



Top 10 Internet Marketing Tips for New, Small Law Firms

An unprecedented series of law firm layoffs has thousands of lawyers hanging their own shingle for the first time either as solo practitioners or as part of two- to five-partner “micro” firms. To turn the pink-slip trend into a profitable new venture, every non-billable hour needs to generate leads and build business. Andrew Unsworth, Senior Director of Search Engine Marketing at LexisNexis® offers these suggestions for budding solo practitioners and micro practices:

1. Advertise Online. Print yellow page advertising alone won't cut it. The investment for a one-time, print display ad is an expense unsupported by demonstrated or measurable data. Investment in online marketing will likely yield more qualified leads and enable easier measurement of ROI as compared to a similar investment in print advertising or print directories.
2. Invest in a professionally designed and developed website. A polished, professional website is a must-have for anyone launching a new firm, regardless of size. In 2008, 32 percent of solo attorneys and 20 percent of firms with two-to-five attorneys did not have a web site, according to a 2008 Harris Interactive study on Marketing among Small Law Firms. Don't be one of these unfortunate few.
3. “Consumerize” your web site. When prospects seek an attorney, they want someone with obviously good credentials, but they also want to know what kind of person their attorney is. Pepper in some personal data about schools, hobbies and outside interests.
4. Incorporate video on your site. Develop an introductory video of the managing partner that showcases personality as well as expertise. Post the video on the web (and YouTube) and even consider a TV spot down the road.
5. Get listed in and link to online directories. Identify all online directories available for posting attorney and firm profiles. This includes attorney-specific portals and social networking sites. Link to these on your website and don't forget to add your firm's website to each online listing you post.



6. Hire an expert. You practice law and let others grow your business! Consider outsourcing your internet marketing campaign to qualified experts. First, ask for a consultation and determine a comfortable budget (earmark usually 2–5 percent of monthly budget as a good start point). Let the experts generate leads for your fledgling practice.
7. Optimize your website. Search Engine Optimization experts can be tremendously helpful in improving online visibility and optimizing a firm’s organic search rankings. Select a search marketing team that offers transparent and results-driven metrics.
8. Engage in pay-per-click advertising. No firm is too small to reap tangible benefits from pay-per-click campaigns. Ensure your marketing experts select appropriate keywords, based on analysis, that are geographically and topically suited to your firm. This strategy helps favorably position small firms to directly compete with larger firms in your market.
9. Understand and use appropriate metrics. Learn how success and ROI are measured in an online marketing campaign. While you don’t need to be an expert, you do need to understand the difference between organic and paid search, as well as “clicks,” “impressions” and “conversions.” Tracking leads is an appropriate metric used by only 20 percent of attorneys.
10. Be responsive! While your internet marketing team brings in qualified leads, put a system in place to respond to each one. Make a phone call, send an email in response to an inquiry, or schedule a meeting. Keep these leads in a simple database so when you’re ready to send the first newsletter from the firm, clients and prospect lists are easily accessible.



Andrew Unsworth is the Senior Director of Search Engine Marketing at LexisNexis® where he leads a team of search engine marketing specialists who help law firms build their brands online and drive qualified prospective clients to their websites.

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