



STATE OF ONLINE MARKETING 2016

OVERVIEW AND BEST PRACTICES FOR THE LEGAL INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

As we enter the second half of the decade, the Internet is “all grown up,” helping to shape virtually every decision consumers make – including which law practice to work with.

For a second year, Martindale-Nolo commissioned a study to get a real-time understanding of the way the legal community approaches online marketing. The result: a fascinating and insightful look at how law firms are using the Internet and other technologies to market their practices and develop new client relationships.

The resulting takeaways are valuable to firms of all sizes in today’s always-connected world.

ABOUT THE DATA

Martindale-Nolo surveyed more than 300 clients regarding their firms’ marketing initiatives. Survey respondents represented a wide range of practices, from solo practitioners to firms with dozens of attorneys on staff. Virtually all areas of practice were represented.

KEY FINDINGS

- The majority of consumers are now finding attorneys online.
- Over 60% of attorneys surveyed said lead generation and other online mediums are their best performing forms of advertising.
- Social media is becoming a more important strategy than search engine marketing.
- More than 70% of attorneys say they follow-up on leads within 15 minutes to 1 hour.
- More firms are using text to communicate with prospects than in 2015.

ONLINE MARKETING: CRUCIAL FOR SUCCESS

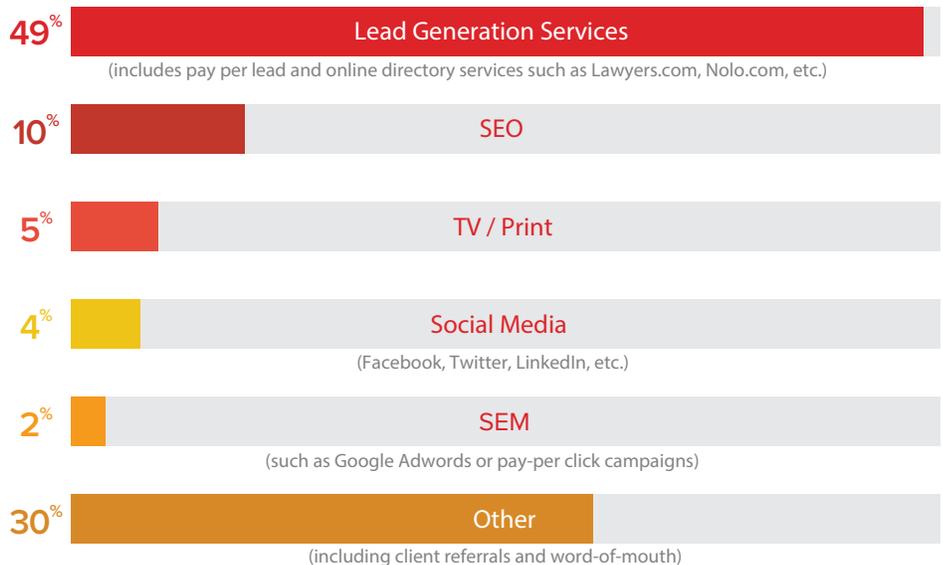
Let's first look at online marketing from the consumer perspective. According to a survey conducted by Lexis-Nexis Martindale-Hubbell, the vast majority (76%) of consumers are finding attorneys online today.*



CONSUMERS WHO NEED AN ATTORNEY SEARCH ONLINE

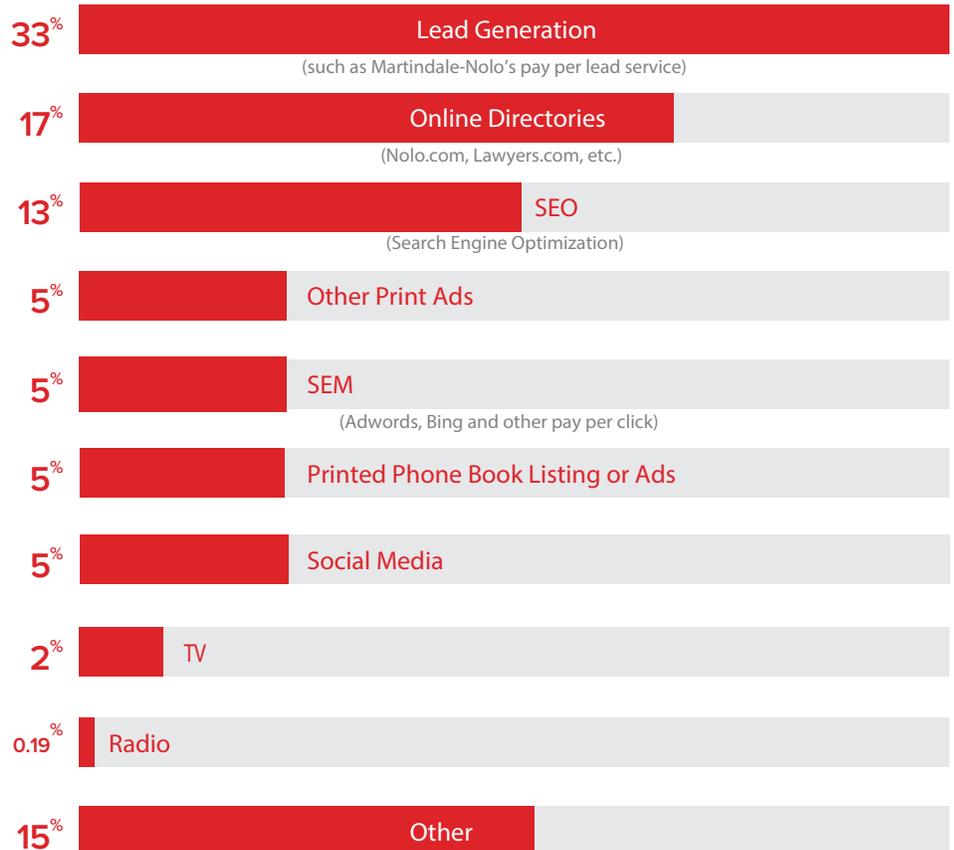
WHAT IS YOUR BEST-PERFORMING ADVERTISING MEDIUM?

- Over 60% of attorneys surveyed said online advertising, such as lead generation, SEO, social media or SEM were their most important forms of advertising.
- In this year's survey, social media outranked SEM in importance - possibly due to the increasing costs of Google Adwords and other pay per click programs.



* Source: Lexis-Nexis Martindale-Hubbell study, "Attorney Selection Research Study," conducted by The Research Intelligence Group, 2012.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR OVERALL BUDGET DID YOU SPEND ON THE FOLLOWING ADVERTISING MEDIUMS IN 2015?



NEED TO KNOW

It's no wonder that attorneys spent more than 50% on lead generation, including directory services - these services provide law practices with constant exposure to consumers looking for local attorneys online.

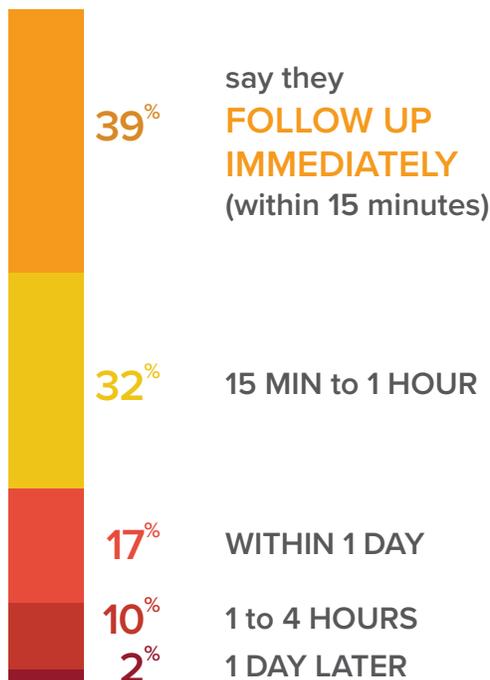
Online lead generation is particularly ideal for quickly establishing a client base for new firms, and can help rapidly grow established firms. It is the attorney's best go-to strategy when client referrals and word-of-mouth are not enough.

If you haven't tried lead generation in the past, or even in a while, there's no better time than now to try it. Due to its cost-effective nature, it levels the playing field for small and large firms to grow their businesses.

YOU'VE GOT THE LEADS. NOW WHAT?

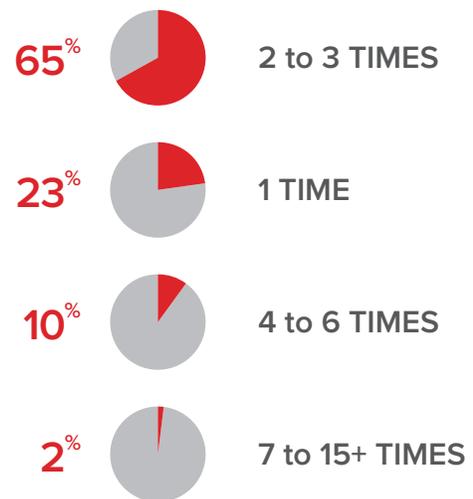
- Speed matters when responding to inbound leads, as does persistence—and there's room for improvement across the board.
- 71% of survey respondents respond to leads within one hour, but only slightly more than half of those respond within 15 minutes.
- Just 12% of respondents attempt to contact leads more than 3 times.

ON AVERAGE, HOW SOON DO YOU FOLLOW-UP ON AN INCOMING LEAD?



ON AVERAGE, HOW MANY TIMES MUST YOUR FIRM ATTEMPT TO CONTACT A PROSPECTIVE CLIENT?

77% attempt to CONTACT A LEAD 2 OR MORE TIMES



NEED TO KNOW

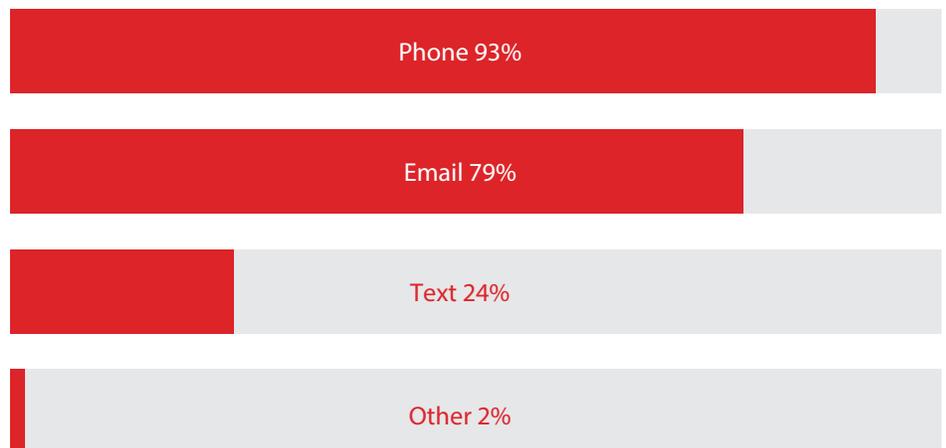
Response times longer than one hour should be considered missed opportunities. It's crucial to respond to leads as soon as possible, or another firm will likely beat you to the punch. Make every effort to respond to leads within 15 minutes.

And don't give up on leads after one attempt at contact. Make a minimum of three to five attempts to contact each prospect, and consider using a variety of alternate means (e-mail, text messaging, phone) to attempt contact.

TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE WAY FIRMS COMMUNICATE WITH POTENTIAL CLIENTS

- In comparison with survey results from just last year, more firms are using multiple ways to communicate with prospects.
- Email follow-up is almost as important as phone.
- Text is growing in use with 24% reporting they used text this year versus 16% in 2015.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATION METHODS DOES YOUR FIRM USE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH AN ONLINE PROSPECT (CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)?



NEED TO KNOW

Consider the days of a telephone-only client development process officially obsolete. In addition to email becoming almost as commonplace as the telephone, almost 24% of firms are using text messaging to communicate with prospects – and this number is growing rapidly because it affords attorneys a way to respond immediately, even if they are in court or not available.

Remember, regardless of communication method, speed and persistence is key to converting leads. It's crucial to respond to leads as soon as possible, and to attempt contact more than one time, whether it be by phone, e-mail, text message – or all three.

ABOUT THE MARTINDALE-NOLO LEGAL MARKETING NETWORK

As the largest legal marketing network with 15 million visitors per month, we help thousands of new and established attorneys across 55+ practice areas increase their visibility and credibility, generate targeted leads and convert two times more prospects to clients.

For more information, please visit:
www.Martindale.com/MarketYourFirm