

## **The One Thing to Do Now to Develop New Business**

Sent September 22, 2010 for Originate

By Larry Bodine

Lawyers, GCs, consultants and business development experts convened at the recent Midwestern Law Firm Management Conference, sponsored by West LegalEdcenter in Chicago and answered a key question:

**“If you would recommend only one thing, what should lawyers do to develop new business?”**

Here are the answers.

“Every month, call on three people you know, three people you wish you knew and three people you want to work with.” – Kathleen S. Reichert, Chief Marketing Officer at Mayer Brown.

“When you take a client to a ballgame, ask the client to bring along a few of his own customers. You just might get a referral out of it.” -- Darryl Cross, Vice President, Client Profitability, LexisNexis.

“Work to turn online relationships into offline relationships.” – Kevin Thompson, a lawyer with David McGrath in Chicago, and the author of the blog Cyberlaw Center at [www.cyberlawcentral.com](http://www.cyberlawcentral.com). He uses Twitter, LinkedIn and his blog to connect with people, and then makes an effort to meet them in person.

“Start your day by making three calls to people. Even if you get their voicemail, at least they got to hear your voice. Like fireworks that burn brightly and disappear, clients forget lawyers. It’s important to stay in front of people.” -- Fred Tannenbaum, managing partner of Gould & Ratner in Chicago.

“Be ‘nichey’ – pick a niche and you can dominate it on Google.” -- Enrico Schaefer, founder and CEO of Traverse Legal, an intellectual property firm in Michigan. He studies which search terms visitors use online to find his firm and then builds a blog around it, using the search term as the domain. He has 200 blogs that generate one

new client every day.

“Offer value billing. There’s nothing about value billing that you can’t learn in 2 or 3 hours. Where do you want to be on the adoption curve – we are past the innovation stage and in the early adopter stage. In 20 to 24 months you’ll see more of these new models of service delivery.” -- Paul Lippe, Esq., CEO and Founder of LegalOnRamp.com, an online social network for in-house counsel.

“Ask yourself, ‘What do you do other than the law to make contacts?’ I got involved in Polish American Association, was asked to on the Board and ended up as chairman. It was neat to be able to talk to people about something that’s important to them in the heart. I am also the general counsel on pro bono basis to the Chicago Bar Association and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. I’m meeting a lot of people and that can’t hurt.” -- Dan Boho, partner at Hinshaw & Culbertson, in Chicago.

“If you get resistance from your clients to alternative fees, ask them ‘what would be valuable to you? What can I provide to you that would be of value?’ When you deliver on that value they will be more than willing to give you a bonus or additional fee.” -- Russell E. Levine, a partner at Kirkland & Ellis.