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Scott Cytron • Jun. 10, 2014



While larger firms may seem to have an advantage over their smaller counterparts because they allocate more money toward marketing and public relations, there's no reason why smaller firms can't do what they can to market their practices.

Marketing doesn't have to cost a lot of money, but it does take a bit of time to get it right. I know this is non-billable time, but you have to put time and money into a

practice in order to get something out of it, right?

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You may be using [LinkedIn](#), but how long has it been since you've updated your profile? Among the firms I talk with, LinkedIn is still considered the most professional of all social media. All of the content on LinkedIn is searchable, so you'll want to optimize your profile with enough content to be "found," if colleagues want to refer business to you and prospects want to find you.

- Populate the "professional headline" feature in your profile with keywords that describe what you do. For example, mine reads, "PR, Marketing and Communications Professional With a Focus on Professional Services – Accounting, Legal, Medical."
- Include a professional photo and make sure it's current.
- Write out your summary, then simply cut and paste it into a bio or resume.
- Include all your social media handles under Contact Info.
- I'm not a big fan of endorsements, but by all means try and gather some recommendations from clients and colleagues you trust.

#2: Get on, and participate in, Social Media

In addition to LinkedIn, I advise getting on several more social media outlets to widen your presence – but do more than just sign up. Be active, update your status frequently, and comment or participate in conversations on a regular basis.

Consider:

- **LinkedIn:** If you're not already on here, get on now! See some basic tips above on enhancing your profile.
- **Twitter:** You don't have to constantly tweet on Twitter, but it does help to build your followers. Remember that all of the content you post is searchable, so include a phrase such as "franchise tax" in your tweets if franchise tax is one of your niches.

- **Facebook:** This one isn't for everyone, especially those hesitant about sharing

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...through Google, so if you're promoting your own videos through a smartphone or something more sophisticated, by all means get your own channel and promote your videos on your website and all other social media.

#3: Work on Your Website

Most practitioners have websites, but like your LinkedIn profile, how long has it been since you've refreshed your site? Is the content dated? Is there content at all beyond the typical "About Us" and "Services" pages?

Most websites I see lack several important elements:

- **The contact information is buried under a button or in someone's bio.** Have your contact information easily recognizable on your site and make sure you include your social media handles and addresses.
- **The content is way too long.** No one is going to read page after page of content about what you offer and what you've done. Keep the pages short with 2-3 paragraphs at the most.
- **The site lacks warmth.** People like to do business with people they trust. If you're using a template website, that's fine, but find a way to warm it up. I prefer sites in WordPress because you can customize the pages and you can also maintain the site, yourself, very easily.

#4: Network Your Niches

Let's face it – accountants are not the gregarious type. Yet, you can't hide in your office and expect the phone to ring. Nowadays, most accountants niche in services and/or industries, so find ways to connect and network with prospects who fall into these areas.

For example, if you enjoy working with architects or interior designers, find a local

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Take my advice and call (yes, use the phone) a reporter and ask he or she out to lunch (or another meal or coffee). Be sure you have something to actually talk with the reporter about; use something in the news as a hook, for example, or simply explain that you are an expert in a certain service, such as business valuation.

Take Baby Steps

Whatever tactics you want to pursue, you should realize that you can't do everything at once – and shouldn't expect immediate, overnight results. Investing time and resources into marketing and PR is an investment for the long-term survival of your firm.

Firm Management • Marketing

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