

INSIDE OUT MARKETING SECRETS

4 LAWYERS ONLY

How To Significantly Increase Your Revenues By Reading One Report

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What Is Marketing?

The first thing you need to understand about marketing is what it is and what it is not. It's all too common for marketing wizards to create elaborate definitions of marketing that enhance their perceived wizardry but don't help. If you can't remember the definition it won't serve you. I'm going to present you with a two word definition of marketing and I want you to think of it as a lens—or a pair of goggles you can slip on—to let you really *see* how people are marketing.

You can use this set of lenses to look at your own marketing, that of another law firm, or anybody in the marketplace selling any kind of goods or services.

Marketing is: *communicating value*.

Everything you do and everything you say creates perceptions in the mind of your audience. Every result your ads, your building, your *after shave* produces in the mind of your prospect is part of your marketing.

A lot of lawyers—especially those with significant referral sources—tend to believe that “we don't market”. But it's not possible to “not market” because everything you are doing conveys *value*—either high value or low value—or even no value, which is a level of value.

The 4 Big Dog Errors That Are Costing You Big Time

There are several common and costly errors lawyers and law firms make in their marketing. I will address a few of them here and comment on them before I go on to recommending a few powerful, proven strategies that you can implement right away.

Error #1: The Big Dog Syndrome.

The biggest and most common error that lawyers make in building their firms is to build a “cult of personality” around themselves. One individual with great passion for the underdog and incredible doggedness and skill will build a reputation as being the “go to guy” in their area of specialty.

These firms tend to be built up upon the preferences, the sensibilities and the peccadillos of that lead person. While it is certainly your right to make your business the way you want—and in fact we encourage our clients to integrate their lifestyle and practice in such a way that the practice of law serves them on a very high level—it’s also important to understand the implications of your decisions on a Return On Investment (ROI) basis.

The discipline of making sound decisions tends not to develop in “cult of personality” practices. The lead dog is too busy saving the world and tends to make ego-based decisions. Such lawyers are particularly susceptible to the pitches of media sales people who know just how to butter them up right.

There is a great quote by Albert Einstein which goes, “A problem cannot be solved at the level of thinking which created it.” This applies in business especially. You cannot effectively market a law firm with “seat of the pants” marketing decisions.

The Big Dog must get good advice and follow it.

Error 2: Making decisions based on personal taste.

Even larger firms that are not built around a single “big dog” tend to make major decision based on the opinions and sensibilities of the partners and, sometimes, the staff. There is nothing more common than for an ad to be passed around and voted on, as if marketing decision-making is a democratic process. Or, as if lawyers and their staffs are savvy advertising and marketing specialists.

Any decision-making based on personal preference is a serious error. Mission-critical decisions should only be made in accordance with *response* and *testing*. In other words, it doesn’t matter what YOU think. It only matter what your prospects think—and more importantly—what they actually DO.

Our perspective as inside-out marketers is that it’s all about attracting people who are just right for you. “Just right” means they are going to give you the revenue level that you want; you are going to be able to serve in a way that satisfies and fulfills their needs perfectly; they are going to refer other “just right” clients to you as well.

You can only create marketing systems to attract these perfect clients if your marketing systems are based on their feelings, sensibilities, thoughts and preferences. And, guessing doesn’t count! You must develop a keen understanding and a lexicon of words that your ideal client demonstrably responds to.

When your marketing and advertising is based on well-researched data, it is as though they are in a secret language that “only dogs can hear”. You will significantly reduce the number of intakes you must process to find a good client. And, you will notice that the people who come to you are uncannily well matched to your unique strengths.

And, most importantly, these perfect clients that come to you will be ready to go, already knowing that you are the right firm for them.

Error #3: “Me Too” Marketing

The third big error that lawyers and law firms make is being cynical and lazy in their messaging. Too many firms simply default to what they see their competitors doing. If you would simply examine the lawyer category in any Yellow Pages directory, or watch daytime television in any major market in the US, you’d realize that lawyers are unconsciously and rigidly following the “Greatest Hits of Same Old Same Old” model of advertising.

There are two contradictory thoughts that somehow live together in the minds of many lawyers. They are:

Contradictory Thought #1: “We must be unique! We want our own unique message to stand out! We want our strengths to be powerfully projected in all our advertising!”

Contradictory Thought #2: “Let’s look at what everybody else is doing and saying and make sure we don’t miss anything!”

If every law firm lazily assumes that the other guy is smart and follows him, it won’t be long before the blind lead the blind over a cliff. This is happening in many television markets and Yellow Pages directories. Many of the ads are based on an original bad concept of a player who has since dropped out of the game!

Error #4: “Name, Rank and Serial Number” advertising

When you ask a lawyer to create a new ad for their firm, the first thing they usually say is “This is who we are, this is what we do, and here’s how to reach us!!!!”

Of course this approach flies in the face of everything that has been discovered about direct response advertising results in over a century of well-documented tests. For a profession obsessed with “precedents”, this approach to advertising is following the proven loser.

What you need to realize is that people don’t call you because your phone number is in big type, and people don’t call you because you said your name the loudest. Also, people don’t call you because your logo is gorgeous. There are two reasons people call you. Reason one is that you are the best of the worst of a bunch of bad communicators...or you’ve made the short list of firms getting the call because the prospect can’t really tell who is good. The second reason is that they actually have a strong preference for something you have communicated. These people call you because they perceive *value*. This goes back to our basic definition of marketing—which is *communicating value*.

An ad or brochure or website or communiqué based on the “who we are, what we do, how to reach us” paradigm is doomed to mediocrity or outright failure.

Someone once said that people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. This is a great principle to follow—especially for lawyers. Instead of looking at an ad or marketing piece as an opportunity to drone on about yourself, try making it all about the other person. Build an ad based on your unique understanding of your perfect prospects. Speak in their words about their concerns and issues. Most importantly, educate them. You will position your firm as the leader in your market.

A great marketing expert named Jay Abraham once said, “Don’t fall in love with your product. Fall in love with your customer.” It is great advice to follow.

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Do you want to know something that can make you millions of dollars over the life of your business if you'll just listen to it, absorb it and DO IT? It's so simple that you might read it or hear it and pass it by—missing it entirely or dismissing it as too obvious.

But if you are not living it, it's not so obvious.

The secret is to be totally different from any law firm your clients have ever heard of or encountered. Sounds good so far, right? So, how do you do that?

Simple. You build your practice around them, not yourself. Read on and find out about a few low cost, high leverage strategies that can literally make you rich as they have for other law firms.

Killer Strategy #1. Reach Out and Touch Someone

Huh?

That's right. Instead of being the big dog, master of the universe killer litigator who people should feel honored to be around...turn it around and make your client the star. Honor them. Serve them. Put their interests first.

Here's one tactical application of this distinction that is so powerful, it will instantly transform your clients' view of you and of the legal profession forever.

Ready? It's pretty simple.

Call them before they call you.

In most law firms, the "squeaky wheel gets the grease" principle is unconsciously followed with respect to client service. As many cases as possible are signed up and then left to their own devices. The clients are expected to chase the very busy and very important lawyers and when the very busy and very important lawyers can spare a moment they deliver a crumb of information to the hungry, desperate little client.

Some firms do a better job of keeping clients in the loop, but there's always a feeling in the client's mind of *chasing*—and therefore being a second class citizen. (I have personally conducted many dozens of interviews with law firm clients all over North America—and I always hear these concerns).

Call your clients before they call you. Call them *personally* if you can. Or have a highly trained and efficient person with excellent phone manner call them before they call asking for an update on

their case. They will be astonished and they will instantly conclude that your firm is different from any law firm they've encountered or ever heard about. What do you think that's worth?

Take a moment to calculate the value of this simple strategy—if you'll only take it to heart. What does it cost you to attract a client through your normal marketing activities? How much does a referral cost? Would multiplying your referrals be a good strategy? Would differentiating yourself from all other law firms be a great way to increase referrals? What if your rate of referrals increased by 25%? How about 50%?

Do you “get” how powerful this is? And why? *Because it flies in the face of everything people know or think they know about lawyers.*

I don't have to tell you that people have *perceptions* about lawyers. Rightly or wrongly lawyers have gotten a bad rap. If you do nothing to correct these perceptions—then by default you are volunteering to have them applied to you. But if you can take a few proactive steps to differentiate yourself, people will think, “These guys aren't like most lawyers!”

I know from personal experience how incredibly dedicated personal injury lawyers are. But there is something you must know: the level of satisfaction a client feels is not directly related to the quality of the legal work done on their behalf.

Very rarely so.

And it's not directly related to the size of the settlement.

The perceived value of the lawyer's services is directly proportionate to the quality of the communication—and the quality of the relationship.

Understanding this fact and masterfully applying it to the way you do business could make a bigger difference in your wealth and life satisfaction than just about anything else.

When people sign up with a lawyer they are hoping to be kept in the loop. They are hoping to be respected. They are hoping to be listened to and really heard. They want to be acknowledged—and included as an intelligent participant. They want justice, yes. But, their deepest need is in the domain of *relationship*.

I know some okay lawyers who have fanatic fans who refer like crazy. And I know some excellent litigators whose clients don't fully appreciate the brilliant legal work that was done in their behalf.

From a marketing perspective, the relationship is even more important than the result. In the consulting world we call it “managing client expectations”. A beautifully managed project with a mediocre result will produce much more satisfaction than a project with brilliant results and only okay client management.

Admittedly, some clients are a pain in the neck and call too often. You can't always be interrupting your schedule four times a day. But your client has a reasonable right to expect regular updates on

their case, to be given documentation, and to be included in the process. Some clever law firms create artificial milestones for the simple purpose of keeping the client in the loop and constantly “papering them with information” as the events unfold.

This is good strategy. Once it’s set up it’s easy to manage and creates significant “perceived value” in the mind of the client.

A better strategy is to nurture that relationship, to honour that person, and to do it in a way that is personal but doesn’t require you to stay up to 11:00 every night. Make it personal as much as possible. If you can’t call personally, have a very personable person make the call for you.

Killer Strategy #2: Understand their ‘Journey to Justice’

Calling your clients is a powerful way to get them bragging to their friends about the amazing lawyer they are working with. In the long term, to understand the whys and wherefores of client referrals, it is necessary to consider what we call the “Journey to Justice”.

Every case goes through a predictable set of stages. If you want to achieve maximum referrability, manage the client through the stages.

The first stage is the injury in which the person has a traumatic interruption of their life which affects their circumstances, their emotional well-being, their relationships, their finances and their sense of hope for the future. It also affects their *identity*. This is something you might want to seriously meditate upon...the change in identity affecting your client.

The client’s sense of “who I am” goes, in some cases, from “I’m in control of my life, I’m a free agent, master of my destiny, nobody can stop me, nobody can touch me”, to “I’m vulnerable, I’m a victim, I’m scared, I don’t know if I have enough money, I don’t know if I can take care of my family, I don’t know what the future holds, HELP!”

That’s stage one in the Journey to Justice.

Stage two is the runaround stage where the insurance company denies benefits or won’t return calls, or says the client has no claim, or the company doctor tells the client to go back to work. That’s when the person realizes that their injury may not be their biggest problem. Now they know they need a lawyer.

Stage three is finding a lawyer to talk to. Some people are connected. They just call their accountant and get a good referral. Or perhaps they have a lawyer in the family who can refer it on to somebody else. Those who are not connected tend to look at television or billboard ads, websites, yellow pages.

Stage four is choosing a lawyer. Most people sign up with the first lawyer they meet. As a rule, any lawyer who is successful is very good at “closing the deal”. Most people are not able to withstand the personal power of a really good trial attorney who can determine the facts of their case, while being reassuring and confident.

The next stage (stage five) is the actual conduct of the case and this is where future referrability is forged or not. It's in the back and forth *communication* and in the *relationship* between client and lawyer that the highest degree of appreciation and respect in the mind of the client can be built. Even if you do a superb job *legally*—if you do not communicate well with the client during this phase you are never going to get as many or as good referrals as you otherwise would have.

Stage six is the resolution in which a verdict is reached or a negotiated settlement with the insurance company.

Stage seven is the aftermath—which is the rest of their life, but usually is limited to a year or two after the case is resolved. In stage seven a person is in the process of transforming from a victim back to their own self.

And, linked in their mind to their victimhood is the fact that a lawyer on a white charger came and saved them from disaster. If they have a good *relationship* with that lawyer they are very much disposed to telling other people and to giving referrals. Their identity could shift from victim of injustice to champion of a bringer of justice. But, if they don't have a good relationship with the lawyer—even if the settlement was wonderful and beyond their wildest expectations—they will not refer.

Killer Strategy #3: Knowing the secret to referrability

(WARNING: What I'm about to tell you is very powerful, but you could blink and miss it. If nothing else, read the following section very closely because it reveals a principle that you will not find written about or discussed anywhere else.)

I personally have considerable experience developing referral programs for many different kinds of businesses including law firms. I have been engaged to speak to groups of entrepreneurs about various high-leverage marketing strategies—including referrals. I've also published a lot of information on the subject. As part of my quest to understand and master referrals—which I consider to be hands down the most important marketing focus for virtually any company—I've purchased numerous programs and have attended dozens of seminars.

You are about to learn the thing that none of the other marketing wizards has ever talked about. It's something we discovered accidentally at Larry Lavin's firm in Philadelphia.

It started innocuously enough. We invited what we call his 'Ambassador Class' of clients to come in for a day of interviews. My objective was to get deep into their skulls and craft a lexicon based on their language patterns that would be used in ads and web text. I also thought it would be a great thing if they received some acknowledgment and thanks for being such great clients.

The people selected were top referrers. They had achieved great outcomes through Larry and his partners, had referred multiple cases. 'Ambassadors' always have a very strong bond with one of the lawyers along with excellent communication.

The day was quite moving and it was quite touching. Each of the partners came and greeted the Ambassadors. They were served an excellent buffet lunch. I interviewed each with great care. And I conducted a round table discussion—which was recorded. Their opportunity to register their perceptions and concerns and opinions and feelings in a formal way seemed to be much appreciated.

Now, keep in mind that if Larry's firm never received another referral from any one of these Ambassadors they would have been more than happy because each Ambassador was an extraordinary referrer. But, what happened took us all by surprise.

In the month or so after the Ambassador event, Larry's firm received an amazing surge in referrals from the Ambassadors. We thought they were "tapped out". They thought they were tapped out. But each Ambassador found a "fifth gear" that nobody had any idea existed.

Let's examine this for a second.

People who had done "all the referring they could do" delivered a significant splurge of new referrals shortly after being nurtured in that particular way. Do you see the implications for your firm? Until the Ambassador event, each Ambassador delivered a referral every time they noticed an opportunity. At their stage in their Journey to Justice they had become champions of a great and caring law firm.

But, after being acknowledged and feeling a deepened rapport, they suddenly noticed more opportunities than ever before!

So, the hidden principle of referrals is that a person's ability to refer is directly proportionate to A) the quality of the relationship, B) the quality of the rapport, and, the kicker: C) the current intensity of the feeling of bonding. This will dictate how many opportunities they will notice and their level of motivation (and persuasion) as they reach out to others in need with their passionate recommendation.

So, if you can create a bond with your clients and nurture it, stoke it and keep it hot, your Ambassadors will not only refer in the short term—soon after their case is settled—but they might just take on the identity of Champion. The implications of this phenomenon are profound.

If you have any kind of bonding ability with your clients, read this Report again. When the penny drops you will truly be dangerous.

To receive a more in-depth tactical overview of the nurturing process, contact me: moistlotus@gmail.com or by phone (647) 707-3315