

Hey everyone. Welcome to this episode of *Law Firm Auto-Pilot* where today we will be talking about referral marketing.

Referral marketing is also known as relationship marketing or some people call it networking. Marketing as we know is important to keep getting a steady work from new clients. It's not enough to be a good lawyer or it's not enough to be even an exceptionally good lawyer.

To get new work, you have to get the word out there, and word-of-mouth will only get you so far. The thing is you need to convince people out there, who are potential clients, that they should hire you.

Because today there's a lot of competition, you have to do a better job of convincing those people than all of the other lawyers who are out there competing with you. The easiest and most powerful way to do this is through referral marketing.

The reason why it's powerful and easier is because it works off of existing trust that you already have.

Now, a lot of people like to think that the internet or the technology is the secret sauce for making everything run faster and better including marketing. The reality is it only works well if it's working in conjunction with other things that are deeply psychologically embedded.

One of the things that matters the most is trust, why we talked about that last time. That's why referral marketing works better.

There are studies that show this. For example, the 2017 Legal Trends Report that was compiled by Clio showed that referral marketing is how 62% of clients find lawyers. That's referral from friends and colleagues. Then there was another 30% that found lawyers through referrals from other lawyers. That was way more than online marketing or anything else.

I did a recent informal survey of about 100 lawyers who responded so far. My numbers confirm the same things: about 67%. According to my survey said, their referral marketing was how they were finding clients their best clients. By comparison, only 10% we're getting most of their clients using online marketing and websites.

The thing is you need to be very strategic if you want better, more consistent results.

If you're going to be using referral marketing or any kind of marketing but even referral marketing, you need to be strategic. What are some of the things you need to think about if you're going to approach this strategically?

Well, these are things that once you think about them, they're pretty obvious. Number one, you need to be as a "referable" as possible. In other words, you need to be trustworthy to the people that would refer work to you, your friends and family, and close inner circle. They trust you a lot.

You're not going to have to necessarily work as hard to earn their trust.

The other lawyers who might refer your business, or business associates, or people out there that know you somewhat casually who would refer you work, you need to establish for them that you are truly trustworthy, that you are a good person for them to refer work to.

Because if they refer the clients to you and those clients are unhappy, it looks bad for them. They won't refer people to you if it makes them look bad.

They'll stop referring work to you as well if you don't show them that you appreciate the referrals. There's lots of ways to do that. But those are the strategic things you need to think about.

You also need to help them understand why you are "referable" because people have different understandings of what you do. You want to be strategic and craft a good message—a compelling message—that tells people what it is exactly that you do, and who exactly you most want people to refer to you.

If you're very clear that *these are the people that I want to help the most, or these are the kind of cases I want most*, then those are the kind of cases that they will refer to you.

Of course, if it looks like you're specializing and focusing on one area of the law, or one type of client, or problem, then those people will be more inclined to refer work to you because they'll feel like you're special.

Being strategic about helping your referral partners understand what you do and who you serve is really important.

Now, another thing to bear in mind is that there's some psychology behind getting people to remember and keep referring your business. Here's where I refer to the 3 Rs. You need to, number one, **remind** people what you do and for whom you do it. You need to do this **regularly**, that's the second R. The third R is, you need to do this in a **reasonable way**: a low-key, non-pushy way. A way that works well reasonably for you and works reasonably well for them.

You can't just wing this. You have to sit down and think about, "Well, how am I going to do this?"

Basically, the reason why you need to do this is because people will forget that you exist or they'll get busy in their lives. Some people who are parents will forget to pick up their kids at school. They need to be reminded of that. If they care a lot about their kids and they forget to pick up their kids at school, they definitely need to be reminded that you exist.

They need to be **reminded regularly**.

You can't just remind them once a year at Christmas by sending them a card or sending them a gift. You have to **do this at least once a month**.

This would be a good time frame to remind people. Or at least once a quarter. If you do this by taking them to lunch or calling them on the phone, that's great. There are

easier ways that we'll talk about in future episodes. In fact, there's one really powerful way that involves email marketing, I will talk to you about in a future episode.

The point is you need to **remind people**, you need to do it **regularly**, and you need to **be reasonable** about it so that they don't feel pressured. You need to keep recruiting new referral partners because you want to have more people out there that could refer you business. You don't want have a small circle, you want to have a large circle.

Now, a website can help you get more good referrals. That's nice, but it's not the only way to do it.

Now, if you're going to have a website, then you should definitely craft it in such a way that it helps you get good referrals. It should tell your story, it should help people understand what you do and who you're trying to serve.

Of course, a website is another touch point where you can publicize your message and make it widely available. Through the website, you can solidify the trust you have with existing referral partners.

It helps you recruit new referral partners. It helps you convince the clients or the potential referrals who come to your website to see if they can understand what you do, and why you're a good person to trust.

A basic website is definitely good. But you should build a website first to establish trust with the people that know you a little bit (*i.e. referral sources*) and then do a good job of explaining what you do.

That's important because, of course, we know that people that know you will still vet you by checking out your website. Or they'll do research on you if you don't have a website. It's definitely a good idea to have a website.

To summarize, you need to be strategic in order to get referrals.

It's powerful and it works pretty well on its own. If you want to make it work better, I think you should. Then you need to be strategic. Remember the 3Rs. You need to **remind** people **regularly** in a **reasonable** way.

I recommend that referral marketing. While it's powerful on its own, that doesn't mean you should just leave it alone. I would do some reading up on strategies.

There's some good books out there, for example, this one called *Endless Referrals* by Bob Burg that was updated in 1998. It's got a lot of great reviews on Amazon. It has 79% five-star reviews. The rest were all four-star reviews. It has no one, two or three-star reviews.

Bob Burg is somebody who's written a lot of books. I know him, I've read a couple of his books including this one. I highly recommend it. That's a great book to get to read about how to do referrals more strategically, because it is powerful if you don't

do anything but you should make the power of it exponentially greater by being strategic.

Referral marketing is your friend and you should take advantage of it. But you should be strategic. All right, that's it for this episode of *Law Firm Autopilot*. In the next episode, I'll talk about direct response marketing. I look forward to seeing you then. Until then, I wish the best for you and your law practice.