

Why E-Mail Marketing is NOT Dead

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We have an entire team of people who handle social media for law firms - from web to Twitter to Facebook and LinkedIn. I get it. Unfortunately, moving headlong into social media for some law firms has meant abandoning e-mail marketing. Big mistake.

Because we are predominantly a B to B company, we aren't using e-mail to sell products, spam people or shoot coupons. There's a place for that and if Qdoba wants to send me a \$5 lunch coupon, I'm going to use it! But the e-mail marketing I'm discussing is sometimes just as simple as asking someone to lunch.

For me, here's the best uses of e-mail to market you or your firm:

Getting and Keeping in Touch

I absolutely love getting e-mails from people I don't get to see very often, asking me to lunch, coffee or breakfast. From a marketing perspective it's a fantastic way to cut through the "gatekeepers" and just "catch up." These are the types of invites that people HAVE TO respond to. I wouldn't imagine ignoring something like this and then running into the person later. It's the epitome of rude and 90 percent of the invites I make get responded to. When was the last time you could say that about phone calls?

Even if it's a "why don't you get in touch with me next month when things are quieter" a quick invite to someone you're trying to get in front of is a great way cut through the formalities of office meetings. What you're offering is a chance to relax and share what's going on in their world (and yours).

Letting Clients and Prospects Know You're Paying Attention

I tell my legal clients all the time to keep Google news searches open for current and prospective clients as well as referral contacts. Why? For the most part, you don't want anything to happen to someone you're working for or potentially working with that you don't know about. Secondly, it's a fantastic way to shoot a "congratulations" via e-mail to someone who just got promoted, became partner, changed jobs, completed an acquisition or sold a company. A quick e-mail "hey I saw thatand wanted to say congratulations" keeps you on their radar and they appreciate the fact you're paying attention.

Using Contacts as Referral Engines

Getting someone to introduce you to someone via e-mail is quick, validated by their taking the effort (even though it's a minimal ask and follow through) to include you and effective as it basically endorses your relationship. Never be afraid when someone says, "I need to introduce you to _____," to follow it up with "could you introduce me via e-mail, that way we can work on getting together and you don't have to be involved." Of course if they want to be part of the meeting - never say no. But for busy people, this is a great and simple way to bring two people together who might be able to work together.

Send Them Your Stuff

I've met many a talented attorney who has written published articles which we got posted in trade magazines, we obtained a media interview for or received an award. I always follow up with - "what did you do with it?" If they didn't send it to a list of contacts, they wasted the effort. Don't be afraid to use e-mail to market your successes.

Send Them a Newsletter

While e-newsletters are "out of vogue" for many marketers, it shouldn't be. As most of us know, they're only as good as their subject line. If you send out a company e-newsletter where the subject line says "XYZ Firm Spring Newsletter" that just makes it easier for me to click delete. It may be full of useful content, but I don't have time to look at your company newsletter if I don't know what's in it. I don't care where it came from, I care what information is in it that might help me make decisions during the day. If you send me one that says - "Why E-Mail Marketing is Not Dead" (wink) I'll probably open it. Another hint - don't send out e-newsletters that are full of information about your company. I'll delete that too. I only have time to read how your insight is going to help MY company.

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