

What's Your Excuse for Not Having a Law Firm Marketing Plan?

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There are many excuses for not having a law firm marketing plan, but I have yet to hear one that I would buy into. You don't have the time to put into planning the future of your firm? You don't know how to write one? You will get around to it "some day" but that day never comes? Is this what you are telling yourself?

Here's what a law firm's lack of a marketing plan tells me:

You only plan to practice for a year or two. Having a law firm marketing plan increases your chances of survival over the long haul. A solid, well-planned guide keeps you from making serious mistakes that can quickly sink your business.

You like to fly by the seat of your pants. Creating a solid business plan provides structure and a context for everyday activities, while helping to fit daily activities into the context of a larger, more strategic plan of how you are going to grow your business.

You like to bury your head in the sand. Staying on track amidst the day-to-day distractions and assessing opportunities to see if they fit with your long-term goals is another way that a comprehensive marketing plan can help you stay on track.

You have plenty of money to throw around. By knowing your financial costs and risks ahead of time, you can more effectively plot your growth strategy and manage your budget.

You like to follow the crowd. Emulating someone else's business model simply because you don't want to devote the time and resources to developing your own law firm marketing plan is fraught with a number of dangers. For example, if you copy someone else's business model, you will likely wind up copying their mistakes as well. You can also miss opportunities that are perfect for your business because of your distinctive experience, knowledge, background, location, or target demographics.

You don't envision any future for your firm. In the end, your business will be driven by your vision — and the process of developing that vision is critical to your business success.

You like operating in a vacuum. It is crucial to set up measurable objectives in advance so you are

able to compare your results against those objectives to learn where you succeeded and where you fell short. If you don't know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?

If the law doesn't work out, you can do something else. Being committed to growing your business starts with laying a good foundation for that future growth, with clearly delineated steps for those in the organization to follow so they can contribute to your success.

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