



## Quit Talking and Start Doing:

# The Best Marketing Strategies for 2019

BY TERRIE S. WHEELER, MBC

Most of the lawyers I work with across the country enjoy brainstorming new ideas; especially this time of year. Often, they look at what other lawyers are doing and say, “If THIS firm is doing it, we should be too!” Alternatively, as we ring in the new year, you might be thinking, “out with the old, and in with the new.” But not so fast. In this article I will share the best – defined as those generating measurable results – marketing strategies that came out of 2018.

### WHAT REALLY WORKS

While client marketing strategies are as diverse as the firms we work with, there are a few marketing strategies that have produced some incredible results for our clients.

Don’t get your hopes up. These are not the newest, coolest, greatest, sexiest things out there; just the things that have worked best.

### Create Audience-Specific Content on your Website.

Think about the types of clients you serve. Market your practice around specific client groups *not* around your services. No one picks a lawyer because they are impressed with a long, bulleted list of services. Clients want to see that you have done exactly what they need with specificity using terms of art they can relate to. Consider pulling all the experience your firm has representing professional athletes, ranchers, physicians, machine shops, farmers, camp owners, executives, associations, inventors, medical device

manufacturers.... you get the picture – into one page on your website that is built just for them. Here, your clients can see a summary of your work in their industry, read relevant blog posts you have written, review representative experience specific to them, see testimonials from satisfied clients, and contact you to discuss their legal matter.

### Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

Recently I was in a client meeting where it was reported that over 15 calls had come in over the past week as a direct result of finding the firm on Google. This firm focuses on working with physicians, and because of its strong SEO, one call was from a neurosurgeon, one from a cardiologist, and the other from an anesthesiologist. All because their website and content has been optimized to reach a specific audience – physicians. Check your firm’s SEO by searching the key words and phrases prospective clients would use like, “lawyer for physicians,” or “camping lawyer,” or “lawyer for inventors,” or “medical device lawyer.” Generally, people do not go beyond the first page of search results.

If your firm does not come up on the first page of Google, it may as well be on page 400. Also, look at where your competitors come up using the same search terms. SEO is complicated, and not something most law firms choose to tackle on their own.

### Website Content and Blogs.

The key to top search engine rankings, is to keep adding new content to your website. If the key words you want to be found under do not exist on your website, clients won't find you. Produce a steady stream of new content including case studies, representative experience, new client-focused pages, audience-specific blog posts, articles you publish and presentations you give. View your website as a living, breathing organism that needs to be tended to and cared for on a consistent basis – constantly feeding it with new content.

### Targeted Communications.

Generally the only type of communications we use are e-communications. And the only type of e-communications we recommend are sent to extremely targeted groups of prospective clients and referral sources. General firm e-newsletters are falling in popularity. Clients just don't have time to read anything that is not specific and relevant to them. Therefore, the key to effective communications is to segment your database into groups of contacts so you can send these smaller groups information that is interesting and informative – blog

posts they can relate to because you wrote the posts just for them.

### Videos.

This year, many of our clients worked with us to create videos for their websites. In addition, videos can be used on social media, and featured in targeted communications. If you choose to add video to your website, make sure you also use a service like rev.com to produce full-text transcripts of each video. Internet search bots cannot scan videos, but they can certainly index text. In addition, make sure your video team knows how to fully optimize each video on your website and on YouTube or Vimeo to generate the strongest SEO results.

### Social Media.

While the algorithms seem to change with the weather, social media is here to stay. In last month's article, I wrote about the "New Rules" of social media. As a lawyer, we recommend spending most of your social time on LinkedIn, posting long-form posts (no longer than 200 words) that are accompanied by a unique image. Use royalty-free sites to find images and focus on your personal engagement. If you maintain a company LinkedIn page, go to that page and share posts with your personal LinkedIn network. Then, engage with your network. Like, share and comment on others' posts. Post something timely and relevant at least once per week.

## THERE IS NO EASY BUTTON

Think about how your clients find you. Most often, it's through referrals and word of mouth. Don't fall prey to email solicitations promising a steady stream of high-quality referrals. Don't spend your hard-earned money on paid directory listings and advertising on legal referral sites. Advertising can be very expensive and is not targeted. Generally, clients don't find you because they stumble upon an ad you paid for. Make sure your receptionist tracks how new callers found the firm and continue to invest in what's working for you.

Finally, don't let new "shiny object" ideas distract you from staying focused on your target audiences and prevent you from taking action. Remember the wise words of Walt Disney, "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."



**TERRIE S. WHEELER, MBC, HAS WORKED WITH LAWYERS AND LAW FIRMS FOR OVER 25 YEARS HELPING THEM FOCUS ON HIGH-IMPACT, LOW-COST**

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