

“Good Marketing Skills Are the Same as Good Lawyering Skills”

The goal of marketing is essentially to forge a real, personal connection with a potential purchaser of your services. The prospect may be an individual or the decision-maker of a large company. It doesn't matter. In either case, your marketing goal is to develop an understanding with the client or prospect about their issues and needs, so that you can demonstrate how what you do relates to their situation and can solve their problem.

Many of the attributes that make you a good lawyer will also make you a good marketer.

- Both require intellectual assessment skills. Marketing is strategic. It is thinking about what you want in the way of more or better work, and then strategizing on the best way to find companies and individuals in need of the services you want them to buy.
- Both require planning. Marketing is not sitting at a luncheon table, or giving a speech or going to lunch with a prospect. Those are the pivots around which your marketing efforts revolve. The marketing effort is the “before and after” — why should I do this? Should I invite others to go with me? What do I want to get out of the activity? How will I follow-up?
- Both have a key fact-finding component. Both require research to ground your efforts. You need to understand the prospect's situation whether it be an accident or an acquisition, and be able to analyze and assess it from their point of view.

Even though law has a tangible side, as evidenced in the piles of papers involved in legal transactions, providing a legal solution is a professional service. As such, it is intangible. A person can't physically see and compare interactions between a lawyer and client the way a shopper can compare bars of soap. And, as a non-lawyer, a client can't evaluate the legal techniques used. But as a consumer of legal services, a person still needs to feel comfortable with the lawyer who will handle their case. Each person needs to assess the value provided by the lawyer and make a judgment concerning the quality of the legal effort.

To make these kinds of comparisons, consumers of legal services turn to attributes they can comfortably compare such as your reputation, your firm's reputation, the way you dress and speak, the look and feel of your work product. This means that all the time you are practicing law, you are really marketing. People are watching what you say and how you say it as part of their purchasing decision-making process.

In summary, a good lawyer, concerned about each client's needs and attuned to each client, is marketing and practicing law at the same time.

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