



MARKETING

7 Steps to Renewed Relevance--No Matter What Industry You're In

How one law firm adopted content marketing to keep the competition at bay.



By Brian O'Connor *Founding Partner, Mr. Finn* [@MrFinnContentCo](#)

WRITE A COMMENT

CREDIT: Getty Images

About 3 years ago, [James Goodnow](#) of Phoenix-based Lamber Goodnow Injury Law Team saw in the tea leaves vast changes looming for the legal profession. He saw less business being generated from word-of-mouth referrals and more from the Internet.

Seems obvious, but there's something strange about the legal profession: it's hard to find an industry more conservative. Advertising, for lawyers, was banned until the 1970s. An aversion to any type of marketing still lingers—but not to Goodnow.

"Industry after industry has been upended by companies that have aggressively used the Internet to take market share," says Goodnow. Indeed, many are fighting back with [innovative ways of marketing](#).

"We realized that, although the legal industry has largely avoid being toppled by digital longer than other sectors, no industry is immune."

What Goodnow realized was that the essence of a traditional referral—a person sees first-hand the quality of your work and then shares that with a friend—was the foundation of content marketing.

After deciding to start a blog—which, 3 years later, has increased their web traffic by 287% and translated into "significant" additional business—Goodnow's firm took the following steps:

- 1. Consult current and past clients:** "Better than anyone else, current and past clients know what potential clients want and need," says Goodnow. "We asked them what questions they had about the legal process, what fears they had, and what motivated them."
- 2. Consult internal team members:** "We asked our team members to identify the questions they hear most from our clients," says Goodnow. "Traditional marketing is often focused on accepting the perspective of the marketer. In my view, if you don't start with the consumer's perspective, you'll be working that much harder with your marketing."
- 3. Find talent:** Once they had gathered enough topics to write about, Goodnow's firm needed to find ways to [create compelling, relevant content](#). They found writers and lawyers who could help them answer the questions that people wanted to know. "Over time, we realized that it's not just enough to write," says Goodnow, "so we hired videographers to help us put together educational content."
- 4. Give away your secrets:** "Many people say we give away too many 'secrets' to prospective clients by discussing how we handle our cases," says Goodnow. "We disagree. By providing our best practices, insightful blogs, educational vlogs, and useful social media posts, we believe clients learn about who we are and how we can help them. Can these prospective clients take this information to other attorneys or to try and get some 'free' tips? Perhaps. More often, though, we believe readers will see our knowledge base and be converted into clients."
- 5. Find efficiencies:** After starting a content program, you'll recognize after a few months how you can re-purpose content and find efficiencies. "As the cost of the videography rose, we determined that it would be better to make a one-time investment in the equipment, which we could use for our video blogs and educational videos we post online," says Goodnow.
- 6. Close the loop:** Because of industry guidelines, law firms are not permitted to call prospects—which many businesses would consider a problem. "The prospects must contact us," says Goodnow. "We want them to be sufficiently impressed with the caliber of the information we've provided to make the decision to reach out to us. In the long run it results in a better, stronger relationship with the client that can lead to other referrals."
- 7. Rinse and repeat:** "Content marketing is a philosophy," says Goodnow. "You can't dabble in it. Everything you do, everything you post, should you adopt this tactic should have consumer-focused content in mind. The deeper, the richer the content, the more you establish yourself in the space as a trusted source—which, if you're looking to build an enduring brand, is far more valuable than any short-term marketing campaign."