

# Future-Proofing Your Practice: Smarter Strategies for the Age of AI

**Pricing • Positioning • Promotion  
in a Rapidly Changing Profession**



Association for  
Conflict Resolution  
Illinois Chapter

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ACR-Illinois**

January Education Session  
January 22, 2026

# Get the Materials

<https://susaneguthrie.com/ACR-IL>



# ADR and legal professionals struggle to move forward for three fundamental reasons:

**They lack clear positioning** in a rapidly evolving, tech-influenced landscape.

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**They rely on pricing models** that no longer reflect how value is created or delivered.

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**They approach promotion reactively**, instead of using strategy to stay relevant and visible.

# A Framework for Adapting in a Rapidly Changing World



**POSITIONING**



**PRICING**



**PROMOTION**

**The Three Ps are not about chasing tools or trends.  
They help you adapt intentionally and use tools strategically.**



## **The shift is twofold.**

You need to adapt how you think about your practice, and then you use tools to support that adaptation.

When people reverse that order, they get overwhelmed or stuck.”

# 01

## Positioning



How you define, present, and differentiate your practice so the right people immediately understand **why you are relevant now.**

**Technology is not replacing expertise.**

**It is changing how expertise is evaluated, discovered, and trusted.**



# What Strong Positioning Requires

Positioning works when three elements are clear and aligned:

- **Clarity on who you serve**

Who benefits most from your work in today's environment?

- **A clear value story**

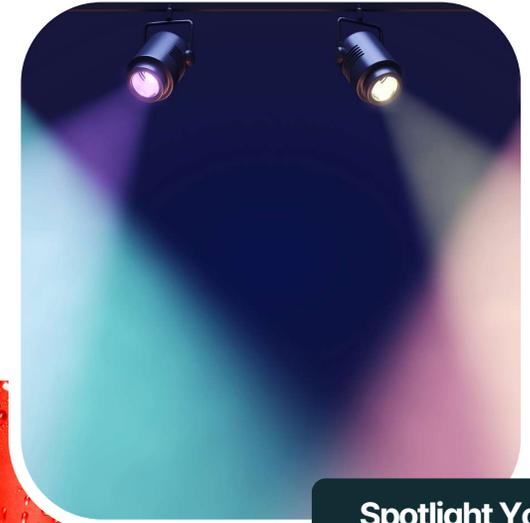
What problem do you solve, and why does your approach matter now?

- **Meaningful differentiation**

What makes your work distinct as technology reshapes how disputes are handled?



Clarity on Why YOU?



Spotlight Your Value



How You are Different

# The Biggest Mistakes in Positioning

Where Most Professionals Go Wrong

## Generalism

Trying to be everything to everyone makes you generic & forgettable.

## Buzzwords

Overloading messaging with jargon → clients tune out.

## Credentialism

Hiding behind credentials instead of showing value.

## Positioning That Supports Adaptation and Growth

- Define who you serve best
- Articulate your value in plain language
- Highlight what makes your work distinct
- Stay consistent across platforms

## Positioning That Connects & Converts



# POSITIONING TAKEAWAY: FUTURE-PROOFING RELEVANCE

## Using Strategy and AI to Support Positioning

- Clarify who you serve and why your work matters now
- Communicate your value in clear, modern language
- Identify how your skills align with emerging needs and opportunities
- Use AI tools to refine, test, and strengthen your positioning over time

**You'll leave with tools and prompts to carry this work forward, using AI as a strategic support to stay relevant, credible, and clearly positioned as the profession continues to evolve.**

# 02

## Pricing

### Why Pricing Is the Next Strategic Question

Technology is changing:

- How efficiently work gets done
- How clients perceive value
- What clients expect in terms of predictability and transparency

If your pricing model has not evolved, it is likely misaligned with how value is now delivered.



# PRICING IN THE AGE OF AI

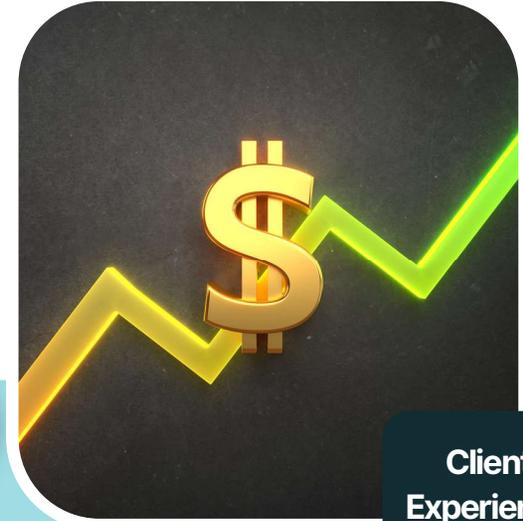
Technology is changing how work is performed, not just how fast it gets done.

As a result:

- Efficiency is increasing
- Time spent is decreasing
- Client expectations are shifting toward predictability and clarity
- When pricing is still tied primarily to time, it becomes misaligned with how value is actually delivered.



What **VALUE** do you bring?



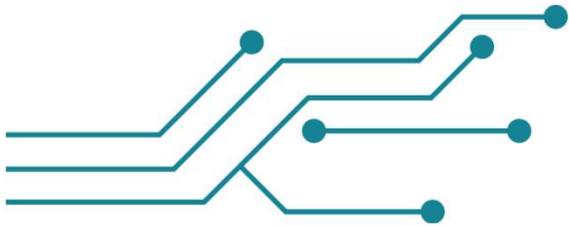
**Client Experience and Trust**



**Sustainable Income**

# Where Pricing Breaks Down

Where Most Professionals Go Wrong



## Default Hourly

Sticking to the billable hour → rewards inefficiency, frustrates clients.

## Underpricing

Underpricing services → undervalues expertise and erodes sustainability.

## Complicated

Overcomplicating fee structures → confuses clients and slows conversions.

## Lack of Scope Clarity

Creates client anxiety and professional burnout..

# How to Do It Right

## Pricing That Aligns With How Value Is Delivered

- Predictability for clients
- Clarity around scope and expectations
- Pricing based on value, not time
- Flexibility to account for complexity and risk

Technology makes these models more feasible and easier to manage, not harder.

Pricing That Supports  
You & Your Clients



# PRICING TAKEAWAY: FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR FEES

## Using Strategy and AI to Support Pricing Decisions

- Identify where technology is increasing efficiency
- Clarify the value clients receive, not the time spent
- Define scope clearly to support predictability
- Use tools to model, test, and refine pricing structures

You'll leave with prompts and tools to work through this after today, using AI as a support for clearer, more strategic pricing decisions.

# 03

## Promotion

### IN A TECH- ENABLED WORLD



### **Promotion as Strategic Visibility, Not Marketing Noise**

Promotion today is about demonstrating relevance and expertise in a world where attention is fragmented and options are endless.

### **Technology has changed:**

- How professionals are discovered
- How credibility is assessed
- How quickly people decide who to trust

# Promotion = Visibility + Consistency

- Promotion is how you stay top of mind with the right clients.
- It's not about shouting louder, it's about showing up with clarity and consistency.
- Visibility builds trust long before the first consultation.

**YOU HAVE MORE OPTIONS THAN  
EVER BECAUSE OF TECHNOLOGY!**



**Build TRUST**



**Stay Top  
of Mind**



**Show Up**

# The Biggest Mistakes in Promotion

Where Most Professionals Go Wrong

## One Bucket

Relying only on referrals → unpredictable pipeline.

## Spaghetti Approach

Posting sporadically or without a clear message or plan.

## Me, Me, Me

Talking about yourself instead of addressing client needs.

## Too Much

Trying to be on every platform → spreading too thin.

# HOW TO PROMOTE STRATEGICALLY

## Promotion That Supports Adaptation and Growth

- Lead with the problem you solve
- Choose one or two platforms to show up consistently
- Use technology to reduce friction and increase consistency
- Focus on usefulness, not self-promotion

Promotion Through Thought Leadership



# PROMOTION TAKEAWAY: FUTURE-PROOFING VISIBILITY

## Using Strategy and AI to Support Promotion

- Clarify your core message and audience
- Use tools to support consistency, not volume
- Repurpose insights across formats and platforms
- Stay visible by being useful and relevant

**You'll leave with prompts and tools to help you carry this work forward, using AI to support thoughtful, sustainable visibility as the profession continues to evolve.**

# WRAP-UP: FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR PRACTICE



## Clarity creates momentum

When you know your **positioning**, pricing, and promotion, growth stops feeling like guesswork.

## Confidence drives profit

Clear, client-centered **pricing** and messaging make it easier for clients to say “yes.”

## Consistency builds trust

Strategic **promotion** through thought leadership is the fastest path to sustainable, long-term success.

# FINAL THOUGHT

**Future-proofing is not about predicting the future.**

**It is about building a practice that can adapt as change accelerates and developing a mindset that is flexible, forward-thinking, and open to evolution.**



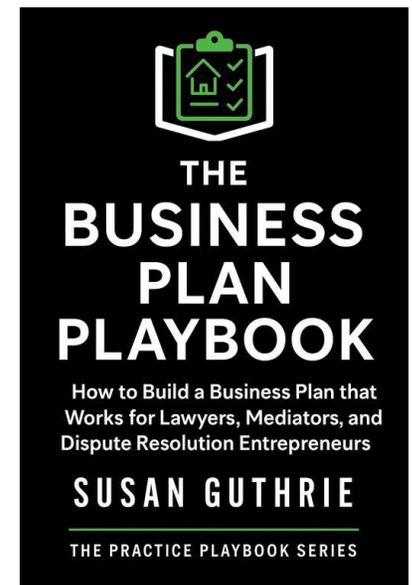
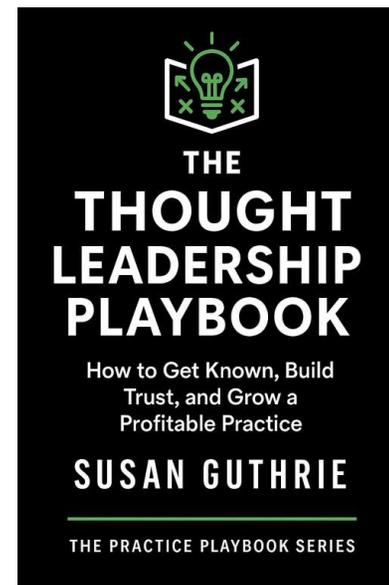
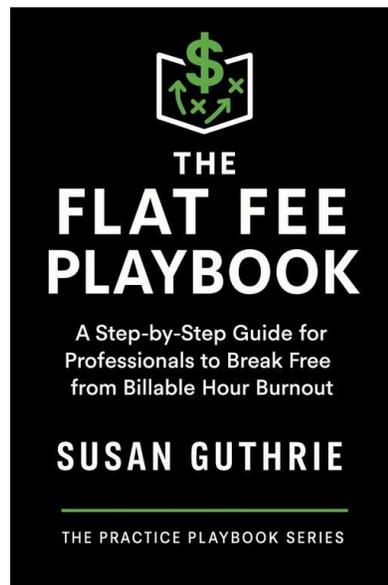
# What to do NOW

It's time to  
do your  
HOMEWORK!

<https://susaneguthrie.com/ACR-IL>



# More Resources:



# More Resources:

[susaneguthrie.com](http://susaneguthrie.com)

Date: Feb. 2, 2026

Time: 11 am CT

Place: Live on Zoom





**Susan Guthrie**

Helping Mediators, Lawyers &  
Entrepreneurs Build Profitable Pr...



# Thank You

## Contact Me

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