



ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT SERIES:

## Going from In-House Counsel to Solo Practitioner with Attorney Larry Silvestri

Larry Silvestri was fortunate to find satisfaction in his role as in-house counsel for a real estate developer. “It was kind of a dream career,” he says. “I really enjoyed it.” But after a long, successful business run, his employer began to wind down operations and Silvestri started looking for a change—in more ways than one.

“My wife and I decided to relocate...to be closer to our son,” Silvestri explains. “My next chapter was going into private practice.”

You read that right—after moving to a new city and leaving his position as in-house counsel, Silvestri chose to hang out his shingle and go solo with **Silvestri Law P.A.**, a commercial real estate law firm.

### STARTING HIS OWN FIRM

“There was a lot more to it than I thought,” Silvestri admits with a laugh. While it’s easy to grasp the importance of securing new clients, it’s not uncommon for solo attorneys to initially overlook the importance of things like finding the right office space, or the need for marketing or research tools. “I’d been a lawyer,” he explains. “But now I’m an entrepreneur and have to wear all the hats that go along with that.”

To help build his business acumen, Silvestri attended a 10-week entrepreneurship course offered by the local chamber of commerce. Not only did it teach him the fundamentals of self-employment, it helped him build a network of friends and colleagues in his new city.

And then, after all the prep work, Silvestri reveals that the true challenge begins.

“You have to go out in the world and get hired,” he says.

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## INTRODUCING “LARRY THE LEASING LAWYER”

As with any small business, Silvestri needed to scale up his **marketing**—which was especially vital given that he was the new guy in town and couldn’t rely on the robust network of colleagues and contacts he had before he relocated.

Silvestri got involved in the community by joining civic groups and attending functions like seminars and conferences. That involvement led to a lot of new faces, fresh handshakes and first impressions. And, as anyone with sales experience will tell you, making a memorable introduction is important.

So, how does a lawyer make themselves memorable?

Taking a cue from one of his professional development coaches, Silvestri found a hook: Instead of Lawrence A. Silvestri of Silvestri Law P.A., he’s now simply “Larry the Leasing Lawyer.”

Silvestri explains that his simple, alliterative moniker helps him cut through a lot of that “what do you do” small talk. Better still, it’s memorable and marketable—Silvestri makes sure that when you **type it into Google™**, his firm is the first to pop up.

## BENEFITS OF A SOLO PRACTICE

Silvestri credits a lot of his success to decades of experience in commercial real estate transaction law. He explains that, while many attorneys say they handle things like leasing, his focused expertise helps him compete with larger firms for clients in need of specialized real estate-related matters.

And he’s able to operate lean, leveraging things like **virtual assistants** to maintain a low overhead. Silvestri reveals that his business model gives him the ability to be responsive to cost-conscious clients.

In fact, Silvestri’s developed some ingenious alternative fee arrangements to attract new business. For instance, he’ll cap his fees for specific work in which there’s an easily defined scope and scale.

## “IT’S COMING TOGETHER”

“Starting from not really knowing much about running my own firm,” Silvestri says, “I now feel like it’s coming together.” Indeed, he reveals a broader picture for his marketing strategy, integrating some online and digital tactics into his established methods. Silvestri says that it’s important to not rely on a single channel, instead he focuses on a multi-faceted effort to attract new business.

While he admits that “the first couple of years [in solo practice] were a bit of a struggle,” Larry the Leasing Lawyer is hitting his stride.

And it’s easy to see why. Silvestri offers a simple maxim that speaks to his success and overall work satisfaction: “Why not do what you like?” he quips.

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