

9 SIMPLE STRATEGIES RENEGADE LAWYERS EMPLOY TO GET MORE CLIENTS, MAKE MORE MONEY AND STILL GET HOME IN TIME FOR DINNER

(And the “Ultimate Secret” if you are Looking for Just One Thing!)¹

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Marketing a law firm today is becoming more and more difficult. Consumers are inundated with marketing messages and they have more choices than ever before in terms of how and when they will consume media, including media that contains your law firm’s message.

In every market area, there are a handful of firms that seem to dominate traditional media, often spending hundreds of thousands of dollars a month to advertise on TV, radio, billboards and buses. At first glance, they seem to be “everywhere.”

The Internet as media continues to evolve and the fight for web traffic is fierce. Not only are there more lawyer websites than ever before, but as Google keeps testing and changing its algorithms, lawyers are befuddled. The tactic that worked six months ago to secure your place at the top of the search results may now have you “punished” and nowhere to be found.

Finally, trying to “brand” yourself or your law firm in a traditional sense is an almost sure path to the poorhouse. The simple fact is that consumers pay almost no attention to your brand-building efforts unless and until a life event puts them in the market for an attorney.

You should know that in every market in America there are solo and small firms that are rocking it with their marketing without spending a ton of money. These lawyers do stand out, they make a great living and, importantly, they enjoy the practice of law. What are they doing differently from you? How do small firms compete with the 800-pound gorillas in their market?

The first answer is that they take marketing very seriously. More accurately, they take the science of marketing seriously. They realize that the quickest path to making more money in a practice is in the marketing. They devote time, energy and money resources into being the best marketers.

Law schools are great at teaching you what to do once you get a client, but they seem to forget that none of that matters unless you have lots of good clients. Thus, lawyers come to the profession prepared for a world that simply does not exist. Once having arrived, it doesn’t get much better. While educational opportunities for becoming a better lawyer abound, very little time, money and energy is devoted to the most important skill set any lawyer could have: acquiring clients.

¹ There are no easy solutions for complex problems. Marketing a law firm in an increasingly distrustful and fragmented world is a complex problem that cannot be solved in 2,300 words. To watch a webinar that explores the ideas in this paper more fully, visit RenegadeLawyerSecrets.com.

Here are nine strategies that I have observed very successful solo and small firm marketers employ to, as I like to say, “make more money, get more clients and still get home in time for dinner.” For shorthand purposes, let’s just call these lawyers “renegades.”

Strategy 1. Renegade Lawyers take the time to design the practice that they want and then they design marketing that attracts the right clients to the practice.

Renegade Lawyers understand that when you own your own law firm, the object is to make money, lots of it, and do so without sacrificing mental or physical health or relationships.

This is best accomplished when your marketing drives a steady stream of people to you with whom you like to work and who have the ability to pay you. For contingency fee firms, this means “good cases that don’t drive you crazy.” If you have bad clients or crappy cases, it’s because your advertising attracted them and you were too desperate to tell them “no.”

Plan: Describe your avatar client in detail. Begin to create marketing that drives THIS client to you. Then, describe in detail your nightmare client and make sure that your marketing repels them.

Strategy 2. Renegade Lawyers understand that having a huge lead flow of potential clients will allow them to pick and choose with whom they want to work. They also know that an offer of “call now for a free consultation” is old-fashioned and self-limiting. These lawyers “open the top of the funnel” wide, typically by offering a book or free report authored by the lawyer instead of, or at least in addition to, a “free consultation.” The potential client is then taken through a sophisticated “marketing funnel,” one which convinces the right client that the lawyer is the wise man at the top of the mountain. Clients come to Renegade Lawyers pre-sold on hiring them.

Plan: Make it easy for a prospect to initiate a conversation with you without their having to pick up the phone to make an appointment. Prepare an offer of a free report or book and create marketing that is all about the book or free report. Renegade Lawyers study book marketing!

Strategy 3. After opening up the top of the funnel, Renegade Lawyers monetize every lead they get by developing sophisticated follow-up systems and by continually marketing to every new contact in an interesting and effective way.

Contrary to what many lawyers believe, most prospects are not ready to hire a lawyer the moment they start searching for one. In the personal injury field, the very best new clients may take as long as 3 to 12 months after they have begun a search before they are ready to hire. Most law firms have no follow-up system in place, thus leaving it up to the potential client to “get back to” them. Renegade Lawyers continue reach out to prospective clients in an interesting and effective way that includes snail mail, email and the telephone. Moreover, these lawyers continue to market to all of their contacts using an interesting monthly newsletter, thus maximizing the value of each new lead. A well-written monthly newsletter that is printed and

mailed to your contact list not only helps convert current prospects into clients but also drives referrals

Plan: Look at your follow-up system. Is it multi-step, multi-media? Does it run automatically? If not, look at a product like Infusionsoft (InfusionsoftForSmallLawFirms.com).

Strategy 4. Most lawyer websites are still boring business cards on the Internet. Renegade Lawyers understand the enormous challenges of making a website work. They understand that even after a potential client finds your website, you have just seconds to convince the visitor to stick around. Good marketers have moved away from traditional lawyer websites, those that feature logos, firm names, gavels, and information that is all about the lawyer. Renegade Lawyers tend to have websites with interesting/provocative headlines, many different calls to action, and an abundance of consumer information, including many consumer information videos. They reject the notion that the primary purpose of a lawyer website is to establish the lawyer as “thought leader.” The primary purpose of the website is to generate a lead.

Plan: Review your website and compare it to your top 10 competitors. If you could simply substitute your name/logo for theirs and tell the same story, then your website does not stand out. Ask yourself: would anything on my website provoke a visitor to give me their contact information right now? Renegade Lawyers study websites that sell.

Strategy 5. Renegade Lawyers leverage as much of the Internet as they can. They know that search engine optimization is only one of the ways in which consumers find them on the Internet. In addition to their main websites, they drive traffic to direct response “landing pages” and informational videos using pay-per-click, banner ads and offline marketing.

They also focus on sites like Avvo.com, BestLawyers.com and SuperLawyers.com, ignoring all of the other lawyer directory sites they are pitched. They leverage these highly popular consumer sites and, yes, they pay for advertising on them. You may think it entirely irrational for a consumer to pick a lawyer based on feedback from anonymous sources on the Internet; Renegade Lawyers understand consumer behavior.

Plan: Develop multiple ways that a consumer can interact with you on the Internet and implement as many ways as you can to drive traffic to these sites using both online and offline sources. Then, track everything. Explore “badge” sites like Avvo, Best Lawyers and SuperLawyers. Renegade Lawyers don’t fight the reality of consumer behavior.

Strategy 6. Renegade Lawyers not only use video in their marketing, they use it the right way.

By now, lawyers and consumers have discovered the awesome power of video marketing. Most lawyers go about this all wrong, however. Lawyer videos produced and uploaded to YouTube look like TV commercials, complete with lawyers standing in front of law books, usually talking about themselves. No one cares what you say about yourself. Use your videos to educate consumers. Let the consumer arrive at his own conclusion that you are an expert.

The other mistake that lawyers make with the video is that they typically have only one call to action (“call us for a free consultation”). Using the same strategies we talked about above, your video can be used to direct consumers to (1) other videos you have created about the subject; or (2) your free books or report.

Plan: Write out the 10 most frequently asked questions that you get in the office or your staff gets on the phone. Record 10 videos, each answering one question before referring the viewer to your book for more information. Renegade Lawyers aren’t shy about getting in front of a camera.

Strategy 7. Renegade Lawyers have a system for creating referred clients.

Have you ever heard of a former client referring a good friend to another lawyer because “they didn’t know you did those types of cases”? The former client is not to blame; you are. You haven’t given the former client a reason to refer, taught them how to refer, made it easy for them to refer, or made a big deal about it when they do refer. People won’t refer clients to you just because you did a good job on their case. You were expected to do a good job. There’s nothing particularly special or unique about doing a good job. Referrals don’t take care of themselves. You must teach people how to refer.

Most lawyers give little thought to actively growing their referral base of evangelists. Every prospect should be added to your database and communicated with regularly. Your goal is to stay top of mind for everyone who comes in contact with you. You cannot afford to spend money like GEICO or Coca-Cola to have people “know your name,” but you can become a very big fish and a celebrity to your small pond of raving fans.

Renegade Lawyers use two critical tools to generate referrals: a mailed monthly newsletter and a series of published books. Books and a newsletter make it easy for your referral sources to let their friends know about you. “Here’s a book from a lawyer I trust” is an easy line for your referral sources to remember and nothing tells your story better than a book.

Plan: The creation of evangelists cannot be left to random chance. Identify who your top referral sources are and ask yourself: what can I do for them today? Start your monthly newsletter and mail it. Make sure it’s interesting. Hint: writing about the law is NOT interesting. Get busy writing your first book. Renegade Lawyers view themselves as publishers.

Strategy 8. Renegade Lawyers only allow highly trained personnel, using carefully crafted “sales psychology scripts,” to answer their phones. Want to cause yourself indigestion? Hire a company to make and record a series of ghost calls to your law firm. If you are like most firms, you will be horrified to hear what actually goes on in your office when the phone rings.

A prospect calling your firm should end that call feeling like they are in the right place, not like they interrupted work that needed to be done.

Plan: Arrange for ghost calls to be made to your firm. Study them with an expert on sales psychology. Create scripts that incorporate both “legal” (e.g., what you need to know to initially

evaluate a case) and “sales.” Mandate that the scripts be followed. Arrange to have ghost calls made to your firm regularly.

Strategy 9. Renegade Lawyers study how to improve upon the “customer experience.” Doing a good job for your client is never enough to create positive word of mouth for your firm. After all, doing a good job is what you are supposed to do. It is the minimum. It won’t get you rave reviews. Renegade Lawyers examine every step of the process in their office, through the eyes of the client, and ask themselves, “What could we do to make this even better?” They seek out, attack and destroy trust-busting steps in their own office systems.

Every client that ends up working with your firm is comparing the level of customer service that they get with the level of customer service they get at places like Amazon, Zappos, and Federal Express. If you want people to remember you and to refer other friends to you, they must have a memorable experience.

One more thing about marketing: Most lawyers, having read this article, will say, “that’s too much work” and they will ask instead for the “purple pill,” the “ONE thing I need to know to market better?” Renegade Lawyers embrace the complexity, knowing that most voice “ambition” but are unwilling to do the work necessary. But if you do want the ONE thing to do...

Here it is, the “Ultimate Secret” to marketing your law practice:

You need to know all of the different ways (“media,” including “referral sources” as “media”) and reasons (what provoked them to think “lawyer”) someone who is your avatar client finds their way to you, and the questions they try to solve for themselves before being provoked enough to think “lawyer,” and create initial marketing pieces (headline, content, call to action, “offer”) and extensive, multi-step, multi-media follow-up sequences for each practice area that will convert someone who has “discovered” you into a client (income) and then into a raving fan (equity) which you market back to forever (newsletter) and manage with a fantastic marketing database.

Benjamin Glass is a personal injury and medical malpractice attorney in Fairfax, Virginia. He is the author of the following books, all available at Amazon:

- *Great Legal Marketing, How Smart Lawyers Get More Clients, Make More Money, and Still Get Home in Time for Dinner*
- *Playing to Win: What Napoleon Hill Might Say About "Success" to Today's Solo and Small Firm Lawyer*
- *Carry Your Own Leash: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Autonomy and Success*