

Title:

17 Important Points To Consider Before You Hire A Law Marketing Consultant

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Summary:

As we fast approach the new year, many firms are preparing to launch their 2006 marketing efforts. If you're thinking about hiring a marketing specialist, make sure you consider these 17 key points.

1. Objective Advice. Consultants who are paid fees are more likely to give you unbiased advice than consultants who earn commissions based on the amount of money you spend. If the consultant profits from ad agency commissions, he has an inherent conflict of interest because th...

Keywords:

Lawyer marketing, legal marketing, professional marketing

Article Body:

As we fast approach the new year, many firms are preparing to launch their 2006 marketing efforts. If you're thinking about hiring a marketing specialist, make sure you consider these 17 key points.

1. Objective Advice. Consultants who are paid fees are more likely to give you unbiased advice than consultants who earn commissions based on the amount of money you spend. If the consultant profits from ad agency commissions, he has an inherent conflict of interest because the more you spend, the more he makes.

2. Experience. Marketing is so specialized and complex that I recommend you hire someone who has provided marketing services for a minimum of 15 years. But, don't assume that because the person has been in business 15 years, he has the knowledge, skill, judgment and experience you need. Make sure you thoroughly interview all consultants you are considering.

3. Workload. Does the law marketing professional do the work for you? Or does the marketing person serve as a coach and simply tell you what you should be doing?

4. Service. Do you feel that the consultant wants to provide you with the help you need to make your program succeed? Or do you get the impression that he is

looking for bigger fish to fry and that you're just a small fish in the ocean?

5. Access. Is the consultant hidden behind a wall of secretaries, account executives and administrative assistants? Or is he readily available to you by phone, fax, and e-mail?

6. Stability. Has the consultant been providing marketing services for some years? Or is he new to marketing -- or new to lawyer marketing -- and just waiting for the opportunity to move on to something else?

7. Marketing Focus. Is the consultant a full-time marketing professional? Or does he offer advice in other disciplines, such as management, human resources, training or finance?

8. Authority. Does the consultant have enough experience that he is a recognized authority in his field? Or is he still a relative unknown?

9. Size and Efficiency. Does the consultant have a large staff and/or a penthouse office that his clients pay for? Or when you write a check, are you paying for his high level of knowledge, skill, judgment and experience?

10. Markups. Does this consultant mark up outside services he hires on your behalf, such as graphic artists, printers, photographers, web site technicians, and so forth? Or does this consultant provide those services to you at cost?

11. Travel. Does the consultant travel around the country from one client to next, running up airline bills? Or does the consultant keep costs down by working efficiently with you by telephone, fax and e-mail?

12. Coverage. Does the consultant have a competent marketing specialist who covers for him when he travels? Or are you relegated to an account executive or administrative assistant who takes messages and tries to relay them to the consultant while he is on the road.

13. Attention. Does the consultant have so many clients he can't provide you with the personal care and attention you deserve? Or does he limit his services to a few select clients who receive the best he has to offer?

14. Work. Does the consultant himself perform the work on your behalf? Or does the consultant delegate your work to a junior associate?

15. Marketing Specialization. Is the consultant a marketing professional who works only with one type of marketing? Or does he try to be a "jack of all

trades" so he can provide whatever marketing services you want to buy?

16. Writing Skills. In marketing, nothing is more important than for your consultant to have superior writing skills. And don't expect the consultant's writing to follow the rules of what you and I learned in school because marketing writing is different from academic writing. To sample your consultant's writing style, read published articles and marketing materials that your consultant wrote. You'll know right away whether they come across as warm and friendly -- or if the writing seems cold and impersonal. The way the consultant writes for himself will be similar to the way he writes for you. So make sure the consultant you choose has a writing style you admire.

17. Testimonials. Does the marketing consultant have comments from other lawyers you can review? The consultant you're considering should provide you with at least 30 or 40 testimonials from other lawyers. If he provides only a few, you may be reading comments from his in-laws.