

How Will You Make 2015 a Game Changer ? (Part 2)

By Kimberly Alford Rice

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In our first installment, we dispelled marketing myths that lawyers must overcome to make 2015 their game-changing year. Read on to learn more.

Myth 3: Online Marketing Does Not Bring in New Clients

As uncomfortable as it can be for some lawyers to accept how technology has pervasively crept into the practice of law, one area that cannot be ignored or resisted is how legal services consumers are identifying and retaining counsel in today's highly connected world.

Even with a referral in hand, most, if not all, prospective clients head straight to your website before they reach out to you. Often, visiting your website is a prospective client's first encounter with you in a business relationship. So, are they impressed and more likely to pick up the phone to retain you? Or does your website send the unfortunate message that you are not ready for "prime time"?

With a virtual handshake, your website has the power to create a positive first impression that can mean the difference between receiving a follow-up call or losing an opportunity.

Your website should be a critical part of your strategy to initiate and sustain relationships with clients, instead of just a promotional tool. Nothing substitutes the power of personal interaction with clients, but your website can and should reinforce your commitment to clients.

Myth 4: A Strong Referral Network Is Key

Building a strong referral network is critical to developing a healthy practice but it is no magic bullet in and of itself. The gospel truth is *there is no magic bullet*, no single tactic, activity or promotional tool unto itself that will help you build a healthy practice. This is the number-one myth that too many lawyers believe!

To proactively build and sustain a healthy practice over the course of your career, you must develop sound strategies that reach specific audiences (existing clients, sound referral sources and qualified prospects) in a meaningful way over a sustained period of time. There are many, many economical ways to do that, but they do not include any one-shot wonders like placing one ad in a charity

fundraiser program book, building a website and never adding fresh content to it, or even attending a scattershot array of networking events without appropriately following up in a timely manner.

No Myth

Marketing legal services is evolving, with many new ways to attract and retain clients. Some marketing strategies have lost their magic, while others are emerging as winners.

One marketing truth won't change: Clients will continue to purchase legal services from trustworthy and competent people who can demonstrate, beyond a reasonable doubt, that they can produce the results they promise. Demonstrate that to the market and you'll have clients lined up to work with you.