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**ACCOUNTING**

# How to Market Advisory Services in 2023

Promoting advisory services isn't as complicated as you think. Here's how to get started.

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*By Joseph Graziano, CFP®.*

Clients want more from your firm than basic accounting and compliance work. In fact, a recent report from Thomson Reuters found that **95%** of surveyed accounting firms said their clients want *more* advisory services.

While the demand may be there, many firms are hesitant to add these offerings simply because they don't know how to market them.

*Where do you start?*

Promoting advisory services isn't as complicated as you think. Here's how to get started.

## Get to Know Your Clients on a Deeper Level

You can't succeed with marketing if you don't know *who* you're marketing to. Your existing clients are a great place to start. Get to know them on a deeper level.

Ask the following questions:

- What are my clients' biggest pain points? How can I solve their problems?
- How can I become a one-stop shop for my clients' financial matters?

Accounting firms can offer a wide range of advisory services, but you'll find the most success if you provide services that genuinely appeal to your clients. Financial planning, for example, is something that most clients will likely want and need.

When you know your clients and understand their problems, you can find more effective and personalized ways to promote your services to them.

## Identify Your Target Audience

Existing clients can give you some valuable insight, but it's still important to clarify your target audiences':

- Pain points – what problems do they have, and how can you solve them?
- Needs – what does your audience need in terms of advisory services?
- Demographics – what is your audience's age, profession, income level, and so forth?

When you understand your audience, you can develop personas that will help you craft messages that truly resonate with them.

## Leverage Digital Marketing Channels

Once you have identified your target audience and gotten to know your audience on a deeper level, you can start promoting your advisory services. One of the simplest and most effective ways to start doing that is to leverage digital marketing channels.

Building a solid online presence will help you reach more potential clients and demonstrate your expertise in these areas. Make sure that you're utilizing:

- **Social media:** If you're not already on social media, then start creating accounts on the platforms your clients are using. Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook are great places to start. Be active on your accounts. Share valuable insights that showcase your knowledge and expertise. Don't forget to engage with your followers or any potential clients who reach out on these channels.
- **Search engine optimization (SEO):** SEO will help improve your visibility in the search results for queries that your audience is searching for. A mixture of on-page SEO, content marketing, and off-page SEO can help drive more organic, targeted traffic to your website.
- **Email marketing:** Email marketing is a highly effective way to nurture leads. A well-crafted email campaign can help you educate subscribers on the benefits of your services and demonstrate the value they offer.

## **Establish Yourself as an Authority and Thought Leader**

Developing a strong online presence goes beyond building a website and leveraging social media to promote your new offerings. Establishing yourself as a thought leader or authority in your field will help drive more targeted leads to your doorstep.

How can you establish yourself as a thought leader? There's a lot you can do. Consider the below as a few ways to get started:

- Host webinars
- Find opportunities to be a guest on podcasts
- Become published in authoritative outlets
- Write high-quality blogs regularly
- Offer insights on social media

The goal is to be seen *everywhere* and demonstrate your expertise so that potential clients view you as an authority in your field.

# Leverage Social Proof

You can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk? Potential clients want to see that you have a track record of success. Client testimonials can serve as the social proof you need to convince existing or potential clients to try your new services.

Positive testimonials are a powerful marketing tool, so use them to your advantage. Ask satisfied clients if they would be willing to write reviews on your website or social profiles. Bonus points if they can provide a video review.

## Host Events That Offer Value

Events are another effective way to establish yourself as a thought leader and showcase your expertise. These events can be in-person or virtual. Webinars are a great example of a virtual event that can promote your services, educate leads and attract new clients.

## Network to Form Strategic Partnerships

Networking can also be a powerful marketing tool. Make it a priority to build and nurture relationships with other professionals in related fields, such as bankers, financial planners, attorneys, etc. These individuals likely have clients that will need your services. Their referrals can become a powerful source of new clients.

Networking can also help you forge strategic partnerships that are fruitful for all parties.

## The Bottom Line

Your clients want and need advisory services. Making the decision to offer them is easy, but marketing can be tricky. Understanding your audience and their needs is a great start. From there, you can leverage digital marketing channels, establish yourself as a thought leader, host events and network to promote your new offerings and grow your client base.

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