

play to win

Committing Time to Marketing Your Law Practice

It is amazing how much progress you can make simply by being organized.

By [Sally J. Schmidt](#)

Recently, I asked one of my clients about a proposal he was going to submit to speak on a prestigious program this year. We had talked on several different occasions about the opportunity. The call for presenters was due on Dec. 31; unfortunately, he missed the deadline.

As rainmakers know, many marketing and business development opportunities are spontaneous and require you to recognize and act on them. But there are just as many, if not more, that can be planned. It is amazing how much progress a lawyer can make in building a practice simply by being organized.

Calendar Events and Activities

It starts by getting things on your busy schedule. By calendaring deadlines and events, you will be more likely to follow through. While you may still need to cancel them, having things on your calendar will prevent you and others from creating a conflict during that time unless it's necessary. Here are some examples.

Add firm dates to your calendar:

- Conferences you want to attend (and early-bird registration deadlines)
- Deadlines for submitting proposals to speak
- Due dates for articles or posts you are writing
- Every meeting of an association to which you belong or a board on which you serve
- Firm practice group, industry team or section meetings

Calendar time for marketing and business development tasks and activities:

- Block two hours each week to call people for coffee or lunch, set up client visits, send thank-you notes, work on LinkedIn or similar tasks.
- Calendar regular reminders — for example, four times a year — to contact a particular referral source for lunch.
- Allocate some time the morning after a conference to follow up with people you met there, add them to your contact list, connect through LinkedIn and so on.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting on the spot when you meet with someone (client, prospect or referral source).
- Calendar an hour or two after an article or post you wrote is to be published to leverage it. For example, send it to specific contacts, thank the editor, circulate it internally at your firm. You could also add it to your bio and tweet the link to the article.

When it comes to marketing and business development, despite what people say, you can't "make" time. But you can allocate time. That starts by making sure important opportunities and activities get a slot in your schedule.