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6 MINUTES TO READ · 1400 WORD

Multichannel Marketing for Law Firms

By Stephen E. Seckler

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In the last three months, I've noticed a trend. Simply put, my business is coming from everywhere.

A promotional banner for the 'CLASS ACTION LAW FORUM' held in collaboration with the University of San Diego School of Law. The banner features the Western Alliance Bank logo on the left, a central 'REGISTER' button, and a background image of a person holding scales of justice. Text on the banner includes 'Western Alliance Bank Member FDIC', 'CLASS ACTION LAW FORUM™', 'MARCH 14-16, 2023', and 'HELD IN COLLABORATION WITH University of San Diego SCHOOL OF LAW'.

In addition to hosting the [Counsel to Counsel podcast](#), I write frequently, I participate actively in a terrific national business networking group called [ProVisors](#), I give presentations, and I do a lot of free consultations.

I now attend ProVisors meetings all over the country since many are on Zoom, and I'm having many virtual one-on-one conversations with potential referral partners.

I frequently connect clients and professionals in my network with each other. In addition, I post regularly on LinkedIn and send out a newsletter.

Periodically, I forward my own content to my clients or my referral sources. When I see an article or a cartoon that I think might interest someone, I forward that.

At the end of the year, I sent nut baskets to some of my biggest clients and swag to others. This year it was a Seckler Attorney Coaching matching pen and flashlight set. (Email me if you are interested!)

I do all these things because I enjoy them. Here's what I don't do:

- I don't play golf.
- I don't spend a lot of time at large networking functions (the exception I make is when I expect to see a lot of people I already know).
- I rarely create videos of myself.
- I don't go to wine tastings.
- I'm not involved in any ongoing bar association committees in my state (although I am happy to plan a panel or a conference).
- I'm not on any nonprofit boards.

I also never attend professional sporting events.

I make these choices because I know that what I tell my clients is true: If I try to get involved in things I don't enjoy and that are not authentically me, I'm not going to have fun.

More importantly, I'm going to make excuses about not participating; and if I do drag myself to a wine tasting or get involved in a committee where there is a lot more talk than action, my feelings are going to come out.

I've never played golf, but if I did, I'd probably be like Eeyore with a dark cloud over my head.

Start By Developing a Niche

In deciding what marketing and business development activities to use, the starting point has to be figuring out who is your ideal client and what is your niche.

Once you have figured that out, you want to use marketing tools that feel comfortable to you to build your reputation in that niche.

Ultimately, it is the relationships you build that will generate the work. So, the next step is to decide how to best reach the clients you want to represent or build relationships with other professionals who might come in contact with those clients.

Once you know that, choose the activities that give you the best opportunity to both build your reputation and your relationships with those individuals. But choose activities you like.

Put another way, if you want to marry someone Jewish, don't hang out at Catholic singles dances. And if you don't like dancing at all, join a book club, get involved in a nonprofit you care about, or find another activity that you do enjoy.

There is no one right way to market. As long as you are involved in activities that you authentically enjoy and that help you build your reputation and deepen the *right* network, you can be successful.

Or as my father used to say: à chacun son goût (which is French for "to each his own").

It Is Hard to Predict Where Your Referrals Will Actually Come From

Beyond that, you will have hits and misses, and frankly, you can't really predict where your work will come from as a lawyer unless you already have deep ties with institutional clients who have lots of ongoing legal needs.

Some of your activities will produce no results in the short run. Some will unexpectedly produce a lot of results.

Of course, at some point, you have to evaluate whether you are hanging out at the right dance. For example, if your target clients are Fortune 50 companies who are doing acquisitions of companies worth at least \$500 million, then hanging out at the local chamber of commerce may not be a good venue for you.

And even if an activity does seem to make sense, you should still reevaluate periodically how to best allocate your limited time.

In my case, I have work coming from many sources that I would never have predicted.

One recent client who is in a career transition found me through a Google search (that probably has something to do with my podcast and the content I publish on my website).

One new client found me when his partner shared with him an article I wrote for an ABA publication. I don't even know his partner.

A general counsel I know who left Massachusetts more than ten years ago thought of me for leadership development for his number two. We are connected on LinkedIn, and he has seen a lot of my posts over the last few years. But we have not kept up directly.

Another new client is a lawyer I've known for a long time. We met when he was in a bigger firm. Recently, he began listening to my podcast, and after he attended a live streaming event that was sponsored by another attorney coach (I was one of four panelists), he finally reached out to me. He had just lost a big client, and he realized that it would be a good idea to ramp up his marketing activities; but he wasn't sure where to start.

Lately, ProVisors has been a great source of business. Someone in one of my affinity groups, who I've been seeing for a couple of years, referred her partner to me for some career and marketing coaching.

An old client whom I had not kept up with joined ProVisors and reached out to me to start working together again.

Several years ago, I met with a lawyer who was trying to reenter the workforce after sailing around the world with his family. Back then, I was dividing my time between recruiting and coaching, but because of his situation, I couldn't place him. But he remembered me because I had given him some advice that ultimately helped him land a job. He really appreciated that. Recently, he referred a friend.

Finally, I picked up a good client from another attorney business development coach. The client had a scheduling conflict with the other coach. The other coach and I have a very good relationship, and he is someone I call when I have questions. He was introduced to me by someone else in my network who appreciates the value of *coopetition*, the idea that even our competitors can be good referral sources.

Of course, like every other professional, I've invested considerable time in activities that have produced no results. And that is to be expected.

Marketing is more art than science. And while lawyers often reflexively say they aren't good at it or don't like it, the truth is that there is something for everyone.

Lawyers are also risk averse and don't think like entrepreneurs. I've heard many attorneys question the value of giving presentations when a single presentation produces no leads. (See my article "[Stop Thinking \(and Acting\) Like a Lawyer](#)" from the September 2022 issue of *GPSolo eReport*.)

The important thing is to be slow and steady. Don't wait until your work slows down. The best rainmakers are always involved in some marketing activities. Over time, this will pay dividends. You just don't know which of your actions will produce the results you want (and deserve).

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