Guide to Marketing for Criminal Defense Lawyers

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In the world of criminal defense law, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Countless people need the help of criminal defense lawyers every day, as the number of people convicted remains high. Each case is different, and wrongful verdicts can happen. Criminal defense lawyers need a well-thought plan tailored specifically for their clients to secure a win.

However, competition for clients can be fierce, and your criminal defense practice will have to find a way to stand out. For example, crafting a marketing strategy that will help your practice appear at the top of the search engine results is one such tactic. But how do you find a marketing approach that will help your particular law practice?

This post will cover practical marketing principles and practices that will help you acquire new clients. Just remember that there is no cookie-cutter approach.

Define your brand and communicate it clearly

Criminal defense is a saturated legal practice area. To succeed in such a crowded market, your firm will need a clear brand image. It needs to communicate professionalism and expertise to become an easy-to-remember brand. This requires being consistent and deliberate in the testimonials, copy, and images featured across your marketing channels.

Try putting yourself in your client's situation, take the time to empathize, and build a feeling of trust. Good criminal defense lawyers create an emotional connection, which goes beyond just selling legal services. Find out what inspires confidence in your client base and make sure your brand resonates with that.

Build a responsive and well-designed website

According to a recent study, 33% of all clients start their search for a lawyer online. Without a website, you're already eliminating a third of your potential client base. Essentially, your website is your law firm's digital home. Do your best to build a secure home that aligns with your firm's values and purpose.

Don't take shortcuts when it comes to website design. You want something that delivers a compelling message and presents the right image—a user-friendly, responsive, and aesthetically pleasing site that is easy to navigate and provides valuable information.

Your firm's website should:

- Details your services (list your specialties, and be specific).
- Communicate why they should choose you to represent them in court. (provide testimonials, list years of experience, and display your criminal case results).
- Provide clear ways of contacting your legal practice (phone, chat, e-mail, or appointment booking).

Just like any other website, your criminal defense firm's website design needs to meet specific requirements when it comes to quality. It needs to be secure, fast-loading, and mobile-friendly. Most of your efforts will go down the drain if you fail to address these tech-related aspects of your website.

Create relevant content

Consistently publishing informative content that conveys your authority and expertise on criminal defense matters is a surefire way of boosting your reputation. For example, producing videos and blog posts that cover changes in the law, discuss factors that could affect court proceedings, and answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

You should aim to publish two types of content on your firm's website:

- **Authoritative content:** If you are an expert on a specific topic (e.g., DUI charges), writing blog posts will help your criminal defense practice become an established voice of authority. People who face criminal charges are usually frightened and often spend a lot of time looking for valuable information online. They're also more likely to contact you if you publish content that assuages their fears.
- **Practice area pages:** These are pages on your website that detail all your specialties. As a criminal defense lawyer, these practice areas can include sexual assault, immediate roadside prohibitions (IRPs), fraud, and more.

Another critical format to consider for your firm isvideo. Visual content is often easier to engage with as 65% of the general population are visual learners. With high-quality videos on your site, your firm can increase conversion rates from site visitors, improve your firm's reputation online, and stand out from the competition. You can create:

- Profile videos that give clients a quick and easy look into your services, your approach as a criminal defense lawyer, an overview of your firm, and more.

- Testimonial videos from satisfied clients.
- Short videos to address FAQs.

Encourage reviews

When a client walks out of your firm's doors satisfied, you shouldn't be afraid to ask them to leave a good review on Google or any other review site. Even a positive status or comment on social media is, in a way, an online review that contributes to your brand's reputation. Not everyone will leave a thrilling five-star review, but positive reviews and feedback help in building trust, especially for local clients.

Never underestimate word of mouth

Despite living in an increasingly digital world, word-of-mouth referrals remain one of the most effective marketing ripples created by the splash of positive feedback. What other people have to say about you can and will affect a prospect's decision to hire you.

To get your name out there the old-fashioned way, you can host a free lecture, participate in community events, volunteer your services, and attend networking events.

On-site SEO

Building your website and creating informative blog posts are a great start to an SEO strategy, but there's still more to learn. Here are a few other tips to help your firm climb up the search engine results page.

- Conduct keyword research and incorporate practice-related keywords naturally throughout the site content.
- Get high-quality backlinks from other websites that specialize in criminal defense. These can be publications or other law firms' websites.
- Understand and optimize your website's meta titles and meta descriptions.

It is common for a criminal defense lawyer to have various sub-practice areas (compared to other areas of the law). You'll have days you may be helping someone avoid a wrongful conviction for verbal assault or defend a client from impaired driving charges. This opens many opportunities to rank your unique and quality content for phrases that can drive more organic traffic to your site.

Technical SEO factors such as mobile-friendliness, fast page load time, and user-friendliness also impact your website's traffic.

Don’t forget about social

Besides acting as another channel for reaching out and connecting with potential clients, social media offers the opportunity to reinforce your brand and communicate your values.

There are many social media platforms out there but your firm should emphasize quality over quantity. It may be tempting to try and be on all of them, but it can get overwhelming trying to juggle multiple platforms. The overall quality and response time for all your social media profiles may go down when this happens. For a smaller firm, posting on just Facebook and LinkedIn a few times a week may be enough.

If you have a large enough budget to devote a small team to content creation and social media management, it would make sense to build profiles on Twitter, Instagram, or other platform.

Attracting clients is step one, but getting paid is the lifeline of your firm. Learn how to improve your criminal defense firms invoicing processes here: Best Practices in Invoice Management for Criminal Defense Law Firms

Final Thoughts

Having a website, sharing your expertise (via high-quality, engaging content), and being active on social media are all great marketing strategies to start. But remember that having an ongoing marketing strategy that you’ll adjust along the way is a must because competition for legal clients is stiff.

About Clio

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