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Are You Missing Out on Business by Not Talking to Your Clients?

By George Brandon

Lawyers are in the business of solving problems. Clients come to you when they face uncertainty, and you provide clarity, strategy, and legal solutions. Your expertise and diligence will guide them through complex legal issues to achieve successful outcomes. But what happens after the case is closed or the deal is signed?

Many attorneys assume that delivering an excellent legal service is enough to keep clients coming back. They believe a job well done will naturally lead to repeat business and referrals. Yet, in today's competitive legal market, such an assumption is dangerous.

If you do not actively engage with your clients—beyond the immediate legal matter—you may leave significant business on the table. Maintaining a strong, ongoing relationship with clients is equally important as delivering excellent legal work.

The Silent Killer of Client Retention

Too often, lawyers treat legal matters as transactions rather than relationships. A client hires you for a contract dispute, an estate plan, or a business formation, and once the matter is resolved, the interaction ends. This approach is problematic. It leaves room for doubt, forgetfulness, and, ultimately, disengagement.

Clients may be highly satisfied with your work, but they will not necessarily think of you for further or future legal assistance. They may not realize you or your colleagues handle different areas of law relevant to their other needs.

For example, a small business owner who hires you for a commercial lease negotiation may not realize you can also help with employment law issues, compliance matters, or mergers and acquisitions. A family law client who trusts you for a divorce might not know you assist with estate planning or child custody modifications.

This lack of awareness can lead them to seek help elsewhere. If you don't stay in touch with your clients, someone else will.

The Power of Proactive Communication

Many lawyers hesitate to follow up with clients because they don't want to appear pushy or too focused on sales. This is a mistake. Proactive communication isn't about selling, it's about educating and staying top of mind. Clients appreciate attorneys who take the time to check in, offer insights, and show genuine interest in their ongoing well-being.

So, how can you maintain meaningful client relationships without feeling like you're marketing yourself? Here are some practical strategies:

1. Schedule Post-Matter Check-ins

Don't let closing a case or completing a transaction be your last interaction. A simple follow-up email or phone call will go a long way. Ask how things are, and whether your client has any lingering legal concerns.

For example, if you handled a business formation, follow up a few months later to see how their operations are running. If you finalized an estate plan, check in periodically. Ask whether the plan needs an update due to major life changes.

These conversations not only reinforce your commitment to the client but also provide opportunities to uncover additional ways you can help.

2. Provide Value Through Education

Your clients might not always realize when they need legal assistance, but they appreciate insights that help them avoid problems down the road. By sharing relevant legal updates, industry trends, or risk management strategies, you position yourself as a trusted advisor rather than just a service provider.

Consider sending out a quarterly email newsletter with brief, digestible legal updates. You don't have to write lengthy articles; a few bullet points about recent regulatory changes, case law developments, or best practices in your practice area keep clients informed and engaged.

Alternatively, if you prefer a more personal touch, send individual emails to clients when you come across legal news that may affect them. A quick message like, “I saw this recent update on employment law and thought it might be relevant to your business—let me know if you’d like to discuss,” shows that you are thinking about their needs.

3. Use Client Surveys and Feedback Requests

Asking for client feedback not only improves your service but also helps you gauge their satisfaction and future legal needs.

Consider sending a short survey after completing a matter, asking about their experience working with you. Did they feel supported? Was communication clear? Do they have any concerns about ongoing legal matters?

Not only does this give you valuable insights, but it also opens the door to further conversation. If a client mentions an unresolved concern, you have an immediate opportunity to offer additional services.

4. Host Client Events or Webinars

Another way to stay connected is by organizing educational or networking events for clients. Hosting a webinar on a trending legal topic or inviting clients to an informal Q&A session can keep them engaged while showcasing your expertise.

For example, if you practice corporate law, you could hold a webinar on “Common Legal Pitfalls for Startups.” If you specialize in family law, a seminar on “What You Need to Know About Child Custody Modifications” could be valuable to past and potential clients.

These events don’t have to be elaborate. A simple virtual coffee chat when clients can ask questions informally will strengthen relationships and remind them of your services.

5. Leverage Social Media and Online Presence

Many lawyers underestimate the power of social media in client engagement. Platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and even Facebook can help you stay in front of your clients without requiring direct outreach.

Sharing short posts about legal trends, common mistakes to avoid, or success stories (with permission) will keep you visible and relevant. If clients regularly see your name and insights, they are more likely to remember you when they need legal help.

Business Growth Starts with Relationships

The most successful lawyers are not only skilled legal practitioners but also relationship builders. Referrals and repeat business don't happen automatically; they occur when lawyers invest time in maintaining connections with their clients.

The key takeaway is simple: if you're not talking to your clients, you're missing out on opportunities. Clients who don't hear from you may assume you're too busy, not interested in their ongoing needs, or simply forget that you offer additional services.

The legal industry is competitive, and clients have more options than ever before. If you want to build long-term client relationships, you must be proactive. Follow up, check in, educate, and engage.

Your clients already trust you—don't let that trust fade because of silence. The more you stay connected, the more likely they'll turn to you when they need legal guidance. And that is how you turn satisfied clients into lifelong clients.

About the Author

George Brandon, the president of LegalXcellence.com, specializes in a wide range of business development services for law firms, including recruiting, coaching and succession planning. Reach him at george@legalxcellence.com.