

## **Speaking engagements can be an incredibly effective marketing tool for your firm.**

So you have a blog, a great website, an active Twitter account, and maybe even some videos showcasing your talent. What's next? A great way to show off your legal knowledge and expertise is to schedule some speaking engagements. Speak at law conferences or seminars that are directly related to your area of practice, or industry events that your potential clients attend, or even other local networking or business organization meetings where you'll be exposed to an entirely new group of prospects.

Are you asking why? Below I cover some of the benefits of booking a speaking engagement.

- **Networking.** This is a great way to build relationships and meet new people. Regardless of where you are speaking—tradeshows, conferences, networking events, industry groups, etc.—make sure you get business cards and email addresses of all attendees so you can follow up with them later.
- **Marketing.** This is an easy way to market your firm in a subtle way. I'm not saying to stand up there and speak only about your firm, but you can subtly work in some firm information throughout your speech without making it sound like a sales pitch.
- **Credibility.** If you speak at a conference that has high credibility among your intended audience, then you look credible by association. Make sure you pick events that directly correlate with what you are trying to accomplish within your practice area. RESEARCH!

Once you have the speaking engagement booked, then it's time to **prepare!** You don't want to sound like a robot by reading off a prompter or be constantly looking down at your notes. Memorize your speech and practice, practice, practice! Make sure it is interesting, meets the time limits imposed and covers your topic in a way that your audience will enjoy. Use Keynote, PowerPoint or another presentation creator to show slides and pictures, but make sure you don't sound like a salesman. You want to keep the attention of your audience without going overboard and ruining your credibility.

Don't let anyone tell you speaking engagements aren't a good marketing tool! This is just another great way to improve your firm's image and credibility, gain clients and showcase your expertise!