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Dale Tincher Interview by Mike Senoff 6-9-03

Mike: What does it cost you to get a get a client, what does it cost you to generate a lead, and how much are you making from them, that is the essence of their law practice, and many people don't take the time to do that, do they?

Music....

Dale: This is Dale Tincher.

Mike Dale, this is Michael Senoff in San Diego. How are you?

Dale Oh, fine thank you.

Mike Good, I understand you are going to talk a little bit about marketing. Ok, is this a good time for you?

Dale It is.

Mike Ok, great, well it is very nice to meet you. You are the Guru of Marketing for Attorneys via website. Tell us, how did you get into this, were you an attorney at one time?

Dale No. I've been a computer consultant for about 25 years and I've been a legal consultant for about 15, and became interested in consulting for law firms as far as technology, telling them what kind of network they had and what kind of computers, and then helping them move to the new environment and I enjoyed the consulting part of it.

Mike Okay

Dale Then about six years ago, I became intrigued with the internet, actually got an AT&T dial up account, and said this would be a great way to make a living, it's very interesting, this appears to be the way the world is going and the more I thought about it, the more I worked with it, and the more I was convinced, and indeed this is the way the world is going. So I put in all my time and energy that I could into learning about the web and learning to get entranced in the web.

Mike Let me ask you this, when you were consulting with attorneys 15 years ago, this was before you were doing any online consulting?

Dale Right

Mike What kind of aspects of consulting were you doing before the online...?

Dale Well, a part of really, in many computers, at the time when many computers were as large as refrigerators and did far less than what the notebook computers do today...

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Mike Ok

Dale And, basically I would look at their common billing systems, their accounting, their set up and help them determine the best ways to go, the most efficiencies, umm... and some marketing also, really how to do the most with the least.

Mike Are you a student of marketing yourself?

Dale I feel like I am.

Mike Okay

Dale Yes, my degree is in business administration and that is the way I plan to go and I've been a marketing manager for two Fortune 500 companies and attending a lot of schools and really do enjoy it like you.

Mike When you had clients, when you started working 15 years ago, I'm sure you see some common denominators, what would you say are the five biggest mistakes that attorneys are making with their marketing or with their website. Can we go over some of the things that you see that people are making big mistakes and that are ultimately costing them money in terms of billing and clients?

Dale The biggest mistakes in web marketing, are first of all, trying to go cheap. Too many attorneys are very bright and they have conquered a lot of technology dragons in the past, they have learned how to use phone systems and how to develop the best way to accomplish certain things with technology, and they feel like they can take that across to the web. Sometimes they can, some do very well, but many, don't have the time or the energy to dig in and learn what is required to be successful...

Mike Right

Dale Others have a friend or a relative or a brother in law or whatever that is learning about web design and they can get him to do a web site very inexpensively, but it simply doesn't work and these same attorneys would never contract with an amateur to do their brochure because it represents their firm, but sometimes they have an amateur do their website and their marketing, and this simply doesn't work.

Mike What is... and, probably because of the perceived perception that if someone is searching for an attorney or a law firm online, and they get some amateur looking site, that is going to be the first time they know anything about that law firm and it probably gives them a pretty negative perception of the firm.

Dale That's exactly right. ... they would have the professional brochure but

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have the amateurs' website, but you are right, visitors see that site and they say one or two things; they say they either don't have the budget, which bothers me, or they don't have the interest, or they don't understand the internet, and none of those are positive. So they do react negatively and sometimes a very good firm with a bad website is discounted or not considered because of the amateurs' website.

Mike Yeah, that makes sense. Lets also talk about this... because of the internet, because search engines like Google and Yahoo and the sophistication, it seems to me, at least in my experience, in my business, the first time I'm looking for something, and especially if it was a law firm, its going to be a lot simpler for me to go to Google and search a law firm and many times this will be the very first impression I'll get of anything I'm looking for, and it seems like this is the way its going in our internet age. Would you agree.

Dale I agree 100%. It's like when you're not looking for a car, you tune out the car ads, you tune out anything to do with cars, but when you start looking, you start paying attention. Attorneys are the same way. An attorney... a law firm may have a wonderful reputation, but people don't know that. The typical consumer doesn't know or care about law firms, they have no need to. But when they do have the need or the interest, then they go to the website and see the website and they just move on to another one that looks more professional or more informative. Now the reason that an amateur can't design a professional website, and there are many, my first few, I thought I was descent at it, but as I go back and look at them now, I see that I really was fairly amateurish.

Mike Right.

Dale It takes to develop a website, you need cosmetic and programming design skills and expertise, you need business knowledge, you need placement expertise, and no one individual has all of those things. It takes really a team to develop a professional website, and it takes someone with marketing knowledge to make that website successful.

Mike Absolutely, it does make sense, and there is a lot of aspect. First of all, and correct me if I'm wrong, I think the most important thing is, is to drive that potential client looking for assistance with their legal matter to your site and that's probably critical. You could have the most beautiful site in the world, but if you can't get people there, no ones going to know about you, so, can we talk a little bit about how someone does this to get people to their specific website and what services you provide that can help them accomplish that goal.

Dale You're exactly right. They have to find you before they consider you,

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and once they find you, you have to have a compelling website. Lets talk a little about how search engines are designed and how they rank sites. Would that be helpful?

Mike Absolutely.

Dale. Ok. Search engines progress, make money, and succeed based on their ability to provide quality results and provide them rapidly. Now, to do that, they have to... they constantly change their algorithms or the way they rank sites. They do not want certain people dominating the rankings by knowing certain techniques that the search engines employ, so they constantly change the algorithm.

Mike Okay

Dale Now, those algorithms today, for example, include something called Meta Tags, that's programming code that is in the search engine, actually in the website that the search engines read and the programmer or the web designer places in the code. There's a title, a description, and some key words. The search engines have a database. That database is driven... is accessed by the algorithms, but indeed, if you type personal injury lawyers, for example, those words... a searcher does... those words go to the database and look through the database to find sites that have those words in the Meta Tag and in the contents, and then they apply others algorithms to make that site come up at the top.

STRAT What can you do, or what tricks do you use to get a high ranking, if there are thousands of personal injury attorneys across the country, what can you do that others don't have the skill to or don't understand how to do?

Dale That's correct. There are certain techniques that you do use and you are right, there are tens of thousands of them and they all want to be on top, and we will talk a little later about the rewards for being on top, because it is worth a great deal of money to have top rankings. But, indeed part of it, part of the search engines algorithms include the Meta Tags. They include the page contents. They carefully compare the Meta Tags to the page content. Page content needs to have the words Personal Injury Lawyers in it a certain number of times if its going to be successful, and have a good, what's called relevance. (*Mumbled word*) to that they might have (*mumbled word*) value and people wouldn't be (*mumbled word*) to it, and both of those are positive. There are other factors also, and they don't publicize them, they are actually very secret and they change frequently.

Mike Okay

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Dale But... their method again is providing the client's quality results so that when people are looking for something they know they are going to get results, for example, from Google.

Mike Okay. So, lets talk about the benefits. If someone has their Meta Tags and the words placed in their site properly, give us examples of some clients, maybe that you have used and what you have seen that they can do for a law firm.

Dale Okay. I can tell you a little bit about what its done for us, if you like... (*mumbled word*) clients

Mike Absolutely. And can I ask you to speak up a just a little bit. Thanks.

Dale Okay, I can tell you a bit about what its done for us and I can tell you about what its done for some clients. If, for example, my goal a few years ago was to (*mumbled word*), so if any one types phrases at all related to us, our site would come up at the top. Now if you typed law firm web designers, or law firm web consultants, web marketing consultants, law firms, basically anything law firms legal research, law firm web photos, anything like that, our site would come up in the top five, typically number one or number two. So, we have enough (*mumbled word*) to talk to people in the market for that, and that's allowed us to have develop a nation wide presence with more clients outside of North Carolina than inside, so, it has allowed us to become part of a very small company one person, myself, and grow significantly. In terms of law firms, we apply a lot of those same procedures. Some law firms will come to us and say, I want a brochure site, others will say I want to be well known in my city, others will say I want to be well known in my state, others will say I want to be well known all over the nation. And we develop campaigns for accomplishing those.

Mike Okay

Dale I'll talk more about the campaigns in a moment. But the rewards can be great. We have some clients that have made sizable investments in campaigns, but we have one client that obtains one case per day, now that's not inquiries, that's case per day, and they are bargaining workers comp and social security disability. That is good money per case, and they are highly successful. We have other clients that get a number of inquiries every day. One client is very happy, he gets three inquiries per week for consultation. That was his goal. We match up the goals with the budget, of course, and then we develop a campaign. Now the campaign can be done in a number of ways. If a goal is not that ambitious, we might simply work with the Meta Tags and the

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content and they will do well for their small city. However, in a large city or state, it may take a campaign. Now that campaign may involve multiple websites. Lets take for example medical malpractice as a target. If a law firms website has on it "we do medical malpractice, personal injuries, workers comp, we do social security disability, we do estate planning" that's a lot of words.

Mike Too much, yeah

Dale Yeah. It's like when you are looking for an eye doctor, your focus... a couple of reasons is not good, if you are looking for an eye doctor and you see generalist, you are going to pick the one that specializes, so indeed we may develop a site for medical malpractice, called medical malpractice Texas, or something, and we have a lot of Meta Tags with Texas, we have a lot of Medical Malpractice in the contents, we have a lot of frequently asked questions, and we develop it properly with the links and everything else so the site comes high for searchers for that particular practice area.

Mike Okay.

Dale That may be one of the campaigns. We have one client that has been very successful and has 17 websites. We have another client that has one website that is successful, successful is determined by what your goals, and your budget is of course.

Mike Right. So with each client, usually the first thing you are going to do is talk to them and evaluate what do they want out of this campaign of the site. Find out what their goal is and you let them know how to do that.

Dale That's exactly right. I have some clients... most clients quite honestly just like the fact that we have a long list of references on our site... they have to kind of prove it to themselves, which is understandable, so a lot of clients will start small, they will start achieving certain success, start to see cases, and they then come back and invest a considerable more money in to a campaign. We have had several clients do that.

Mike Can you give me an idea, a range, I know every different case... every different client may cost something different, but could this range from someone who may be has a small budget of \$1000 all the way up to maybe \$50,000 for the national campaign.

Dale We have done... that's a very good question... we have done campaigns all the way from \$1000 to \$100,000.

Mike Okay

Dale One client wanted national exposure and they had the fund, so indeed, we have been successful with that. We have had several small firms

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that just want to practice in a small city and that can be done very affordably.

Mike Let me ask you this question, could you give me some ideas... let's say this... I'm sure there are a lot of attorneys who have (*mumbled word*) grafted and have gotten their cousin to design their site, or they have made the best effort in doing it themselves, but may not have all the answers. Can we talk about if they have something already and maybe don't have the money to invest, just some key important elements of the website, from an esthetic view to some techniques that can get them better results, what are some of the most common problems you see in attorney's websites right now that may not have invested in their professionalism to do it right, that maybe you can give them quick tips to help them improve it without really investing anything else, but understanding some of these tips.

Dale Right.

Mike Can you give some ideas about this?

Dale Yes. Defiantly. A mistake a lot of firms make is that they try to put a token website out there and just have a presence and as you know that really doesn't buy them much because of a lot of other sites have token presence.

Mike What do you mean by token presence?

Dale Like a small brochure site that just has "here's who we are, here's a list of the areas of practice in which we work, here's a list of our bios, and here's the contact form". Well, that doesn't really inform the client. We believe in doing two things. 1. We believe in handling a site that is first concise, because some people just want "give me the facts", but with links to more detail. So if you say "Estate Planning", have a link to areas that describe estate planning. An area that has frequently asked questions. In other words, package the information in another way. Some people love frequently asked questions. I do personally, so I can go see what other people have asked and so forth, and then get answers. Now another nice thing about frequently asked questions is that you can emphasize your strength and weaknesses, your strengths rather, and then address those and say for example "why should you have a certified estate planning" or something like, indeed if you are a private estate planner. The biggest mistake is that most people have just putting up a token website and then not having details.

Mike I can totally relate to that and its almost like they put up a token website almost like the little yellow page ad that shows the logo of who we are, here's my number, call me. Now...

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- Dale That's right Michael. Attorneys are busy and obviously their cases come first in their mind and it is difficult to find the time, but if they find the right web consultant a web consultant will develop the site and will take the time to flush out the content and add to the all the information that should be there with minimum time involvement from the attorney, and with a very affordable price. I had one client who and an estate planning firm, and they have done a wonderful job of having a great deal of content on the site. Someone asked me one time, why do they do that, because someone could really go to their site and develop their own estate planning set up. I told them the reason they do it is because if a client looked at the competitors site and did not see much information and then goes to his site and sees all this enormous amount of information, check list, details, frequently asked questions, and they get to know that firm and get to feel good about the firm, they appreciate the fact that there is information there. Now in the long run, they know they could, but they would never do their own estate plan, so they end up going to the firm to use the firm and they get a lot of inquiries.
- Mike You know, I'm a marketing nut. I love marketing, and I also studied a lot about copy writing, and there is always the question, it has been proven that a two page letter will outsell a one page letter. And a four page letter will outsell a two page letter. An eight page letter will outsell a four page letter. Every time. The more information you have in there, the more reasons for that person to buy, and more is better as long as you are giving good content and good reasons for that prospect or that customer to use your law firm or to buy a product for that matter.
- Dale Right. And that's the beauty of the web. Is that you can indeed give concise information but say click here to learn more. So you can get as detailed as you want and we certainly encourage that.
- Mike Okay, that's a great tip. So more is better. Give your prospect more information about yourself, what you are about, and try and build some kind of personal relationship with him through the internet.
- Dale Correct.
- Mike What's another mistake you see happening a lot out there by attorneys with their websites.
- Dale An interesting mistake is understandable, but a lot attorneys resist pictures, graphics, and so forth. I even saw one convince someone to take the graphics off and have a free vanilla site. Attorneys all day long read black and white paper. They are comfortable with it. What they forget is, that their clients do not look at the black and white paper all

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day. They look at the TV and newspapers, not newspapers, but magazines and so forth. So they are more comfortable seeing some pictures that explain and are explicable. So we certainly encourage attractive websites. And if you starting looking at attorney websites, you don't see very many attractive sites. They are very plain, very uninteresting.

Mike Have you found this, through your experience, to get better results when it's less text heavy and mixed in with text and graphics to pull better results?

Dale Without a doubt. If you have, lets say that you are doing estate planning, and on the front of the top page is a picture of a couple in their fifties, with a boat behind them, whatever, that tells you an entire story. They look prosperous, they look happy, they are smiling, and you don't have to read any further to gain the mental picture. Where as with text, you have to wade through a great deal of text.

Mike Okay, that is a good point. So you want the right pictures that are going to convey some kind of emotional response, a positive response, that will keep people on the site in reading more.

Dale Correct.

Mike Okay, what's another mistake you find?

Dale Another mistake is people or firms building monuments for themselves. Just talking about their achievements, associates. What the client wants to know is, what will you do for me, do you care, can you help me, why are you the best firm, and that's what the firm needs to address. Now the fact that they are members of the country club and so forth... I'll see some of that...

Mike No one really cares, do they? They just want to know "can you help me and can you do in an affordable price and are you going to care about me".

Dale Correct

Mike Why do you think people, what do you think it is, you see it all the time in the form of logos in the yellow pages, and... why is it that I guess law firms believe that that type of thing don't.

Dale That's the way they have been trained by the book publisher. The book publishers hand them a page and say here's an example. Follow this format, and that's all the format is. Were you went to school, associations you belong to, and so forth, and that has been ingrained in them.

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Mike And they just don't know any better.

Dale That's correct.

Mike Okay. Any other mistakes? What about... here's something that I have seen, even in my experience, is the color of the background of the webpage. Can you talk about color and white writing on black backgrounds, things like that.

Dale Umm... it depends partly on the market place, if you are an estate planning firm you probably take a more conservative approach, if you are marketing to technology companies, lets intellectual properties, you probably want more grit and flash and color. In general, the best approach is to have a white background with black text.

Mike Why is that?

Dale It's easier to read, more familiar, really basically easier to read.

Mike Okay

Dale However, that's not always needed. If a firm is marketing a site... again, a site towards a certain market, advertising companies, intellectual property and so forth... doesn't need to be black on white, its really better if it's more colorful. Have some pizzazz. We are not real sticklers on it being black text on white. Black text on white can be a bit dreary, a bit boring, and uninteresting if it's not presented properly. Basically, with colors, blues are good, especially if you are targeting males. Umm, burgundies can be used sometimes. Red might even be okay for females... again depending on your audience.

Mike Right. Each color has a psychological impact on the person seeing it. You don't want to have a pink website if you are appealing to males, something's going to click and say this doesn't seem right.

Dale Right.

Mike Lets talk about this, how important is it when you get a visitor or a prospect or a lead to your website, do you employ any strategies to capture that name and phone number or email address or address that you can have a chance to follow up and sell them on your services.

Dale We do not do a lot of cookies, we don't try to trick people, but we do offer information and we offer, "click here to subscribe to our newsletter", "click here to see an example of it" to determine if its of value to you. So, yes, anything we can do to remind them who you are. Now news letters indeed are very effective.

Mike So when someone, if someone wanted to subscribe to a newsletter,

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you are going to capture their first and last name or whatever you chose, any information about them.

Dale That's correct. Get their name, email address, and depending on what you are after, what they want to know about you, you may ask for more information and then if anyone you market to, its very easy, very affordable to send email newsletters. We do send them in the body of the email, we don't (*mumbled words*) very similar... we sometimes have been (*mumbled word*), such as how much do you know, how much do you know about such and such or what should you do in the event of a car accident, and people enjoy sometimes filling those out and responding, and allowing you to capture their name and address.

Mike This is a digital recording and kind of cut me out so I have to restart it.

Dale Sure

STOP
Mike Let me ask you this question, before the internet was here, you know, attorneys would have to rely on different systems to generate clients. So before the internet, how did attorneys generate new clients. What methods did they use in marketing to get their clients. From your experience in consulting over 15 years, and how has the internet changed that from your experience in seeing what a good web presence can do.

Dale That's a very good question. The attorneys in the past used Martin Dale Hubble (?), directory (*mumbled words*) and directory services, and attorneys paid a great deal of money to list their firm in the directory, a printed book technically, each firm bought it, and if they needed to refer a firm, or someone from another city or state, they would look in the book. Martin Dale still offers those books. And other directories such as (*mumbled word*) publishing and so forth offer those type capabilities.

Mike What did they charge, what did it cost to be listed in their?

Dale Thousands of dollars... it could be easily eight to ten or twenty thousand – depending on the size of the firm.

Mike And was this like a monopoly.

Dale Absolutely.

Mike Okay

Dale There were local directories (*mumbled words*). The Bar Association had some lists and so forth. Now a lot of firms have not changed. They are still buying the book and still using the book, and a lot of them don't realize or really don't want to take the time, or really don't want to admit that the web has so much capability, so much reach.

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- Mike Now... excuse me for interrupting, was this book ordered by attorneys all throughout the country
- Dale Oh, absolutely.
- Mike So this was a system to generate referrals from other attorneys.
- Dale Correct.
- Mike So that was one method.
- Dale And it worked well, it still works well, if a firm can get a lot of their business from referrals, but not a lot do.
- Mike Okay, and what other methods have you seen for attorneys to get clients.
- Dale In the past, it has been word of mouth, obviously, referrals, they networked very successfully, joining the Chamber of Commerce, a lot of networking. But today, the web... that's the main way, because as you know the web has changed all that. With the force of today's... this year next year, one fourth of all business to business purchasing is happening on the web. Different articles you read say that 60% of people in the US use the web. 80% of those expect to find reliable news and healthcare and other information on the web. 79% of those polled said they expect to find a business on the web that will give them information about the products they are considering to buy.
- Mike How about yellow page advertising? How many attorneys out there use yellow page advertising.
- Dale They use it heavily, extremely heavily.
- Mike Are they using it well typically?
- Dale No.
- Mike Why not?
- Dale Many of them assume that people are still using the yellow pages to find services. A lot of children obviously use the web in school, the internet, they come home and ask for the computer, it is important they have a computer because they want to have a social life, and need to be able to chat with their friends. They use the internet for their research. Their teachers are encouraging them to do that because that's just the way it is today.
- Mike And this generation is going to grow up not using yellow pages.
- Dale That's correct.
- Mike Okay.

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Dale The young attorneys coming out of law school do not use the yellow pages, they use the internet very well. They use the internet to look for potential firms to join, for recruiting purposes.

Mike Do you do any statistics about what the effect of the internet compared to the yellow pages are like, 50% of people now are not using the yellow pages when they look for an attorney and they go directly onto the internet?

Dale I don't those figures for attorneys, but I do know it is a growing percentage and I also know that the firms that have invested in a marketing presence on the web are ecstatic about the results and are coming back saying "what else can I do, what more can I do, and how can I get more infringed on the web?" It is obviously working for them. I know firms are spending thousands of dollars per month for a web presence.

Mike Let me ask you, what do you say to... you know.... Lets say you've got an old timer who has been an attorney for 30, 40, 50 years, and he is used to the yellow pages, and he is used to that directory we talked about, and he is technology illiterate and it scares him. What would you say to him, how do you move a guy like that, who has been so set in his ways of doing things his way, and lets say he has got a very successful practice, what do you say to him to move him over to the internet? For generating leads and building a presence for his law firm.

Dale I think the best question is, as you said he has enough business and he is happy with what he has, there is probably not a lot you can say. But if you say, "would you like more business" or "would you like a better quality of business", if you are doing criminal law, would you like to have more "white collar" cases? Or would you like to move in a certain direction, or would you like to spend less on your marketing adverts. All of those work well with the web, because a lot of the people are just spending money on, for example, certain types of periodical ads, they spend a tremendous amount of money putting together an ad, and again, like buying a car, when people aren't interested, it's wasted. When they are interested, the ad is not there. Much less money can be invested in the web and you are there when the people have the need. It is surprisingly reasonable, comparatively speaking, to invest in a web presence, or multiple web presences.

Mike What would you tell me if I am computer illiterate and I want to go ahead and do this, but I'm afraid that I'm not going to be able to access the names and the numbers, how do you make it easy for me to do this.

Dale That's a good question. Really, the best thing to do is buy, to invest in

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a knowledgeable web consultant. Two ways you can do it, obviously you can train someone on your staff or have someone to start looking after your interests, it can work but people leave and it is difficult. But if you get some percentage of a web consultant's time or contract a web consultant just to take care of you, then you will be fine. One of our best clients just simply says "I don't know anything about the web, I don't want to know, you just handle it", and we simply manage everything about his web presence and he is very successful and we are both happy with that.

Mike Do you provide him with the names of people who have visited his site and expressed an interest in his services?

Dale We can, some have us do that. We can certainly provide him statistics that show him how many people have visited his site, what search engines have referred people to his site, for example Google may have referred 150 individuals to his site yesterday, Alta Vista may have sent 15, a directory may have sent 30, we can get him a lot of web statistics like that. A lot of them say I don't have time to read that or study it, you study it and manage it for me. And we will then look and say, I wonder why this particular search engine doesn't send me any leads, we need to investigate that. Or, others say, "I want to learn" and we are able to provide them with the ways to take a measure and target and so forth. A big part of what we do, we help coordinate intake sheets with the web and web statistics. We encourage firms upfront to develop a strong intake sheet.

Mike What is an intake sheet?

Dale When someone calls in, they will write down all the information about them, the name, address, and they say how did you hear about us... and they will say yellow pages, or newspaper, or the web. If it was the internet, they ask "do you recall which search engine" and if they say it was Google, the next question is "do you recall what you typed", and they will say I typed in "car wreck lawyers". They record all that, and then if they do that, we can then compare that type of information with the web statistics and see which search engines directories are referring people and then put together a knowledge of informed marketing process. We learned... we did this for a client not long ago, and we learned that they were spending several thousand dollars... \$18,000, for directories that were sending them less than 4% of their (*hushed word*).

Mike Okay, so you are saying, you found a law firm that was spending \$18,000 a year, was it?

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- Dale On certain directories that were giving him almost no business...
- Mike So they weren't measuring what (*mumbled word*) to get a customer.
- Dale That's correct.
- Mike Okay. And then what did you do after you identified that, you showed them what they were spending on getting nothing.
- Dale We showed them that they were getting almost no leads from those particular... unfortunately, what they had not been doing, they were new clients, they had not been tracking the input. So we couldn't tell if they were getting 4% of their clients or they were getting 40% of their referrals from the internet, but we couldn't figure out what percent were real cases. But then later, we were able to set it up so that they could determine more of this and we encouraged them to try to get a better presence in some of the free directories. It turned out they were getting 16% of the referrals from free directories.
- Mike So free directories could be an effective marketing solution.... Are there lots of free directories out there?
- Dale Right
- Mike Okay. That's a good strategy right there.
- Dale It is. And what we encouraged them to do was to go to free directories and say I would like to buy a more prominent listing in your directory. If they are getting a good percentage of referrals from the free directory, why not pay a little and get a prominent position, because they are obviously working, and make themselves more visible.
- Mike I think what it comes down to, is most attorneys in law offices, they are so busy working in the business and its understandable, because there is so much work to be done in any kind of law firm, the tactical daily management, all these things, and it's almost like there is no time to really figure out the numbers of what does it cost me to get a client.
- Dale That is exactly right
- Mike And compare that cost from your billing, what are you making on a client average, and that is the bottom line, what does it cost you to get a client, what does it cost to generate a lead, and how much are making from them. That is the essence of their law practice an many people don't take the time to do that, do they?
- Dale That is exactly right. They shot gun the effort. They just figure if they throw enough money in certain areas, something will work, and it's a terrible waste of money. They could take that same money and put it in

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to the areas that are working and multiply their results significantly.

Mike Now, is this what you did as a consultant before you got into the internet area? You almost... you could look at maybe ten law firms and if they opened up to you and showed you their numbers and what they were doing, their strategy of generating clients and leads, you could identify ways to bring in a customer for less money, and is the nature of your consulting practice?

Dale Yes.

Mike That's what you get. So you are a business consultant for a price.

Dale Yes. And using the web as a tool, one of the tools.

Mike Okay. Lets talk about this, now if someone becomes one of your clients, this isn't a one shot deal, I mean we have talked about the search engines are always changing, there are logarithms and you have to stay on top of it, you have to keep up with the research and know to stick with them, right?

Dale Correct.

Mike So how do you review a client campaign on an ongoing bi-monthly, every six months, as needed? What happens, what are you thinking with all your clients, as technology is changing, and how do you service that?

Dale Pretty much all those you named. It depends on the plan they chose and how aggressive they want to be. A lot of them we give them monthly reports. Others periodic, others have the ability to go look themselves. Some we crack ourselves and then we take the proper steps to make sure they are doing okay.

Mike Okay. That's excellent. Umm... we talked about five big mistakes that most attorneys are making. One is there is not enough graphics on their website. Two, there is not enough content on their web site. Three, they are spending money that they don't have to to generate leads through directories. Can you think any other big mistakes that attorneys are making in their marketing, that you could them tips that would be easy for them to fix if they took action? Anything that we haven't talked about?

Dale I can tell you some general things they should do, umm, like press releases...

Mike Yeah. What an attorney would design a press release about a certain case they are doing to get them publicity

Dale Correct. A lot of people, if they are looking for an attorney for personal

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injury, they want to see which cases they have done and what awards they have one.

Mike Okay.

Dale A press release can be done for a lot of reasons and we have guides on our side as to how to do them, but a press release will show that the site is fresher, up-freshed, being updated, it will also show success, but it will also be indexed by the search engine.

Mike That's correct. Any press release that gets out there and is published, is there forever, isn't it?

Dale Right.

Mike Yeah. So what would... give me an example, what would the press release be on, give me a ballpark concept of what would it would be about and how do you get it distributed? Do you offer that service?

Dale Yes. It would be about, as you said, depending on the ethics requirements, some states are pretty difficult about ethics, but most, many aren't. But you would simply say the case was such and such, and just information about the case, and a good way to distribute it would be to put it in a newsletter.

Mike Okay

Dale With a lot of other information.

Mike Okay. And then that press release may get published by... could it be published by any other media? Could you send the press release to your local TV station?

Dale Absolutely.

Mike And they may run a story on it?

Dale Very possible.

Mike And then it's cataloged there forever.

Dale That's correct.

Mike And that's also a warning. If any attorney is going to use a press release to promote their practice, they better make sure and understand that those words in that press release will be there forever, once you hit the send button, right?

Dale It's... yes. Once you send it, right, that's correct. They need to check they state bar or their local bars ethics requirements to determine what they can and can't do, and many know that, but we have links to those and we know that also, so that's the only concern, and obviously needs

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to be done tastefully, but they usually know that.

Mike You bring up an important point when you talk about ethics. Are there any kind of ethics or states or regulations that prohibit attorneys from marketing via the internet?

Dale Not particularly marketing, they treat... most of them treat the web as advertising and require that attorneys follow the same guidelines. Most state bars have a link, an area which (*mumbled word*) on ethics and it will spell out what they can and can not do.

Mike Okay. So that's something most attorneys should check, but they can feel pretty confident what your website or web presence is under advertising.

Dale Correct.

Mike Okay. Can you think of anything else that maybe you want to talk about.

Dale Yes. There are a couple of other things. A lot of attorneys do presentations in speaking when they are networking. If they do a power point presentation, save those and put them on the web. Also put their articles, everything they write, put it on the web. We set it up, we index it so the search engines will pick it up, and so that their visitors will also look at it. So that's another way to capitalize on the time and investment they have made. We are big believers in forms, check lists, anything to help the client, anything that will allow a client or prospective client to put in information about the potential case or situation. It does a lot of things. First it helps them organize their information, second, it helps the firm determine if this is the case we wish to pursue, or refer, or whatever, save everyone time. Check list, help people be better prepared when they come in to the firm.

Mike To think like there is just a whole method of streamlining and managing the whole operation. And it seems like a big time saver too.

Dale That's correct. We believe in items like child support calculators for family attorneys. We program them and provide for some of our clients an ability for them and the client to sit down with a client, or sit down from home and put down how many children they have, what their income is, and help calculate the child support requirements. That gets people coming back and so forth.

Mike Right. Okay. Lets someone's ready to talk to you. How could someone get in touch with you and once they get in touch with you, what can they expect is going to happen as far as the possibility of them looking into your services?

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- Dale They can get in touch with us of course on our site, now if they want to talk directly to us, they could call and we will get back to them and talk on the phone. Some people just simply want a price, they can go to our contact us page, they can fill out a feedback form, or they can fill out a more lengthy quote form.
- Mike Lets give them your URL address, if someone wants to get in touch with you.
- Dale www.consultwebs.com
- Mike And if someone wanted to call you directly and they are not real computer literate, what would be a good number for them to call and who would they ask to talk to?
- Dale They could go to our contact page and there they would see some numbers, but they are certainly call me on the contact page, I'm listed as Dale Tincher, my bio is there, my phone number, my email address. But my phone number is: (919) 272-8052 and my email address is: dtincher@consultwebs.com.
- Mike And once they contact you Dale, what's going to happen? You are going to talk... are you going to have them fill out some check lists or some needs analysis...
- Dale The first thing we will do is talk about what their goals are and their budget and so forth, and determine if we have got a good bid. We may determine that... we may recommend that they do something different, or we may recommend they surf more, we will determine what can we do for them and we will determine their budget. Now we have a pretty extensive quote form that asks a lot of questions about the website, what their goals are, budget, information that helps us understand their needs, what sites they have seen that they like, and what they don't like, and so forth. When we get that back, we can give them a very specific quote. If it's warranted, we are happy to visit with them.
- Mike Let me ask you this, once you come to an agreement with somebody, what kind of timeframe, how long would it take to get a good web presence up and running. How long does it take, and I know that it could depend on the complexity of the campaign, a ball park... lets say a simple campaign.
- Dale A simple campaign could be done, as far as the work, in three weeks, depending on their ability to get back to us with answers. That's usually the hold up, is they are busy with cases and other work and they can't get the answers back to us. After they have talked to us, we ask them to fill out the online form, we then put together an online status page

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that they can refer to at any time that tells them where we are in the campaign and the development and what they owe us, what we owe them, and they can look at the sample sites and so forth by clicking on links. It take, generally, three to four weeks to put together a site or a campaign we have done from sooner, quicker, more quickly, we have done some obviously that take longer. They will see results within 30 days, in terms of improvement in their rankings. They will see success in 90 – 120 days, because we have to do quite a bit in a campaign, including get them established in directories and links and so forth.

Mike Okay. Great. Your website is very complete and I am sure there is more than enough information for anyone to make an intelligent decision. I really appreciate you giving your advice and taking your time out of your busy schedule to share this with us. I really do, dale.

Dale I'm glad to help Michael.

Mike Thanks so much and we will be in touch.

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