CEB's Business of Law Guidebook Issue 11

Strategies for Growing Your Law Firm Business Online

David Mitroff, Ph.D.
PiedmontAve.com



THE BUSINESS OF LAW

CEB presents
The Business of Law webinar series
ceb.com/golden-state-lawyers

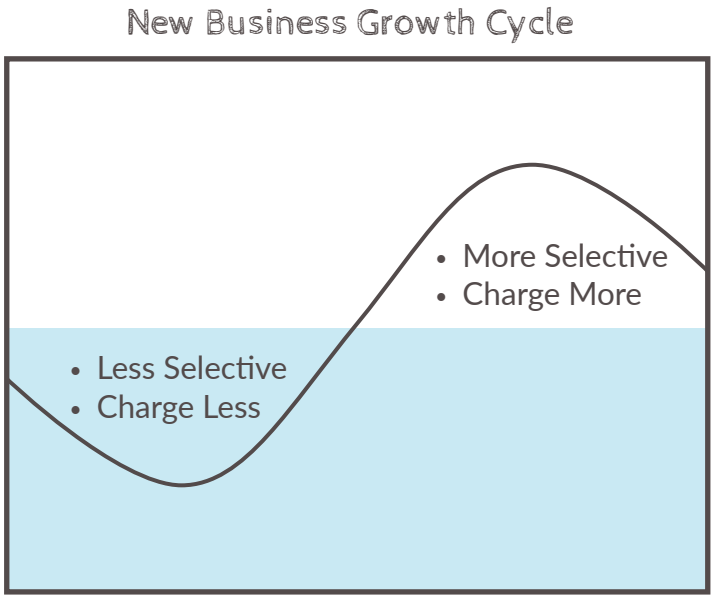
WAYS TO GROW YOUR FIRM TODAY

Grow Your Law Business Right Now

Here are things you can do right now to grow your business:

- Focus: List ten things you can control
- Consistency: Set up three lunch meetings per month x 12 months = 36 lunches
- Top of Mind: Start a monthly or weekly newsletter
- The Event Effect: Organize firm events and workshops (live or virtual)

The new business growth cycle moves from being less selective about your customers and charging less when you're just getting started, to becoming more selective and being able to charge more over time.



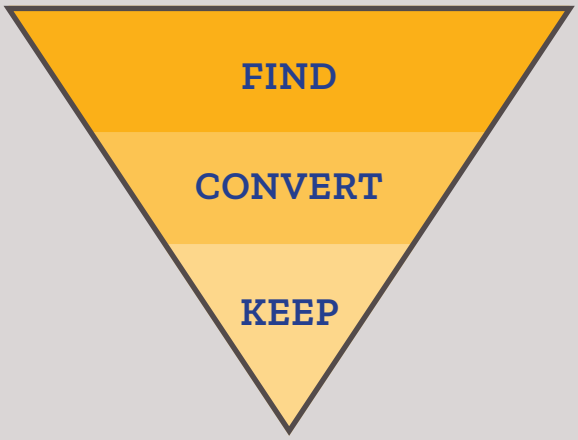


HOW TO ATTRACT CLIENTS

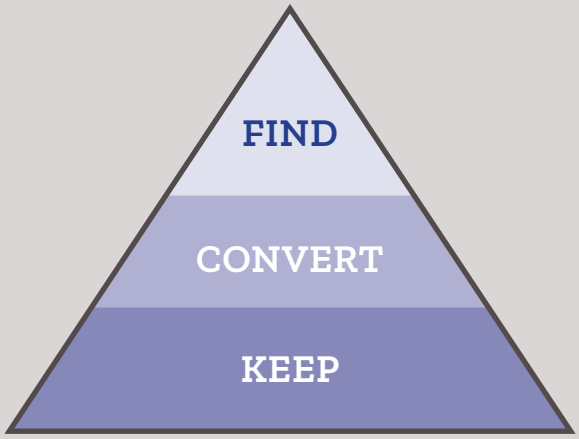
Two Approaches to Growth

Here are two approaches to how to grow your business through marketing, selling, and networking.

- **Traditional.** You cast a wide net to find people and then convert them into clients. ONLY keep a select number of leads at the narrow end of your sales funnel to follow up with.



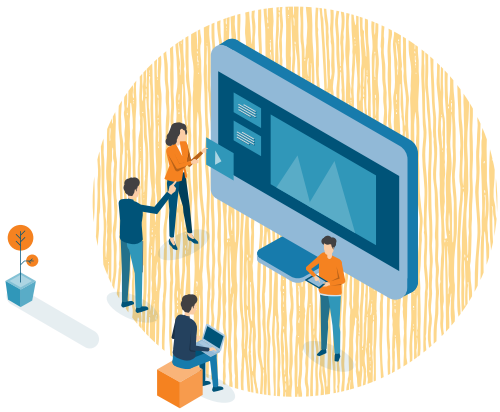
- **Engagement.** You focus on finding connections and opportunities not only clients. Connections lead to opportunities to grow your business in new ways. You keep MOST of the connections you meet.



Active/Passive Marketing

What are your current marketing efforts? Are they active, passive, or a mix?

- **Passive.** Print ads, website
- **Active.** Cold calling, direct mail, events, strategic partners, talks, referrals/ introductions, email marketing



Data Driven Marketing

Tracking and analysis: The key benefit of online marketing and technology is the ability to track and analyze results, then quickly iterate and adjust for optimal performance.

- **Non-Financial Metrics.** Brand awareness, test-drive, churn, customer satisfaction (CSAT), take rate
- **Financial Metrics.** Profit, net present value (NPV), internal rate of return (IRR), payback, customer lifetime value (CLTV)
- **"New Age Marketing" Metrics.** Cost per click (CPC), transaction conversion rate (TCR), return on ad dollars spent (ROA), bounce rate, word of mouth (WOM)

NINE KEY AREAS OF YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

1. Website & Blog

Google Ranking, SEO/CRO, Blogger, Wix, Squarespace, Instapage, WordPress

- **Control the content.** It's a chance to tell your story
- **Define a clear message.** What do you offer?
- **Create a medium for contact.** Invite feedback, questions
- **Provide links to other pages.** Share links to Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- **Update your content.** Ensure consistency in theme and info

Website Pitfalls

- Not having full control of content or website. Do you have the login?
- All content must be moderated and vetted. Who writes content and what is checked?
- Security issues
- Contact forms without disclaimers

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)/Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO)

Helps drive traffic to your site, and thus increases hot leads, opportunities, proposals, new customers

- **Off-page SEO.** Work that takes place separate from your website
- **On-page SEO.** Website changes to increase search engine rank





2. Online Directories

Google Local/Maps, Yahoo Local, Bing

- **Search yourself.** The power of Google
- **Look for similar businesses.** If you're not listed, someone else is
- **Display correct contact info.** Location, phone #, hours, directions MUST be correct
- **Take a photo.** If they know what to look for, they'll find it

3. Review Sites

Lawyers.com, Avvo, Martindale-Hubbell, Yelp

- **Rely on word of mouth.** People trust personal accounts more than ads
- **Offer additional information.** Yelp is a mobile tour guide
- **Respond to reviews.** Thank those who provide feedback
- **Learn from your reviews.** Don't make the same mistake twice!

NINE KEY AREAS OF YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

4. Social Networks

Facebook, LinkedIn

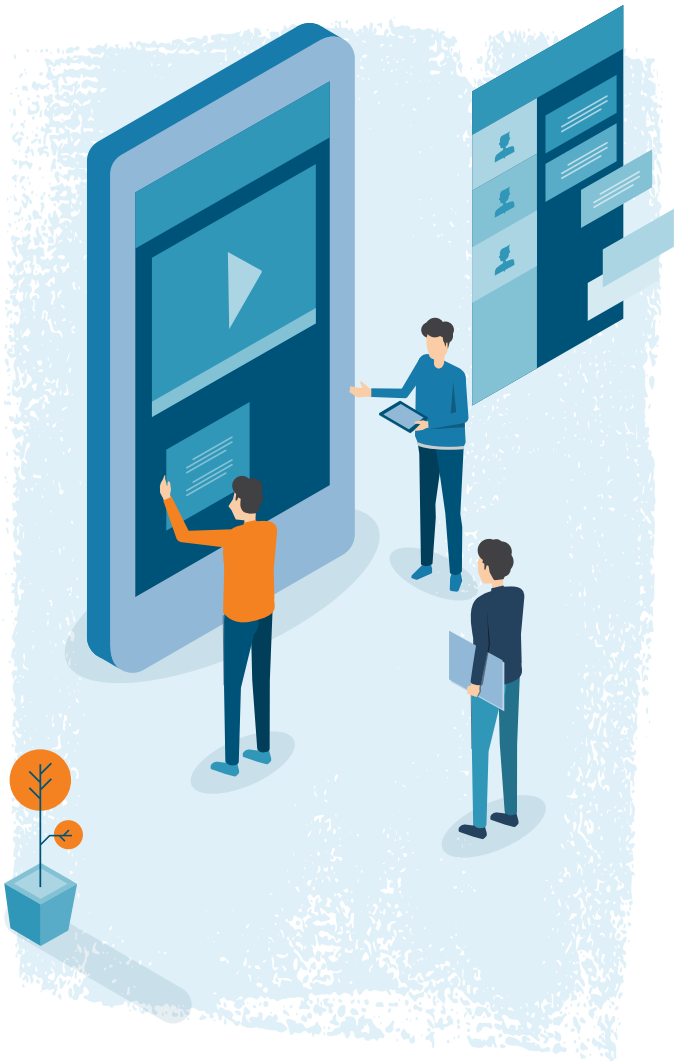
- **Communicate with clients.** Be involved in the conversation
- **Connect.** Associate your business with related pages and people
- **Establish a following.** Invite people to view your page

LinkedIn Personal Profile

- **Custom url.** Customize your LinkedIn url
- **Title = Story.** Tell the story of your business with the title of your profile
- **Privacy settings.** Make sure the right people can find you
- **Websites.** Don't forget to link to your firm website
- **Summary.** Use keywords to help people searching for what you do. Use the words a potential client would use. Include contact information
- **Photo.** Make it a professional one
- **LION.** LinkedIn open networking means you're open to receiving connection requests from people you don't know
- **Join groups.** You can join up to 50 groups; it will increase your third-level connections

LinkedIn Company or Firm Profile

- Find individuals you know in a professional capacity
- Participate in discussions
- Recruit attendees to your events
- Invite people to join your mailing list



5. Micro Blogging

Twitter, Tumbler

- **Interact with daily events.** How can you relate to what's happening?
- **Remind everyone about events.** Update information leading up to a firm webinar or other event
- **Invite new followers.** Friend of a friend of a friend

Pitfalls of Social Media

- Risks include confidentially and ethics concerns, human resource issues, reputation management, and more. Always follow the California Rules of Professional Conduct.

NINE KEY AREAS OF YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

6. Rich Media

YouTube, Podcast, Flickr, Instagram

- **Appeal to the senses.** The eyes are drawn to an image/video first
- **Attract new clients.** If the website quality is great, then people assume the business quality is great as well
- **Entertain your audience.** Get creative with images and videos

Pitfalls

- **Inauthenticity.** You have a chance to give a sense of yourself as a person; potential clients will resonate with that. Stock images or video can seem forced or fake
- **Copyright infringement.** Don't use content that's not yours to use

7. Mobile Apps

Smart Phone, SMS Text, What's App

- **Stay in contact with clients.** People are ALWAYS on their smart phones
- **Solidify your relationship.** Make the client feel attended to and heard
- **Go the extra mile.** Communication shows that you're following through

8. Industry Specific

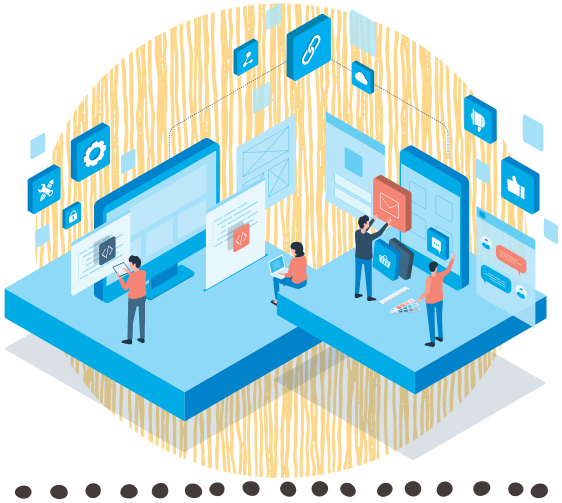
Local Bar Associations, Practice Area Groups, Professional Associations, ListServs

- **Network within your group.** Get the scoop on what's the latest and greatest
- **Surround yourself with what you want to become.** Hang out with like-minded attorneys, and even offer or find mentorship
- **Help those who help you.** Give and get referrals

9. Event Promotion

Facebook, Zoom, Eventbrite, Meetup, FullCalendar.com

- **Promote what you've got.** An event can attract more business
- **Collaborate with others.** Get other firms and businesses involved, connect with colleagues, and grow your referral network
- **Feature your calendar.** The internet is a great way to publicize!



THE BUSINESS OF LAW

CEB presents
The Business of Law webinar series
ceb.com/golden-state-lawyers

Watch. Listen. Learn
visit ceb.com/golden-state-lawyers
Join CEB for FREE
at research.ceb.com

ONGOING ONLINE PRESENCE MANAGEMENT

Set up a 12-Month Marketing Calendar

Include national holidays, local holidays and events, industry-related events, and location-based events

Assess Your Online Reputation

1. Start with simple searches

- Your name
- Firm name
- Brand
- Product
- High profile employees
- Handles and usernames
- Record results and determine if there are any problems

2. Identify Potential Problems

- If search results are not about you and your company
- When results are not relevant or positive to your business needs
- Negative comments and responses
- Bad news coverage or false information

3. Build Your Reputation

- Protect your name
- Register your username and purchase all relevant domains as well as register on social networking sites
- Set privacy settings
- You can control whether your social network pages appear in search and what is on your page

4. Monitor Your Reputation

- Set Google Alerts to track results, news, blogs, video and groups
- Twitter Search—makes it easy to search Twitter for any mentions of a particular keyword phrase
- Stay connected to coworkers, clients, business partners, etc. on networking sites
- Be accessible via email and social media
- Respond to criticism

What to Monitor?

- **Your brand.** Think about all its possible spellings/configurations. For example: Far and Away Law Firm, Far&Away, etc.
- **Your competitors.** Spot successful tactics being used by others in your industry (and the not-so-successful). For example: Does the firm down the street tweet daily? Do the other law firms in your area have company LinkedIn profiles?
- **Your practice area.** Categories, topics, and keywords of your firm. For example: estates, probate, real property, contract negotiation, immigration, patents, DUI, etc.
- **Influencers.** The established influencers in your practice area, bar association, etc.

Next Steps

1. Today. Build Your Brand & Take Action

- Come up with your growth plan
- Create a website (wix.com is a good place to start) and/or update your website to include clear call to actions and to integrate social media.
- Schedule free consultation to review your law business growth plan and overall Online presence at www.PiedmontAve.com/CEB

2. Next 30 Days. Increase Brand Awareness

- Make adjustments to your online business and personal presence (test and see what works)
- Work on increasing your brand awareness on social media

3. Next 60 Days. Keep Learning and Improving

- Develop a more comprehensive marketing plan based on your initial tracking and experiments in social media
- Attend a workshop or event