

Law Firm Marketing: How to Gain A Competitive Edge

By: Stephen Fairley

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The Super Bowl last weekend reminded me that legal marketing is as competitive as any sport. A well-prepared coach will know the facts about his opponent. A well-prepared trial attorney will not only study their case, but also their opponent.

Marketing your law firm consists of quite a bit of information gathering; learning about top competitors is one of the first steps.

Below is a list of ideas you can use to become acquainted with your competitors to gain an important edge in law firm marketing:

1. **Review and analyze their website.** You will be surprised what a law firm will reveal on their website. Studying their website will give you some important clues about their level of professionalism too.
2. **Enlist a friend's help to interview their associates as a potential client.** Be prepared with a list of questions before they place the actual call. Choose questions that will reveal important data about the competition. A simple telephone call can produce a wealth of information about the competition's law firm marketing techniques.
3. **Ask them to mail you some information about their law firm.** The type of legal marketing material they send out will speak volumes about who they are and how they conduct business.
4. **Sign-up for their online newsletter or e-newsletter** (using your personal email address, of course).
5. **Use Google to further bolster your law marketing strategic planning.** Type in the keywords and phrases someone would use to find your practice area. For example, "LA PI lawyer" or "Real Estate Attorney Chicago" or "Estate Planning Lawyer in Manhattan". Study the top ten websites that come up. These are your most aggressive online competitors because they didn't get there by mistake.
6. **Talk to local recruiters to find out if they are hiring.** Recruiters are a great resource; they often talk to clients daily and can give you the inside info.
7. **Review local newspapers and trade magazines to see how 'visible' they are.** Create a Google Alert for each of your competitors so you can receive news feeds about them as they happen.
8. **Ask fellow attorneys what they know about the competition.** If they have had business dealings with them, get as many details as possible.

Don't be afraid to ask questions and to investigate as much as possible. Your successful competitors, no doubt, are learning about you too if they are using the best law firm marketing techniques.

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Stephen Fairley is a nationally recognized law firm marketing expert and has helped more than 6,000 attorneys from hundreds of law firms across the country to discover the secrets of generating more referrals and filling their practice.

He is the international best-selling author of 10 books and 5 audio programs.

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