



## Marketing, Managing and Growing a Profitable Law Firm

### **Legal Marketing Tip - How To Reduce Friction In Your Legal Marketing Efforts And Make It Easier For People To Do Business With You**

By Jay S. Fleischman

It's been said that your role as a business owner (and yes, you are a business owner if you run your own law firm) is to make it as easy as possible for people to do business with you. You need to grease the wheels and create a friction-free experience for the potential client. When you fail to do this, you run the very real risk of losing business - sometimes, without even knowing it.

I confess that from time to time I have made it difficult for people to hire me. Sometimes that's been by accident, other times by design. But over the course of my career as a consumer bankruptcy lawyer, I estimate that friction has cost me hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost profit.

Every morning I look at my practices and ask whether there is anything I could possibly do to make it easier and more convenient for the right person to hire me. Whether it's the way I deliver my services, my pricing structure, the payment plans I offer, or even the way my staffers talk with callers - there's always something that could be made better.

#### **Better law firm marketing makes it easier for the right prospect to do business with you.**

I'm not advocating some crazy 24/7/365 business operation, nor am I telling you to consider doing your work for free. Here are 5 of the ways that might make things go a bit smoother:

1. **Magazines in the waiting area.** Go through your reading material and make sure that it is current and relevant to your visitor - not to you. If you cater to 20-somethings I'd recommend that you steer clear of having a bunch of old copies of *Highlights for Children* in the waiting room.
2. **Your retainer agreement.** Make the retainer agreement easier to read (bigger type), shorter, and skip the legalese. Write it so that clients can understand what you're talking about and they'll feel more comfortable signing it.
3. **Your receptionist.** If the receptionist isn't friendly and warm then it's time to reconsider your staffing. The first impression is critical in making a prospect feel better.
4. **The work the client needs to do.** Still giving your bankruptcy clients a 20, 30 or 40 page document to fill out? Convinced that

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this is for your protection in case the client complains about missing a debt later? Consider shortening the document to 5 or 10 pages, and then having the client initial each page of the bankruptcy petition. In this way you can decrease the amount of work the client needs to do to get the case filed, and make it easier to get them to that happy end result.

5. **Your availability.** When a client calls and gets your voicemail, they get angry. Why? Because they have no idea when you'll call back - if ever. Consider setting a time to return all phone calls each day, and letting all clients know when that time will be. Clients will be happier when they know that you will call back at a certain time, and you'll be happier because you won't get distracted by phone calls all day.