

What's New in Marketing?

By Jennifer Marsnik

It's the middle of fall with the holidays quickly approaching. It's also the season for finalizing strategic plans and budgets for 2020, prompting many legal vendors to wonder ... what's new?

Not much, it turns out – at least not with some core tenets of sales and marketing.

Legaltech News published an article on November 15, 2019, by Frank Ready, a reporter on the tech desk at ALM Media, titled "[For Legal Tech Vendors, the First Impression is Everything.](#)" The piece acknowledges the difficulty of marketing to and maintaining relationships in the legal industry and includes insight from three different perspectives: a law firm director of e-discovery, a law firm attorney and a corporate general counsel.

What I found most interesting is that I probably could have read the same article back when I started working in this space in 1996, perhaps without the reference to email. Because it turns out that with all the technology and advancements in the channels used to reach this market over the past 20+ years, nothing has really changed with respect to basic principles of sales and marketing.

Ready highlights several insights from his subjects that, as marketing consultants in this industry, we've been telling clients for years ...

- Know your audience. Every organization is structured differently, so the decision-maker or influencer at one firm won't have the same title as the decision-maker at another firm. Salespeople and marketers must do their homework to ensure they're targeting the right individual at each firm with any direct outreach.
- Having a message that resonates is the best way to get someone's attention.
- Ongoing marketing and relationship management is critical to keeping the clients you have.
- A multipronged approach is necessary to reach various people in the legal market because everyone wants something different –
 - One wants relevant content she can share with her clients about something new and how/why it impacts them, but then she goes on to admit she also gets this info from conferences/panels.
 - One prefers a more direct approach but admits that even if your message is compelling enough to get him to open a marketing email out of curiosity, he's probably not going to buy from you anyway.
 - Another wants to see evidence that your solution is uniquely able to address a specific pain point or a case study sharing how a similar organization found success with it. She wants succinct messaging but acknowledges that is hard to achieve in a crowded marketplace.

All in all, Ready's article doesn't tell us anything we didn't already know but rather serves as a reminder of why reaching the legal audience requires a thoughtful approach. His timing is perfect, though, as vendors are revisiting their strategies and actively working to map out their marketing plans for 2020.

The real takeaway is this: Unless you have a money tree and can truly afford to market to all these segments in all the different ways they want to be reached simultaneously, the best things you can do are to prioritize your audience and messaging, be strategic and get focused.

1. Prioritize your audiences. Know exactly who your primary targets are and tailor your outreach accordingly.
2. Revisit your messaging. Know exactly what your differentiators and value proposition are to ensure your key messages are accurate and impactful enough to resonate with your primary audiences.
3. Have a strategy. Outline a PR and marketing plan that leverages the available channels to reach your primary audience with the right messaging or content at every touchpoint.
4. Stay focused. Don't get distracted with the latest opportunity or channel that becomes available. Rather, be purposeful and make sure every activity in your 2020 plan actively works toward your goals and objectives.

Need help refining your message, developing a strategy or getting focused? Call the experts at Edge today.



About the Author

With Edge since 2007, Jennifer specializes in helping clients develop and implement strategic plans that support their overall business goals. She lives in the Twin Cities area with her husband and two daughters and enjoys golf and cheering on the Twins, Vikings and U of M Gophers.

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