

## COMMON SENSE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING YOUR LEGAL PRACTICE

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Contact Paula Black at:  
3006 Aviation Avenue, Suite 3B  
Coconut Grove, FL 33133  
P 305-859-9554  
F 305-860-0016  
[paulablacklegalmarketing.com](http://paulablacklegalmarketing.com)

**Paula Black** has advised law firms around the globe on everything from powerful and innovative design to marketing strategy and business growth. She is an award-winning, Amazon-bestselling author and the force behind **In Black & White** ([inblackandwhiteblog.com](http://inblackandwhiteblog.com)), a blog dedicated to clear, straightforward advice and open discussion of legal marketing issues. For more information on Paula Black, her books and her company please visit [paulablacklegalmarketing.com](http://paulablacklegalmarketing.com).

## Your Legal Marketing Plan: Where to start...

Now that you've decided to write a 2010 marketing and business development plan, (I did convince you last week... didn't I?) the question becomes where and how to start? First think about your personal brand; that is your vision for your practice, your expertise, your experience and your strengths. Every great brand has an **idea or focus that sets them apart from everyone else**, so what's yours? Look at the big picture when it comes to expanding and building on your personal brand and it may spark ideas for your plan.

### A few categories for you to include in your legal marketing plan:

- Focusing on your Internet presence
- Developing and nurturing your referral base
- Upping your involvement in organizations
- Defining a niche (maybe an industry)

Now think about the specifics of what you will do. My friend **Gail McQuilkin**, from **Kozyak Tropin Throckmorton**, has some great advice...

*"We have individual lawyer marketing plans that everybody is required to follow as part of their leadership responsibilities. In that marketing plan, you're required to set forth specific things you're going to do during the year. You can't say 'I plan to build a referral base for myself.' You have to say you're going to do ten dinners a month, what I call 'touches'. Then you've got to say you're going to have four dinners with people that you know, three dinners with people that have been referred to you, and so on. Whatever it is, lunches, dinners, or plane rides to visit a client out of town, your marketing plan must be specific as to how you're going to do it."*

We asked two questions this week...

### QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

#1. How have you spent your marketing time in the past?

#2. How do you plan to spend your marketing time in 2010?

## RESULTS

### Question #1: In the PAST I spent time on:

1. my referral base - **33%**
2. client service - **20%**
3. blogging - **0%**
4. social media - **0%**
5. Bar involvement - **43%**
6. industry organizations - **0%**
7. not much - **4%**

### Question #2: In 2010 I PLAN to spend time on:

1. my referral base - **29%**
2. client service - **25%**
3. blogging - **5%**
4. social media - **10%**
5. Bar involvement - **30%**
6. industry organizations - **1%**
7. not much - **0%**

Thanks to everyone who participated in this week's poll...

**My Thoughts:** It is understandable that in the past **43%** of your marketing time has been spent on Bar involvement since that is the comfort zone for lawyers. In 2010 let's **breakout of the comfort zone**. Hats off to the 4% who were honest and marked NOT MUCH.

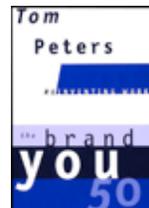
Now for the breakdown of where you PLAN to spend your time, I was pleased to see the balance shift a bit to client service since that is a great source of new business... and the interest in **blogging because I think it can be a valuable tool**.

This list will help you focus while considering what to include in your plan. If you start with too much you'll just end up spinning your wheels. Your goals and strategies must be realistic and achievable... you can always add to the plan later. As a rule I like to tell clients to state strategies and tactics that are **specific, measurable and achievable within one year**.

Simon Ward of Piper Alderman sees it like this:

*"Don't aim too high in your marketing strategy—bagging elephants is a Herculean task—but select small, reasonably achievable targets and chip away at them. Small successes can build to bigger things."*

**Black Pearl:** For more in-depth information on personal brands you may want to look into Tom Peters' book "The Brand You 50: Or: Fifty Ways to Transform Yourself from an 'Employee' into a Brand That Shouts Distinction, Commitment, and Passion!"



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