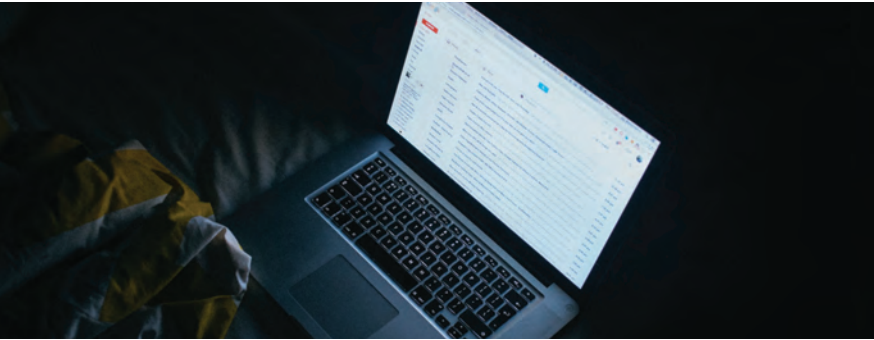


BEST PRACTICES: ONLINE PRESENCE



THE BEST E - MARKETING RESOURCES



Communicating with your current and future clients is an important way to build your business and improve customer satisfaction.

Before the internet, companies relied on Television, Radio, Billboards, and Direct Mail – all relatively costly and impersonal communication media.

Today though, many companies use email marketing to stay connected to their current and future customers.

Email marketing is a cheap and effective way to keep your clients up to date on your business. There are many inexpensive tools available that allow you to quickly create a professional email newsletter for your company and keep track of the results.

MAILCHIMP

MailChimp is a great email service for small businesses who are looking for a user-friendly and free email marketing tool. If you have less than 2,000 email subscribers and plan on sending less than 12,000 emails per month, MailChimp is completely free! There are options to upgrade, which don't cost much more a month. MailChimp's drag and drop email creation platform is easy for anyone to use. They offer many mobile-friendly templates that will ensure responsiveness on any platform. Our favorite option? They allow for unlimited image storage – an upgraded option with most other providers

CONSTANT CONTACT

Constant Contact is a more expensive option for email marketing, but offers more options that make up for it. If you want to try constant contact before settling on a decision, they offer a free 60-day trial for you to email up to 100 contacts an unlimited amount of times. Constant Contact offers extra options such as adding forms, surveys and more into your emails that other email marketing clients can't beat. They also offer many forms of customer support that answer any questions you have.

With both email marketing clients offering free options, why not try out each and see which one you like better? Adding this tool will help you to engage your current and future clients, opening up new business opportunities.

INVESTING IN A CRM SYSTEM

Having a system to keep up with your current and future clients is a key component for your business. Whether it's a sophisticated software program or a simple Excel spreadsheet, all companies can benefit from tracking their customer interactions. Over the past 12 years, we've worked with thousands of firms and have seen many different CRMs.

The most important factor when choosing a CRM is finding a program that you and your staff will be comfortable using. Don't get hung up on all the bells and whistles that you may never use. If you focus on the core components that your business needs and then work to get everyone on board with using the system, you'll be successful.

Litify is a CRM system that's made specifically for lawyers. Built on top of Salesforce.com—the world's most secure and flexible platform—Litify automates marketing, client management, intake, matters, documents, referrals, reporting, and finance, all in a single, secure, easy-to-use application. By leveraging the power of technology to simplify daily tasks, Litify gives law firms the tools they need to become high-performing businesses.

Salesforce is our second pick and the CRM we use at LeadRival. If you're into longer time consuming build outs, and would like to tackle a SAAS build out on your own (which we don't recommend from personal experience), a conventional Salesforce account has the most bells and whistles. They also have a mobile app that allows you to efficiently use the system through your mobile device. One of the big advantages of Salesforce is their App Exchange. There are hundreds of third party apps that you can install that add additional features like click to call, email automation and electronic signatures.

HubSpot CRM is a great option for people who need a basic CRM that can be augmented later. It is completely free for unlimited users and unlimited records. It is part of a larger group of marketing automation tools that include email automation, landing page optimization and more. The HubSpot team goes out of their way to educate their users on how to use their tools and best practices in digital marketing. HubSpot CRM is a great option for businesses who want to test drive a CRM before investing a lot of time and money.

Zoho has been around for quite some time and offers many options to suit your business. It has evolved into a magnificent CRM system that offers mail options, invoicing, human resources tools, and more. Its integration with other programs and platforms puts it ahead of other systems, especially with the release of integration on an apple watch. The Zoho interface is easy to use and is customizable to fit your needs.

Velocify, formerly known as Leads360, is a CRM system that is great for medium to large businesses. It offers a great sales automation app and dialing system. Though it is a bit harder to use, it has great tools that could help grow your business on the go. The user ratings are moderately high, but its ability to track and help you communicate with your leads is a plus. You can also integrate many other programs into Velocify to increase productivity.

WHY SOCIAL MEDIA PAYS OFF

When people say Social Media, they are primarily referring to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. These websites help with networking and building relationships on a personal and business level. Millions of people use social media on a daily basis and usage numbers are continuing to increase. If your firm is not already using social media now would be a great time to start.



If you don't want to take on every single social media account, you can simply start off with one or two that contain your target audience. For example, if you primarily focus on B2B clients, Facebook might not be the most effective channel. Facebook users like to socialize, and may not necessarily be in the mindset of business. A website that is more professionally geared like LinkedIn might be better for you.

Twitter is all over the place when it comes to targeting demographics. It has a mixture of professional and personal accounts that you can filter through with the right search words. This variety of people can boost your networks to people you never thought of reaching. The only things you need to focus on with Twitter are consistency and relating to your audience.



Regardless of what you decide to use, make sure that you always post different messages on different social media sites, or at least post the same content at different times. That way you don't flood a true follower with the same information over and over again.

THE BEST SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Keeping up with multiple social media accounts can be a full-time job. Not only must you update your pages with new and fresh content, you must also respond to people who interact with you and measure the results of your work. Thankfully, there are several programs that are available to help automate and streamline social media management.

Sprout Social allows for easy social media management. It organizes and reports on all activity from your linked accounts. You can log in from your phone, tablet or computer and connect with your followers through their simple, intuitive interface. Plus, you have the ability to search key words and repost with the click of a button. Sprout Social is our personal favorite because it is simple and to the point, plus, we love the weekly update email that shows how many followers or messages we have received. It's a bit more expensive than other programs at \$59/month, but the features make it worth the price. They also offer a free 30-day trial so you can be sure you like it before you buy it.



Hootsuite has the capability to schedule and post on multiple social media accounts all at once. If you pay the \$10/month, you have the capability of linking up to 50 social media accounts, which can ensure every person in your firm is spreading the right message. Plus, this means that you won't have to force anyone to post online that normally wouldn't have the time. Hootsuite allows for your feeds to show as well, which Sprout Social is very limited with. It's worth checking out!

Sendible has been known for quite some time as the lesser appealing version of HootSuite and Sprout Social. Though some people enjoyed it in previous years for its nearly free costs, it now ranges as expensive as Sprout Social and can get up to \$500 a month. It hosts a feed, similarly to HootSuite, and has all of the same features as Sprout Social. It does have some new features, such as task assignments to other members on the account and has integrated CRM like abilities. Sendible has definitely started to rebrand their products, which is why we suggest to try it out if you are looking to monitor more than social media.

The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media

By LeadRival

"This social-networking thing takes you to crazy places."

- Bill Gates

The Do's

Be Engaging

- 1 Interact with the people following your brand! Talk to people, ask questions and make the most out of the "social" aspect of social media.

Post Relevant Info

- 2 Pay attention to trends in social media that you could use to your advantage. People are more likely to react to current content vs old news.

Follow the 4-1-1 Rule

- 3 Use a posting ratio of 4 parts other peoples' content, 1 part educational content, and 1 part sales related content.

Be Consistent

- 4 Create a social media plan that will keep you on track with posting regularly. Don't expect people to stick around if you post monthly.

Share Great Content

- 5 If you are posting things that you won't even read, you probably aren't reaching your audience effectively.

Track Progress

- 6 Use a website, such as SproutSocial, to track your social media progress to see what is working and not working for your brand.

The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media

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The Don'ts

Only Use 1 Service

- 1 Try to expand your idea of social media. Your best customers might not just come from Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn. Use multiple sites!

Selling Too Much

- 2 People are not following you for a sales pitch every day. Become a point of educational info and you will see better results from followers.

Spamming Followers

- 3 Don't instantly message people or send an automated direct message. It will annoy everyone.

Inconsistent Message

- 4 When posting different info to different social media sites, make sure your brand message matches everywhere.

Avoiding Customer Service

- 5 Don't delete negative comments, instead respond to them and nurture your relationships online.

Not Being Visual

- 6 There are so many options for posting, so use them! Post videos and pictures to add variety to your social media page.

MAKING MEMORABLE GRAPHICS ONLINE

You don't have to hire a graphic designer to show that your company knows how to create a cohesive brand. There are many ways to tie together your online presence through graphics. Here are a few simple steps to creating quality images in a short amount of time.

Snappa is the easiest way to combine great photos and text into one image that is perfectly sized for all of your social media accounts. It is free to try, and can be free forever if you modify the same design after you save the one you like. Using their easy templates can make your graphic design skills look professional, and it will be impossible to tell the difference.



Nobody enjoys looking at stock photos. They are overly staged, make no sense and can really clutter a web page. Instead of settling for something overused, try out these alternative photo options for your website and advertisements:

www.raumrot.com

www.stocksnap.io

www.gratisography.com

www.negativespace.co

www.splitshire.com

www.lifeofpix.com

www.picjumbo.com

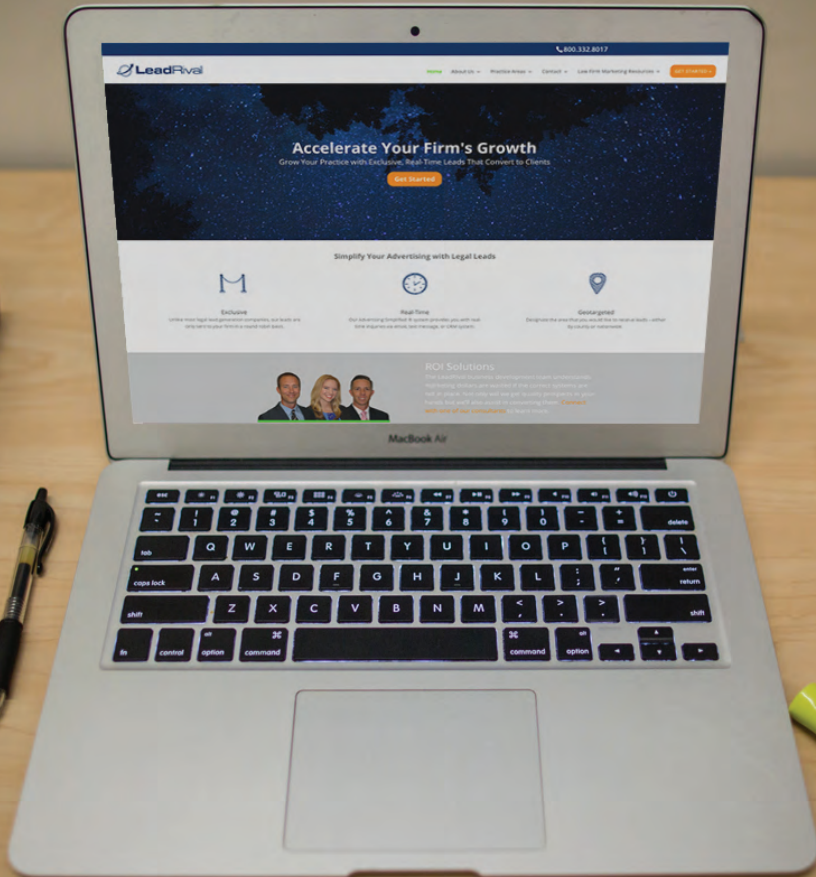
CREATE A WEBSITE ON YOUR OWN

Squarespace can be difficult to understand at first, but it has sleek design capabilities and templates that really make your website stand out. If you already use Wordpress to manage your content, you can easily migrate your site to Squarespace. The Squarespace website builder also offers the option to create landing pages or single-page websites. Squarespace is growing in popularity, and has become one of the best website builders on the market. These features come at a decent price, ranging from \$12 to \$36 a month.

Wordpress is an open source platform that can be both easy and hard to use, depending on if you decide to purchase a template or create your own website. You may download and install the Wordpress on your own server or pay Wordpress.com to host your site for you. Wordpress has downfalls such as a lack of drag and drop creation, as well as lacking a preview format of what you are posting. You will also have to pay for your own hosting, and if you decide to buy a theme and great plugins, you could end up spending \$300-\$500. However, because of its flexibility, integrations, and customizations, Wordpress is the best option if you have a web designer building your site for you.

Weebly is easy to use and is available on any platform to open and edit on the go. It has most of the same features as Squarespace but focuses more on blogging. They trump Squarespace by having thousands of templates, as well as the capability to download other templates that people have created. Plus, who can get upset at a price model that ranges from free up to \$25 a month?

Wix is the website builder we suggest you try last if you don't like any other option. It has limited templates, all which you can't switch if you want to update. If you ever decide to hire a designer, they won't be able to adjust your site because it does not offer HTML or CSS editing features. The upside? This website is drag-and-drop capable and is one of the easiest to work on if you have little to no design skills. It's pricing is from \$7 up to \$30 per month.



THE IMPORTANCE OF GREAT SEO

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the practice of promoting your website so that it will appear naturally in search engine results. Over the years, the search engine algorithms that decide how pages rank have become extremely complex. As a result, there are very few SEO “tricks” and any tricks that may exist will likely not work for long. The best bet is to focus on creating quality content that people will value and share.

SEO can be broken down into two broad categories – On Page SEO and Off Page SEO.

On-Page SEO refers to everything that appears on your site. By optimizing and improving the on-page elements of your site, you can improve your chances for ranking highly on search engines.

Code Elements: Search Engines look at the <title> of each web page and the <h1> tag of the page in order to identify the main idea of the page. Every page on your site should have a unique, relevant <title> and <h1> tag. In addition, search engines sometimes use the “meta description” of the page on the search engine results page. Make sure your meta description is also relevant and unique and entices a user to click through to your site.

Interlinking: Links between your pages are an important way for search engines to rank the importance of pages on your site. Make sure that each of your pages links to other relevant pages on your site. Common ways to do this are through Category pages, Tags, and Related Link boxes.

Content: Writing good content is the backbone of SEO. To develop a winning content strategy, start by writing down every question that you’ve been asked by your clients. Then, take those questions and write an article that answers that question as completely as possible. The goal of search engines is to return the most relevant result for a user’s search. Your goal should be to deliver the best answer to a user’s question so that your page will be the preferred answer in the search engine.

Off-Page SEO encompasses everything that does NOT appear on your site. Search engines look at how other sites interact with your site in order to establish the relevancy and importance of your site.

Listings and Profiles: Make sure your business is listed in relevant business directories like Google Places, Yelp, Yahoo Directory, etc. Also, make sure that your profile in these directories is up to date and links to your website.

Social Media: Build out profiles on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for your firm and make sure these profiles link to your website. When you publish new content on your site, be sure to publish it on your social media accounts too.

Links: Search engines consider links to your site as “votes” that vouch for your website’s authority and importance. Do what you can to get other sites to link to yours. Never pay for links, but asking or suggesting that other sites link to yours is just fine.





THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOW - UP TIME

When handling leads and clients, it is vital to communicate with them in an appropriate time frame so that they understand that you have their best interests in mind. There is nothing worse than losing a great potential client to your competition because of your firm's follow up time. The sooner that you contact leads the better.

The Lead Response Management study conducted by MIT and InsideSales sought to determine when companies should call web-generated leads. Following are highlights from this study:

1. "Wednesdays and Thursdays are the best days to call in order to contact (by 49.7% over the worst day) and qualify (by 24.9% over the worst day) leads. Thursday is the best day to contact a lead in order to qualify that lead (by 19.1% better than the worst day).
2. 4 to 6 pm is the best time to call to make contact with a lead (by 114% over the worst time block) 8-9am and 4-5pm are the best times to call to qualify a lead (by 164% better 1-2pm, the worst time of the day). 4-5pm is the best time to contact a lead to qualify over 11-12am by 109%).
3. The odds of calling to contact a lead decrease by over 10 times in the 1st hour. The odds of calling to qualify a lead decrease by over 6 times in the 1st hour. After 20 hours every additional dial your salespeople make actually hurts your ability to make contact to qualify a lead.
4. The odds of contacting a lead if called in 5 minutes versus 30 minutes drop 100 times. The odds of qualifying a lead if called in 5 minutes versus 30 minutes drop 21 times."

Source: http://www.leadresponsemanagement.org/lrm_study

It's important for you to call leads quickly and to then follow up multiple times at various points in the day. The amount of time that you put into contacting potential clients will directly impact the results you achieve.

THIS WHITE PAPER IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



LeadRival began in 2001 as a traditional print media advertising company serving law firms in Texas. Recognizing the potential of internet marketing, the founders began developing legal-themed websites in order to expand their reach of advertising. Today, LeadRival generates thousands of prospects every week for our partnered attorneys nationwide.

Our Advertising Simplified® system provides you with exclusive, real-time inquiries and are filtered to improve your chances of success.

Practice Areas We Provide Legal Leads For:

Auto Accidents | Bankruptcy | Foreclosure | DUI/DWI | Divorce
Employment Law | Social Security Disability | Workers' Compensation
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