



Legal Marketing Strategies

14 Ways to Get on More Insurance Panels in 2014

By Margaret Grisdela

Highlights of this Article:

- Look beyond large, national insurance carriers for fresh panel counsel opportunities
- Build your law firm and attorney credentials for better competitive positioning
- Contact old clients and prospects to remind them that you remain interested

Start the New Year with a Plan to Get More Insurance Panel Appointments

Insurance defense law firms that start the New Year with a resolution to get appointed as insurance panel counsel for more carriers may find the following legal marketing tips to be helpful.

1. **Target in-state or regional insurance companies.** Many law firms rely on a relatively small number of national insurance carriers for the bulk of their business. This can be a profitable yet risky strategy as national carriers tend to consolidate panels periodically, leaving unprepared law firms exposed to potentially dangerous revenue swings.
2. **Explore opportunities with risk retention groups (RRGs).** These are alternative risk transfer entities created by the federal Liability Risk Retention Act. They act nationally, and serve the needs of very tightly defined market segments.
3. **Research panel opportunities with self-insureds.** Some national retailers and restaurant chains self-insure for premises or product liability claims under a certain level (like \$1 million).
4. **Get certified.** State-sponsored board certification is available to lawyers in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. Also, the ABA has accredited 14 certification programs conducted by seven different private organizations. Get more information at www.LegalSpecialists.org.
5. **Apply for a Peer Review rating from Martindale-Hubbell** if you are not already rated. There is no cost for the rating (although there is a fee if you want to display the icons), and you literally need about 18 references, but if you can achieve an AV® rating it

will be worth the time invested. Click on the link for details about the [Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rating](#) system.

6. **Apply for a listing in the A.M Best [Directory of Recommended Insurance Attorneys](#).** Many claims professionals refer to this directory when looking for a law firm in a new territory.
7. **Become a member of the CLM.** The [Claims & Litigation Management Alliance](#) is a national organization created to meet the needs of professionals in the claims and litigation management industries. Founded in 2007, the CLM currently has approximately 20,000 members and fellows.
8. **Write an article** on an emerging legal topic relating to insurance defense in your area of the law. Cybersecurity, employment practices liability (EPLI), and professional liability are a few of the many rapidly growing defense areas of practice. Once your article is published, mail it out to clients and prospects. You can also post it to your website, your blog, and your LinkedIn profile.
9. **Get a speaking engagement.** Go beyond speaking to other attorneys at bar association events by targeting claims professionals, adjusters, or other insurance executives. If you are not already, become a CLE provider in accordance with state licensing requirements.
10. **Maximize your LinkedIn profile.** There are so many ways to gain visibility on LinkedIn, such as expanding your network, posting free status updates, and joining groups.
11. **Add new content to your website.** A blog hosted within the framework of your website works well, but at a minimum it is a best practice to add at least one new page to your website monthly.
12. **Explore diversity options.** As more carriers establish goals for diversity among panel counsel members, consider getting certified if your firm qualifies on the basis of gender, race, veteran status or other relevant factors. This approach could be particularly suitable for small law firms that otherwise find it more difficult to break into the insurance defense market.
13. **Update your marketing materials.** Law firm brochures, bio pages, websites, and other sales support materials should all be freshened up for the New Year.
14. **Contact old clients and prospects** to let them know you remain interested in serving their insurance defense needs.

Determine which of these 14 legal marketing ideas are suited to your insurance defense practice, and get a jump start on your 2014 business development efforts.

Remember, marketing is a process and not an event. Have fun!

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Courtesy of Legal Expert Connections, Inc.

About the Author: Legal marketing consultant Margaret Grisdela is president of [Legal Expert Connections, Inc.](#) and the author of [Courting Your Clients: the Essential Guide to Legal Marketing](#).

Legal Expert Connections is a national legal marketing agency focused on business development for attorneys and experts. Our services include insurance defense marketing, outsourced legal marketing management, content marketing, and more.

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Remember, never stop marketing! Marketing is a process and not an event.

The author invites your questions and comments. She can be reached at mg@legalexpertconnections.com.

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