Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed:
Tips For Building or Expanding Your Practice

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Today’s Talking Points

1. How to use your time most effectively
2. “Basic” methods of practice building
3. Incorporating new forms of practice development (Technology)
4. Tips you can start using tomorrow
Starting Points

You are always marketing/developing business/creating opportunities
You never know where your next client will come from
All activities are related and build upon themselves

Law is a personal relationship business
  80% relationship building, 20% reputation building

Technology does not change the basics/rules
  Only the tools are changed
  But can and should be enhanced by technology

You must fully commit to the task of building your practice
Building your process is not an overnight process
  It takes planning and effort

It is still all about Service, Service, Service
MUST START WITH A PLAN

- MUST be a written plan
- Should be simple and easy to follow
- Can be done alone or with consultant
- Planning process will:
  - Start by asking questions
  - Identify specific and realistic goals/outcomes for a period of time
  - Help you use technology properly
  - Create a calendar
  - Help you budget your time and resources realistically
  - Help you monitor progress and “effectiveness”
- Follow up and consistency is critical to success
- You must be enthusiastic about your plan
Counselor Know Thyself

- What type of practice do you currently have?
- Who is your competition?
- How are you viewed in the marketplace?
- How do you currently get clients?
- Why should clients choose you?
- List the characteristics of your best clients.
- List the characteristics of your worst clients.
- What are your best referral sources?
- Which clients refer you business?
- If you have clients who never refer you business, do you know why?
- Have you ever referred business to other professionals who have never referred you business? If yes, why?
- In which organizations are you currently active? From which have you received business?
- How much time/effort are you willing to invest?
Where do you want to go?

• Do you have an area of law that you love (or not love)?
• Are you located in the right area or do you want to change/expand your geographical location?
• Do you have a different practice area you would like to pursue?
• Do you know people/potential clients who would benefit from your new interest?
• What type of client would you like to have?
• List five potential clients or current best clients.
• What are you comfortable doing and are you willing to get out of your comfort zone
• How much time are you willing to invest in business development and client retention?
Tracking Clients Data Necessary for Success

- Can only be done using case management or database software
- Two most popular for solos are Amicus Attorney (www.amicusattorney.com) and Time Matters (www.timematters.com)
- New product called Credenza which is an add on to Outlook www.credenza.com
- Also a “cloud” product – Rocket Matters www.rocketmatters.com
- And Clio www.goclio.com

- Four types of data a practitioner should have:
  - List of all clients
  - List of clients in particular industry or practice areas
  - Potential clients
  - “Friends of the firm”

- Information a database should have:
  - Name, address, phone, fax, e-mail
  - All contacts with the client, can be family or employees or both
  - Why the client came to the firm or how heard about the firm
  - Name of primary client and any other staff person who worked on the client
  - Date client started with firm
  - Type of work done for client
  - Billing information
Basic but not obsolete

Availability is the single most important factor in your being selected or not being selected after you have been recommended.
Never say “I’m busy” to potential clients and referral sources

You are your firm’s best advertising. Always be marketing!
Always have your business cards with you. Potential clients are everywhere!
Give your business card to almost everyone you meet.

Send welcome letters to new clients
Inform clients about all the services you offer

Send out press releases
Send to small local papers where you want to do business
Promote an event that applies to your practice or potential client base
Tell about what you have done
Getting your name out
Old techniques with new approaches

- **Get quoted**
  - [www.helpareporter.com](http://www.helpareporter.com)

- **Suggest ideas to editors**

- **Write for publications**
  - [www.ezinehub.com](http://www.ezinehub.com)

- **Follow editors or others on Twitter or Facebook**
  - @mddailyrecord
Referrals: Your Key to Success

Let others know you are interested in doing their work.

Get involved with other lawyers who do not practice in the same area or practice setting.

Ask for referrals
  Ask in case closing letters and include business cards
  Make sure they know all the areas you practice
  Put “We appreciate your referrals” on your envelopes
  Make certain your friends, family and social contacts know what type(s) of law you practice.

How to Treat Referral Sources
  Contact your referral sources regularly.
  Take referrals to lunch.
  Send your clients, contacts and referrals sources articles of interest to them.
  Thank referrals for business.
Reputation Building

- Join an association/group that supports your practice area.
- Obtain mailing list for groups in which you participate.
- Send at least one article, letter or client update each month to selected individuals on your mailing list.
- Get more involved in Bar association activities.
- Send press releases regularly.
- Speak whenever possible to all types of groups.
- Join the MSBA Speaker’s Bureau.
- Send letters to editors.
- Write articles.
- Send topics that you can write about to editors of various publications.
Protect Your Reputation

• Know about lawyer ranking sites
  – [www.avvo.com](http://www.avvo.com)

• Monitor what is on the web about you
  – [www.google.com/alerts](http://www.google.com/alerts)
Article Writing

Write articles for bar association publications
- free advertising to other attorneys
- start to build your reputation in the field
- some bar associations put article both in their publication and online
  - extends life of the article and the marketing of your firm
Ask your clients what they think

Some insights that can be determined from a client survey are:

- the level of satisfaction the client has with the work that has been performed
- the client's perception of you and all of the employees he/she worked with
- whether the client would use your services again
- whether the client would refer you other clients
- what suggestions would the client give to improve the level of service
- what criteria the client used in selecting you
- their needs for future legal services
- whether the client is aware of all the types of legal services you provide
USING TECHNOLOGY

Websites
Blogs
Social Media
Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, YouTube, Google+
E-newsletters
Websites

– Necessary in 2012
– Can have minimum information
– Can start with template
– People are looking for lawyers online
– If you do not have one, people will wonder about the status of your firm
– Give away free information on your website
– www.bestlawfirmwebsites.com
– http://lawyerist.com/5-reasons-your-law-firm-website-is-failing/
ESQSites123.com

Company that offers reasonably priced templates
Great for solos and small firms to start
Discount for MSBA members
(http://www.msba.org/departments/membership/benefit.asp)
Blogs

- It is not a website
- Easy to set up and Inexpensive
- Must add information regularly
- Write content for your potential clients and not to impress other lawyers
- attaching blog to firm website domain name helps your website show up earlier on Google and - drives potential clients to your website
- Most popular blogging platforms:
  - WordPress.com (hosted by WordPress), - WordPress.org (host your own blog),
  - Blogger.com
### Blawg Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Subcategory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Exams</td>
<td>Federal Judiciary-Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing - Politics</td>
<td>In-House Counsel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>Law Libraries &amp; Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Students</td>
<td>Law Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal History</td>
<td>Legal Journals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Sec'y - Admin Assl</td>
<td>Legal Subjects &amp; Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Writing</td>
<td>Litigation Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Paralegals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Management</td>
<td>Pro Bono</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion &amp; Law</td>
<td>Solo Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Blawgs</td>
<td>State Government</td>
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### Currently Tracking

- Total Blogs: 6,080
- Active Blogs: 4,333
- Total Posts: 268,212

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Ready to Get Listed? [ADD YOUR BLOG]
Where do you work?
Did a search for Frederick Lawyers but with DC/Baltimore Locations

Can Limit to Law Practice

Only three pages of names and NONE from Frederick

This is an opportunity
LinkedIn Groups

• Many Groups to join for a variety of interests
• Search on Groups, Companies and Individuals
Communicate with clients and potential clients and referrals sources
Follow other Legal Tweeters
www.lextweet.com
Facebook – Telling people what you are doing

• Create fan page for law firm
  Should be separate from personal profile
Encourage friends, family, clients, etc. to become fans of the firm’s facebook page
Can have your blog posts feed into your page
Communicate with your clients

• Use Constant Contact to create an e-newsletter
  – www.constantcontact.com
  • Can also survey clients

• Twitter
  • www.twitter.com
  • Share information about your practice area or firm

– Can also survey clients
Email Accounts

• Create an automatic email signature for your emails
  • Include firm contact information
  • Include your practice areas
  • Free advertising with every email

• Create a generic email account and include it in your outgoing voice mail message
  • Potential clients will send an email with more details about their problem than they will leave in a voice mail message
    • Ex. info@yourlawfirm.com
Media Exposure
www.pitchrate.com

- Recognized as an expert
- Link to your website or blog
- Name will come up higher is Google Search
More Communications

- [www.blogtalkradio.com](http://www.blogtalkradio.com)
- Blog for NYC Attorney

- Consider video
- [www.rosen.com](http://www.rosen.com)
EPISODE NOTES

Host Name: ELEVATOR PITCH PLUS
Show Name: TED'S LAW A LIVE LAW SHOW EVERY SUNDAY 10:30 A.M.
Date / Time: 8/9/2009 10:30 AM - 1 hr
Length:
Description: TODAY'S TOPIC GRANDPARENTS RIGHTS - TRUSTS & WILLS Florida lawyer Ted Zentner joins the show each week on Sunday to talk about family law issues and more. Join us each week as he answers your legal issues by calling in at (347)637-3644 or call his office for an appointment at (386)-252-8118.

Category: Legal
Tags: LAWYER ATTORNEY TED ZENTNER FAMILY LAW DUI DAYTONA BEACH JACKSONVILLE edd gimenez
Not just for Cats in Sinks Videos Anymore

- Did a search on YouTube for Frederick lawyers
Get on www.google.com/places

Must have a Google Account which is free

This was originally Google Local Directory
You answer a series of questions and get on the directory
Other Directories

www.yelp.com

http://local.yahoo.com
Client Satisfaction is the key to the success of all marketing activities

- The #1 Reason clients leave a firm is disappointment with the treatment they receive
- Most new business will come from referrals and negative referrals will travel much faster than positive ones
Common Sense Tips for Client Service

• The most important tip to remember is that good client service starts with good client selection.
• Keep current clients happy.
• Do not ever consider hiring someone who does not contribute to the success of the practice.
• Contact clients regularly.

• Contact “A” clients at least weekly.
• Keep your staff informed.
• Recognize clients' successes.
• Find out what your clients think about your firm and services.
• Communicate regularly.
• Return phone calls or have someone call and say you are busy.