

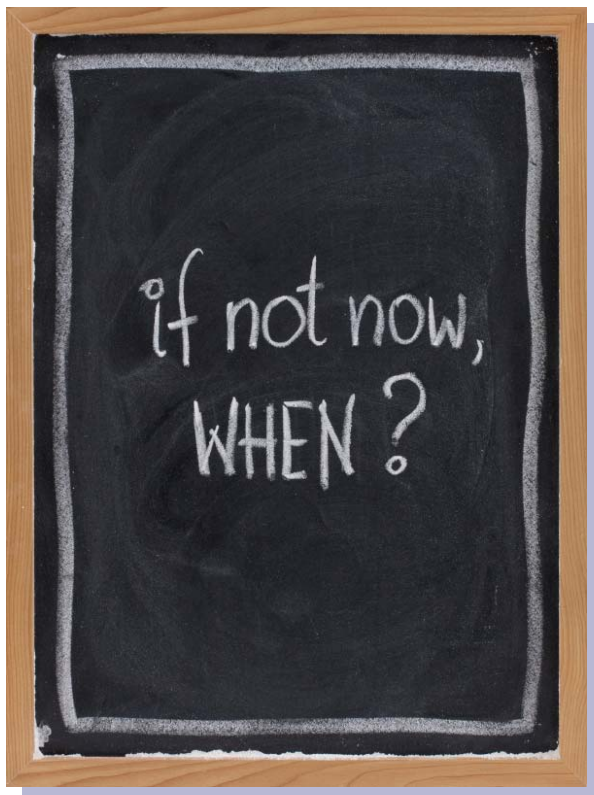
real life marketing

a collection of blog posts & real life coaching



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This eBook contains a collection of blog posts and coaching tips to help you think about marketing - maybe in a way you've never thought about it before - and to move you to action. I'll bet you already know a lot of this stuff. But I also bet that you're not really doing it, or you're not doing it as regularly and systematically as you should.

One of my favorite quotes is from author and leadership coach, Marshall Goldsmith: "There is an enormous disconnect between understanding and doing. Most of us understand, we just don't do."

If you want to see results, you've got to do something. So I say:
Success lies in both understanding and doing. Taking action is key.

So here's to **Taking action!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nora". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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Become a natural marketer.

Attorneys tell me all the time, “Nora, I’m no good at marketing. I’m just not a natural marketer. I don’t like talking about myself.” I tell them, “Phooey! You can learn to be a natural marketer.” Before we go any further, let’s define marketing. According to the American Marketing Association, “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” Whew. That’s a mouthful. Here’s a simpler way to say it: Marketing is about knowing what you do, knowing who your ideal clients are, and building relationships that get those clients knocking on your door.

So you’re thinking, “Of course, I know what I do. I’m a lawyer. And a fine one, at that.” OK, but being a lawyer is part of who you are, not what you “do.” As a lawyer, you guide people through some of the most difficult and challenging times of their lives. Maybe you help them survive the break-up of a marriage or a business. Maybe you help them find a way to survive after an injury leaves them unable to work or they’ve been illegally fired from a job. Knowing what you “do,” and how you help people is critical to marketing your services. It might be difficult for you to talk about yourself, but you should be able to speak with passion about what you do for your clients.

Next you need to know who your ideal clients are. When you know who your ideal clients are, then you can begin to develop relationships with those people that surround your ideal clients. Let’s say, you’re a family law attorney, and your ideal clients are professional people with a high net worth. Who are those types of people surrounded by? How about starting with financial planners, investment bankers, and business law attorneys? Once you know who your ideal clients are and the types of people they are surrounded by, then you can get to work building relationships with the right people.

Finally, you need to build real relationships that create great referrals for you. The focus here is on “real relationships,” not relationships just for the purpose of getting referrals, but relationships out of which great referrals grow. In my example above, I mentioned business law attorneys as great referral source for a family law attorney. There are a lot of business law attorneys out there. But you’re not going to build relationships with all of them. You’re going to meet as many business law attorneys as you can, and then, you’re going to build relationships with the one, or two or three that you really hit it off with. You’re going to build real relationships with people you like, and you’re going to get to know them and trust them. And they’re going to get to know, like and trust you. You’re going to become a great referral source for them, and they for you. It’s a beautiful thing!



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You may not know who all your best referral sources are. But you sure know who some of them are.

- Pick up the phone.
- Call one of your best referral sources.
- Make a date for coffee, lunch, drinks, dinner.
- REPEAT . . . Often.



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BRAG!

Many attorneys just are not comfortable talking about themselves, what they do, and how they help others. But being able to talk about your strengths in a genuine and authentic way is one of the most effective marketing tools you can have in your tool kit. And there are simple ways to begin to develop these skills.

In her book, [*BRAG! The Art of Tooting Your Own Horn Without Blowing It*](#), Peggy Klaus provides a number of strategies and exercises to help you develop your “braggables.” The book is a fun and entertaining read.

Get started by identifying your “braggables” which can be incorporated into your Laser Talks and Marketing Stories. Here are Klaus’s “Take 12” Self-Evaluation questions – tweaked for the practice of law.

1. What would you and others say are five of your personality pluses?
2. What are the ten most interesting things that you have done or that have happened to you in your practice?
3. Why do you practice in the area of law that you do?
4. What do you love about the practice?
5. How does your practice use your talents, and what are you working on right now that best showcases them?
6. What career successes are you most proud of?
7. What new skills have you learned in the last year?
8. What obstacles have you overcome, both personally and professionally, to get where you are today, and what essential lessons have you learned from your mistakes?
9. What did you gain from your law school experience?
10. What professional organizations are you associated with and why?
11. How do you spend your time away from the office?
12. In what way are you making a difference in people's lives?

That should get you started on crafting a great Laser Talk and some memorable Marketing Stories. Have fun, and get bragging!



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Set aside one hour. Choose five of the “Take 12” Self-Evaluation questions.

- Write out your answers to each question.
- Review your answers and identify five great stories you can tell about yourself or your practice
- Block one hour a week in your calendar for the next five weeks and focus on writing one story each week.
- When you’re done you’ll have the beginning of your book of “braggables,” and you might just have some fun in the mean time.

If you need some help getting started, check out [How to Write an Article in 20 Minutes](#), from copyblogger.com.



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Why great marketing is like brushing your teeth.

You don't get up in the morning, brush your teeth and say, "Whew, that's done! Don't have to worry about that for another month." Think of marketing like brushing your teeth. You don't brush your teeth once a month or once a week. You brush your teeth every day, twice a day, maybe three times a day. Just like brushing your teeth, you've got to focus on your marketing every day. You can't go to an event and say, "OK, I've done my marketing for the month." Nope. You've got to do a little bit every day. Make a phone call each day to a referral source. Send an email. Write a note. Go to lunch. Have a beer. Play a game of golf. Go shopping.

Here's the other thing about brushing your teeth and marketing. You don't have to think about brushing your teeth. It's a habit. A good habit. I want you to make marketing a habit, something you do without thinking about it.

One of my clients told me recently that she'd been approached by a partner from a large business law firm. She's a sole practitioner with a successful entertainment law practice. She's worked in big firms before and has no desire to go back. She told me that a year ago she would have said, "No, thank you," and that would have been that. But now, she says, "I told him that I appreciated the offer, but wanted to keep my own firm. Then I told him I'd love to have lunch with him and find out how we could each help each other. I never used to think that way." When you make marketing a habit, you'll begin to see marketing opportunities everywhere.

What are your business cards saying about you?

Have you taken a good look at your business card lately? In this era of electronic everything, your little old business card can still speak volumes about you and your practice. A well-designed business card is like having your laser talk in your pocket – or purse.

Maybe you're thinking, "But I don't have a laser talk." Well, re-thinking your business card is a great reason to get one! Remember, your laser talk can - and should - be the genesis for all of your marketing. Or maybe you're thinking, "But I'm a lawyer, how can I get creative with my business card?" If you're a creative person, you may be able to come up with some fresh ideas on your own. If not, consider hiring a designer to work with you. It will be money well spent.

To get you started thinking, check out these ["10 Creative Business Card Ideas" from Inc. Magazine](#). And then if you're still thinking, "Well that's cool stuff, but I'm a lawyer, I can't do anything that creative, take a look at the business card at the top of this post. That's the business card for Charleston, South Carolina, family law attorney, Melissa F. Brown. (In the interest of full disclosure, Melissa is one of my clients. And yes, I'm a bragging on her.) The business card, a Charleston garden gate, opens to visually represent her laser talk: "Helping individuals cross thresholds to new lives." The theme of her laser talk is reinforced in all of her marketing materials and her web site:

Melissa's laser talk and business cards are unique. And, guess what, yours will be, too. Begin by focusing on your laser talk. You might be amazed at where that takes you!



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If you really want to kick start your marketing, make a commitment to take three actions each day to "touch" your referral sources.

- Call three former clients.
- Call three referral sources.
- Send three emails.

It will take you only a few minutes, and the return on your investment of time will be well worth the effort.



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- Pull out one of your business cards. Put yourself on the receiving end, and imagine someone had just handed it to you.
- Does it convey what you want it to? Could you improve upon it?
- Get feedback on your cards from friends and colleagues.
- If your cards need a facelift, invest in a designer.



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Who's on Your "Top 20" List?

Do you know where your best clients come from? If you don't, you owe it to yourself take some time to find out. If you don't know where your best clients come from, how are you going to get more of them? Your "Top 20" List is made up of those people who refer you A & B clients on a consistent basis. Identifying these folks and building relationships with them is one of the greatest investments you can make in your law firm. By the way, when I say "building relationships," I mean real relationships. I don't mean relationships with the sole focus of getting referrals. I mean relationships with people you really like.

When you start to examine your referral sources, you may find that you have only a few referral sources who refer A & B clients to you on a consistent basis. That's OK! Identify those people. Thank them! Ask them for their feedback on the service your firm provides. Listen. If they offer constructive criticism, just listen – don't defend or explain. Then thank them again. I can promise you, there are very few attorneys asking how they can improve their service. You'll put yourself way above the crowd by simply asking the question.

Build strong relationships with the best referral sources on your Top 20 List. Then, start adding to that list.

"Elevator Pitch" or "Laser Talk" – Why You Need to Have One

One of the most important conversational strategies in the Atticus marketing tool kit is the Laser Talk. Simply put, the Laser Talk allows you to inform your listener about what you do. Hint: If someone asks you, "So what do you do?" "I'm an attorney," is not only *not* a Laser Talk, it's *not* a good answer. Period.

According to David Yewman, co-owner of [Elevator Speech](#), a consulting firm that specializes in helping clients craft 30-second descriptions of their companies, "Executives who can't, in a half a minute, explain what they do and why anyone should care miss out – on sales, funding, partnerships and more opportunities." Attorneys who can't explain who they help, how they help them, and what's unique about their practice in 30 seconds miss out on referrals. It's that simple.

In an article in [Inc. Magazine](#), Yewman works with a home security company to help them craft their what Yewman refers to as their "Elevator Pitch." After a lot of talk about "virtual connectivity," "redundancy," and "a web portal to monitor events," they hit upon: "We are bringing home security out of the closet." (There's a pretty funny "back story" to this line, too.)

"You've got to cut right to it, hit them over the head with it. The magic comes when you can talk like a human being about your business, and when you can really deliver a punch on why this is important," says Yewman.

You can learn to talk like a human being [read: non-lawyer] about what you do. Attorneys are in the business of changing lives, transforming lives. Don't be afraid to speak genuinely



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Start building your Top 20 list.

- Identify your best clients.
- Do you know where they came from? Make a list.
- If don't know who your referral sources are, start capturing that information for every, single potential client that contacts your office.



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Start working on your laser talk today. Be sure to:

- Nix the legalese. Talk like a real person.
- Keep it simple.
- Describe exactly how you help your clients.
- If you're having trouble getting started, finish this sentence: "Our clients hire us because . . ."

If you more help getting started, read *The IT Factor*, by Mark Wiskup.



About Nora Riva Bergman

As a coach and Practice Advisor with [Atticus](#), Nora is dedicated to helping attorneys create the lives and law practices they dreamed of when they were in law school. She knows the frustrations that attorneys experience every day and is committed to helping them change their lives for the better.

Nora brings a deep understanding of the practice and business of law to her work as coach and Practice Advisor. She has practiced as an employment law attorney and certified mediator and has served as a professor at both Stetson University College of Law and the University of South Florida, teaching courses in alternative dispute resolution and negotiation. In addition, Nora has been a speaker at conferences for the American Bar Association, The Florida Bar and other regional and national legal associations. She has also served as the executive director of the St. Petersburg Bar Association.

Her background as an attorney, law professor and bar executive gives her a unique perspective on the challenges lawyers face and makes her a powerful coach. In addition to her broad experience with all aspects of the law firm, Nora understands the importance of, and is committed to, helping attorneys leverage technology in order to maximize their ultimate success.

Nora is a graduate of the Leadership Development Institute at Eckerd College, and is certified in the Conflict Dynamics Profile[®] developed by the LDP to help individuals and organizations learn how to deal with conflict constructively. She is also certified in the DISC Behavioral Style Assessment.

Nora received an undergraduate degree in journalism, *summa cum laude*, from the University of South Florida and her J.D., *cum laude*, from Stetson University College of Law, where she was a member of the law review and served as a mentor for incoming students.



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