

HBC/BTI Study Released

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From HBC's Sound Bites Blog (www.hellermanbaretz.com/soundbites)

For lawyers the perennial question is: which marketing activities actually get clients to hire me?

To answer this question HBC recently teamed with the BTI Consulting Group to commission a new research study called "The Attorney Hiring Zone: Top Activities to Win New Clients." It reveals the business development activities that most effectively differentiate attorneys and lead to hiring decisions.

The independent BTI report is the result of 270 in-depth, one-on-one interviews with top legal executives at large corporations (average annual revenue of \$25.7 billion), including 28% of the Fortune 1000 and 15% of the Global 500, spanning more than 15 industries, including healthcare, energy, banking, financial services, manufacturing, and technology. Participating legal executives scored the effectiveness of various business development activities on a numerical scale, and also responded to extensive probes about the actual act of hiring an attorney.

Many of the findings are surprising. For example:

1. It typically takes 7 follow-up calls to get the GC to agree to a meeting, because GCs routinely reject requests for meetings to test for follow-up. Astonishingly, 90% of attorneys fail to follow-up at all after the first rejection! We believe that the content generated from PR activity can and should be the grease to facilitate many of these follow-up calls.
2. PR is a "credentialing activity" more so than an "awareness activity," and it takes as little as 3 quotes in respected publications to equal the trust value of an actual referral by a peer, which is the number one activity for receiving hiring consideration. [As the research indicates, we think quotes are the touchstone of a modern professional reputation and the backbone of any solid PR effort.]
3. To GCs, feature articles about an attorney or the firm, are only slightly more valuable than ads. This is due to the fact that GCs are unclear about how subjects for features are chosen and sense it has little to do with actual merit (unlike being quoted as an expert). [We found that while features don't resonate as powerfully for GCs as you'd expect, they -- and bylines, especially bylines -- do beget interview opportunities and quotes. In fact, we can share multiple examples where shifting 30% of PR effort to bylines and features led to an increase of quotes in excess of 50%.]

For more findings from "The Attorney Hiring Zone", check out the full study here

(<http://hellermanbaretz.com/sites/default/files/publications/BTI%20HBC%20Attorney%20Hiring%20Zone%20Study%20vFinal.pdf>).