



The LexisNexis® Tips Series -- Number 3:

Improving Lead Generation for Law Firms

The only constant in marketing is change. Just as classified advertising in newspapers has seen steep declines, Yellow Pages print advertising is projected to experience a 39 percent drop in the next five years.¹ Bill Gates publicly foreshadowed that statistic stating in 2007 *Yellow Page usage amongst people under 50-years-old will drop to near zero over the next five years.*⁺

Historically, lawyers have gravitated to print Yellow Pages display ads; and the classic print directory remains highly popular among small- to mid-sized law firms. However, this shrinking and out-dated publishing network faces an uncertain future -- print directory spending is projected to slide from \$12.7 billion in 2008 to \$7.8 billion by 2013.²

Debra Regan, vice president at LexisNexis, offers the following tips for law firms interested in navigating away from traditional Yellow Pages advertising to more cost-effective and progressive lead-generation tactics that help balance the marketing mix:

1. Build a marketing plan that is aligned directly to your firm's business objectives and has measurable goals. How are you going to measure the results of your marketing plan? How will you know the plan is generating new cases for your firm?
2. Develop an integrated marketing plan. Are you relying solely on print Yellow Pages and print advertising to generate new cases? Your plan should include a mix of online- and-offline marketing tactics. The right plan depends on your firm's budget and goals.
3. Document and measure incoming queries. Ask your prospective clients how they heard about you...capture the data in an easy to use format. If Yellow Pages spending is the majority of your advertising budget, can you attribute new cases resulting directly from these print directories?
4. Incorporate lead-generation tracking tools to help document prospective client activity. Online advertising is infinitely measurable. Traditional print advertising is not! You can measure profile views, web site visitors and conversions, including phone leads and email leads from an online intake form. If you're part of an online network like Lawyers.com, you can also see which competitors your prospective clients are checking out.
5. Track your marketing investment. On a monthly basis, review the performance of your marketing plan. Do you know how many people visited your web site? Do you know how many phone calls you received from your print advertising campaign? Understand what's working well from your marketing plan in terms of generating leads.



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6. If you're uncomfortable migrating immediately from classic Yellow Pages advertising to online marketing with search engines, then make a slower transition. In year one, reduce Yellow Pages advertising by 50 percent and devote the other 50 percent to online marketing; in year two devote 75 percent of marketing dollars to online marketing.
7. Optimize your marketing plan. Once you know what's working for you, refine and adjust your marketing plan to get the maximum results from your investment. If you're investing in search marketing, you can change the scope of your advertising campaign in a matter of seconds. Can you do that with print Yellow Pages?
8. Build your own brand. Are you active in any online professional networks? Take advantage of online networks like Martindale-Hubbell Connected (<http://www.martindale.com/connected>), LinkedIn and others to establish your own, distinct online brand. Encourage your partners and associates to do the same.
9. If traditional measurement tools are in use, are you capturing volume of inbound calls from a toll-free line and can you attribute these leads generated directly to Yellow Pages advertising? Be sure and inquire how a prospect finds you so you are better informed what's working.
10. No one expects you to go it alone. Experts who specialize in internet marketing for small- to-medium sized firms are readily available to offer counsel on which program and budget suits your growing law firm. Invite legal marketing experts to meet with you to analyze and evaluate all the marketing possibilities available to help grow your practice.



Debra Regan (debra.regan@lexisnexis.com) is vice president at LexisNexis, part of the Lawyers.Com and Martindale-Hubbell networks since 1999. For more than 10 years, LexisNexis, as a trusted brand, has delivered a full suite of online marketing services to lawyers. The in-house LexisNexis "agency" is staffed with search marketing, pay-per-click, video and web design experts along with a full team of web developers with key industry certifications. For more information, visit www.lexisnexis.com/lmc.

¹2008 Borrell Associates %Say Goodbye to Yellow Pages+Case Study.

² Ibid.