

Fast Track Your 2018 Marketing Efforts:

Simple and Effective Tips You Can Do in December

By Terrie S. Wheeler, MBC



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December is a great month for reflection and planning. I don’t know about you, but generally in December, my clients become more involved in their own family activities, and a little less active in their day-to-day practice. Your New Year’s resolutions have been set. You will eat healthier, get more exercise, and double down on your commitment to generate more revenue in 2018 than you did in 2017. Good intentions abound. You have the entire year ahead of you!

Before your best intentions spiral into a steady stream of client work and other practice management tasks, please take the time now to conduct a brief check-up on some of your most important market-

ing tools – the things that help you market without you having to spend a lot of time. Think of these tasks as laying the foundation for a successful and prosperous new year.

Plan to Succeed

Take some time to create a mini-marketing plan for 2018 by answering the following questions:

- **What your Best Contacts have in Common.** What traits and characteristics do your best clients, contacts, and referral sources have in common?
- **Industries Attracting your Clients and Referral Sources.** What industries are your clients or referrals sources in-

volved in? How can you become more involved?

- **Best Referral Sources.** Who are your top 10 referral sources, and what can you do in 2018 to stay in touch with them and continue to build the relationships?
- **Revenue Goal.** How much revenue did you generate in 2017, and what are your revenue goals for 2018? You need a measurable goal.
- **Define your Niche.** What is your niche – the areas in your practice that others seek you to help with because of your expertise?
- **What Worked and What Didn't?** Reflect on the marketing activities you pursued in 2017. What activities produced results, and what didn't? How can you do more of what worked?
- **Finding the Time.** How can you make marketing a priority in 2018? Consider adding "marketing time" to your calendar every day – even if it's just for a few minutes. Moving slowly is better than not moving at all.

A Checklist to Fast-Track Your Marketing

- ✓ **Biography Review.** Read through your website biography. Make sure your biography is up to date and includes presentations and CLEs you delivered in 2017, articles you published, and volunteer and pro bono opportunities you participated in. Remember 80 percent of visitors to law firm websites go there to view attorney biographies. Make yours shine!
- ✓ **Representative Experience.** Reflect on 2017 and provide highlights of your best work. This experience should also be featured or linked to in your biography. Come up with 8-10 highlights from 2017. For each one, include the type of client you served, a summary of their legal issue, your approach to solving their problem, and the result.

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Clients want to see that you have done what they need.

- ✓ **Update Other Listings.** Many of you are Super Lawyers, Avvo Rated, and are prominently featured on other websites like MNLawyers.com, Martindale.com, or Lawyers.com. Make sure you also update these important listings.

- ✓ **Contacts.** Make sure you are adding new contact information into your database. Don't forget to include all your new clients and referral sources from 2017, as well as the LinkedIn contacts you added in the past year. Communicating with your contacts is the best way to stay top-of-mind with them.

- ✓ **Track How your Clients Found You.** Now is the time to set up a system with the person who answers your phone. For every inquiry call received, you should be tracking how they heard about you. If they say, "I found you online," ask a follow up question: "Do you remember what you searched for?" This information is golden when trying to keep your Google rankings high. Once you know what they searched for, you need to regularly use those keywords or phrases in the content on your website.

- ✓ **Review your Contracts.** Chances are you have many active contracts for services including directory advertising,

practice management tools, and other subscriptions. Make sure you are not just auto-renewing a service that is not working for you. Create a spreadsheet with all your expenses. Include what you are paying for and when the contract renews. Don't take the path of least resistance and "just say yes." Rather, evaluate upcoming renewals and determine if you have received new clients because of your investment. If not, consider not renewing.

- ✓ **Study your Website and Social Media Analytics.** Anything you do in marketing must have a method to measure its results. Make sure your web developer or marketing professional is providing analytics each month that will let you know how many unique visitors have visited your website, how long they stayed on your site, what pages they visited (which is how we know biographies are the most highly visited pages), how many people were "referred" from one of your social media sites, how many visitors are accessing your website from mobile phones, tablets, laptops and desktop computers. You can then make changes to your website content accordingly.

Take the opportunity right now to step back and be reflective about where and how you have been spending your marketing time (and money). If you take the advice above, you will be well positioned to generate a steady stream of new clients in 2018!



Terrie S. Wheeler, MBC, is the founder and president of Professional Services Marketing LLC. For over 30 years, Terrie and her team have helped lawyers and law firms analyze the success of past marketing initiatives to put winning plans in place for the future. Terrie serves as vice chair of the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board. She earned her master's degree from the University of St. Thomas and presents regularly at two local law schools. You can reach Terrie at Terrie@psm-marketing.com or (320) 358-1000.