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## Getting Real Return on Legal Marketing and Client Development Efforts

When working on a marketing or client development initiative, keep the primary goal at the forefront of your mind: connecting one on one with your clients and prospects, says Goodwin's Lauren Piccolo-Ingram and Vanessa Torres.

By **Lauren Piccolo-Ingram and Vanessa Torres** | June 28, 2021



**Lauren Piccolo-Ingram, left, and Vanessa Torres, right, of Goodwin Procter. Courtesy photos**

The days of longstanding relationships with institutional clients driving law firm revenue have shifted dramatically as clients' demands on their outside counsel have evolved and disrupters have come to market. These changes necessitate a recalibration of legal marketing and client development tactics to stay ahead of the competition. That said, the lack of "ROTI," or return on time invested for lawyers on their marketing and client development efforts, can feel disappointing.

Leveraging marketing efforts for targeted one-on-one client and prospect interaction is often a missed opportunity—leaving efforts to "one and done" status and resulting in diminished motivation to work on the next marketing initiative. This article provides tips for leveraging marketing content that will lead to meaningful connections and touchpoints with clients and contacts.

Traditionally, the primary purpose of legal marketing and business development was to build brand awareness and increase a lawyer or firm's status as a thought leader. Traditional tactics include sponsoring conferences, sending email client alerts, and hosting CLE programs.

These traditional tactics are value-adds to clients and prospects; however, it's how you leverage these opportunities that can turn ROTI into actual ROI.

## Tips for Content Development

**Keep it simple:** Gone are the days of people taking the time to read lengthy white papers with hundreds of case citations.

**Make it digestible:** Provide bite-sized, easily consumed content such as "Top 5" lists or infographics.

**Focus on the business:** Tailor content to specific industries, letting clients know you understand their business and have their bottom line needs top of mind.

## Tips for Content Promotion

**One-to-one outreach:** Ask your marketing or client development professional to provide a template email you can send to clients and prospects for personal outreach. You should include a personal message as to why the content or invitation is relevant to the client with whom you are connecting.

**Repurpose:** Leverage content in multiple ways for multiple uses. If you write an article, leverage the research and content for a webinar. If you do a webinar, use sound bites or video clips to promote the content on social media.

**Maximize social media channels:** Understand which social media channels are most appropriate for your content and engage with your networks by posting relevant content.

**Encourage social media engagement:** Ask your marketing or client development professional to provide suggested language for social media posts to relevant lawyer teams within the firm to expand sharing beyond firm channels to individual networks.

**Drip:** Release portions of content by email marketing and/or social media tying back to a full article or alert. This approach is in line with repurposing content and allows you to highlight key points over a period of time pointing back to the same content.

## Leverage Data and Technology

The tips above are terrific ways to get in front of large audiences and maximize content exposure across various channels. Using the data from these broad-reaching efforts, one can target clients individually. Using metrics and reports on user engagement and interest to target prospective clients with accuracy is a sure fire way to make connections, build relationships, and get meetings.

## Practical Application

A team of lawyers host a three-part webinar series and their marketing and client development teams track attendees for each of the webinars. At the end of the series they share the following metrics on attendance:

Of the 75 unique attendees across the entire series, 10 attended all three webinars. Of the 10 who attended all three webinars, seven are existing firm clients and three are not clients at all.

This is where ROTI has the opportunity to turn into true ROI—but it requires action.

Along with the metrics, the marketing and client development team shares email templates for further outreach. One communication is to the lead relationship partners of the seven existing firm clients letting them know that their clients were particularly interested in the webinar series topic and you'd welcome the opportunity to meet with them to further discuss.

The second communication is to the three non-existing clients that either the lawyer team, or after checking the firm client relationship management database, the most appropriate firm contact can send offering to schedule a meeting between the attendee and the subject-matter expert(s).

The lawyer team who put the time into the webinar series are now one step closer to turning that ROTI into ROI with a targeted, data-based approach.

## Additional Considerations

Artificial intelligence, paid social media advertising, and paid search advertising are being leveraged with more frequency by legal marketing and client development teams. Ask your teams if they have recommendations on thought pieces and event programming based on the data they have collected from recent efforts.

Artificial intelligence tools track trends and inform behaviors which can help you determine the topics most relevant to your audience. With an abundance of data being collected through various methods including social media and event registration, leveraging AI tools that can make the most of marketing data is key to putting your energy into initiatives most likely to lead to ROI.

Paid social advertising allows for targeting an audience by industry, geography, size of business, and more.

Paid search advertising increases search engine optimization and therefore brand awareness.

These tactics can be deployed together to lead to gated content on your firm website. Gating content, or allowing content access only to those who enter their contact information, is an easy way to determine who is interested in a service offering or trending topic. Contact information gathered in this way should be viewed as a "lead" and lawyers can follow up directly with these leads.

## Conclusion

When working on a marketing or client development initiative, keep the primary goal at the forefront of your mind: connecting one on one with your clients and prospects. Every strategy you develop and tactic on which you execute should align with that primary goal. Before you set out on your next marketing initiative, ensure

everyone involved is invested in the effort and understands the steps that are most likely to turn the ROTI into ROI.

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