



Feature

Law Firm Marketing is on the Rise

By Mary Waldron

Law firms everywhere are quickly jumping on the marketing bandwagon. It is no secret that many top law firms' levels of success in 2006 were attributed to their marketing budgets, according to the BTI Consulting Group, which surveyed 60% of all Am Law firms. The average marketing budget among top firms was \$9 million.



The marketing buzz in law firms has been getting stronger, prompting increases in marketing budgets, but it is still nowhere near the heights of corporate America's marketing expenditures, which include 30-second Super Bowl commercials priced at \$2.4

million a pop.

In recent years, many marketing companies specifically designed for lawyers have come into focus. These companies tailor their methods to firms' competitive marketing needs, such as website design and ingenuity, photography and image consulting, and brochures, newsletters, and other collateral material.

When the trend first caught on, law firms' websites lacked pertinent information aside from their firms' names and contact information. Today, having a useful and intriguing website is really a huge asset that lawyers and firms must make available to their clients and potential clients.

In the highly technological society we live in today, many people rely on search engines like Google to guide them to various attorneys who they have either read about or heard about from friends. If your site does not come up in an Internet search, you are really doing yourself and/or your firm a great disservice.

Besides being time- and cost-efficient, law firm websites are more subtle than mailers and other forms of marketing that tend to force messages down people's throats. If people need representation and information, they can come to a site that will fulfill their needs and answer their questions.

A website can have all of a firm's information laid out in an organized and aesthetically pleasing manner in a location where clients and potential clients can browse as they please.

Website visitors can also sign up for newsletters and other offers if they want more information.

"It's like having a 24-hour lobby filled with racks of information and brochures," said Andy Havens, Director of Marketing for Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, LLP, in an interview with *FindLaw*. "People can visit whenever it's convenient for them, browse, pick up a 'brochure' if they feel like it, and find out more about the firm at their own pace."

There are even professional "polishing" companies that specialize in helping lawyers find their business images. Many firms hire these types of companies to come in and revamp their attorneys in order to improve business and clientele. This may include finding the proper attire, choosing the right hair colors and styles, and learning how to walk, talk, and interact with clients.

Some firms are taking their marketing budgets and spending them on business development for their attorneys, a less advertising-oriented route that can help a firm's lawyers enhance their current and anticipated business relationships.

It was reported that the Chicago-based firm Chuhak & Tecson, one of the largest full-service law firms in its region, held an intensive program of business development training for 20 of its income partners in 2005. Within nine months, that same group had brought in \$1 million in new revenue. In fact, one of the partners doubled his fees billed.

The firm's marketing director, Lily Joy, teamed up with consultant Larry Bodine to launch the program. Bodine reviewed and analyzed the law firm's finances, clientele, marketing initiatives, and equity-partner viewpoints. He was able to decide on five key goals the firm should aim for to increase and maximize its success. These goals were: to increase firm revenues by \$1 million by training 20 partners, to generate business more aggressively, to focus on industry niches, to increase revenue from current and new clients, and to maximize results from marketing efforts.



Feature

After a one-hour training session with Bodine and Joy, which included training on finding leads and overcoming obstacles, ideas for marketing tactics to pursue, and help with picking targets based on the industries in which the firm had clients, each lawyer developed a plan of action.

Throughout the following months, the firm, Bodine, and Joy stayed in constant communication to ensure that the lawyers

were staying on track with their plans. Nine months later, they reached their targets.

There are many different types of marketing vehicles that can drive law firms to success. It is up to individual firms and their lawyers to find the ones that best suit them and their plans for the future.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.