

One of the best ways to grow a law practice is through a consistent stream of referrals from past and current clients, as well as from referring attorneys. One effective marketing strategy to generate these referrals can be done with email marketing. Specifically, a weekly email blast to your list is a relatively easy and inexpensive marketing tactic every law firm should execute.

When done right and sent out on a consistent basis, this can help your office's marketing efforts tremendously. But when done the wrong way, it will not only waste effort and money, but will also irritate people. Here are some things to keep in mind if you already send out, or are considering sending out, a weekly email blast to your list.

How to effectively send out your email blasts. Web sites such as Constant Contact and Mail Chimp as well as other similar providers do a fine job of providing a platform through which you can both design as well as send out your emails. These programs are very reasonably priced. They have easy to use templates that can help you get started.

If you want to take things up a notch and you are willing to invest more money, I highly encourage the use of a CRM (customer relationship manager). A CRM is a powerful tool that allows you to segment your email list and also can provide insightful data and reporting which enables you to constantly adjust and improve your overall email marketing strategy.

Regardless of how you send your emails out, you want to make sure to keep your email list clean and scrubbed. In particular, you want to be sensitive to both 'hard bounces' as well as 'soft bounces' because if you are emailing to email addresses that are no longer valid, then your emails may be considered spam. That can seriously undercut the effectiveness of your email deliverability.

Before these emails can be effective they first must get opened. I believe the key to getting email blasts opened is with a great subject line. Think creatively and invite curiosity when writing your subject lines. Give the person, who likely receives hundreds of emails per week, a reason to open it. Examples of effective subject lines can be questions, or something that sparks intrigue or mystery, because that is what people are drawn to.

Once the email is opened there must be content inside that will provoke interest and engagement. Make sure the email has a personalized greeting to the recipient (Dear Joe,...). Many email programs allow you to create a custom greeting line that automatically merges the recipient's name into the greeting. This layer of personalization goes a long way.

For the body of the email, some of the content that we use is a positive message or story at the beginning of the email, followed by pictures of happy clients that have recently come to the office to pick up their settlement checks, an option to download a free book or free report I have written, videos, links to our newest blog post, an inspiring quote or idea, a request for a review, a request for referrals etc.

Don't make the email all about your firm, and don't make it all about the law either. People will find that boring. At my firm we frequently run giveaways on social media and the email blast is a great place to announce these giveaways to our list. The key is to keep things fun so your list

finds value in the emails and does not unsubscribe. Make sure above all else to never be spammy at all with these emails.

Always be sure to give your email audience a reason to stick around and not unsubscribe. But, no matter how well you execute your email blast strategy, people will still unsubscribe. That is an inevitability so don't let unsubscribes ever discourage you from continuing to send your emails out.

Some may think that a weekly email is overkill, but the more you can interact with your list in order to encourage their engagement with your office, the better. This allows for creating and maintaining top-of-mind awareness so that when people on your list require legal services, they think of your firm. Also, you want to stay top-of-mind with your referral attorneys as well, and an email blast is a great way to do that.

A weekly email blast can be a very effective addition to a law firm's marketing arsenal. If you have other ideas on email marketing I would love to hear them. Please share them with me by emailing me at cearley@chrisearley.com.