

## **Legal Marketing: Speaking directly to your target market**

**By securing speaking engagements where your clients and prospects are gathered, you can share your expertise directly with your target market and make a strong impression firsthand.**

I've talked before about the benefits of speaking as a marketing tool for your firm. It's one of the most direct ways that you can show your expertise and also meet with prospects in one fell swoop. But just any speaking engagement may not prove to be helpful. For example, if you specialize in intellectual property law and speak before a group of real estate developers, you may not walk away with any business. It might not be a totally wasted opportunity, as everyone knows someone, and those in attendance may recommend you to more appropriate friends. But in reality, if instead you can speak before a room full of inventors, your investment will be more likely to pay off. And since time is quite literally money for you, it pays to find groups that contain more of your target clients.

Which is why when I saw this event I figured a blog post was in order. The Daily Report is probably the most read media outlet by legal professionals. And they are sponsoring an event aimed particularly at in-house counsel for companies of all sizes and in all industries. And it offers CLE. Now this is the type of event where almost any attorney would like to speak. Just imagine a room full of potential clients clinging to your vast knowledge while earning CLE for their time investment! So, how do you find events like these? And how do you secure a speaking engagement in front of this group? Here are a few ideas.

Research organizations where your ideal prospects are likely to gather or the publications they read. You may already have a few groups in mind, so add those to your list first. Then, ask a few of your key clients what groups they are most active in and where they hear the best presentations. Add those. Then, you can usually do a quick Google search for the industry you want, the word "organization" or "association" and your city/area. This will return a number of potential options for you. By now, you should have a pretty good list.

Now, review the event schedules for each of these organizations and note the types of topics they like to cover. Once you have a good idea of their focus, come up with your own speaking topic that has not yet been covered but still falls in line with their roster. Next, I suggest you create a one-page "pitch sheet" that contains your topic, a brief description and outline, a short bio, a photo, and also any testimonials you've received from previous presentations. By creating a branded, professional-looking sheet, you'll stand out. You will also give the organizer something he or she can easily forward to other committee members for review and discussion.

Next, look up the person who books speakers for their events, and forward your pitch sheet in an email. State that you'd like to speak before their group, explain the benefits

members will receive from your presentation and offer to provide any additional information that he or she needs. Some groups require that a member recommend potential speakers, so if that is the case, ask a member client or colleague to send an email to the person that handles the booking as well. If you don't hear back right away, send a follow-up email in a few weeks, or consider calling the contact. Remember that most of these people are volunteers with full-time jobs, so anything you can do to make it easier for them, the better.

While it sounds like a lot of time investment, much of this work can be done by support staff too. And in the end, if you get an opportunity to speak before a room full of potential clients, it will be well worth the effort.