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The Adirondack Women's Bar Association Receives State Bar's Cometa Award

The Adirondack Women's Bar Association (AWBA) have been honored with the State Bar's 2016 Angelo T. Cometa Award for its pro bono work aiding domestic violence survivors.

The AWBA, a chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, launched a free monthly legal clinic in 2010 that, since its inception, has helped more than 175 individuals.

"The State Bar is proud to recognize the ongoing commitment of the Adirondack Women's Bar Association in assisting domestic violence survivors, whose legal needs may have otherwise gone unmet," said David P. Miranda of Albany (Heslin Rothenberg Farley & Mesiti). "Their efforts clearly serve the mission of the State Bar's Lawyer Referral Service and do not go unnoticed."

The clinics, held in Glens Falls, provide one-on-one meetings between domestic violence survivors and volunteer attorneys, who answer questions on matters related to divorce, support, custody, tax, bankruptcy, foreclosure and landlord-tenant issues.

The clinic also offers client referrals to other legal organizations and private attorneys. Administrative assistance is provided by the Catholic Charities Domestic Violence program.

The award, sponsored by the State Bar's Committee on Lawyer Referral Service, recognizes individuals or groups in New York that demonstrate an extraordinary commitment toward

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Cometa Award— Jill O'Sullivan, left, and Jessica Vinson display the 2016 Angelo T. Cometa Award, presented April 1 to the Adirondack Women's Bar Association for its pro bono work aiding domestic violence survivors. The group, a chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, launched a free monthly legal clinic in 2010 that, since its inception, has helped more than 175 individuals. [Photo by Eva Valentin-Espinal]

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Q&A

In an effort to assist you and your staff with some common inquiries below are answers to frequently asked questions.

What is the LRIS membership fee?

LRIS panel members pay an annual fee of \$75 (\$125 for non-NYSBA members).

What is the referral fee if a client retains my services?

LRIS panel members agree to remit 10% of their entire fee if the fee is \$500 or more.

Do I need to carry malpractice insurance?

Yes, LRIS panel members are required to provide proof of malpractice insurance in the minimum amount of \$100,000.

How much should I be charging for the initial ½ hour consultation?

The consultation fee is \$35.

What if I can't help a client that was referred to me?

If you decline a referral for any reason, you should refer the client back to the LRIS. A LRIS client can also be seen by another attorney in your firm but the referral will be tracked as a referral to you.

Do I have to have an office in the County that I want to receive referrals from?

Yes, attorney members must have an office in one of our 44* service counties to be eligible to participate in our referral panel.

How do I sign up?

Download the LRIS application at www.nysba.org/joinlr or call 1.800.342.3661 or email lr@nysba.org to have an application mailed to you.

* Go to www.nysba.org/joinlr for a complete list of service counties.

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advancing the goals of the Lawyer Referral and Information Service.

The award is named for Angelo T. Cometa, president of the State Bar between 1990 and 1991. During his presidency, he advocated for increased compensation for judges and adequate funding for the Interest on Lawyer Account Fund. He also led the Bar's successful effort to oppose a proposed sales tax on legal services.

Under Cometa's leadership, the State Bar created its Lawyer Assistance Program, Pro Bono Department and what is now known as the Department of Law Practice Management. In 2007, he was honored with the inaugural Angelo T. Cometa Award, named to recognize his leadership of the Committee on Lawyer Referral Service. Cometa died in 2014.



Percentage Fee Reminder

LRIS collects 10% of the entire fee for any referral case fee that is \$500 or more. For example, our percentage for a legal fee of \$1,000 would be \$100. Some attorneys have mistakenly subtracted the first \$500 and submitted only \$50.

Any questions about percentage fees can be directed to Eva Valentin-Espinal, Lawyer Referral Manager at evalentin@nysba.org.

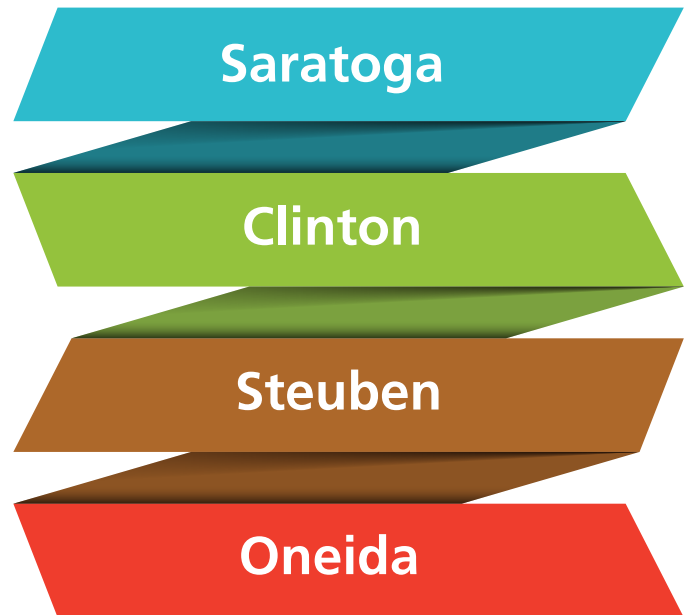
Lawyer Referral Stats* So far this year.....

Incoming Calls: 6,533

Areas of Practice receiving the most referrals:



Counties receiving the most referrals:



(*January 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2016)

Just a Moment, Please: A User-Friendly Meditation

By Patricia Spataro

If you google benefits of meditation you will find the results are extensive. One article was prepared to take me through 78 reasons but it was the short list identified in an article in the **Huffington Post** www.NYSBA.org/Meditation that I found most helpful. Perhaps your motivation for meditating can also be found on this short list... stress reduction, improved concentration, increased happiness, strengthened immunity, enhanced healthy lifestyle and slowed aging. They are all enticing but slowing the aging process was the one that cinched it for me.

As a member of a profession that is demanding and, often times very stressful, lawyers need to know about the impact of these risks and how to minimize them. To do otherwise... such as ignoring the impact of the stress and/or using unhealthy ways to deal with it can leave you vulnerable for serious consequences to your law license and your life.

Sadly, many are adversely impacted by the demands and stress of practicing law. Past and current research consistently indicates that lawyers have rates of alcoholism and depression twice that of the general population. Unmanaged stress can lead to drinking too much, abusing substances, depression and anxiety. These, no doubt, will impair your ability to competently represent your clients. It appears that taking care of yourself is not as much of a choice as a necessity.

There are many things you can do to get and stay healthy such as exercis-



ing, eating right, balancing your personal life and professional obligations, setting priorities and maintaining meaningful relationships. Among the many things you can do to take care of yourself meditation floats to the top as a universally excellent way to cultivate health and wellbeing.

Meditation is the practice of calming your mind. It is a myth that the goal of meditation is to empty your mind and stop thinking. If that were the case I would not find a good enough reason anywhere that would motivate me to try something I am certain I would not be good at.

The ideal meditation practice might look like taking 20 to 30 minutes every day at around the same time, in the same place, undisturbed, with or without music and with or without your eyes closed to focus on your breath. The goal is to slow things down

enough that you are in the moment free from stress and problems.

Also, since a meditation practice can be customized to meet your needs, it can look like taking a moment in between email, phone calls, meetings, while waiting in traffic or at court to, first of all, catch your breath then just for a moment relax as you focus exclusively on your breath. This is the user-friendly version of meditation... the one I call "just a moment, please".

There are many great apps that can help you create a daily habit of meditation. I like Headspace and Calm but there are many more apps as well as websites; I suggest you have fun exploring.

Patricia Spataro is the Director of the State Bar's Lawyer Assistance Program and can be reached at 518.487.5685 or pspataro@nysba.org. Please visit our lawyer assistance resource website at www.nylap.org

Online Legal Advertising: What Works and What Doesn't

By Ken Matejka

There are numerous online marketing options currently available to lawyers, including directories, search engines, banners and video advertising. They each have their purpose: some advertising channels are good for branding purposes, others for direct lead generation.

With more choices coming online each month, how is a lawyer who is targeting local legal consumers to make the best use of a limited marketing investment? This article highlights what I believe are marketing opportunities that work, while dispelling others as ineffective for lead generation.

With more choices coming online each month, as well as endless new offerings and enhancements coming from the bigger players, how is a lawyer to prioritize the spending of a limited marketing investment?

Below is a description of each advertising medium, in order of what I have found to be most effective to steer you towards what works and steer you away from what may be a less than optimal use of your investment. We cover only paid advertising in this article and reserve for another time a comparable comparison of other sometimes-effective marketing opportunities like e-newsletters and guest-blogging.

Google advertising

When done well, Google advertising delivers, plain and simple. You bid on phrases like "Albany injury lawyer" and Google shows your ad on that search. When someone clicks on it, you owe Google a sum of money



based on your bid. The result is that you have a legal consumer who is searching for a divorce lawyer in Albany on the divorce page on your website.

An exciting new "Call-only" ads allow you to run ads only on smartphones and you owe Google only when someone actually calls you.

The downside is that the learning curve on this kind of advertising is staggering and it is recommended that you outsource the account management to a competent professional.

On the bang-for-your-buck scale, Google wins.

Bing/Yahoo advertising

Comparable to Google advertising, you can bid on phrases in Bing and Yahoo too. The clicks are generally cheaper than in Google but for some reason I have found website inquiries through these search engines to be a lower percentage that from Google.

Smartphone advertising is available from Bing but not to much effect: Google has a near monopoly for

smartphone search, as it is the default search engine on both Androids and iPhones.

The learning curve is steep with Bing's advertising dashboard nearly identical to Google's. The Yahoo Gemini advertising platform is an unfortunate mess, usable by only the most patient of advertising professionals, all of whom probably have Yahoo Support speed-dialed.

I normally recommend against Bing/Yahoo advertising unless you're already spending as much as you can in Google, which for many practice areas is a significant investment.

In sum, Bing/Yahoo works for lead generation but not as well as Google.

LinkedIn advertising

LinkedIn advertising is a unique opportunity for lawyers who represent businesses and other professionals. Through it you can reach LinkedIn members by a variety of means including job title, user groups and keywords.

LinkedIn advertising is beyond the scope of this article but definitely worth exploring for B2B law firms.

Yelp advertising

Like Google and Bing, you can bid on a pay-per-click basis for top listings when people in Yelp are searching for reviews about lawyers. Yelp users who are reading reviews of lawyers are presumed to be at an advanced stage of the buying process so they can be a valuable group to target.

Through Yelp's "Self-serve" ads, you don't have to buy an expensive

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"Enhanced Listing" nor do you have to lock yourself into a 12-month commitment. An advantage of Yelp advertising over Google and Bing advertising is that it is easy to set up and it can be a set-it-and-forget-it tool.

There are several shortcomings when it comes to Yelp advertising. You can only target broad categories like "Lawyers" rather than specific searches like "Albany accident lawyers;" you cannot set your own bids (and based on what I've seen, your average cost per click will be higher than it is at Google and Bing); and the ads take consum-

as well as demographics like location, age and gender.

Advertising in YouTube is managed through your Google advertising account and is astonishingly cheap at about \$0.08 per view.

As a preliminary matter, you need a high-quality video ideally less than 30 seconds in length.

I've served up thousands of video views for different law firms and return on investment is difficult to measure. As with other types of Google advertising, this is probably something you don't want to run in-house.

Facebook allows you to run "Sponsored Posts" from your law firm's "Fan" page in the timeline of Facebook users.

ers to your Yelp profile, not to your website.

There's a circumstantial component, too: you should never run ads in Yelp if you have a low star rating. Negative reviews from former clients will dissuade Yelp users from making contact with you.

I often recommend against Yelp advertising unless you're already spending a lot in Google and Bing and/or you want to show off a large number of 5-star reviews. It's cheaper and more effective to invest that money in Google.

YouTube advertising

Not many people realize that YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world and has hundreds of thousands of law-related searches each month. In YouTube you can show your videos "In-stream" as a commercial preceding the user's desired video content and on other websites too, targeting keywords like "divorce"

For a budget of maybe \$2.50 per day, it can be cheap exposure for lawyers who have a good video. My reservation being that it probably won't generate many leads.

Facebook advertising

Facebook allows you to run "Sponsored Posts" from your law firm's "Fan" page in the timeline of Facebook users.

For lead generation, I have found Facebook advertising to be ineffective. It can be useful for promoting a specific post, getting more "Likes" for your Fan page, and generally raising awareness of your law firm, but people are not in Facebook looking for legal help.

Facebook does not allow advertisers to target keywords, like you can in Google, Bing, Yahoo and Twitter. Your options are demographics like age, location and interests. It's surprisingly inexpensive.

Facebook brings several important benefits to your online ecosystem and your law firm should be active in Facebook, but I usually recommend against Facebook advertising except to get more "Likes" for your Fan page if you need them.

Twitter advertising

Twitter advertising, like Facebook, allows you to display a post from your Twitter account as a "Promoted Tweet." Its advertising is keyword targeted so you can show your ads when someone is tweeting about lawyers making it more targeted than Facebook advertising. However, as with Facebook advertising, I have found Twitter advertising ineffective for lead generation. A recent study also found that Twitter users are irritated by the ads in their feeds.

The advertising can be useful in raising awareness of your Twitter account or specific Twitter posts and can help get "Followers" but Twitter users are not there to hire lawyers.

I usually recommend against Twitter advertising for lead generation, unless you're already spending a lot in Google, Bing and Yelp.

Paid directories

There's often a disconnect between what legal directories charge for a listing and the traffic you get in return. These listings have a calculable value and on the occasions I've had a chance to pour through data for my clients, I have found the listings to usually be worth about a third of what is charged. There are exceptions where the value of the listing is equal to or greater than the cost and it's a case-by-case calculation.

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LawHubSM content is rapidly increasing, providing more resources, to members

At the 2016 Annual Meeting in late January, the State Bar introduced the LawHUBSM – a service for members that puts “Everything you need to run your practice, all in one place.”

Our goal was to build a platform that could be updated constantly without waiting for long periods between upgrades. Already in the past few months, we have added more content and functionality to the Hub.

When we launched, users with Google calendars could see and manage their appointments from the HUB. Users who keep track of their calendar and appointments in Microsoft Office 365 can now do the same. None of your data is copied; we just create a connection to your existing calendar information.

Feedback matters

Based on feedback from our users, we also have added new functional-

ity to the Fastcase service. When you search from the LawHUBSM, your search results now highlight your search term in the results display to make your search more effective. We also added a link to the full Fastcase product in case you want to use some of the more advanced tools. If you are logged into the Hub, you can jump right to the Fastcase site without any additional steps. Both services are part of your member benefits.

Users of our LawPay credit card processing service told us that it would be useful to know when a client payment has been declined. The LawHUBSM card for this service now includes an indicator whenever this occurs.

As we grow the HUB, we rely on members and our Electronic Communications Committee to guide us on many decisions. Based on feedback from these groups and others, we built a better interface for LawHUBSM users

on smartphones. Instead of scrolling up and down through all of the content and services you have chosen, we now provide a more compact screen with icons to make you more efficient.

We also look to our members’ use of the NYSBA website (www.nysba.org) for guidance. Based on analytics, some of the most frequently viewed pages on our site involve our ethics opinions. We are working with the Committee on Professional Ethics to build a new card in the Hub to allow members to view and search our ethics opinions. The same is true of our CasePrepPlus service.

New York appellate courts release, on average, between 150 and 200 decisions per week. The CasePrepPlus service summarizes the most significant decisions into one-paragraph summaries. Each summary will

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Keeping in mind that there are exceptions, I have found listings on the major national legal directories to be overpriced and I usually recommend against.

Banner advertising on local websites

Banner advertising on local websites like radio station websites or online newspapers are often delivered by Google. In the event that a local website is offering to sell you a banner on their website independent of Google, then it is a matter of traffic and cost.

This is a case-by-case situation. Sometimes it’s a value, other times it’s cheaper to run your banners directly through your Google advertising.

Conclusion

It is hoped that this article will help focus your current marketing investment. The Internet is crowded with marketing options and separating the fruitful from the wasteful is not easy. My data and years of experience marketing attorneys supports what I’ve written here, but it’s always worth noting that other marketing

professionals may have different opinions. As you formulate or refine your marketing plan, please do your research, invest wisely and make the second half of 2016 a period of growth for your firm.

Ken Matejka, J.D., LL.M., is a California-licensed attorney and President of Matejka Marketing, Inc., a San Francisco-based Internet marketing company for solo practitioners and small law firms. If you have questions about this article, Ken can be reached at ken@matejkamarketing.com.

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be linked to the full decision. Keeping up with the decisions released the week before, a process which could easily take an individual attorney numerous hours every week, takes only minutes with CasePrepPlus in the LawHUBSM.

New topics

The State Bar also is working with various committees, especially Law Practice Management, to add a new HUB section with content and information on various practice topics, including technology, marketing,

management and finances. We already have lined up a podcast service on legal topics and are incorporating video content—all part of your membership.

Even though we have many voices guiding us in our efforts, we welcome and encourage your thoughts and ideas. What would make the LawHUBSM even better? What resources would make you a better and more efficient attorney? You can contact us by going to <http://mylawhub.nysba.org/contact/> and sending us your thoughts.

Interested in expanding your client base?

Do you practice in one of these counties...?

Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Ulster, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates



NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
Lawyer Referral

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