

Marketing yourself as an attorney

The last couple of years have really taken the legal market for a loop. Even in the best economic times a law firm is a competitive environment. Add the cloud of uncertainty with job stability, and it can be a land mine.

When the going gets tough, the tough do what they have to do to make themselves invaluable to the law firm. The best way to do that is to generate business for the firm.

Unfortunately, generating business and billing enough hours is a tough combination. It may seem almost impossible to bill 2,000 hours *and* devote time and commitment to client development. Many times, lawyers are left with two options: Bill, bill, bill or come in under your expected billables and spend some working hours marketing. The former is a short-term “fix,” you may feel good about it now, but there’s nothing to build upon. On the other hand, the latter reaps longer-term rewards and engenders job security.

There you have it – your options and the consequences. My philosophy is to create some long-term stability and start generating revenue for the firm. This can be an overwhelming task for many attorneys. So here, I attempt to make it a bit easier on you. These tips for generating business can be done in one hour per day. Look at this time as an investment in your future at the firm and beyond. Even if you’ve never brought a case, you have a chance to bring great value to your firm. Here’s your schedule for the first week of rain-making.

Day 1: Monday. Browse through your “address book” on your phone and/or computer. Organize all current or previous clients with which you personally dealt. Make sure you have email addresses and phone numbers. Do a little online research on these folks to see what they’re up to these days. Have they moved jobs, started their own businesses, achieved a great success in their business, appeared in the paper/on TV for some reason? Make a few notes for yourself on each of these current/previous clients.

Day 2: Tuesday. Pick two or three of the clients and send emails. Don’t ask for anything, just check up with them. Mention that you saw that they recently (fill in the blank. Bought a business, moved their office, commented on a story on Larry King, etc.) Congratulate them.

Day 3: Wednesday. Search your address books for your personal contacts – friends, family, classmates, former co-workers, etc. – and send out a newsletter. Let them know that you’re searching for new business. Make it very clear what type of case you’d like. Also, let them know that any type of leads would be helpful. Maybe they don’t know anyone who needs a bankruptcy lawyer, but they know someone who knows someone... These “friends of friends” connections can be amazing. Be clear that you’re ready to meet folks who may need your legal services.

Day 4: Thursday. Search online for events to attend. You can look at websites for attorneys (CalBar.org, local bar associations, etc.), review charity sites, hobby sites, etc. At this point in the game, it really doesn’t matter what type of event you attend, you just

need to get out there and meet people. Buy tickets or RSVP to at least 2 events that will occur over the next two weeks.

Day 5: Friday. Review blogs that pertain to your area of law. Note that these blogs don't have to be legal blogs. Go to Google and type in your area of law and the word "blog." See what shows up. Just do a little online research. Make some notes for yourself and bookmark the blogs you enjoy.

Congratulations! You're well on your way to bringing your first case. Keep the momentum over the coming weeks, and you'll have a client (and job security) in no time.

For more tips on marketing yourself, [contact us](#). We're lawyers who have been helping lawyers for years. We understand the pressures of billing and the importance of bringing cases, and we're excited to help you in your journey.