

Marketing for lawyers - Mistakes Attorneys Make--and How to Avoid Them Mistake #2

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Law Firm Marketing MISTAKE 2: **TARGETING THE WRONG MARKET**

This is one of the biggest mistakes I see among attorneys especially in small law firm marketing—targeting the wrong market. Identifying and targeting the right market for your services is the most important thing you can do marketing your law firm to ensure the success of your practice. If you don't target the right market, nothing else you do will matter.

Let me give you an example.

As a law firm marketing consultant I was talking with a lawyer in Chicago and asking her about her target market. She said that her target market was small business owners who were too small to need in-house counsel or who couldn't afford the high priced downtown lawyers. They needed someone who understood the legal issues small businesses face and who offered them a flexible payment plan.

I asked her, "Do you know how many small business owners there are here in Chicago?"
"No," she replied.

I stated, "Recently, *Crain's Chicago* business magazine reported there were over 300,000 small business owners here in Chicago.

"Now, I've never been very good at math, but for the sake of illustration, let's say that only 50 percent of those business owners needed or wanted your services, that's a pretty large task trying to reach 150,000 prospects even once."

Marketing research has shown that it takes seven "touches" before a prospective client becomes a client. **The Law of 7 Touches** is based on research that found it takes an average of 7 to 10 meaningful touches EVERY YEAR to move someone through the cycle from not knowing anything about you to being ready to buy from you.

This is just the average, not a guarantee, because in hypercompetitive markets, like legal services, it often takes many more touches than that. In addition, it also takes consistency.

There are also ways you can speed up this process and create multiple touches all at once by being highly-targeted in your marketing materials; using technology like law firm internet marketing, law firm websites and using mail delivered by the post office.

In general, only 3 percent to 5 percent of your target market is ready to buy at any given time. Therefore, it's how you reach the other 95 percent to 97 percent that will make or break your

business. You must consistently be in front of your prospects to be at the top of their minds when they are ready to buy.

Now that you know *The Law of 7 Touches*, you can better understand why it's so vital to narrow your target market in your law firm marketing plan. Remember the story I told about the Chicago attorney who targeted small business? Well, according to *The Law of 7 Touches*, you multiply this lawyer's 150,000 prospects by a factor of 7, maybe 10. That means she would need to produce 1 to 1.5 million meaningful touches every year. Considering both her time and money, there is no possible way a typical solo practitioner could do that and smart business owners who are also smart marketers won't even try.