney.

If you are still navigating the legal waters without a viable website, you are missing out on a substantial number of potential new clients.

If you already have a website, view it with a critical eye and compare it to the sites of other attorneys in your geographic and practice areas. If a facelift is in order, get to work on that immediately or save yourself some time and aggravation by outsourcing the task.

There are also several website design companies dedicated to just the legal industry, such as [ONE400](#) and [Jurispage](#).

Referrals are another major source for potential new clients. Not only are referrals useful in attracting new customers, but they are also more likely to lead to an actual sale or service agreement. This is because a referral

establishes an immediate level of trust in your practice and what you can provide as an attorney.

Later this month, I will provide some tips on encouraging referrals, so be sure to check that out. Don't underestimate the power of a good client relationship. A happy client can lead to more happy clients.

A third way that customers find your business is through engagement. I am sure you've heard the phrase, "Put yourself out there." I know it is clichés, but it also holds some profit generating water. Existing within a bubble only allows you to engage with others who are already inside of your bubble.

By putting yourself out there, you open up the possibilities to create engagement with potentially new clients. There are a number of ways to tackle this objective:

- Volunteer at a pro bono clinic. I know this may sound counterproductive to making money, but you never know who may walk through the door for assistance. You may help a man whose wealthy sister is looking for a transactional lawyer. You may also meet a more established attorney who wants to hand off some of his domestic law cases. The possibilities are endless, plus it will make you feel good. So, get out there and volunteer.
- Do some public speaking. It's a great way to establish yourself as a credible and knowledgeable attorney in your field. Perhaps you could put on an estate planning seminar at a local church or speak to your local chamber of commerce.

Knowing is half of the battle and now you know that most consumers won't find you with a shingle and a telephone book advertisement. Take the time to get that website together, cultivate client referrals and do some volunteering. Your practice will thank you for it.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a Virginia based writer with a passion for all things legal. As a former domestic relations attorney, she understands the challenge of determining the best fee structure for your practice. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.

