

COMMON SENSE STRATEGIES FOR GROWING YOUR LEGAL PRACTICE

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Why You Need A 2010 Plan

The time has come to start thinking about creating your 2010 marketing and business development plan. Didn't have one in 2009 (or in 2008 for that matter!)? It doesn't matter. 2010 is the year to start.

The world has changed and it is essential to figure out where you're going and what you need to do to get there. To operate in this new environment you need to be strategic... business isn't going to simply fall from the sky. Consider this: According to a 2006 Managing Partner Forum audience survey, **82% of law firms with a plan reported a direct correlation between planning and profitability.** And while the survey may apply to law firms as a whole, those plans began with lawyers, were carried out by the lawyers and were measured on lawyer results. So, whether firm-wide or individual, the lesson here is: **You. Need. A. Plan.**

So, I will write a SPECIAL SERIES... devoting the next few weeks of *In Black & White* to the questions and strategies that encompass writing an effective marketing and business development plan. Subscribe today at inblackandwhiteblog.com and have my bi-weekly commentary delivered directly to your inbox!

To begin with, I asked how many of you have been writing individual marketing and business development plans...

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Where do you stand when it comes to your marketing and business development strategy?

RESULTS

1. I have a plan and review it on a monthly basis. - **20%**
2. I have a plan and review it on a quarterly basis. - **0%**
3. I have a plan but haven't looked at it since I wrote it. - **50%**
4. I have been meaning to write a plan for years and 2010 is the year I will start. - **30%**
5. I have no time or interest in writing a marketing and business development plan. - **0%**

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

Congratulations to the 20% of you who write a plan and refer to it regularly. Your plan is a living breathing document that gets adjusted and fine-tuned as you move along, good job! **80% of you don't have a plan**, yes I'm talking to the **50%** of you that write it... and the big problem is putting it into practice... it's as though you NEVER wrote it in the first place. And lastly, I love to see that **30% of you are making a commitment that 2010 is THE YEAR.**

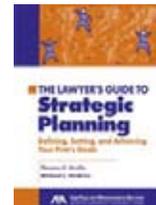
My Thoughts: Having a plan is one of the most important steps in your marketing and business development journey. For the next few weeks I will be blogging on creating a 2010 plan... ideas to include and tactics to monitor. Individual marketing plans should set forth what you will do over the next 12 months to **maximize relationships** with key clients. It should also include activities to **enhance your credentials** as an expert in your practice area or industry of focus.

The key is to keep it simple and easy to incorporate into your daily business activities. It is constantly changing and evolving and needs to be revisited and updated often.

Howard Berlin of Berger Singerman points out...

"In addition to the firm's overall marketing plan, we ask the partners to submit their individual marketing plans to the marketing director. The marketing director is the coach. They know the playbook and can make recommendations on how to best execute the plays. After that it is up to the attorney or practice group, with the support of the marketing director and staff, to run the plays and clinch the victories."

Black Pearl: For help in writing your strategic plan, there is a wonderful book written specifically for lawyers: Tom Grella's aptly titled "The Lawyer's Guide to Strategic Planning." I highly recommend it for anyone looking for guidance.



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