

# How Lawyers Can Develop Powerful Brands

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**KEY TAKEAWAY:** Products and services with strong brands have always outsold those with weak brands. Lawyers can now reap the rewards of having a strong brand by following the simple steps outlined in this article. The chief benefit of a well-known personal brand is it “pre-sells” clients on your services

## Brands Drive Purchases

When you head out to buy a car, a kitchen appliance – or even a cup of coffee – chances are good that you’ve already narrowed the field down to a small number of choices. How does this happen? A powerful tool called branding.

We choose products that offer the level of quality we are looking for and have successfully differentiated themselves from the rest of the pack. In any given market segment, brands “live” on a ladder of priority. A product can be on rung number one, number two, or number three – or somewhere underneath among the undifferentiated masses.

## Lawyers Need Personal Brands

Lawyers are no different. Lawyers can brand, and successfully take to market, a professional service. In this case, each individual lawyer or group should be viewed as a “service solution” – akin to a “product” – that needs its own, exclusive brand. If your personal brand is not in the top three in your category, you need to make some changes.

How is it possible for you to define and differentiate your personal brand when there are so many lawyers out there? One of the best ways to stand out is to create a new category. This is not easy, but the rewards are well worth it.

In one example, the firm Tedford & Pond, has successfully branded itself nationally as “fire science litigation.” If you do an Internet search using these terms, this is the only firm that shows up. Tedford & Pond is an expert in this area of the law. Everything they do communicates this expertise. And clients respond. If you were a client looking for this service solution, would you give them call? Probably so.

## Generalists are a Dying Breed

In the past, a lawyer – or a law firm – could be an unfocused generalist, knowing “just enough” to be moderately competent in a great number of different areas. The generalist’s expertise, in other words, is broad and shallow.

In today’s highly competitive market for legal services, however, buyers want to hire an expert – someone who has focused his or her career on solving the specific legal problems that arise in a particular industry. In other words, they want a lawyer whose expertise is focused and deep – a lawyer with a brand. The brand gives them comfort as well as the assurance that they have made the right choice.

## The Benefits of a Strong Brand

A commodity product can only charge commodity prices; a branded product can charge – and receive – premium prices. A brain surgeon earns a lot more than a general practitioner. The more specialized you become, the more your services are perceived to be valuable.

Another benefit of branding is the fact that a good brand not only promotes your services, but also creates a barrier against entry by others into your field. If you are number one, two, or three in the area you have carved out for yourself, others will have a very hard time stealing your business.

## Developing Your Own Personal Brand

Creation of your personal brand is an essential first step in the process of business development; all other steps (personal marketing, converting inquiries to engagement, and trusted-adviser status) build upon this one. Some people can create a personal brand on their own; others benefit from the guidance and perspective of a business development coach.

The heart of a personal brand is found at the place where your legal skills, your passions, and the needs of the marketplace intersect.

In developing your personal brand, follow these four steps:

**Step 1:** In assessing your legal skills, you need to objectively consider your strengths and weaknesses as a lawyer. As part of this process, consider the kinds of matters or cases you most enjoy, the kinds of clients – and industries – you most like to work with and your current reputation as a lawyer inside and outside your group or firm. Are there additional personal or professional skills that you need to acquire in order to be the best?

**Step 2:** Next, consider your passions. Why did you decide to practice law in the first place? What industries are you drawn to? What do you want to change in the world? Which issues really upset or excite you? What are your outside interests or hobbies? What community organizations do you belong to?

**Step 3:** Consider the factors that make you unique. These can include your gender, personality type, ethnic background, level of ambition, undergraduate degrees, law school, geographic origins, and previous careers. Other factors might be the business interests of your parents, siblings or spouses (where you doubtless have extra insight). If you take guidance from your passions and interests, you will be much happier throughout your career path.

**Step 4:** Finally, consider the marketplace. Where is the economy headed? Where is there a demand for what you do best and enjoy most? You can focus on a particular industry that interests you, or even a particular sub-section of that industry. You can focus on a particular size of business. You can focus on a particular part of the country – or even a particular business development district or neighborhood.

For example, we helped one client develop this brand: “I am the leading legal expert who helps large real estate developers navigate the tricky rules and regulations that hinder their project being built quickly and within budget in the Greater Denver area.”

### **Putting Your Personal Brand to Use**

Once you have created a personal brand, use it everywhere you can. Make it the heart of your “verbal business card” and the answer to the question, “What do you do?” Integrate it into your LinkedIn profile and firm bio. Lastly, use it as a part of any marketing collateral you develop.

While developing a personal brand takes time and effort, the rewards are well worth it.

# Overview of Revenue Wise Services and Contact Information

## FIRM OVERVIEW

Revenue Wise is a full service firm that specializes in helping law firms grow revenue. We use a combination of coaching, training, and consulting to help lawyers, practice groups, and ultimately, law firms become more successful. We can also license our materials, so your in-house staff can deliver the programs.

**Past clients have averaged an 800% return on their investment in our programs.**

We have been serving law firms for over 20 years and count some of the nation's top firms as our clients, including Orrick, Littler Mendelson, Fenwick & West, Kecker & Van Nest, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton, Holland & Hart, Lindquist & Vennun and many other firms.

Our services are grouped under these areas:

- **Lawyers Services.** We help your lawyers become better business developers.
- **LinkedIn and Social Media Services.** Many consider our LinkedIn for Lawyers program the best available.
- **Practice & Industry Group Services.** We help your team leaders and members increase revenue, deepen client loyalty, and improve overall team performance.
- **Client Development Services.** We help your firm systematically develop and deepen client loyalty.
- **Firm Services.** We help law firms develop strategies, structures, and plans that measurably grow revenue.
- **Marketing Department Services.** We work with marketing leaders and their teams to optimize the performance of their departments.

## QUESTIONS

If you have questions about our services, please write or give us a call.

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