

T H E P R I M E R U S

Paradigm

A new model for lawyers and law firms

SPRING 2009

Making the Most of the Primerus Brand

**Building and Capitalizing
on a Good Brand**

John C. Buchanan



Sharing the Passion

Survival in today's challenging marketplace depends, perhaps more than ever, on a good brand. Your brand equals the image evoked in the mind of the beholder. It means having a recognizable and consistent profile in the marketplace based on who you are and what you do well. It tells potential clients what makes you stand out in a crowd.

Primerus's brand starts with the name – derived from “prime” meaning first and the Latin “primus inter pares” meaning first among equals. It continues in substance to the Six Pillars, those common values we all share – integrity, excellent work product, reasonable fees, continuing legal education, civility and community service. Our screening process for admission of new firms protects that brand by ensuring we maintain the highest quality among our members.

A Highly Marketable Brand

Our brand, which could be summarized with four words – high quality, reasonable fees – has never been more marketable than it is today. We have all read the sad headlines over the past several months announcing firm layoffs and cutbacks and news of clients no longer tolerating sky-high rates for their legal services.

Primerus has grown faster since September 2008 than ever before, despite the struggling economy. It's because we have a product and a brand that's tremendously marketable. We offer partner-level

High quality legal services at reasonable fees – there could not be a better brand for today's marketplace.

services at the fees large firms charge for their associates. And that resonates with a lot of corporate decision makers right now. High quality legal services at reasonable fees – there could not be a better brand for today's marketplace.

What's in a Name?

Branding has worked for the nation's largest firms. For example, when you say the name Sullivan Cromwell, it evokes the image of some of the highest quality legal work available to clients. Yet, it also evokes the image of some of the highest legal fees in the world today.

Most of our firms will never achieve the kind of name or brand recognition that Sullivan Cromwell has. But, by coming together under the umbrella of Primerus, we have an alliance of more than 1,400 lawyers. We are the size of some of the

country's largest law firms, boasting attorneys with expertise in hundreds of specialties and subspecialties. And there's one significant difference between us and the others – we charge reasonable fees for very high quality work.

This issue of *The Primerus Paradigm* will explore how members of Primerus can further build and capitalize on this brand. It takes all of us working together in little ways to do this. Proudly display your affiliation with Primerus on your brochures, website and stationery. Wear the Primerus “P” pin; if nothing else, it will start a conversation that could lead somewhere. Collaborate with your fellow Primerus members to show clients the power of the alliance we have.

If we all go to the fullest extent to promote and capitalize on the Primerus brand, we will accomplish far more than by spending all our energy and money promoting our own firm name and brand. In fact, through our combined efforts, a lot of people out there will be promoting your firm just as they promote their own.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Buchanan". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

In this issue

The theme of this issue of *The Primerus Paradigm* is marketing. In addition to the lead article about capitalizing on the Primerus brand, this issue features eight articles written by Primerus members and other experts in their fields. This represents the most submitted articles ever featured in an issue of *Paradigm*, and we hope you find them both educational and inspiring.

Based on the positive response to the membership directory in the Winter 2009 issue, we have included it again – updated with all of our new members. Use it as a reference guide as you interact and collaborate with fellow Primerus members. For more information about each firm, visit our website at www.primerus.com.



About our cover

We believe the Primerus brand – high quality legal services for reasonable fees – makes us stand out in a crowd. In fact, despite the economic storm of the last several months, Primerus membership has grown more than ever before. This cover depicts that, as well as the hope that this issue, with its marketing focus, helps the “rainmaking” efforts of your firm.

Publisher & Editor in Chief: John C. Buchanan
Executive Editor: Ruth Martin
Managing Editor: Chad Sluss

© 2009 International Society of Primerus Law Firms



Page 8

Developing and Marketing a Niche Practice: How I Found My Focus

By Carlos F. Gonzalez

Page 10

Secrets of the Rainmakers: What Do Rainmakers Do That Less Successful Lawyers Don't?

By Bob Weiss

Page 12

Be Young, Be Smart, Be Good at Marketing

By LaBella Alvis and Duncan Manley

Page 14

Tips for Dealing with the Media

By Tim Wondergem

Page 16

Building Your Personal Brand

By Frederick C. Johs

Page 18

Hitting the “Restart Button” on Marketing: A Case Study for Marketing the Small Firm

By Robert W. Bivins

Page 20

Five Brand-Building Tips for Law Firms: How Any Law Firm Can Raise Its Public Profile While Enhancing Its Dignity

By Stephen G. Schwarz and Richard Moon

Page 22

How to Use Search Engine Optimization to Your Firm's Advantage

By Chris Davies

Making the Most of the Primerus Brand in Tough Economic Times: Building and Capitalizing on a Good Brand

A sampling of headlines from the last six months says it all:

Law firms feel strain of layoffs and cutbacks

*(The New York Times)*¹

Big-firm partners go small to keep and attract frugal clients

*(The National Law Journal)*²

Recession will forever change the legal profession

*(Larry Bodine Marketing Blog)*³

Yet in the midst of this economic storm, Primerus President John C. Buchanan reports that Primerus has grown faster than ever before in its history. In the last four months of 2008, Primerus added 15 new firms, followed by another 15 as of April 15, 2009. That brings the total number of Primerus firms to 118, with more than 1,400 lawyers.

The Primerus brand, which he summarizes in four simple words – high quality, reasonable fees – has never been more marketable than it is today. *(For more of his thoughts on this trend, please read the President's Podium on page 2).*

Everyone plays an integral role in building the Primerus brand and capitalizing on it in today's marketplace:

- By collaborating to meet the needs of new and existing clients across the country, Primerus members reinforce the brand's identity as a nationwide alliance of quality attorneys who are a preferable alternative to big, expensive national law firms.
- By prominently featuring the Primerus logo and Six Pillars, and educating clients about the organization,

members increase the visibility of the Primerus endorsement and expand the brand's impact.

- By ensuring consistency of quality among member firms through strict admission policies and unwavering adherence to the Six Pillars, Primerus maintains the brand's good reputation.

"It takes all of us working together in little ways to build the Primerus brand," Buchanan said. "By doing that, we are able for minimal cost to have the same results as if we spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in media to build the brand."

Collaborating to Leverage a National Brand

Across the country every day, Primerus members are leveraging the brand by collaborating with other Primerus firms to serve client needs. Through this work, the members promote not only their firm, but the network at large.

"The Primerus brand increases the probability of getting quality business in the door," Buchanan said.

Primerus recently attracted the interest and consideration of the Avis Budget Group, Inc., a company which operates two of the most recognized brands in the vehicle rental business. According to Robert A. Zupkus, partner with Primerus firm Zupkus & Angell in Denver, Primerus connected with the company through two avenues – Zupkus's work coordinating member benefits for the American Bar Association, as well as Primerus member Thomas E. Brennan of Fain, Major & Brennan in Atlanta, who currently does legal work for the company.

Brennan and Zupkus joined forces and met in December with Avis Budget Group's General Counsel and Vice

President – Litigation Counsel and Government Affairs who runs litigation programs nationally. As a result of that meeting, the Vice President attended the Primerus Defense Institute Convocation in April in Tucson.

"[The general counsel's] desire was to get quality legal services at the lowest possible price," Zupkus said. "The Primerus brand was very attractive to them because they wanted to find lawyers who had already passed a quality screening process."

Zupkus hopes that Primerus's relationship with the Avis Budget Group will blossom and create opportunities for other Primerus firms across the country on a statewide basis.

Collaboration among Primerus firms sends a strong message to clients, Zupkus said. "It says we want to show you there is a real synergy here, and that synergy can be of assistance to you."

The firm also invited a client to the April Convocation. "The moral of the story is we believe it's important, and we try to invite clients to these meetings because we are proud of the group and the lawyers in it," Zupkus said.

Shining a Light on the Brand

On a recent afternoon Steve Kailas of Primerus firm Kohner, Mann & Kailas in Milwaukee said he was planning to have workers change the sign on the door of the firm's office space to include the Primerus logo.

"That's what you have to do if it's something you're proud of," Kailas said. Soon after joining Primerus in September, the firm included an article in its client newsletter announcing its membership in Primerus and explaining the organization. The firm also added the Primerus logo and statement "A Primerus law firm" to its letterhead and will continue to add it to other firm materials as they reprint.

"We all have to recognize it as a badge of accomplishment," Kailas said. "It's like being in a select crowd. It's very hard for you to bring accolades upon yourself, but it's not hard for somebody else to do that, and people will accept someone else doing that. The Primerus logo does that for you."

Kailas added: "Anyone in the group who isn't maximizing the exposure of that logo is making a big mistake and is hurting the whole group."

As a commercial law firm, Kailas said his firm is very interested in further developing relationships with Primerus firms across the country to establish an exchange of work. "This is a unique opportunity to provide clients national service across the full spectrum of business legal issues supported by a credible guarantee of uniform quality," he said. "We regularly work with decision makers from nationally recognized corporations that have recognized our firm's ability to offer them representation on matters throughout the 50 states. We expect to turn to Primerus members to help us in our volume of work and to further strengthen and establish the Primerus network."

Kailas added, "As long as our firm and the other firms in the Primerus network can individually and collectively deliver first-rate legal services and results while practicing all the other requirements of the Primerus organization, there is no question that Primerus is providing a real alternative to big national and regional law firms."

An Attractive Alternative

According to an April 16 article in *GC California Magazine*, more and more general counsel are seeking an alternative to large national firms with high fees. The



Making the Most of the Primerus Brand in Tough Economic Times: Building and Capitalizing on a Good Brand

article cited a November 2008 Altman Weil survey of 115 general counsel, in which 53 percent said they plan to switch some current work or send new work to lower-priced outside counsel in 2009.⁴

It's a model Wilmington, Delaware-based DuPont Co. began using in 1992, according to an April 6 *Bloomberg* article.⁵ The article says that more companies are following DuPont's lead, using small firms as outside counsel and thus saving as much as half compared with fees of Wall Street firms. DuPont's current list of outside counsel includes eight of the country's 100 biggest law firms and four times as many small firms, according to the article.

"We feel there is a great opportunity for Primerus to take advantage of this opportunity to market our members to these corporate clients," Primerus Director of Services Chad Sluss said.

Ensuring the Brand's Consistency

The brand is only effective as long as it is recognized positively in the marketplace. And that, Buchanan said, requires every Primerus firm to adhere to the Six Pillars – the highest possible quality standards. Working together, Primerus staff and the Accreditation Board under the leadership of chairman Richard Fogg continuously strive to ensure consistency of quality in member firms through the initial accreditation screening and annual auditing processes.

Sluss said Primerus staff is also in the research and development phase of an expanded quality assurance program. Beginning in April, Primerus launched the first phase of the program – a Client Quality Assurance Survey available at www.primerus.com (see page 7). The survey is designed to collect client opinions of the service they receive from Primerus firms.

Staying the Course in Tough Economic Times

Primerus member firm Rudolph Friedmann in Boston has prominently displayed on its website home page the Primerus logo above the statement "Charter Member of the International Society of Primerus Law Firms." According to Managing Partner James Rudolph, the firm also includes information about Primerus in its annual letter to clients.

"It has been beneficial on a national level," Rudolph said. "It's helpful to be connected with a network of lawyers. We do get referrals from lawyers in other states. It's nice to refer to another Primerus firm because we know the work is going to be done right."

As part of its marketing efforts, Rudolph Friedmann recently ran a series of five ads in the *Boston Business Journal* promoting

Primerus Launches New Quality Assurance Program

Primerus has launched a new Quality Assurance Program using the JD Powers and Associates quality model.

We ask all members to encourage clients to complete the Primerus Quality Assurance Survey at the conclusion of their case or matter. The link to the survey is centrally located on the home page of the Primerus website (www.primerus.com). Firms that consistently receive high marks on the Quality Assurance Survey will receive an annual “Outstanding Achievement” award from Primerus and will be recognized through press releases. If you are interested in this program, please contact Chad Sluss, Director of Services, at 800-968-2211 or csluss@primerus.com.


Exclusive Territory Charter Announcement

The Primerus Board of Directors has revised the Exclusive Territory Charter. To review these changes, please visit www.primerus.com and click on the “Members” tab.

the firm’s niche practice in “business divorces.” The bold campaign featured headlines including “Is your partner cooking the books?” and “Freeze outs happen all year round.” In addition to running in the business journal, the firm also sent the ads with a cover letter to members of various organizations.

Rudolph believes it’s important for his firm to invest in advertising despite the economic climate. “Especially in this environment, we have to be entrepreneurial. We shouldn’t be cutting back on marketing,” Rudolph said. “It’s a commitment, but I think you have to get your name out there.”

It’s the same principle that applies to promoting the Primerus brand – getting the name out there. Through ongoing

efforts to ensure consistency of quality, collaborate in client development efforts, and increase the visibility of the Primerus identity, the Primerus brand could lead you to new heights you never thought possible, even in tough economic times. 

¹http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/12/business/12law.html?_r=2&partner=permalink&exprod=permalink

²<http://www.law.com/jsp/article.jsp?id=1202429116078>

³<http://blog.larrybodine.com/2009/03/articles/current-affairs/recession-will-forever-change-the-legal-profession/>

⁴<http://www.law.com/jsp/ihc/PubArticleIHC.jsp?id=1202429931212>

⁵<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aPaoB9uRSvQk>

Developing and Marketing a Niche Practice: How I Found My Focus

By Carlos F. Gonzalez

In a down economy in which thousands of lawyers have lost their jobs, the temptation to expand your practice and gobble up as much legal business as possible may seem like the only way to survive. Nothing could be further from the truth. The practice of law has become incredibly specialized. Litigation offers a perfect example. A commercial dispute litigated amongst parties located exclusively in the United States is very different from an international business dispute involving parties in more than one country. In international litigation, service, personal jurisdiction, venue and discovery, raise a host of unique issues that are simply not at issue in domestic litigation.

The law has become so specialized that it is no longer enough to simply have a mastery of key skills. While the mechanics are still important, the level of substantive knowledge required to effectively represent clients in modern-day business disputes necessarily requires specialization. Developing a focus and building a niche practice will help you stay ahead of the curve and expand your marketing potential. Here's how I did it in three steps.

The Advantages of a Niche Practice

Before we jump into the nuts and bolts of developing and marketing a niche practice, let's make sure we have definitively answered the fundamental question raised by this article – why build a niche practice? Today, lawyers build entire practices around specific

statutes, industries and even geographical regions. In the long term, this makes a great deal of sense. We live in a regulated society, where businesses are governed by an often complex series of rules and regulations. In order to keep abreast of the latest developments in one industry or another, a practitioner must often spend many hours a week pouring over press releases, legal decisions, administrative and regulatory reports, and trade and academic journals. A niche practice helps you focus your time so that you can stay tuned into key developments in your field of practice, and still practice law!

More importantly, a focused practice improves your ability to market yourself. Let's face it, there are a lot of law firms out there competing for the same clients. Take a moment to scan your competitors' websites and ask yourself how different each law firm truly is. Assuming a potential client does not have an existing relationship with a lawyer or firm, how will that client choose between competing law firms? Most websites look the same and offer practice descriptions that include every type of dispute under the sun. This does not help potential clients identify the best firm or lawyer for their unique needs. The reality is that outside the largest law firms in the country (whose own business models have been seriously challenged as of late), no lawyer or law firm has such broad experience.

In reality, most lawyers' and law firms' expertise can be categorized into a few distinct areas of practice. By focusing your practice and becoming an expert in

Best Practices



Carlos F. Gonzalez
Partner

Carlos F. Gonzalez is a Partner at Diaz, Reus & Targ, LLP, a Miami-based law firm with offices in Latin America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. He concentrates his practice in international litigation and arbitration.

Diaz, Reus & Targ, LLP
100 S.E. 2nd Street
2600 Bank of America Tower
Miami, Florida 33131
305.375.9220 Phone
305.375.8050 Fax
cgonzalez@diazreus.com
www.diazreus.com

a particular field, you will necessarily stand out from the crowd. This, in turn, will allow you to effectively compete for business within your practice niche, be selective about the types of cases and clients you take on, and, ultimately, increase your billable rates. Expertise comes at a premium.

Step One – What Do You Like?

Having hopefully convinced you to embrace a niche practice, the next step is to decide on the niche itself. Warning – the selection process here must involve more than simply whether one specialty is more lucrative than another. If you are not a tax lawyer and have never wanted to be a tax lawyer, you should think twice about jumping into this highly specialized area of the law. So, how do you proceed?

Begin with a simple question – what do you like to do? Think about this question in broad terms. Focus on your experiences, skills, interests, etc. Your focus should be on your life as a whole, and not simply your professional life as a lawyer. Why is this exercise important? A niche practice is not born overnight. In some cases, lawyers fall into a particular area of practice because it is the focus of their law firm, or the partners they work with. Other lawyers grow into a niche, perhaps as a result of working with one or more clients with very specific legal issues. A third group simply creates a niche practice by fusing a personal interest with a professional objective. In a recent interview, for example, a young lawyer described how he took his passion for videogames and turned it into a specialty practice advising and counseling videogame software developers.

Regardless of which category you ultimately fall into, the key is to identify a practice area that excites you, has some bearing with your broad interests – both personal and professional – and affords

you the opportunity to grow as a lawyer. And, if the practice area does not exist, then you should not be afraid to create it.

Step Two – How Much Do You Know?

Once you have found your niche, the next step is to become as much of an expert in your field as possible. Your “expertise” will play a critical role in your personal marketing campaign. So, do not cut corners here. The best advice is to read. Whether you are working your way through a pile of court decisions, journal articles or industry-specific trade publications, your ability to master the technical jargon of your specialty will be critical. Your goal here is to simply build a base of knowledge so that you can add both depth and breadth to your practice. There are no shortcuts or tricks to save you time here. You must invest time and energy to identify the key publications in your fields’ meet the expert; and attend important conferences. This is the best way (and arguably the only way) to truly master your subject area.

Step Three – Getting the Word Out

A niche practice is great, but you need the business to sustain it. Developing and implementing a marketing plan is critical. Be forewarned – marketing is time consuming. As with your research, there are no shortcuts here; you won’t find an easy 12-step program for becoming a rainmaker, although many people will try to sell you one. However, there are things you can do now, and in the future, that will help elevate your profile and identify you as the go-to lawyer in your particular area of practice. Here is a non-exhaustive list:

- **Publish** – By authoring bylined articles in journals and trade publications you will build name recognition as an expert in your field. You need not spend your time writing law review articles; well-written opinion pieces,

or “practice tip” articles that can be quickly prepared and submitted to various publications will be just as, if not more, effective.

- **Pursue Speaking Opportunities** – There is no better way to raise your profile than through speaking opportunities. Individual presentations, panel participation, even acting as a moderator will expose you and your expertise to a captive audience. The opportunity to share your knowledge and make your presence known is invaluable.
- **Maximize Conference Participation** – Don’t be a passive conference attendee. Many of us see conferences as an excuse to visit a nice city and take some time away from the office. Conferences, however, can be a valuable business development tool, even if you are not one of the speakers. Take the time to introduce yourself to fellow participants and the speakers themselves; take part in any networking events, including cocktail receptions and dinners; finally, be an active participant. Ask thoughtful questions, always taking the time to introduce yourself by name so that people know who you are.
- **Network, Network, Network** – You can’t hide in your office. You must be seen! A sound business development plan must include structured networking events. Take the time to attend cocktail parties and other social events. As you expand your social and professional circle, you will be able to expand your reach as a specialist.

These are just some of the few building blocks that will help you develop or continue growing your niche practice. The ability to focus will set you apart from the crowd and elevate your stature as a go-to lawyer in your specialized area of practice. **P**

Best Practices

Secrets of the Rainmakers: What Do Rainmakers Do That Less Successful Lawyers Don't?

By Bob Weiss



Bob Weiss
Marketing Consultant

Bob Weiss has been a law firm marketing consultant for 25 years representing local, regional and national firms. He is President and Founder of Alyn-Weiss & Associates, Inc. in Denver.

Alyn-Weiss & Associates, Inc.
1331 17th Street, Suite 410
Denver, Colorado 80202
303.298.1676 Phone
weiss@themarketinggurus.com
www.themarketinggurus.com

A national survey has confirmed our anecdotal observations of law firms over the past two decades about the time and specific efforts that differentiate top rainmakers (lawyers who generate enough work to keep themselves and associates busy) from those lawyers who struggle to generate enough business to meet their hourly or revenue goals every year.

In short, the rainmakers spend far more time on personal business development than less busy lawyers, and they “speak, join, lead and party.”

How much time do rainmakers spend on personal business development? The survey shows that one-third of rainmakers devote 15 hours or more every month to speeches, group memberships, leadership activities and client entertainment.

Another 20 percent of rainmakers devote 11 to 14 hours to personal business development every month. Just under 28 percent of rainmakers spend six to 10 hours monthly. By comparison, 62 percent of lawyers who are just barely filling their own plates with work spend five hours or less monthly.

The survey revealing all of this was conducted by the Legal Sales and Service Organization (LSSO). It included responses from 450 women equity and non-equity lawyers in firms big and small. (Our observation is that the survey results are equally applicable to men.) The lawyers were split into two groups for comparison. The first group are so-called “rainmakers.” They averaged about

\$807,000 of annual originations. The so-called “less successful” group of attorneys in the survey averaged \$327,000 of annual originations.

In surveys of lawyers we have done while writing marketing plans for their firms, we have obtained confirmation of the LSSO’s numbers. On average, lawyers in two dozen firms we have worked with in recent years report spending less than five hours monthly engaged in activities directly related to developing their own business. That’s why it’s true most lawyers are not rainmakers, and never will be – they simply don’t spend enough time at it.

By the way, we’ve also seen a direct correlation between partner profits and how often non-billable time associated with rainmaking is recorded. If a firm does not record how much non-billable time each lawyer spends on marketing, per partner profitability drops. As all business people know, you can’t evaluate and improve what you don’t measure.

Key Findings of the LSSO Survey

Rainmakers and less successful lawyers were about equally active in bar associations. Rainmakers were 20 percent more likely to be involved in community and trade groups, however, with 70 percent doing this. The important difference lies in how prominent a role the lawyers take in these organizations.

Rainmakers were nearly twice as likely to take leadership roles in associations and groups of which they were members. In other words, they tended to be more

involved than less successful lawyers in groups populated by non-lawyers. And while there, rainmakers specifically took leadership roles that drew attention to themselves.

Again, our bi-annual national marketing effectiveness surveys, which we have been doing for nearly two decades, confirm these findings. Firms in our surveys report that trade and community group memberships are the activity most likely to result in new work, directly and by referral.


Our surveys also show that speeches are highly effective at creating file flow. The LSSO survey results confirm this, as well. Sixty-four percent of rainmakers engaged in speeches. Just 38 percent of the less successful lawyers reported doing any speeches in the LSSO survey.

We have long counseled our attorneys to take leadership roles in the groups in which they participate. Simply attending events is not enough. A board position, or serving as a committee chair, allows a lawyer to seek out other members of the group and create working relationships. In the process the lawyer demonstrates certain anecdotal qualities, enthusiasm for the assignment, organizational skills, ability to adapt to changes, problem solving, a sense of fairness, etc. These give confidence to non-lawyers to recommend or hire them directly. After all, a non-lawyer, absent being a client, has no choice but to use anecdotal evidence in a hiring situation or when making a recommendation. They don't have law degrees and can't judge a lawyer's legal ability.



Finally, the rainmakers spend significantly more time in networking-friendly situations with clients and referral sources. And they are not afraid to ask for help from them compared to the less successful attorneys. Specifically, the LSSO survey shows rainmakers ask existing clients for referrals at twice the rate of less successful lawyers. At a far higher rate, they ask their contacts to introduce them to other people who could hire them. Same goes for asking other attorneys for conflict work, for asking referral sources to introduce them to others in their company and outside their company who may need legal help or could refer work.

That's no surprise. As the American Management Association teaches in its fundamental sales course, the most successful sales people are those who are able to generate leads, gain access to decision makers, indentify needs they can fulfill, ask for the order and then deliver the business.

The practice of law has always been and always will be a relationship business. In the end, the lawyers with most relationships, and the most productive relations will prosper most. 

Best Practices

Be Young, Be Smart, Be Good at Marketing

By LaBella Alvis and Duncan Manley



LaBella Alvis
Partner



Duncan Manley
Partner

LaBella Alvis is currently the Marketing Partner at Christian & Small and has worked with the firm's associate training program for many years. Duncan Manley has served as Firm Administrator, Marketing Chair and in numerous other firm administrative roles. Both spend hours mentoring young lawyers, both within and outside the firm.

Christian & Small, LLP
Financial Center, Suite 1800
505 N. 20th Street
Birmingham, Alabama 35203
205.795.6588 Phone
205.328.7234 Fax
dym@csattorneys.com
lsa@csattorneys.com
www.csattorneys.com

When Duncan and I were young lawyers, marketing is what our moms did on Saturday morning at the local grocery store. We were proud that the firm was progressive enough to take it's best client to lunch once a year.

Those days are long gone. Marketing is a topic at every firm meeting and most conferences. Law firms not only hope their young attorneys understand that marketing is an important part of their partnership track, they demand it.

Understanding the importance of establishing relationships with both existing and new clients is one thing. Being able to actually implement a marketing plan three to five years out of law school is another thing. Here are 10 tips to help you do that:

1. Keep your expectations realistic. As a young lawyer, you just might land the single biggest client or case in the firm's 50-year history, but... probably not. The reason the firm's rainmaker is a senior partner is because he is senior. He or she has been around long enough to build the credibility and respect to get a lot of business. Realize that and accept the fact that your goal is to one day be that senior partner. All partners do not get the business. Figure out who in your firm is the rainmaker (your easiest task in this list) and find out what has worked for that partner. You will probably recognize some of the things which worked for your senior partner on this list.

2. Start building relationships locally, statewide and nationally. As important as relationships were 25 years ago, the current, more sophisticated marketing techniques have not changed that basic concept. It is a lot easier for clients to talk out problems with a lawyer they like than to fire him and the law firm. You may or may not have a lot of client contact, but take advantage of what you have. Learn what the client's family, hobbies and charitable interests are and get involved with them. Involvement means everything from asking relevant questions about their children to attending their favorite fundraiser.

3. Don't just send e-mails. Pick up the phone, especially if you recognize a red flag in a case or with a client. Many misunderstandings occur due to the impersonal use of e-mail.

4. Join a state and national legal organization with marketing potential and be active. Attend group meetings every year rather than choosing your CLE because of where it is being held. Join a committee. Speak at a conference. Build your credibility by hard work. It will pay off down the road as you get referrals and enjoy your chosen profession more.

5. Be active locally. For most young lawyers, this means joining the young lawyers bar section and/or serving on committees for the local bar. Building credibility with local lawyers not only results in conflict referrals over the years, it will help you obtain better results for



your clients with less expense. If you earn respect from those attorneys you deal with every day, you will be better able to achieve a good result for your client.

6. Develop a legal area of expertise based on these factors: your interest, your firm's needs and the growth potential of the area of law. Make yourself invaluable to the firm's clients and you will be invaluable to the firm. This is hard work and usually not billable. You can assist a senior partner in editing or writing a book or article, or presenting a CLE seminar. Ask that you share credit with the partner at the same time that you commit to the work. Be willing to work those non-billable hours with a good attitude.

Examples of our firm's associates' efforts in developing an expertise include:

- An associate interested in coverage law updated the state's leading coverage primer which had been written by one of the firm's senior attorneys.
- A young attorney fluent in Spanish has marketed locally. Hispanic organizations built a specialized niche.

- A third-year associate who has targeted litigation as a specialty seeks out partners with upcoming trials and assists with the trials, even if he can't bill for every hour.
- An associate who has obtained exposure defending medical malpractice cases is marketing to local doctors and medical cancer placement companies to review the doctor's employment contracts for a flat fee.

7. Your former classmates who are now the young bankers and insurance claims adjusters will eventually be the people who refer business, who judge the cases, or who represent the opposite side. **Treat all of them with respect now and you will reap the benefits later.**

8. One of the best marketers we have ever known has a trait which is not confined to a senior partner's level of expertise. **It is simply to enjoy people, talk to people, and take advantage of all opportunities to converse with the person sitting next to you on the plane or the fan standing in the concession line at the college football game.** Tell them what you do. Get their card (way more important than giving them yours) and follow up on contacting them later.

You will be amazed at the business which will come. The best part is if you like people, this marketing tip is easy and you don't have to have gray hair to practice law!

9. Be organized. Start young with documenting your contacts and their personal information such as family names, hobbies, etc. Write down your trials, published articles and speeches. Keep your CV updated. The marketing opportunities to use this information over the years are endless. Have the information at your fingertips.

10. Develop your individual marketing plan/goals whether or not your firm requires it. Find a partner in your firm who will sit down with you on a regular basis to throw out ideas and suggestions. Not only will you learn a lot, your firm will appreciate your efforts, even when they don't translate immediately to business. Have fun. Maintain a sense of humor. The firm's clients are people, too. They like to be around smart, good lawyers who are also pleasant and interesting. The good news? Senior partners have not cornered the market on fun. **P**

Best Practices

Tips for Dealing with the Media

By Tim Wondergem

“PR no longer stands for public relations, but for perception and reality.”

Howard Bragman, publicist to the stars and author of *Where’s My Fifteen Minutes*



Tim Wondergem
Principal

Tim Wondergem is the principal of Wondergem Consulting, a public relations, government relations and issues management firm based in West Michigan. Tim has served a broad array of private and public sector clients.

Wondergem Consulting
15 Ionia Avenue SW, Suite 405
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616.235.7467 Phone
616.235.3207 Fax
tim@wondergem.com

This statement has never before been more relevant. Case in point: former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick’s illicit text message scandal. In a court of law, you are innocent before proven guilty. In the court of public opinion, unfortunately, perception is reality. Before Kilpatrick even had his day in court, the verdict was in.

Despite evidence uncovered by the media, Motown’s controversial city leader vigilantly maintained his innocence while denouncing allegations of marital infidelity, conspiracy, perjury and even murder. His defiance only fueled the fire. For months, reports of Kilpatrick’s misdeeds dominated the news. And, outrage reached new heights when the mayor, in an unprecedented move, banned reporters from the grounds of the city-county building in downtown Detroit.

In the end, Kilpatrick’s arrogance and such incriminating facts in the press led to a conviction in the eye of the public.

Working With the Media

Your reputation means more today than any other time in history. As Kilpatrick is well aware, the power of the media – its speed, scrutiny and sensationalism – can disgrace you personally and professionally in a matter of minutes.

Alternately, the media may be used as a vehicle to build your credibility, enhance your presence in the marketplace and, most importantly, boost your bottom line. How is this done? Simply by establishing and maintaining relationships of mutual respect and trust with journalists. Relationships matter. And, in this case, strong relationships impact the quality, accuracy and fairness in news coverage. This does not happen overnight. Rather, it’s a process that requires a clear understanding of the media’s objectives, expectations and needs, as well as news operations and how to work with reporters.

Many organizations, however, are wary of engaging in such a practice based on preconceived notions or previous experiences. Company leaders are oftentimes critical of the media’s failure to cover the story completely, tendency to overemphasize drama and conflict, and penchant for taking quotes out of context.

Similarly, reporters have complaints of their own. They typically grouse about a source’s attempts to hinder free flow of information, use of influence to be included in a story, failure to be accessible and ignorance of editorial requirements.

Understanding each of these perspectives provides the foundation necessary to build relationships with the media. Initiating and preserving these relationships call for a particular set of guidelines:

- **Be honest.**
 - Do not attempt to hide the truth or shade information. It’s the reporter’s job to uncover the facts and he or she usually does.

- Failure to deal honestly will damage your most important asset in working with the media: credibility.
- **Be objective.**
 - Have realistic expectations of media coverage – your story is either interesting and relevant news or it isn't.
 - Do not try to influence editorial content through your connections in the advertising department.
- **Do your homework.**
 - Be very familiar with the media outlet.
 - Know reporters individual preferences, styles, beats and deadlines.
- **Make their job easier.**
 - Provide timely stories with the necessary background information.
 - Be a resource – always ask how you can help, provide accurate information and meet deadlines.
 - Be accessible – reporters will try to reach you with one call. If they can't, they will quickly move on.
- **Let reporters do their job.**
 - Never insult a journalist by asking for a story to be killed.
 - Never ask to review and edit the story before it runs.
 - Always ask for a reasonable correction if the published story includes inaccurate information.
- **Don't underestimate a reporter.**
 - There will always be efforts by the journalist to find a secondary source to conflict, confirm or complete your own account of the facts.

Serving as a Source

Ultimately, the goal of engaging the media is to position the organization's leader as a preferred source – one who is regularly called for comment on current events, issues or trends. Of course, there may come a time when your firm or client is the story and reporters demand a response to the situation.


In either circumstance, however, an interview will likely take place. Regardless of whether the news is positive or negative, this is your opportunity to bolster your credibility and connect with the public. For many people, the ability to appear confident on camera, eloquently state your key messages and conduct a successful interview does not come naturally. It takes time and practice. Following are a few interview tips to consider:

- **Take control.** Conduct a pre-interview with the reporter.
- **Stay calm.** Remember, you're the expert – that's why they're talking to you.
- **If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.** Tell the reporter you'll call back with the information.
- **Be prepared.** Draft a few key points that you want to make and incorporate these messages into your responses.
- **Talk from the viewpoint of the public's interest,** not your organization's. Make your message relevant if you want people to listen.

- **If you don't want a statement quoted, don't make it.** "Off the record" is a fantasy. Casual conversation before the "real interview" can become tomorrow's big story.
- **Avoid arguments with journalists;** the last word will not be yours.
- **If a question includes words or language you don't like,** don't use them – even to refute them. This is how reporters plant inflammatory words in your mouth.
- **Tell the truth,** even if it hurts. Even exaggerating the facts can critically damage your reputation with a journalist and the public.
- **Forgot to make a key point?** Following the interview, reiterate your key messages in a written communication to the reporter.

Reputation Management

Keep in mind, relationships with journalists are symbiotic. They function like a business relationship based on mutual obligations, expectations and protocols. Violating or suspending any of the terms, as demonstrated by Kwame Kilpatrick, may cost you your reputation.

Such a consequence underscores the importance of working with the media in a positive and proactive manner – especially in today's world, where perception is truly reality. 

Building Your Personal Brand

By Frederick C. Johs



Frederick C. Johs
Partner

A founding partner of Lewis Johs, Fred serves as Senior Trial Partner in all areas of litigation, including medical malpractice, product defect, sexual torts, nursing home, construction, municipal and commercial litigation. He has been representing clients in transactions and matters of significant exposure for over 25 years.

Lewis Johs Avallone Aviles, LLP
425 Broad Hollow Road, Suite 400
Melville, NY 11747
631.755.0101 Phone
631.755.0117 Fax
fcjohs@lewisjohs.com
www.lewisjohs.com

Marketing by the legal community has grown exponentially in the decades since the American Bar Association began to relax its strict ban on promoting legal services. Today, lawyers and law firms, including ours, leverage the full marketing tool kit, including a widely used strategy known as “branding.”

For those unfamiliar with the concept, branding is a marketing activity designed to define and promote the distinct “personality” and benefits of a product, service, company or person. At Lewis Johs, we promote a strong brand that truly defines who we are as a firm: a valuable business resource that supplies clients with significant, tangible benefits, not just a supplier of legal services.

“Brand” embodies a unique but highly identifiable profile that engenders a product or service’s most salient qualities in ways that differentiate it from other brands. Brand should also offer a “value proposition.” In fact, branding is so important today that marketing programs are often built around the brand, rather than the product itself.

‘The Brand Called You’

So, what does this mean for attorneys who market their legal services?

First, branding has become “personal,” as one can see from the many examples of corporate CEOs, entrepreneurs and others who are out front representing their company or product brands.

Second, while professional services providers, such as attorneys, may work in firms that have marketing programs in place, the reality is that they are to a large degree entrepreneurial in how they pursue new business. As a result, “personal branding” can play an important role in the area of legal practice development.

Management guru Tom Peters has called this phenomenon “The Brand Called You,” saying in a recent article, “We are CEOs of our own companies: Me Inc. To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You.”

At our law firm, and I know at other firms, we find that attorneys who can effectively represent their brand are also the most comfortable and successful with marketing. One of the most effective brand messages conveyed by our attorneys highlights their commitment to “trial focus” during all phases of litigation, which puts them in the best position for a favorable settlement or favorable verdict for their clients.

Marketing Your Personal Brand

Whether you are with a law firm or practice solo, creating and promoting your brand helps do three things: create awareness of your practice, differentiate you from other practitioners and create a preference for your services.

Many attorneys actually practice some form of personal branding each and every day, without even knowing it. For example, how many times a week does the



average attorney present their “elevator speech,” requiring them to define their firm and describe their services all before the elevator doors open again?

Here are four key steps to consider when creating a personal brand:

Create a “value-benefit” brand message:

Think of this message as your personal 30- or 60-second commercial. Yes, you need to describe what you do, but more importantly, you need to describe in a compelling way the solutions you provide and the benefits that can accrue. There is little point in talking about how you are the same as other service providers; pointing out how you are “first, biggest or best” is a fair way to differentiate yourself. Like a successful TV commercial, this definition of your brand needs to be brief but memorable.

Determine target audiences and prioritize:

You know better than anyone where there is the greatest potential for new clients. Tailor your brand message and hone it to address that audience. Sure, you will need to be flexible, but addressing targets is the most efficient way to maximize your time and your marketing budget.

Leverage various methods to convey your brand:


Defining your brand and targets are just the initial, but by no means the last steps, in the branding process. There are many cost-efficient ways to get the job done, whether it’s writing articles, getting interviewed by the media, preparing a newsletter, speaking to business groups, blogging and many others.

Repeat your brand message often, consistently and broadly:

Building your brand takes time, and consistent effort and repetition is one of the cornerstones of effective marketing.

Some opportunities to brand yourself will have more impact than others, but, like your legal career, it is a building process. The most important thing is to be consistent.

Promoting Solutions vs. Selling Services

It seems most lawyers today recognize that marketing is a necessary business function. At the same time, many view it as an unpleasant task, which they relegate to a lower priority. The most effective marketers in our firm are the attorneys who view themselves not as salespersons, but as experienced, specialized consultants who can provide clients with tangible solutions. At Lewis Johs, we even incorporate the “problem-solving” positioning in our corporate symbol, a fedora-style hat accompanied by the tagline, “A law firm can wear many hats—none more important than the one that fits your needs.” 

Hitting the “Restart Button” on Marketing: A Case Study for Marketing the Small Firm

By Robert W. Bivins

You really never know where your career path will take you. Such is the lifecycle of a law firm as well. While your firm may hold its annual marketing meeting and adopt an ambitious, detailed plan with enthusiasm and the best of intentions, either a lack of implementation or unseen events often derail those plans. Once that occurs the firm’s marketing efforts can either drift downstream like a leaf in a creek or they can make a mid-course correction to face the new challenges head on.

I offer my personal experience as an example. On December 9, 2006, I was the senior real estate attorney with a successful downtown law firm when a car crash resulted in an unanticipated and abrupt interruption in my practice. For the next two months, my fulltime job became physical rehabilitation. To complicate matters, by spring 2007 when I returned to my practice, our attorney group decided to separate from our former firm. Upon doing so, we were immediately faced with a perfect storm of marketing challenges that included not only our firm change and a disrupted work flow from my extended absence, but also a frozen Florida real estate market and a weakening local economy. The challenge for our new firm would be not only to survive in this environment, but also to establish a presence in our legal market that would set the stage for success and growth in the coming years.

After evaluating both our options and our budget, we adopted some key market-

ing strategies that served us well. I will discuss five of these in this article.

1. Go to where the clients are.

Although I had practiced out of downtown office high-rises for over 20 years, I knew that the bulk of our clients were based outside of downtown and generally disliked coming downtown. After analyzing where our existing clients were clustered, looking at untapped business development opportunities in those areas, and reviewing the local legal competition, we departed downtown and relocated into a part of our metro area where businesses actually outnumbered lawyers. As part of our “street level” marketing strategy, we made sure that we came to the area with as much visibility as possible. We also talked personally to all of our major clients about the move from downtown. Because so much of our client communications had long been handled via telephone or e-mail, we found our clients to be unconcerned with the relocation, and we lost none of our existing client base as a result of the move. Moreover, our list of active clients has tripled in two years, in part as a result of our ability to increase market penetration among the fast-growing businesses in our new sub-market, which previously had not included a strong, multi-attorney AV-rated business law practice. At the same time, we were careful to continue cultivating clients and referral sources outside of our immediate metro area to avoid becoming just a neighborhood law firm. Primerus proved to be a particularly invaluable tool in this regard, both enhancing our

Best Practices



Robert W. Bivins
Managing Partner

Robert W. Bivins is the Managing Partner of Bivins & Hemenway, P.A., the Primerus BCI affiliate for the Tampa Bay area.

Bivins & Hemenway, P.A.
1060 Bloomingdale Avenue
Valrico, Florida 33596
813.643.4900 Phone
813.643.4904 fax
bbivins@bhpalaw.com
www.bhpalaw.com

out-of-area profile, as well as providing us ready access to legal expertise across the country to better serve our clients with interests outside of Florida.

2. Keep in touch with your clients.

One of the easiest ways to increase business is to simply ask for it, and I am constantly amazed how many lawyers fail to do so. When asked by clients or prospects how busy they are, many lawyers simply answer with a grimacing complaint about being overworked. This leaves the impression not only that the attorney is too busy to handle additional work, but also that they do not want additional work. Personally, whenever I am asked that question I make a point of conveying that while business is good, it could always be better and that we are actively looking for more work and have the capacity to handle it. My law partner and I also make an effort to remain vigilant and strategic about staying in front of our referral sources, whether it be personally or by phone or e-mail, and reminding them that we are interested in any referral opportunities they might send our way. As most of our referral sources have relationships with multiple lawyers, this keeps our firms fresh on their mind when opportunities arise. We also have found newsletters and bulk mailings, and of course personal contact, to be extremely reliable methods for reminding clients of legal work they have been meaning to get around to sending our way. We do several mailings a year and each time notice an almost immediate uptick in work flow from the clients who receive them.

3. Be visible in your market and on the web. In today's market for legal services, a dynamic and informative web presence is critical. When designing our website, we not only focused on visual aspects that differed us from other law firm sites, but also intentionally built in targeted metadata tags, website links, and other strategic tools to enhance our firm's visibility on the web. Primerus has been a significant help in that regard, both by enhancing web search results and providing valuable strategic consulting and support services. Each month we track and monitor how our site visitors reach us and use that information when updating our marketing plan and budget, and we update our site whenever possible to increase our search result visibility. As a result, the internet has become a significant and increasing source of new clients. We also stress to each of our lawyers the need to get involved in our community and to remain visible in positive ways. Our efforts to keep a high profile has served us well.

4. Brand your firm. Needless to say, our world is full of lawyers. At the end of the day, the key to success is differentiating your firm from all the other firms in your market. For many of us without huge advertising budgets, one of the easiest ways to "brand" our firm is by developing a reputation for expertise and superior service. For example, our business model stresses that our lawyers are to be readily accessible to our clients, rather than relying on secretaries or paralegals to

handle day-to-day interaction. A client who can easily reach their attorney when necessary tends to be more satisfied. Accordingly, we ask that our attorneys take their own calls and discourage call screening. When an attorney is unavailable and cannot call the client back within a four hour period, another attorney or staff person will call the client back, so advise them, and see if they might assist in the interim.

5. Adapt to anticipated market conditions six months out. All firms need to constantly re-evaluate themselves and their business strategies. In our case, while approximately 65 percent of our work was historically real estate related, in a down real estate market we had to significantly adapt our client development focus. We did so in subtle ways, such as marketing ourselves as a general business law firm both in our marketing materials and our personal introductions, and in more deliberate ways when targeting client prospects. Strategically, we continually evaluate prospects, adapt practice areas, and search for marketing opportunities with an eye toward a horizon that is six months in the future rather than the present. Using this approach has given us time to plan and adapt, rather than react.

Current business conditions present unique challenges to traditional law firm marketers. However, those conditions also give rise to unique opportunities for law firms that are willing to adapt to their market and outwork the competition. P

Best Practices

Five Brand-Building Tips for Law Firms How Any Law Firm Can Raise While Enhancing Its Dignity

By Stephen G. Schwarz and Richard Moon



Stephen G. Schwarz
Managing Partner

Stephen G. Schwarz is managing partner of Faraci Lange, a member of the Primerus Plaintiff and Consumer Lawyers' Group.

Faraci Lange, LLP
28 E. Main Street, Suite 1100
Rochester, New York 14614
585.325.5150 Phone
585.325.3285 Fax
SSchwarz@faraci.com
www.faraci.com



Richard Moon

Richard Moon is a director of Moon Brand LLC, an international brand consultancy.

Moon Brand LLC
1.800.965.3996 Phone
richard.moon@moonbrand.com
www.moonbrand.com

Four years ago Faraci Lange found itself at a crossroads. The firm had reached a point where it needed to establish a name directly within the general community. But it had to accomplish this without spending lots of money, demeaning its members on television or risking its reputation within the legal community.

The dictionary defines the word brand as: trademark or distinctive name identifying a product or a manufacturer. In the context of a professional service business, establishing a brand is a way to solidify and perpetuate a reputation for competence, integrity and success. Every Primerus law firm has already established a brand, at least within the firm's legal community in at least one area of practice. Otherwise, it would not have been invited to join Primerus.

For many years, Faraci Lange has been recognized in the local legal community as the personal injury firm in town. If a Rochester attorney received a call about a serious or complex tort case, they sent that client to Faraci Lange. The firm always had as many good cases as it could handle, and business was great.

But the Faraci Lange brand at that time was as unknown outside the legal community as it was revered within it. When Faraci Lange attorneys picked juries, potential jurors would rarely recognize the firm name. Being under the radar was just fine while the pipeline of cases was still flowing.

Early personal injury attorney advertising in Rochester in the 1990s posed no significant threat because the ads were

ineffective in attracting seriously injured clients who were intelligent enough to ask around. Then, around the year 2000, new law firms from out of town began bombarding the local airwaves with TV and radio ads and local highways with billboards. One in particular touted itself as the "biggest" and "most successful" firm in Western New York, and it was hard to argue with this claim when their advertisements were running constantly day and night at a cost of millions of dollars.

Suddenly, being recognized only in the legal community was not cutting it. More and more prospective clients were skipping the step of asking a lawyer for a referral and were simply calling one of the advertisers. It was at this crossroads that Faraci Lange met brand consultant Moon Brand LLC, whose reputation and experience in branding was equal to ours in law.

Four years later we have become one of the best-known personal injury law firms in the area. Now it is rare when a prospective juror has not heard of the firm when questioned during voir dire. Moreover, this brand recognition in the general community has not come at the sacrifice of the Faraci Lange brand within the legal community.

From our experience working with Moon Brand, we can offer five simple tips to other law firms of any area of specialty who wish to raise their profile in their relevant market:

1. Take a long, hard look at your competition.

While it is important to understand your market, it is essential to understand your

Its Public Profile

competition as well. Never, ever, underestimate them. It was clear that the big advertisers were not going away. Their constant bombardment over the airwaves of their name and phone number – usually helped along by a catchy jingle and the promise of unbridled riches – had come to mean that in the few critical minutes following an injury, theirs would be the law firm that even people who should know better would think of first. We did not have the money (or the inclination) to match them head-on so we had to find another approach.

2. Identify your clients and how to best reach them.

In the personal injury business, clients come from all segments of society. We focused our marketing dollars on reaching people who are more discriminating and who would not contact a law firm without first learning more about them. To do this, we began by attacking overwhelmingly negative stereotypes of personal injury lawyers. Our strategy has been to demonstrate that we are instead committed, accomplished and approachable people, working in a great company within a noble profession. Whether your market is the general public, or other businesses, we believe this level of transparency will pay dividends for all Primerus firms.

3. Remember that the first objective of any brand is to be understood.

Clarity – especially in these troubled economic times – is more important than ever. Your potential clients must be able to clearly understand your practice to see

whether it has what they need. To do this, our TV campaigns in the past three years have explained how the compensation we win for our clients can improve broken lives, how dedicated and hard-working the men and women who make up our practice truly are, and how our national accreditations and affiliations say more about us than we can ourselves. These are all difficult messages to convey in just 30 seconds of television!


Regardless of what medium you use, remember that plain English is still the best way to help most of your prospective clients make informed choices.

4. Pay particular attention to your website.

Moon Brand has completely overhauled www.faraci.com. A great deal of analysis went into its content, appearance and how easy it is to use and understand. We recognize that many who visit for the first time are frightened, angry and probably never expected to need our services. Our website is simply the best way to let people know how much the 40 years of experience in understanding the problems of seriously injured people is essential to our being able to successfully resolve tough, complex cases today. We constantly encourage people to use it, because it accurately captures the whole ethos of the Faraci Lange brand. It also lets clients understand our high reputation within the legal community in as much detail as they want, and at their own pace. For these reasons, our latest TV campaign specifically focuses on driving the public to our website.

5. Extend your brand throughout your whole organization.

Moon Brand also helped us understand that our “professional yet approachable” brand must also extend to our working environment. Our new office colors, lighting, furniture, signage and layout have all been planned to be efficient, warm, welcoming and assuring. We’ve made sure that the first thing visitors see is our wall of plaques from many of the prestigious legal organizations, including Primerus. Our brand extends still further, to how we look, dress and communicate with all our visitors.

We are extremely happy with the result. New business calls are up and so too (surprisingly to Faraci Lange) are referrals from other attorneys. Rather than detract from it, our branding program has successfully enhanced our professional reputation, as other firms have encouraged and seemed to admire our new higher public profile and are continuing to refer cases. We have accomplished this while spending considerably less than our competition. To Primerus members who are considering doing the same: it won’t be easy, as it will require a significant amount of direct involvement from your top management. But, done properly, it will be worth it. Regardless of your area of specialty, establishing your brand in your relevant market outside your legal community will pay dividends. Remember, as a member of Primerus you are already more than halfway there. 

How to Use Search Engine Optimization to Your Firm's Advantage

By Chris Davies

Google entertains us, educates us, corrects our spelling and helps us find the right answer to every question. It's become such a part of our lives that many of us can no longer remember what the web was like before Google. For nearly everything we do, Google is our first stop.

It might seem obvious that ranking number one in Google for "Phoenix personal injury lawyer" would be a good way to capture business. However, ranking well for phrases like that can be difficult and there's a more fundamental online touch-point we should pay attention to.

People might know the name of your firm, or the address of your website, but they're going to use Google (or Yahoo or MSN) to find you. We know that to go buy a book on Amazon, we just have to type "amazon.com" into the address bar at the top of our browser, but we've become so conditioned to use Google that we type it into the search box instead. This is why the three most common phrases people use to navigate to Amazon.com are amazon, amazon.com and www.amazon.com (data from compete.com).

For every firm, it's essential that when someone Googles the name of your company, any of your partner's names, or terms related to your major practice areas, that your website has visibility across those phrases.

People aren't just searching for entertainment or a product to buy. They're using search engines for everything they do. There is an expectation that Google

knows about every company in the world, and if Google can't find you, then you may not be the reputable company they thought you were.

Search Engine	Searches
Google	72.92%
Yahoo	16.14%
Ask	3.95%
MSN	3.51%
Live	2.17%

Data from hitwise.com. Volume of searches for the four weeks ending May 5, 2009.

All marketing is about being where your customers expect to find you, and more than ever that's through search engines.

Let's take the example of Glen, the general manager of a small general contracting company in Ohio. Glen's been suffering in the current recession. He has some outstanding invoices which he may have to take to court, owes money to some private investors, and sales are dropping off. He's unsure if he'll be able to keep the business afloat, and he has no idea what bankruptcy options might exist or what liability he might be exposed to if he were to walk away from the company.

In a case like Glen's, it might be six months before he's ready to seriously sit down with an attorney or accountant. In the meantime he's going to try and learn more on his own, by reaching out to resources that he knows are helpful (maybe a Contractor's Association website) and by a little bit of random Googling.

Best Practices



Chris Davies
Search Marketing Strategist

Chris Davies is a search marketing strategist with Enquiro, a search engine marketing firm. The company has an affinity partnership with Primerus.

Enquiro
1620 Dickson Ave., Suite 410
Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada V1Y 9Y2
250.861.5252 Phone
250.861.5235 Fax
Chris.davies@enquiro.com
www.enquiro.com

He's going to try searches like "Ohio bankruptcy attorney," "bill collection help," or "how to collect unpaid bills."

He will do dozens of searches, each one a potential touch-point where your firm has the potential to build a relationship with Glen. Each time Glen sits down in front of his computer, he's looking for the right result, and your challenge is to be there at the right time, in the right place, with the right content.

Search engine optimization, or SEO, is usually used to describe the art form of optimizing a website with the goal of being the first listing on Google for a given keyword or phrase. What we do isn't a magic solution to get listed #1 every time. Our goal is to help our clients achieve visibility online wherever their clients are. It doesn't make any sense to have good visibility for keywords that your clients don't use, and we can't hope to measure every keyword that a potential client might search. What we can do is help determine which keywords best match your firm's practice areas and the phrases people use most often.

The algorithm Google uses to rank websites measures more than 200 criteria, none of which they actually disclose. However, experience, testing and the few times Google has actually made statements about how they rank has given us a solid picture of what it takes to make a website that will attract traffic from the search engines.

The first and by far most important component is content. Great websites (from a search perspective) need lots of content presented in a way that's accessible to search engines. This is why we often see Wikipedia in the first few results for many queries: there's a page for every topic you can think of, and it's nicely formatted text. The engines also prefer to present results from a site which is an

authority on a given topic and, to that end, a site with more pages will outrank a site with fewer pages. This is one reason we often see the Primerus website rank higher than individual firm websites, often for very competitive terms.

<u>Keywords</u>	<u>Approx Number Searches</u>
Attorney	13,600,000
Attorneys	9,140,000
Lawyer	9,140,000
Lawyers	6,120,000

February 2009 (Google)

We can tell that the word "attorney" is far more popular than the word "lawyers," and content which uses attorney can be exposed to a much larger potential audience.

Links are the second major factor in helping a website rank well. This was the reason why Google was different from the other engines when it launched. Google searches the entire Internet and forms a complete picture of which websites link to yours, what those sites are about and what they're saying about your website. The most visible way this exists is in the text which makes up the link. When you link out to another site, you make some words clickable, known as anchor text. Often this is "click here," but the best links use descriptive text (e.g., Primerus has a list of excellent injury law firms). Using this approach, a search engine can obtain a very accurate picture of what a website is about based on what other sites are saying about it.

The best links come from other authority sites related to your own, earned because of something noteworthy about your firm or your website. Less valuable links include directories, reciprocal links (where two sites agree to link to each other) and links from sites created just to create links ("linkfarms"). Links which you have to pay for (not counting programs like Google's AdWords) and are

intended to improve your ranking in Google are exceptionally dangerous, and Google may completely remove these sites from their index.

The best way to improve your rankings in Google and the other engines is to publish unique, well-written content on a regular basis.


Five ways to help your firm's website:

1. Track your visitors. Google Analytics (www.google.com/analytics) is an excellent free service which tracks how people find your website and provides a wealth of information about how they interact with it. This information will help you to see which keywords you're getting a lot of traffic from and help to focus your optimization efforts.

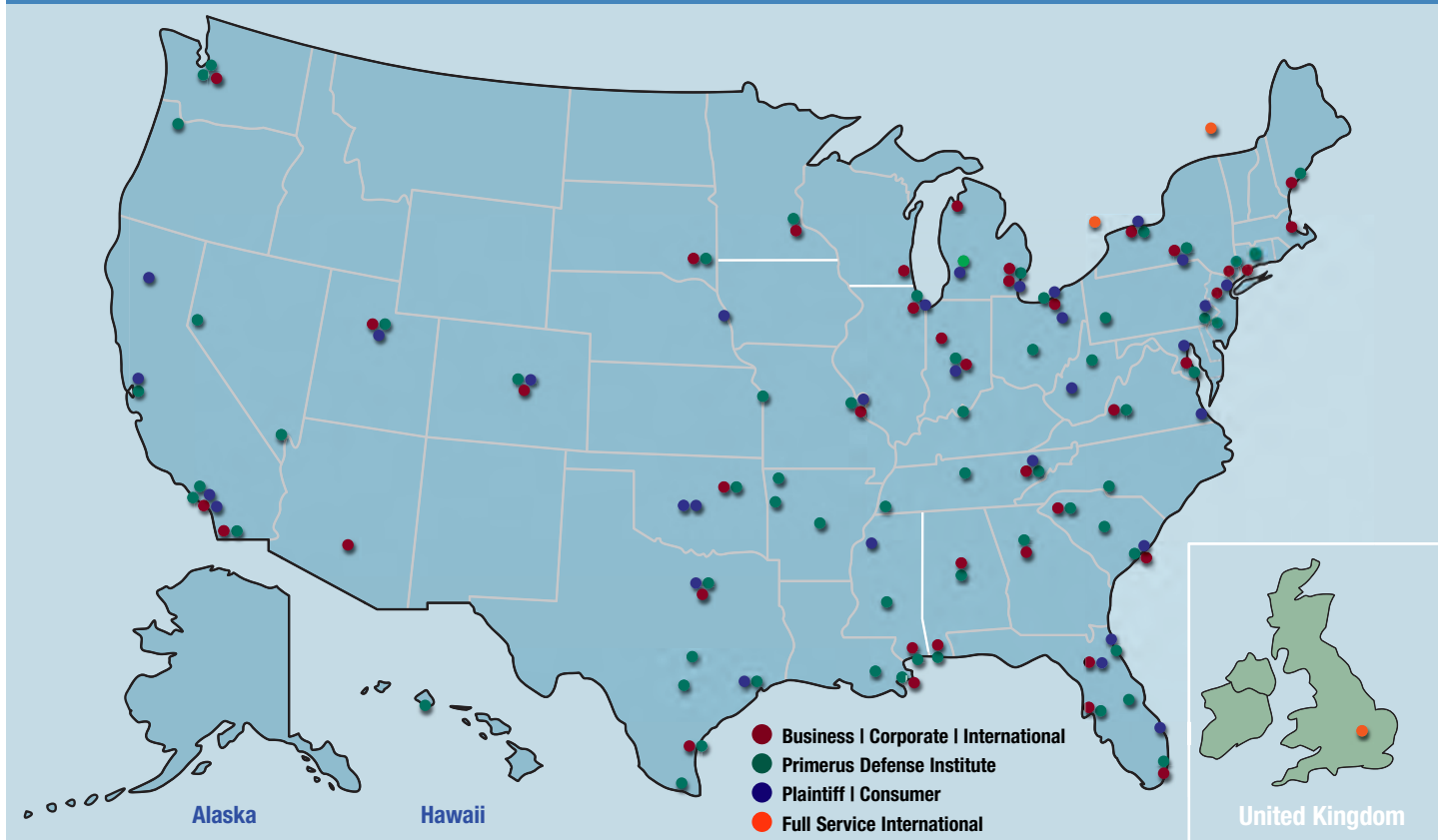
2. Set up Google Webmaster Tools (www.google.com/webmasters/tools). This is Google's official way of communicating with website owners. Beyond providing information about how Google is viewing your site, this will also be how Google will let you know if you've broken their quality guidelines.

3. Have a website that's clean, simple and written in HTML. Avoid sites that are written in Flash, have lots of popup windows or have any sort of "special" way of creating, recycling or adjusting content. A simple website to which you can easily add more pages of content will serve you much better in the long run.

4. Use keywords in your page names, URLs and in the anchor text of your links.

5. Add more content to your website. Write information that is useful, publish articles or start a blog. This content will also help attract more links, which will help you rank better. 

2009 Member Listing – International Society of Primerus Law Firms



United States Firms

Alabama

Briskman & Binion, P.C. ● ●
 205 Church Street
 P.O. Box 43
 Mobile, Alabama (AL) 36602
 Contact: Mack Binion
 Phone: (251) 433-7600
 Fax: (251) 433-4485
www.briskman-binion.com

Christian & Small, LLP ● ●
 Financial Center, Suite 1800
 505 North 20th Street
 Birmingham, Alabama (AL) 35203
 Contact: Duncan Y. Manley
 Phone: (205) 795-6588
 Fax: (205) 328-7234
www.csattorneys.com

Arizona

Burch & Cracchiolo, P.A. ●
 702 East Osborn, Suite 200
 Phoenix, Arizona (AZ) 85014
 Contact: David M. Villadolid
 Phone: (602) 274-7611
 Fax: (602) 234-0341
www.bcattorneys.com

Arkansas

Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, P.C. ●
 500 President Clinton Avenue, Suite 200
 Little Rock, Arkansas (AR) 72201
 Contact: J. Bruce Cross
 Phone: (501) 371-9999
 Fax: (501) 371-0035
www.cgwg.com

Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, P.C. ●
 5401 Rogers Avenue
 2nd Floor, Suite 200
 Fort Smith, Arkansas (AR) 72903
 Contact: Benjamin Shipley III
 Phone: (479) 783-8200
 Fax: (479) 783-8265
www.cgwg.com

Cross, Gunter, Witherspoon & Galchus, P.C. ●
 4100 Corporate Center Drive
 Suite 330
 Springdale, Arkansas (AK) 72762
 Contact: Steve Carter
 Phone: (479) 443-6978
 Fax: (479) 443-7697
www.cgwg.com

California

Brydon Hugo & Parker ●
 135 Main Street, 20th Floor
 San Francisco, California (CA) 94105
 Contact: John R. Brydon
 Phone: (415) 808-0300
 Fax: (415) 808-0333
www.bhplaw.com

Cotkin & Collins, P.C. ●
 300 South Grand Avenue, 24th Floor
 Los Angeles, California (CA) 90071-3134
 Contact: Robert G. Wilson
 Phone: (213) 688-9350
 Fax: (213) 688-9351
www.cotkincollins.com

Ferris & Britton, A Professional Corporation ●
 401 West A Street, Suite 1600
 San Diego, California (CA) 92101
 Contact: Michael Weinstein
 Phone: (619) 233-3131
 Fax: (619) 232-9316
www.ferrisbritton.com

Guy Kornblum & Associates ●
 1388 Sutter St., Suite 820
 San Francisco, California (CA) 94109
 Contact: Guy O. Kornblum
 Phone: (888) 249-7800
 Fax: (415) 440-7898
www.kornblumlaw.com

Howarth & Smith ●
 523 West Sixth Street, Suite 728
 Los Angeles, California (CA) 90014
 Contact: Don Howarth
 Phone: (213) 955-9400
 Fax: (213) 622-0791
www.howarth-smith.com

Neil, Dymott, Frank, McFall & Trexler APLC ●
 1010 Second Ave., Suite 2500
 San Diego, California (CA) 92101-4959
 Contact: Hugh McCabe
 Phone: (619) 238-1712
 Fax: (619) 238-1562
www.neildymott.com

Quinlivan Wexler LLP ●
 6 Hutton Centre, Suite 1150
 Santa Ana (Orange County), California (CA) 92707
 Contact: Patrick "Rick" C. Quinlivan
 Phone: (714) 241-1919
 Fax: (714) 241-1199
www.qwllp.com

Reiner, Simpson & Slaughter, LLP ●
 2851 Park Marina Drive, Suite 200
 Redding, California (CA) 96001
 Contact: Russell Reiner
 Phone: (530) 241-1905
 Fax: (530) 241-0622
www.reinerinjurylaw.com

Robinson, Calcagnie & Robinson ●

620 Newport Center Drive, 7th Floor
Newport Beach, California (CA) 92660
Contact: Mark P. Robinson, Jr.
Phone: (949) 720-1288
Fax: (949) 720-1292
www.orangecountylaw.com

Rutter Hobbs & Davidoff Incorporated ●

1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1700
Los Angeles, California (CA) 90067
Contact: Brian L. Davidoff
Phone: (310) 286-1700
Fax: (310) 286-1728
www.rutterhobbs.com

Colorado**John Gehlhausen, P.C. ●**

22447 East Polk Drive
Aurora, Colorado (CO) 80016
Contact: John Gehlhausen
Phone: (719) 336-9071
Fax: (719) 336-9617
www.tractorlaw.com

Robinson Waters & O'Dorisio, P.C. ●

1099 18th Street, 26th Floor
Denver, Colorado (CO) 80202
Contact: John W. O'Dorisio, Jr.
Phone: (303) 297-2600
Fax: (303) 297-2750
www.rwolaw.com

Zupkus & Angell, P.C. ●

555 East 8th Avenue
Denver, Colorado (CO) 80203-3715
Contact: Rick Angell
Phone: (303) 894-8948
Fax: (303) 894-0104
www.zalaw.com

Connecticut**Brody Wilkinson PC ●**

2507 Post Road
Southport, Connecticut (CT) 06890
Contact: Thomas J. Walsh, Jr.
Phone: (203) 319-7100
Fax: (203) 254-1772
www.brodywilk.com

Silvester & Daly ●

118 Oak Street
Hartford, Connecticut (CT) 06106
Contact: Frank J. Szilagyi
Phone: (860) 278-2650
Fax: (860) 727-9243
www.silvester-daly.com

District of Columbia**The Law Offices of Stewart & Stewart ●**

2100 M Street, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, District of Columbia 20037-1207
Contact: Terence P. Stewart
Phone: (202) 785-4185
Fax: (202) 466-1286
www.stewartlaw.com

Thompson O'Donnell, LLP ●

1212 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
Contact: Matthew Carlson, Esq.
Phone: (202) 289-1133
Fax: (202) 289-0275
www.thompson-odonnell.com

Florida**Avera & Smith, LLP ● ●**

2814 SW 13th Street
Gainesville, Florida (FL) 32608
Contact: Mark A. Avera
Phone: (352) 372-9999
Fax: (352) 375-2526
www.avera.com

Bivins & Hemenway, P. A. ●

1060 Bloomingdale Avenue
Valrico (Tampa / Brandon area), Florida (FL) 33596
Contact: Robert W. Bivins
Phone: (813) 643-4900
Fax: (813) 643-4904
www.bhpalaw.com

Brown, Garganese, Weiss & D'Agresta, P.A. ●

111 N. Orange Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 2873
Orlando, Florida (FL) 32802
Contact: Anthony A. Garganese
Phone: (407) 425-9566
Fax: (407) 425-9596
www.orlandolaw.net

Diaz, Reus & Targ, LLP ●

2600 Bank of America Tower
100 Southeast 2nd Street
Miami, Florida (FL) 33131
Contact: Michael Diaz, Jr.
Phone: (305) 375-9220
Fax: (305) 375-8050
www.diazreus.com

Edward M. Ricci, P.A. ●

515 N. Flagler Drive
Suite 400
West Palm Beach, Florida (FL) 33410
Contact: Edward Ricci
Phone: (561) 842-2820
Fax: (561) 844-6929
www.edriccilaw.com

Milton, Leach, Whitman, D'Andrea & Milton, P.A. ●

815 South Main Street, Suite 200
Jacksonville, Florida (FL) 32207
Contact: Joseph Milton / Joshua Whitman
Phone: (904) 346-3800
Fax: (904) 346-3692
www.miltonleach.com

Nicklaus & Associates, P.A. ●

4651 Ponce de Leon Boulevard
Suite 200
Coral Gables, Florida (FL) 33146
Contact: Edward R. Nicklaus
Phone: (305) 460-9888
Fax: (305) 460-9889
www.nicklauslaw.com

Ogden & Sullivan, P.A. ●

113 South Armenia Avenue
Tampa, Florida (FL) 33609
Contact: Tim V. Sullivan
Phone: (813) 223-5111
Fax: (813) 229-2336
www.ogdensullivan.com

Saalfield, Shad, Jay, Stokes & Inclan, P.A. ●

50 N. Laura St., Suite 2950
Jacksonville, Florida (FL) 32202
Contact: Harvey L. Jay, III
Phone: (904) 355-4401
Fax: (904) 355-3503

Georgia**Fain, Major & Brennan, P.C. ●**

100 Glenridge Point Parkway, Suite 500
Atlanta, Georgia (GA) 30342-1440
Contact: Thomas E. Brennan
Phone: (404) 688-6633
Fax: (404) 420-1544
www.fainmajor.net

Krevolin & Horst, LLC ●

1175 Peachtree Street, NE
100 Colony Square, Suite 2150
Atlanta, Georgia (GA) 30361
Contact: Douglas P. Krevolin
Phone: (404) 888-9700
Fax: (404) 888-9577
www.khlawfirm.com

Hawaii**Roeca, Louie & Hiraoka ●**

900 Davies Pacific Center
841 Bishop Street
Honolulu, Hawaii (HI) 96813
Contact: Arthur F. Roeca
Phone: (808) 538-7500
Fax: (808) 521-9648
www.rhllaw.com

Illinois**Defrees & Fiske LLC ●**

200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1100
Chicago, Illinois (IL) 60604-2480
Contact: L. Judson Todhunter
Phone: (312) 372-4000
Fax: (312) 939-5617
www.defrees.com

Lane & Lane, LLC ●

33 N. Dearborn St., Suite 2300
Chicago, Illinois (IL) 60602-3199
Contact: Stephen I. Lane
Phone: (312) 332-1400
Fax: (312) 899-8003
www.lane-lane.com

Williams Montgomery & John Ltd. ●

20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2100
Chicago, Illinois (IL) 60606
Contact: Raymond Lyons, Jr.
Phone: (312) 443-3200
Fax: (312) 630-8500
www.willmont.com

Indiana**Ayres Carr & Sullivan, P.C. ●**

251 East Ohio Street, Suite 500
Indianapolis, Indiana (IN) 46204-2133
Contact: Bret S. Clement
Phone: (317) 636-3471
Fax: (317) 636-6575

Ball Eggleston, PC ● ● ●

201 Main St., Suite 810
P.O. Box 1535
Lafayette, Indiana (IN) 47902-1535
Contact: John K. McBride
Phone: (765) 742-9046
Fax: (765) 742-1966
www.ball-law.com

Osborn Hiner & Lisher P.C. ●

8500 Keystone Crossing Blvd., Suite 480
Indianapolis, Indiana (IN) 46240-2456
Contact: John L. Lisher
Phone: (317) 257-2400
Fax: (317) 722-4840
www.ohlawfirm.com

Kentucky

Blackburn, Domene & Burchett PLLC ●

614 W. Main Street, Suite 3000
Louisville, Kentucky (KY) 40202
Contact: David Domene
Phone: (502) 584-1600
Fax: (502) 584-9971
www.bhdlawky.com

Louisiana

Degan, Blanchard & Nash, PLC ●

6421 Perkins Road
Building C, Suite B
Baton Rouge, Louisiana (LA) 70808
Contact: Sidney W. Degan, III
Phone: (225) 610-1110
Fax: (225) 610-1220
www.degan.com

Montgomery, Barnett, Brown, Read, Hammond & Mintz, L.L.P. ●

3300 Energy Centre
1100 Poydras Street, Suite 3300
New Orleans, Louisiana (LA) 70163
Contact: John Y. Pearce
Phone: (504) 585-3200
Fax: (504) 585-7688
www.monbar.com

Maine

The Bennett Law Firm, P.A. ● ●

121 Middle St., Suite 300
P.O. Box 7799
Portland, Maine (ME) 04112-7799
Contact: Peter Bennett
Phone: (207) 773-4775
Fax: (207) 774-2366
www.thebennettlawfirm.com

Maryland

Dugan, Babij & Tolley, LLC ●

1966 Greenspring Dr., Suite 500
Timonium, Maryland (MD) 21093-4119
Contact: Henry E. Dugan, Jr.
Phone: (800) 408-2080
Fax: (410) 308-1742
www.medicalneg.com

Massachusetts

Rudolph Friedmann LLP ●

92 State Street
Boston, Massachusetts (MA) 02109
Contact: James L. Rudolph
Phone: (617) 723-7700
Fax: (617) 227-0313
www.rflawyers.com

Michigan

Bos & Glazier, P.L.C. ●

990 Monroe Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan (MI) 49503-1423
Contact: Carole D. Bos
Phone: (616) 458-6814
Fax: (616) 459-8614
www.bosglazier.com

Buchanan & Buchanan, PLC ●

171 Monroe Ave., N.W., Suite 750
Grand Rapids, Michigan (MI) 49503-2683
Contact: Robert J. Buchanan
Phone: (616) 458-2464
Fax: (616) 458-0608
www.buchananfirm.com

Calcutt Rogers & Boynton, PLLC ●

109 E. Front Street, Suite 300
Traverse City, Michigan (MI) 49684
Contact: William B. Calcutt
Phone: (231)947-4000
Fax: (231)947-4341
www.crblawfirm.com

Cardelli, Lanfear & Buikema, P.C. ●

322 West Lincoln
Royal Oak, Michigan (MI) 48067
Contact: Thomas G. Cardelli
Phone: (248) 544-1100
Fax: (248) 544-1191
www.cardellilaw.com

Demorest Law Firm, PLLC ●

555 S. Old Woodward Ave., Suite 21U
Birmingham, Michigan (MI) 48009
Contact: Mark S. Demorest
Phone: (248) 723-5500
Fax: (248) 723-5588
www.demolaw.net

Demorest Law Firm, PLLC ●

1537 Monroe St., Suite 300
Dearborn, Michigan (MI) 48124
Contact: Mark Demorest
Phone: (313) 278-5291
Fax: (248) 723-5588
www.demolaw.net

McKeen & Associates, P.C. ●

645 Griswold Street, 42nd Floor
Detroit, Michigan (MI) 48226
Contact: Brian J. McKeen
Phone: (313) 961-4400
Fax: (313) 961-5985
www.mckeenassociates.com

Minnesota

Johnson & Condon, P.A. ●

7401 Metro Boulevard, Suite 600
Minneapolis, Minnesota (MN) 55439-3034
Contact: Dale O. Thornsjo
Phone: (952) 831-6544
Fax: (952) 831-1869
www.johnson-condon.com

Krass Monroe, P.A. ●

8000 Norman Center Drive, Suite 1000
Minneapolis, Minnesota (MN) 55437-1178
Contact: John E. Berg
Phone: (952) 885-5999
Fax: (952) 885-5969
www.krassmonroe.com

Mississippi

Currie Johnson Griffin Gaines & Myers, P.A. ●

1044 River Oaks Drive
Jackson, Mississippi (MS) 39232
Contact: Edward J. Currie, Jr.
Phone: (601) 969-1010
Fax: (601) 969-5120
www.curriejohnson.com

Dukes, Dukes, Keating & Faneca, P.A. ● ●

2909 13th Street, Sixth Floor
Gulfport, Mississippi (MS) 39501
Contact: W. Edward Hatten, Jr.
Phone: (228) 868-1111
Fax: (228) 863-2886
www.ddkf.com

Merkel & Cocke ●

30 Delta Avenue
Clarksdale, Mississippi (MS) 38614-2718
Contact: Ted Connell
Phone: (662) 627-9641
Fax: (662) 627-3592
www.merkel-cocke.com

Missouri

Foland, Wickens, Eisfelder, Roper & Hofer, P.C. ●

911 Main Street
Commerce Tower, 30th Floor
Kansas City, Missouri (MO) 64105
Contact: Clay Crawford / Scott Hofer
Phone: (816) 472-7474
Fax: (816) 472-6262
www.fwpcplaw.com

Gray, Ritter & Graham, P.C. ●

701 Market Street, 8th Floor
St. Louis, Missouri (MO) 63101-1826
Contact: Patrick J. Hagerty
Phone: (314) 241-5620
Fax: (314) 241-4140
www.grgpc.com

Rosenblum, Goldenhersh, Silverstein & Zafft, P.C. ●

7733 Forsyth Boulevard, Fourth Floor
St. Louis, Missouri (MO) 63105
Contact: Carl C. Lang
Phone: (314) 726-6868
Fax: (314) 726-6786
www.rgsz.com

Wuestling & James, L.C. ●

The Laclede Gas Building
720 Olive St., Ste. 2020
St. Louis, Missouri (MO) 63101
Contact: Richard C. Wuestling
Phone: (314) 421-6500
Fax: (314) 421-5556
www.wuestlingandjames.com

Nebraska

Gast & McClellan ●

Historic Reed Residence
503 South 36th Street
Omaha, Nebraska (NE) 68105-1201
Contact: William E. Gast
Phone: (402) 343-1300
Fax: (402) 343-1313
www.gastlawfirm.com

Nevada

Barron & Pruitt, LLP ●

3890 West Ann Road
Las Vegas, Nevada (NV) 89031
Contact: David L. Barron / Bill Pruitt
Phone: (702) 870-3940
Fax: (702) 870-3950
www.barronpruitt.com

Laxalt & Nomura, LTD ●

9600 Gateway Drive
Reno, Nevada (NV) 89521
Contact: Robert A. Dotson
Phone: (775) 322-1170
Fax: (775) 322-1865
www.laxalt-nomura.com

New Jersey

Lesnevich & Marzano-Lesnevich, LLC ●

Court Plaza South, Suite 250
21 Main Street., West Wing
Hackensack, New Jersey (NJ) 07601
Contact: Walter A. Lesnevich
Phone: (201) 488-1161
Fax: (201) 488-1162
www.lmlawyers.com

Mandelbaum, Salsburg, Gold, Lazris & Discenza P.C. ●

155 Prospect Avenue
West Orange, New Jersey (NJ) 07052
Contact: Stuart Gold
Phone: (973) 736-4600
Fax: (973) 325-7467
www.mandelbaumsalsburg.com

Thomas Paschos & Associates, P.C. ●

30 North Haddon Avenue, Suite 200
Haddonfield, New Jersey (NJ) 08033
Contact: Thomas Paschos
Phone: (856) 354-1900
Fax: (856) 354-6040
www.paschoslaw.com

New York

Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson, LLP ● ●

2400 Chase Square
Rochester, New York (NY) 14604
Contact: Robert E. Brown
Phone: (585) 232-5300
Fax: (585) 232-3528
www.boylandbrown.com

Coughlin & Gerhart, LLP ● ● ●

19 Chenango Street
Binghamton, New York (NY) 13902
Contact: James P. O'Brien
Phone: (607) 723-9511
Fax: (607) 723-1530
www.cgloffices.com

Faraci Lange, LLP ●

2 State Street
Crossroads Bldg., Fourth Floor
Rochester, New York (NY) 14614
Contact: Matthew Belanger
Phone: (585) 325-5150
Fax: (585) 325-3285
www.faraci.com

Ganfer & Shore, LLP ●

360 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York (NY) 10017
Contact: Allen L. Finkelstein
Phone: (212) 922-9250
Fax: (212) 922-9335
www.ganshore.com

Lewis Johs Avallone Aviles L.L.P. ●

30 Vesey Street 8th Floor
(northeast corner of Church and Vesey Streets)
New York, New York (NY) 10007
Contact: Frederick C. Johs
Phone: (631) 755-0101
Fax: (631) 755-0117
www.lewisjohs.com

North Carolina

Richard L. Robertson & Associates, P.A. ●

2730 East W.T. Harris Boulevard, Suite 101
Charlotte, North Carolina (NC) 28213-4108
Contact: Richard L. Robertson
Phone: (704) 597-5774
Fax: (704) 599-5603
www.rlrobertson.com

Ohio

Lane, Alton & Horst LLC ●

Two Miranova Place, Suite 500
Columbus, Ohio (OH) 43215-7052
Contact: Curtis F. Gantz
Phone: (614) 228-6885
Fax: (614) 228-0146
www.lanealton.com

Low Eklund Wakefield & Mulvihill Co., LPA ●

1660 West Second Street
610 Skylight Office Tower
Cleveland, Ohio (OH) 44113-1454
Contact: Mark L. Wakefield
Phone: (216) 781-2600
Fax: (216) 781-2610
www.lewm.com

Norchi, Barrett & Forbes LLC ●

Commerce Park IV
23240 Chagrin Blvd., Suite 600
Cleveland, Ohio (OH) 44122
Contact: Lisa M. Barrett
Phone: (216) 514-9500
Fax: (216) 514-4304
www.norchilaw.com

Perantinides & Nolan Co., L.P.A. ●

300 Courtyard Square
80 S. Summit
Akron, Ohio (OH) 44308
Contact: Paul G. Perantinides
Phone: (330) 253-5454
Fax: (330) 253-6524
www.perantinides.com

Schneider, Smeltz, Ranney & LaFond P.L.L. ●

1111 Superior Avenue, Suite 1000
Eaton Center Building
Cleveland, Ohio (OH) 44114
Contact: James D. Vail
Phone: (216) 696-4200
Fax: (216) 696-7303
www.ssrl.com

Oklahoma

Fogg Law Firm ●

421 S. Rock Island
El Reno, Oklahoma (OK) 73036
Contact: Richard Fogg
Phone: (405) 262-3502
Fax: (405) 295-2626
www.fogglawfirm.com

The Handley Law Center ●

111 South Rock Island, P.O. Box 310
El Reno, Oklahoma (OK) 73036
Contact: Fletcher D. Handley Jr.
Phone: (405) 295-1924
Fax: (405) 262-3531
www.handleylaw.com

James, Potts and Wulfers, Inc. ●

2600 Mid-Continent Tower
401 South Boston Avenue
Tulsa, Oklahoma (OK) 74103-4015
Contact: David Wulfers
Phone: (918) 584-0881
Fax: (918) 584-4521
www.jpwlaw.com

Smiling, Miller & Vaughn P.A. ●

9175 South Yale Avenue, Suite 150
Tulsa, Oklahoma (OK) 74137
Contact: A. Mark Smiling
Phone: (918) 477-7500
Fax: (918) 477-7510
www.smilinglaw.com

Oregon

Gordon & Polscer, L.L.C. ●

9755 S.W. Barnes Rd., Suite 650
Portland, Oregon (OR) 97225
Contact: Thomas A. Gordon
Phone: (503) 242-2922
Fax: (503) 242-1264
www.gordon-polscer.com

Pennsylvania

Kane Pugh Knoell Troy & Kramer, LLP ●

510 Swede Street
(For Mailing Address, use Norristown, PA 19401)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (PA) 19401
Contact: George H. Knoell, III
Phone: (610) 275-2000
Fax: (610) 275-2018
www.kanepugh.com

Mellon Webster & Shelly ●

87 North Broad Street
Doylestown, Pennsylvania (PA) 18901
Contact: Steve Corr
Phone: (215) 348-7700
Fax: (215) 348-0171
www.mellonwebster.com

Picadio Sneath Miller & Norton, P.C. ●

4710 U.S. Steel Tower
600 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (PA) 15219
Contact: Alan S. Miller
Phone: (412) 288-4000
Fax: (412) 288-2405
www.psmn.com

South Carolina

Collins & Lacy, P.C. ●

1330 Lady Street, Suite 601
Columbia, South Carolina (SC) 29201
Contact: Gray T. Culbreath
Phone: (803) 256-2660
Fax: (803) 771-4484
www.collinsandlacy.com

Roe Cassidy Coates & Price, P.A. ● ●

1052 North Church Street (Office Zip Code 29601)
P.O. Box 10529
Greenville, South Carolina (SC) 29603
Contact: Carroll H. "Pete" Roe, Jr.
Phone: (864) 349-2600
Fax: (864) 349-0303
www.roecassidy.com

Rosen, Rosen & Hagood, LLC ● ● ●

134 Meeting Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 893
Charleston, South Carolina (SC) 29401
Contact: Alice F. Paylor
Phone: (843) 577-6726
Fax: (843) 724-8036
www.rhrlawfirm.com

South Dakota

May & Johnson, P.C. ● ●

6805 South Minnesota Avenue, Suite 100
P.O. Box 88738
Sioux Falls, South Dakota (SD) 57109-8738
Contact: Mark J. Arndt
Phone: (605) 336-2565
Fax: (605) 336-2604
www.mayjohnson.com

Tennessee

Gilreath & Associates ●

550 Main Avenue, Suite 600
P.O. Box 1270
Knoxville, Tennessee (TN) 37901-1270
Contact: Sidney W. Gilreath
Phone: (865) 637-2442
Fax: (865) 971-4116
www.sidgilreath.com

Kennerly, Montgomery & Finley, P.C. ● ●

550 Main Street
Knoxville, Tennessee (TN) 37901
Contact: Jack Tallent, II
Phone: (865) 546-7311
Fax: (865) 524-1773
www.kmfpc.com

Spicer Rudstrom, PLLC ●

175 Toyota Plaza, Suite 800
Memphis, Tennessee (TN) 38103
Contact: Betty Ann Milligan
Phone: (901) 523-1333
Fax: (901) 526-0213
www.spicerfirm.com

Spicer Rudstrom, PLLC ●

414 Union Street, Bank of America Tower,
Suite 1700
Nashville, Tennessee (TN) 37219
Contact: Marc O. Dedman
Phone: (615) 259-9080
Fax: (615) 259-1522
www.spicerfirm.com

Texas

Branscomb, PC ● ●

802 N. Carancahua, Suite 1900
Corpus Christi, Texas (TX) 78470
Contact: James H. Robichaux
Phone: (361) 888-9261
Fax: (361) 888-8504
www.branscombpc.com

The Law Offices of Frank L. Branson, P.C. ●

4514 Cole Avenue
Dallas, Texas (TX) 75205-4185
Contact: Frank L. Branson
Phone: (214) 522-0200
Fax: (214) 521-5485
www.flbranson.com

Clark & Milby PLLC ●

1401 Elm Street, Suite 3404
Dallas, Texas (TX) 75202
Contact: Steven E. Clark
Phone: (214) 220-1210
Fax: (214) 220-1218
www.camfirm.com

Donato, Minx & Brown, P.C. ●

3200 Southwest Freeway, Suite 2300
Houston, Texas (TX) 77027-7525
Contact: Robert D. Brown
Phone: (713) 877-1112
Fax: (713) 877-1138
www.donatominxbrown.com

Downs • Stanford, P.C. ●

2001 Bryan Street, Suite 4000
Dallas, Texas (TX) 75201
Contact: Jay R. Downs
Phone: (214) 748-7900
Fax: (214) 748-4530
www.downsstanford.com

Downs • Stanford, P.C. ●

4425 S. Mopac, Bldg. 111, Suite 500
Austin, Texas (TX) 78735
Contact: Timothy U. Stanford
Phone: (512) 891-7771
Fax: (512) 891-7772
www.downsstanford.com

The Talaska Law Firm, PLLC ●

1415 North Loop West, Suite 200
Houston, Texas (TX) 77008
Contact: Robert Talaska
Phone: (713) 869-1240
Fax: (713) 869-1465
www.talaskalawfirm.com

Thornton, Biechlin, Segrato, Reynolds & Guerra, L.C. ●

100 N.E. Loop, 410 - Fifth Floor
San Antonio, Texas (TX) 78216
Contact: Richard J. Reynolds, III
Phone: (210) 342-5555
Fax: (210) 525-0666
www.thorntonfirm.com

Thornton, Biechlin, Segrato, Reynolds & Guerra, L.C. ●

418 East Dove Avenue
McAllen, Texas (TX) 78504-2240
Contact: Tim K. Singley
Phone: (956) 630-3080
Fax: (956) 630-0189
www.thorntonfirm.com

Utah

Winder & Counsel, P.C. ● ● ●

175 West 200 South, Suite 4000
P.O. Box 2668
Salt Lake City, Utah (UT) 84110-2668
Contact: Donald J. Winder
Phone: (801) 322-2222
Fax: (801) 322-2282
www.windercounsel.com

Virginia

Frith Anderson & Peake, PC ● ●

29 Franklin Road SW
Roanoke, Virginia (VA) 24011
Contact: Phillip V. Anderson
Phone: (540) 772-4600
Fax: (540) 772-9167
www.faplawfirm.com

Shapiro, Cooper, Lewis & Appleton, P.C. ●

1294 Diamond Springs Rd.
Virginia Beach, Virginia (VA) 23455
Contact: James C. Lewis
Phone: (800) 752-0042
Fax: (757) 460-3428
www.hsinjurylaw.com

Washington

Beresford Booth PLLC ●

1420 5th Avenue, Suite 2200
Seattle, Washington (WA) 98101
Contact: David C. Tingstad
Phone: (425) 776-4100
Fax: (425) 776-1700
www.beresfordlaw.com

Johnson, Graffe, Keay, Moniz & Wick, LLP ●

2115 N. 30th Street, Suite 101
Tacoma, Washington (WA) 98403-1767
Contact: A. Clarke Johnson
Phone: (253) 572-5323
Fax: (253) 572-5413
www.jgkmw.com

Johnson, Graffe, Keay, Moniz & Wick, LLP ●

925 Fourth Avenue, Suite 2300
Seattle, Washington (WA) 98104-1158
Contact: John C. Graffe, Jr.
Phone: (206) 223-4770
Fax: (206) 386-7344
www.jgkmw.com

West Virginia

The Masters Law Firm L.C. ●

181 Summers Street
Charleston, West Virginia (WV) 25301
Contact: Marvin W. Masters
Phone: (800) 342-3106
Fax: (304) 342-3189
www.themasterslawfirm.com

McNeer, Highland, McMunn and Varner, L.C. ●

BB&T Bank Building, 400 W. Main St.
P.O. Drawer 2040
Clarksburg, West Virginia (WV) 26302-2040
Contact: James A. Varner
Phone: (304) 626-1100
Fax: (304) 623-3035
www.wvlawyers.com

Wisconsin

Kohner, Mann & Kailas, S.C. ●

Washington Building, Barnabas Business Center
4650 N. Port Washington Road
Milwaukee, Wisconsin (WI) 53212
Contacts: Steve Kailas / Stephen D.R. Taylor
Phone: (414) 962-5110
Fax: (414) 962-8725
www.kmksc.com

Canadian Firms

Ontario, Canada

Houser, Henry & Syron LLP ●

2000 - 145 King Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2B6
Canada
Contact: Michael R. Henry
Phone: (416) 362-3411
Fax: (416) 362-3757
www.houserhenry.com

Quebec, Canada

Colby, Monet, Demers, Delage & Crevier, L.L.P. ●

Tour McGill College
1501 McGill College Avenue, Suite 2900
Montreal Quebec H3A 3M8
Contact: David Crevier
Phone: (514) 284-3663
Fax: (514) 284-1961
http://www.colby-monet.com

European Firm

England

Ford & Warren ●

Westgate Point
Westgate
Leeds West Yorkshire LS1 2AX
England
Contact: Peter McWilliams
Phone: +44 (0)113 243 6601
Fax: +44 (0)113 242 0905
www.forwarn.com

Business | Corporate | International

Susan Schultz Laluk
BCI Practice Group Chair



Marketing. Branding. Advertising. These concepts are no longer anathemas to lawyers. The days are long gone when law firms can hope to be successful without some form of marketing. Law is still first and foremost a profession, but it is also a business to be managed. The question is, how can we do it right?

Primerus can be an essential part of how to successfully market our firms the right way.

Of course, there are numerous marketing tools that Primerus provides to its members, such as model advertisements and website search optimization. And we should not underestimate the strength and reputation of the Primerus name, which the Wall Street Journal has likened to a “Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.” But the most powerful marketing tool we have is each other. Primerus is most effective when we collaborate to pursue opportunities in creative ways that we could not imagine attempting as individual law firms.

One law firm offering opinion letters for business transactions in one jurisdiction is a dime a dozen, but a dozen Primerus law firms collaborating in several key states to offer one-stop shopping for opinion letters in multi-jurisdictional transactions is compelling. Primerus firms have been able to provide opinion letters in multi-jurisdictional transactions despite the fact that we were not on the lender’s “approved” list (which is usually granted only to the

largest firms) because of our affiliation with Primerus.

One law firm with expertise in some areas of Employment and Labor law licensed to practice in one jurisdiction can provide excellent legal services to local clients. A large group of BCI and PDI law firms collaborating to offer full coverage of all aspects of Employment and Labor Law in almost every state allows us to effectively market our services to regional and national companies. The same is true for the Bankruptcy, Real Estate and Intellectual Property Groups.

Sharing our expertise within our firms gives us access to a handful of exceptional attorneys. Using listservs to discuss esoteric legal issues, and webinars to teach each other evolving areas of the law allows us to tap into the intellectual resources and creativity of hundreds of top-rated lawyers across the country and around the world. By the time this article is published, two Primerus firms from the Employment and Labor law group will have collaborated to present the first of hopefully many webinars to Primerus law firms and clients.

One law firm working with a member of Alliance of Merger and Acquisition Advisors (AM&AA) locally can drum up some new business. A group of Primerus law firms collaborating with many members of AM&AA throughout a region can create an orchestra of new opportunities. Several Primerus law firms in the Great Lakes region (both in the U.S. and in Canada)

are building upon the Primerus/AM&AA strategic alliance to develop joint regional marketing efforts.

One law firm alone trying to crack the Am Law 100 domination of legal work at large companies is a Sisyphean task. Primerus law firms, who collectively have more lawyers in more jurisdictions than even the largest international law firms, can collaborate to effectively compete for an increasing share of legal work from in-house counsel.

I am delighted to report that the Business, Corporate and International Section is the fastest growing Section of Primerus, having added 21 firms in the last year, including expanding our international presence with firms in Montreal, Canada and Leeds, England.

The whole is, indeed, greater than the sum of its parts.

Contact Information:

Susan Schultz Laluk
Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson, LLP
2400 Chase Square
Rochester, New York 14604
585.232.5300 Phone
585.232.3528 Fax
slaluk@boylanbrown.com
www.boylanbrown.com



Primerus Defense Institute

Bob Brown
PDI Chair

Greetings all. This issue's topic is marketing, another topic I am probably not qualified to write about. Until my involvement with Primerus, I was probably the worst marketer of any partner in my firm. My tried and true method was to do a good job, win cases, then wait for clients to call me and beg me to do their work. Surprisingly enough, in the 1990s this tactic worked well enough for me to make partner.

We are now in a completely different atmosphere. Simply doing a good job at a good price is not enough. For every case available to defend, there are hundreds of qualified firms wanting the work. In order to be successful in this market, firms must distinguish themselves from their competition. Primerus allows us to do so.

Between convocations, seminars and client visits, I have had the pleasure of meeting a great number of clients who utilize Primerus firms. A number of those clients now use my firm, for which I am supremely grateful. The amazing thing about Primerus is the opportunity it provides to develop personal relationships with potential clients. I am a firm believer that your best clients are also your best friends. When handling significant cases, there must be a level of trust between client and lawyer. This trust does not

come from exchanging e-mails, nor does it come from occasional phone contact. This trust comes from a personal relationship, knowing each other's likes and dislikes, and knowing each other's philosophies with regard to handling litigation. It is only when trust is obtained that the lawyer-client relationship can be utilized to the utmost.

Primerus strives to allow good clients to meet good lawyers, and to allow good lawyers to meet good clients. Through the convocation, the recent transportation seminar and regional meetings, the PDI has been achieving that goal. The opportunity for this one-on-one contact is worth far more than the price of admission.

We are faced with a new economy that is terrifying, to say the least. We at Primerus must try to benefit as much as possible from this new economy. All clients are looking for ways to cut costs. The best way for a client to cut costs is for firms to bill them at reasonable rates, and more importantly, to get them the same or better results than those firms that charge higher rates. This is what we can offer our clients in this economy. Each and every firm in Primerus is highly screened, and not allowed into Primerus until they have shown their dedication to the Six Pillars. These pillars of course include reasonable fees and excellent work product. We can provide better service for clients than

those firms that charge two and three times what our firms charge. This is the message that we must spread.

A truly successful lawyer-client relationship is a symbiotic one, where both sides benefit equally. Through our dedication to the Six Pillars and our ability to achieve excellent results, we can save the client money, make them look better to their supervisors, and do what we can to help get this economy back on track.

This is my last article as Chair of the Primerus Defense Institute. I have very much enjoyed my last two years serving as Chair, and hope in some small way I have improved Primerus and your firms' experience in Primerus. I wish Hugh McCabe best of luck. I am leaving the PDI in good hands.

Contact Information:

Bob Brown
Donato Minx & Brown P.C.
Suite 2300
3200 Southwest Freeway
Houston, Texas 77027-7525
713.877.1112 Phone
713.877.1138 Fax
bbrown@donatominxbrown.com
www.donatominxbrown.com

Plaintiff | Consumer

Edward Ricci

PC Practice Group Chair



When I first met Primerus, I was invited to speak to the Plaintiff Practice Group about my research on “why the public hates trial lawyers.” I had discovered that the public generally sees “lawyers” as greedy, unethical and operating out of self-interest.

At the same time, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (now the American Association for Justice) conducted research to determine whether a name change would increase the organization’s credibility. When they changed from the word “lawyer” to “attorney,” public acceptance improved drastically. Attorneys are associated with justice; “lawyers” are not.

We must do everything we can to reinforce this connection between attorneys and justice. Attorneys, particularly personal injury attorneys, must convey

to the public that they are in the business of justice, not the business of money. As I like to say: “Justice is the goal. Money is simply proof that justice was done.”

One of the keys to successful marketing is to communicate this link to our core values, to the goal that is the backbone of what we do every day. Many organizations have recognized this – the American Medical Association is not the American Doctors Association and the National Education Association is not the National Teachers Association. And as we all know, the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, as a result of this research, changed its name to the American Association for Justice.

I incorporated this idea when I developed the current marketing plan for my law firm. The homepage of my firm’s website (edriccilaw.com) shows a picture of a two-lane highway with double yellow

lines. Skid marks cross the lanes. It says, “The need for safety, in seconds can become the need for justice.”

I believe there’s another critical message we must convey to the media and public. Nobody has claimed that the recent collapse of the economy is the fault of trial attorneys. Yet for the past 25 years, there have been efforts to bring about restrictions to consumer tort rights, claiming it was going to bring down the economy. But we all know that’s not how the collapse happened. We must get our message out, not just for soliciting business for our own law firm, but to change the environment in which we function. We must get back on our white horses and remember that we are the defenders of the rights of citizens.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward M. Ricci". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Contact Information:

Edward Ricci
515 N. Flagler Drive, Suite 400
West Palm Beach, Florida 33410
561.842.2820 Phone
561.844.6929 Fax
edricci@edriccilaw.com
www.edriccilaw.com



“We have roots in the community. My son is here. My daughter is here. My grandkids are here. It’s that kind of environment... We serve the community in which we grew up. If you’re going to take from a community, you ought to give back to it.”

Ball Eggleston: A Firm with Deep Community Roots

At Ball Eggleston, PC in Lafayette, Indiana, community service has a home-grown feel.

Six of the firm’s 10 attorneys were born and raised in Lafayette, another is from a town 29 miles away, another moved to Lafayette for her husband’s job, and another moved there to be closer to his father.

“We have roots in the community. My son is here. My daughter is here. My grandkids are here. It’s that kind of environment,” said Joseph T. Bumbleburg, president of the firm. “We serve the community in which we grew up. If you’re going to take from a community, you ought to give back to it.”

The list of ways Ball Eggleston attorneys have given back to the city of Lafayette (population about 45,000) is long. Through the years the firm’s attorneys have been involved with organizations including the Indiana General Assembly, Lafayette City Council, American Red Cross, United Way, Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Boys’ and Girls’ Club, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, YMCA, a church’s Haiti ministry and many others.


Recent service projects include:

- Three of the firm’s attorneys participated in a program on February 12, 2009 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth. The Indiana State Bar Association and the Indiana State Supreme Court sponsored “Why Lincoln Was a Lawyer,” a program that organized attorneys to speak in classrooms statewide about Abraham Lincoln and his importance to the rule of law.
- The firm also was recognized in 2008 for its ongoing support of the United Way of Greater Lafayette, receiving an Award of Merit for the Best Overall Campaign for Companies with 10-100 Employees. The award recognizes organizations for their campaign results based on employee per capita-giving levels, employee growth over previous year’s giving levels, employee dollars raised and total dollars raised.
- Two Ball Eggleston attorneys gave a presentation titled, “The Importance of Advance Planning Or, What Your Attorney DOES Want You to Know” to

a group of residents at the GreenTree Assisted Living Center in West Lafayette. Their presentation focused on the topics of wills, trust and other advance planning documents and how those documents are drafted to meet a person’s needs and wishes.

But the firm’s service is about far more than service projects and writing checks. It’s about generations of families living and working and raising families in the community they love.

“A lot of our kids come back. [Michael] Stapleton’s son is a broker here in town. My son is Parks Superintendent for the City of Lafayette. My daughter works for a local company,” Bumbleburg said. “[Brian] Walker’s kids are involved in athletics at the local Catholic high school. We watch these kids we know play. That makes it kind of fun.”

One need not look further than Ball Eggleston to find a place where practicing law is about all the things that really matter – the Six Pillars. 



PRIMERUS

International Society of
Primerus Law Firms

171 Monroe Ave. NW Suite 750
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

800.968.2211 Toll-free Phone
616.458.7099 Fax
www.primerus.com