Four tips for marketing your law firm to businesses

Business clients can prove extremely valuable to a legal practice. Most companies have an ongoing need for legal representation, which creates an opportunity for long-term or repeat business. When working to establish a business clientele, it's important to steer your marketing efforts in the right direction. Otherwise, you risk wasting precious time and resources. To help you in this endeavor, here are four tips for successfully marketing your law firm to business clients:

1. Strategic advertising – If your goal is to attract business clients, an advertisement in a neighborhood newsletter or church bulletin probably will not yield your desired results. Think about where you would find your ideal clients. Consider what organizations they might belong to or places they may frequent for business purposes. For example, if you are hoping to attract local, small business owners, an advertisement with your area Chamber of Commerce may be a worthwhile investment. For larger corporations, like banks or investment corporations, your dollars may be better spent with a trade magazine or sponsorship of an industry-related event. You're a lawyer. You know how to strategize. Use those same skills to make smarter advertising decisions.

2. Get found – Many business relationships start with an internet search. A company needs legal assistance, so an administrator or manager jumps on the internet to start the process. This is where your website and searchability become extremely important. If an owner or manager cannot find you, she cannot hire you. Take the time and effort to optimize your website for the best search results possible. If this sounds like a foreign language to you, hire an SEO professional to audit your website and provide valuable guidance. A regular stream of new content also increases your site's searchability and adds to your firm's

credibility among potential clients. Find a talented writer within your firm to write a few blog posts each month, or solicit outside help. An active social media presence is also useful to get you noticed.

3. Trade association meetings – These meetings can be a business gold mine for your firm. Each member and virtually every attendee is in business, which makes your vetting process that much easier. In addition, individuals attend these meetings in business mode, with the intention of forming new professional relationships and finding better ways to manage their companies. It's helpful to pick an industry that you have some knowledge and/or experience in, so that you can best market your firm to those in attendance. When networking, find out what legal needs these companies may have and talk about how your practice can be of assistance. Don't press too hard though. Think of it as a first date. While you ultimately hope to secure the deal, your short term objective is an additional opportunity for discussion.

4. Maintaining the relationship – Wouldn't you agree that the best business client is one who keeps on giving? Businesses are constantly faced with a variety of legal needs. Capitalize on this necessity by cultivating a long term professional relationship. First and foremost, offer good service. Providing your client with a top notch level of legal representation is the best way to promote repeat business. Secondly, suggest a retainer based fee arrangement. Don't assume that the client only has one legal matter or that he does not want to keep you on retainer. He may not understand what a retainer agreement entails or the benefit you can offer for his business. Make the suggestion and open the door for a conversation. You may end up with a long-term and profitable business client.

Business clients could mean big profits for your law firm. Why not try out a marketing strategy targeted at these valuable clients? You could end up with a list of repeat and profitable and clients.

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.