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Welcome to the March 2010 issue of Navigator, our in-house newsletter designed to assist member firms to make the most of the economic upturn. In this issue, we examine two differing perspectives on Marketing, we look at how firms can use technology to “Work Wiser” and we introduce a new contributor.

### **Achieving a Bigger Local Footprint**

As firms come out of the recession and they look to grow their business, they need to find options for marketing in their local community. They can boost their local presence cost effectively by taking the Walk the Course initiative outlined below.

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## **Achieving a Bigger Local Footprint, Cost Effectively**

As we exit the recession, firms will want to raise their profile again. However, budgets are still tight and every pound spent on marketing must be used to best effect. An extremely cost-effective aid in planning of your programme is to “Walk the Course” and see where your money can be best spent and your marketing can be best focused. You do it like this.

Walk around your local area with a clip-board, with the sole purpose of spotting opportunities to raise your local profile. You will find that the clipboard quickly fills. For example you might spot:-

- Advertising sites that you would particularly like. For example, if your firm has poor signage opportunities on your own office building, is there a bus shelter site right outside or close to your front door that could have an 8’x4’ advert permanently featured?
- Do local hotels have your details? If a guest went to the concierge at the best hotel in the area and said: “Can you direct me to a Solicitor’s practice?” would it be your leaflet/card that would be offered? If not, why not? They will be directed to somebody, why not you?
- Are there events being organised that you think you should attend, or even sponsor? Are there hotels or conference centres locally? Do you know the future programme of events? If, for example, you offer legal services to medical practices you might be interested to know that next month 100 GPs are attending a one day seminar at a venue just down the road from you.
- Places to negotiate leaving your leaflets or a poster, or places where an outdoor advert might be particularly effective. CAB Centres, retirement care/nursing home foyers, surgeries, A & E waiting areas.

### **“Pull Marketing”**

A new contributor, Boyd Butler, begins with an article giving firms advice on how to use “Pull Marketing” and change from being an unwelcome pest into a welcome guest! In the next issue Boyd will conclude the article.

### **“Working Wiser” with Online Legal services**

We look at the possibilities open to firms for using the technology available to support providing online legal services, for enabling firms to “work wiser” and improve their bottom line.

- Potential sources of new clients, for example, accident repair workshops’ reception areas.
- Potential new referrers, for example, care home managers/supervisors. Most firms have well established relations with the obvious and well established (funeral directors, bank managers, estate agents, accountants). Think outside the box.
- Think: Do any of our target client groups gather anywhere special (for example: a local theatre). Given that audiences are usually old (or depending on the event, young, or middle aged), is there an opportunity to offer the theatre a deal? We’ll buy six tickets if we can feature our leaflets in your foyer for X performances. You can then use the tickets to reward either referrers or staff.
- Things that your competitors are doing and you think you should also be doing (or doing better).
- Venues you spot for a seminar or promotion, or upcoming events you might want to use for a bit of entertaining or fun with clients (they don’t always have to be expensive events).
- Local retail outlets and other venues suitable for a temporary “pitch” on their premises. Tie it in to something like a “Make a Will Day”. Make sure that the staff from your firm who participate are enthusiastic. No “pressed soldiers” on that detail.

**The point of it all is that you look with an open mind. A one hour walk-about will generate several useful “initiatives” to focus your marketing in your community - where your new clients will come from.**



## Pull Marketing: “How To Go From Unwelcome Pest To Welcome Guest”

Boyd Butler

Getting business for law firms is not about who you know. It's more about *who knows you*. People pay experts more money to do their legal work. So it pays to get known as a legal expert. Expert status is up for grabs in most local and regional markets. You should claim it for yourself and profit from it.

Has your doctor ever called you at lunchtime asking if you are ok and recommending treatment for flu? No, because doctors don't prospect.

**They don't waste their time trying to second guess that you may need treatment on a particular day and that what they have is the cure.**

You go to the doctor when you are sick. You go to the doctor because he's the expert, you trust him and you know where to find him *when you need him most*.

**“A flower does not chase the bee.”** This is what is called Pull Marketing – it's the *pulling in people by getting them to raise their hands and say out loud, “I am interested in what you have got.....tell me more.”*

Pull marketing is a lot more difficult than getting some glossy brochures printed or buying some advertising in the Yellow Pages. It takes effort and time to do it well.

If you get people to respond to your pull marketing you will have a series of leads on your desk. Leads that are qualified and are there because they are interested in what you have.

This is important for three reasons:

- Clients have more respect because you are the expert *and they contacted you*.
- You don't have to work with clients who don't match your expertise.
- Your time is spent proactively because new clients already know what you do.

You can even get them to do the work for you to qualify themselves.

For example, you can ask them to fill in an audit of what they need or what they have in place **before** you look at their business in more detail.

If it's a private client, you can ask them to complete a “Roadmap for Tomorrow” before

you see them about Estate Planning.

**What do you need to communicate in your PULL Marketing?**

When you use Pull Marketing you have to be entering into the conversation that is already going on in your clients' or prospects' heads.

Ask yourself, “What is it that they are thinking about today, next week, this month?” Google UK comes up with searching suggestions in a drop down box if you type in things like “How to get a divorce” This is your key to providing them with the information that they need in the language they talk, *so that they contact you*.

That's why search marketing on Google is so powerful. The results match what's going on inside someone's head – they are looking for particular information and the person who comes first in the search is a winner in catching their attention.

Your communication has to be believable, professional, credible and emotional (and by emotional we don't mean “over the top”). That's because people often buy with emotion. People decide what they are going to buy with emotion and then use logic to justify the purchase.

**There's an old saying that it's about “Who you know.”**

**Wrong! It's About Who Knows You.**

Getting yourself the right personal brand is very important. Even in the law, business people are going to buy **you**. Your legal expertise will be assumed as a given.

**What is your personal brand? Have you ever Googled yourself to find out?**

So what is it that they are considering buying when they think about buying you? Does it convince them to buy before they have even spoken to you? When you get your personal... brand right this is what it can do:

- You can create the demand for your service without advertising.
- People will have confidence enough to buy from you.
- You'll earn a reputation for excellence that will be talked about.
- You'll establish yourself as the expert.
- You'll become a valuable resource to people.



- Your professional stature will increase.
- You'll be a positive influence because you will be delivering.

**And all this will lead to you getting qualified, quality leads.**

**What you must do to make yourself a quality and memorable brand:-**

- Dedicate the time to make it happen – write the plan down or it won't happen.
- Do things with a creative flair to make yourself memorable.
- Stay in front of the people you want to do business with through communications such as newsletters, media, website.
- Get a great business card...people should be saying "nice card" when they get it, make it stand out.
- Be a resource, if people value what you say, they'll want to stick with you.
- Be persistent and maintain quality, don't do

something once and sit back and wait, keep at it and success will come.

- Don't expect to do one thing and get 20 new clients – but do 20 things and get 20 new clients – that's possible.

In your chosen field, become the media expert. Becoming the media expert is much easier than you think. In business you become the expert by **taking on the role.**

Remember, editorial is more believable than advertising. Editors and producers have to come up with new content every day so they love it if people help. Once you have 20 articles of 20 pages in length **it is possible to publish a book.** Being an author is an amazing way to get people to trust you and to get in touch. You get to be known as: **"That Lawyer who wrote the "47 Legal Things you need to know when starting Up a Dot Com Business"!**

**When you've achieved that level of credibility you really have a powerful personal brand.**

Boyd Butler specialises in finding, getting, keeping and growing clients for all types of firms including solicitors, internet, leisure, property and sport. His legal marketing blog, which includes many training videos, is at [www.GreatLegalMarketing.co.uk](http://www.GreatLegalMarketing.co.uk).

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## Using Online Technology to "Work Wiser"

**This article addresses one particular aspect, or by-product, of the technology available to law firms providing on-line legal services; that is, the way in which the technology can be used to improve productivity within the firm.**

As will be well known to member firms that have come to our recent conferences, a recent innovation in the legal marketplace has been the launch of online legal services from a range of institutions and national law firms.

Of course, where we say "online legal services" we really mean delivery of legal services via the internet. The best example of this is Epoq's "DirectLaw" product which is the delivery platform that we are using as the basis for our UK Law Online project.

To remind those of you that have not yet investigated DirectLaw for your own firm, the idea behind it is that, engaging through your own website, an existing or potential client can browse the online legal services that you provide.

The client is then "interviewed online" using DirectLaw's document automation system (that

is, they answer a series of questions that appear onscreen). As the client progresses through the interview, the document is drafted in real-time to reflect the answers provided by the client. Once the document is completed and submitted, your firm can then securely access the first draft, amend it as required, speak to or see the client and then securely return the document or make an appointment for the client to see you.

However, vital though this initiative is, this article is not about the potential for online legal services. That is a subject for another time and another article.

What we're talking about here is the happy by-product that the online technology can enable firms to achieve substantial increases in fee earner productivity.

It can also give firms flexibility regarding how they deliver their traditional services, in the traditional manner, via face-to-face meetings, in their premises, with their clients.

Crucially, the firm can make much better use of precious fee earner's time. This could mean firms being able to handle much heavier volumes of work without having to recruit more fee earners.



This is because of an additional feature of the DirectLaw system - called "LawDraft". All DirectLaw subscribers gain free access to LawDraft, which uses the same technology for building up first draft legal documents based on information gathered on-screen.

LawDraft has been designed for use by "in-house" fee earners and staff to create first draft documents. Crucially, users do not have to be legally qualified. As mentioned above, LawDraft uses the same technology and approach as DirectLaw - and DirectLaw is designed to be used by your clients! The questions posed by the system as it moves through the "online interview" act as a script for the unqualified interviewer/data capturer. The questionnaire is interactive in that answers to questions affect which subsequent questions are asked (in a will, for example, if the answer to the question "do you have children" is "no", then no other children related questions are asked).

As well as enabling firms to grow fees by supplying additional services online, a considerable benefit of the technology is that the online "tools" help firms to "work wiser" by providing operating efficiencies, within the firm itself, for instance, by enabling non-fee earners to conduct initial information-gathering interviews (ordinarily this information gathering would be done by the fee-earner), and how to

use people resources more efficiently in client contact and delivering the finished "product".

It is possible, therefore, to use lower skilled (lower cost) non-lawyers to conduct data gathering interviews, and, using LawDraft, to produce first draft documents quickly and safely, for subsequent review by suitably qualified lawyers.

The qualified lawyer reviews the first draft and then manages the client in the usual manner, meeting them, taking further instructions, etc.

What this means is that fee earners concentrate on that part of the transaction where legal expertise and client management skills are most needed.

This can have a dramatic effect on the productivity and recoverable hourly rates of qualified fee earners. See below for a couple of examples of just how powerful an effect there can be (*timings and hourly rates will vary between firms. Focus here on the mechanics rather than the actual figures!*).

So, the firm has much greater flexibility about who does the work, and how it is done. The client can be offered greater choice, and overall, the firm can make much better use of its assets and human resources. It can "work wiser".

### Example A - Shareholders Agreement

Assume a Shareholders Agreement is being drafted.

Via the traditional route this would involve (say) 6 hours drafting and client time by a fee earner at £250 per hour. Total cost to the client: £1500.

Using LawDraft, information can be captured from the client via forms and/or a secretary and the secretary can generate the first draft.

The fee earner then deals with meeting the client and bespokeing and finalising the draft; time totalling 3.5 hours.

The client still pays £1500, but the recoverable hourly rate has increased to £430, up 72%.

### Example B - Will

Assume a married couple with stepchildren are setting up Discretionary Wills Trusts and preparing Lasting Powers of Attorney. Let's assume this involves (say) 5 hours drafting and client time at a recoverable hourly rate of £180. Total cost to the client: £900.

Assume now that the firm uses LawDraft, with a secretary data capturing information during an initial interview and subsequently generating the first draft.

Again, the fee earner then deals with meeting the client, reviewing and finalising documents. This involves 3 hours of fee earner time.

The client still pays £900, but now the recoverable hourly rate is £300 per hour, a 66% increase.



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