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**Promote Your Law Practice Online**

**By Tony Merlino**

Offering legal services via the Internet offers Lawyers endless possibilities. While we focus our attention on New Jersey based lawyers, the same is true no matter where your practice is located.

The interesting fact however is that out of the 20,000 plus practicing attorneys in New Jersey only just over 600 of them have a web presence. Could it be that this many (otherwise intelligent) attorneys are missing the boat?

Even if you are an attorney within a larger firm there are still plenty of opportunities to take advantage of web-based marketing for the legal profession. Offering your services on the Internet is not about how well developed your programming or web-design skills are.

It's about how you present and provide your services to your clients.

It's about your message.

It's about how you "Educate" your prospective client.

The potential is endless. You can provide your services to clients nationally, state wide or exclusively to residents of a particular county by "targeting" your client base. It doesn't matter which practice area you specialize in, you will experience tremendous benefits with a web presence.

Every lawyer has a unique view on his or her area of practice. And, odds are you are already promoting that view to your clients and deriving your income based on those principles. But have you ever thought about "educating" your clients about your views and generating even more clients by utilizing the powerful reach of the Internet?

In fact, promoting your law practice online, using Education-Based-Marketing is, arguably the most overlooked yet fertile opportunity on the Internet. Even though it requires minimal effort and costs very little to create a legal marketing website, most lawyers fail to do so. And what about the few lawyers who do attempt to take advantage of this medium?

## Promote Your Law Practice Online

Well, the effort leaves much to be desired. Either they put up a "me too" website that is little more than a billboard in the desert (that no one ever sees) OR they hire a so called "webmaster" who's legal marketing skills are non-existent. The sad fact is, neither of these approaches is either effective or efficient.

In order to attract clients to your practice, (without word of mouth referrals) you must successfully educate and convince that client that you are:

- 1) Known to be the best lawyer in your particular area of practice.
- 2) Known to over deliver on your service.
- 3) Known to be competitively priced. (no matter how high your fees)
- 4) Known to provide the exact legal solution that he or she is seeking.

Bottom line? You gotta get KNOWN!

In order to succeed at attracting and retaining clients online, you need to establish a relationship with them. Designing a content-rich, "education based" website and newsletter that builds trust and is credible, is the only way to develop and solidify your relationship. Only after you establish a relationship will your prospective clients begin to respond.

Most lawyers assume that because the Web is a global medium, it's not a relevant advertising option for a locally based law practice. Nothing could be further from the truth. After all, if your practice is based here in New Jersey, it's unlikely anyone outside of a one-hour driving radius is going to hire you for legal services. Right? Wrong!

That's "stinkin thinkin" Why?... Because a web presence gives your law practice a distinct advantage over your local legal competitors. Particularly when you are trying to grow your current client base. The fact is today more and more prospective clients are relying on the Internet as their primary source of information about purchasing products and services, including your "legal services".

So now your Web presence allows your potential client to get to know you and your service better than a "also ran" Yellow Page ad ever could. You have the opportunity to give your client a confident and secure feeling about making the decision of which lawyer to hire.

Your Education Based legal website has given S/he a more open-to-hire frame of mind. Since we already know that MOST of your competitors (only 600 out of 20,000 in NJ) don't offer this option, you have a serious edge on getting that follow-up contact about your legal services. After all, who do you think prospective clients are going to retain -- a friend or a stranger?

Add to that, the benefit of links and referrals, pointing to your site, from some highly trafficked legal websites like this one and you have the formula for a successful legal website.

But there are a million options when it comes to creating the right website. Where do you turn? Let's cut through all the noise and hype surrounding legal website design and marketing of legal services on the web.

Do It Yourself. That's right. DIY No body knows more about you and your legal services than you do. You are the expert on you. Think you can't do this by yourself? Think again. Here is the solution to creating the perfect legal website designed to attract your "perfect clients". Clients that you have systematically educated, informed and built a solid trusting relationship with even before you ever talked to them.

This is for those lawyers with a vision. It's The Most Overlooked Opportunity on the Net. Start building an ever-growing client base until you can say "I'm sorry I'm not taking new clients at this time"

An SBI (built by you) Education-Based-Legal Marketing Site is perfect because every law practice revolves around a theme.

Tony Merlino is webmaster and legal marketing consultant at

<http://www.JerseyJustice.com>

,a legal

information and marketing portal for clients and their lawyers in New Jersey. For more information on creating the perfect legal website visit

<http://service-selling.sitesell.com/tmerlino.html>

## **Online Marketing Law! Whats Happening?**

**By Charles Nixon III**

You read that right. There's a new law in California for online marketing. This law is thanks to the California's Online Privacy Protection Act.

Who does this affect the most? This affects anyone online selling anything, operating a newsletter, or collecting data in any way from users online.

It says it's targeting "commercial," and websites that offer services online. Are you selling anything online? If not, than this doesn't affect you... yet. It will affect you when you decide to start selling something online. So read up.

If you are a web host, broadcast, or database firm you are only responsible for your privacy policy. You are not held responsible for anyone that you are hosting under you. But do inform them of this new law.

## Promote Your Law Practice Online

What do you have to do? You have to that the information you collect online from visitors matches up with your privacy policy. This means that you will have to be reading and reviewing your policy often to make sure that you don't come across any problems with users and how you use the information you are given.

You will also have to make that privacy policy link more visible. Cause if the users can't see it or find it than to them it most likely doesn't exist. So no more of those fine print privacy policy notes at the bottom of websites.

How long do I have? The law is in motion now. It started July 1st, 2004. You should look into moving that privacy policy link up with the rest of your links.

How do I read more about this law? I have a copy of the PDF on my website available for you to download:

[http://www.charlesnixon.com/ab\\_68\\_bill\\_20031012\\_chaptered](http://www.charlesnixon.com/ab_68_bill_20031012_chaptered)

or you can download it at

[www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)

:

[http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/bill/asm/ab\\_0051-0100/](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/bill/asm/ab_0051-0100/)

[ab\\_68\\_bill\\_20031012\\_chaptered.pdf](#)

"It's only four pages and a pretty easy read compared to most legislation I've seen in my time." says Publisher Anne Holland

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Online Marketing Law! Whats Happening?

Make Money on Internet: Promote the product not the program  
The Law Of Specialized Knowledge  
Washington State Outlaws Gambling And Speech  
Are Lemon Law Lawyers Really Worth The Money?

How to Gain and Retain More Customers  
Expand Your Professional Coaching and Consulting Business  
English Slang Dictionary  
PPC Profits  
Disaster Preparedness and Crime Protection Manual



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