

# **NEXTLEVEL.LEGAL EPISODE 53: BRANDING QUESTIONS**

## BETTER BRANDING EQUALS BETTER PROSPECTS

### WHAT IS A BRAND ANYWAY?

Your brand consists of your firm's unique selling proposition, first impression, and reputation. A brand is an identifier that helps people differentiate your law firm from others in your community.

Often, the word "brand" can seem to suggest a weighty ideal best used by large corporate and consumer companies. However, you also have a personal brand that you communicate as you interact with clients and other professionals. This brand, even if unintentional, exists as a product of how you present yourself.

*And your firm has its own brand.*

The culture of your firm, the way you run your office, the way you represent your firm in court or on the phone, and the visual elements you use on marketing materials are all pieces of your law firm's brand. Your brand encompasses more than just design and images: it helps people understand who you are.

### WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

Successful branding seeks to establish core values and beliefs that cultivate trust, interest, and engagement in prospective clients. Your firm's brand can help reach new clients, retain current clients, produce referrals, and improve your overall local reputation.

**For this reason, we want to understand the "why" of your firm.** If we understand why you practice, we can establish a brand that communicates the right values to the right people. The following questions were carefully designed to help us understand your firm in order to grow your business.

Think about the following questions and take notes. (Remember, every thought is important.)

*The following questions are not meant to be limiting or definitive. This is not a checklist, but rather a guide to foster a beneficial conversation. Feel free to take notes or prepare any way you see fit.*

## FIRM OVERVIEW

### 1. Provide a history of your firm.

- a. When was the firm founded?
- b. Who originally founded the firm? Is that person still present?
- c. What drove the founder(s) to start his or her own firm?
- d. How large is your firm in total (attorneys, clerks, etc.)?
- e. Which attorneys should be featured most prominently on the website? (Please provide their names)
- f. Has your firm been involved in any well-known cases, locally or nationally?
- g. Why should people be interested in your firm's history?

### 2. Describe your services.

- a. What types of cases do you in your office most frequently?
- b. What types of cases would you like to target specifically?
  - i. Why these types of cases?
- c. Do you see litigation as a last resort or a viable option from the start?

### 3. Identify your unique selling proposition.

- a. What does your firm do differently than your competitors?
- b. What aspects of your firm do you think are unique to the legal industry as a whole?

#### 4. The future of your firm

- a. Explain where you would like your firm to be in five years.
  - i. Would you like more/fewer employees? More/fewer practice areas?

### FIRM VALUES & BELIEFS

#### 1. Describe the firm's values

- a. What drew you to the legal profession?
  
- b. What part of the legal process are you most passionate about? Why?

#### 2. Describe the firm's beliefs.

- a. What does your firm stand for?
  
- b. What does your firm stand against?
  
- c. What type of individual, case, or cause are you most excited to support?

### FIRM PERSONALITY

#### 1. Define the culture of the office.

- a. Do you form friendlier or strictly professional relationships with clients?
  
- b. Do your clients refer to you by your first name or title?
  
- c. How is your office designed and organized? Can you provide pictures?
  
- d. What traits do/would you look for in new hires?
  
- e. Would you like your non-attorney staff to be featured on the website?

- f. What types of community organizations or local events is your firm involved with?
- g. Outside of the office, what are you passionate about or involved in (e.g., nonprofits, children's programs, education, sporting leagues)?

## CLIENT EXPERIENCE

### 1. Outline the typical client process.

- a. How do your clients contact you?
- b. Do clients have 24/7 access to your firm? Can they reach you outside of office hours?
- c. Who manages all incoming calls/inquiries?
- d. Who is the first person a client meets when he or she comes to your office?
  - i. How does this interaction progress?
- e. After the initial contact, do you usually talk with clients in person or phone?
- f. Do your clients interact mostly with attorneys or paralegals?
- g. How do you conclude a case?
- h. How do you encourage lasting relationships with your clients?
- i. Do you get many referrals from other firms? What firm(s)?

### 2. Describe the client's perspective.

- a. Who typically contacts your firm (e.g., a family member or the person directly involved)?

- b. In your experience, what factors influence potential clients when choosing an attorney?
- c. What emotions does a client typically experience before meeting with you?
- d. How does your firm address those emotions?
- e. How does a client feel after meeting with you?

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### 1. Describe your current clients.

- a. What type of person typically is contacting your office?
  - i. Gender
  - ii. Age
  - iii. Income
  - iv. Occupation
  - v. Education level
  - vi. Marital status
  - vii. Children
  - viii. What type of car does he or she drive?
  - ix. Where would your typical client be more likely to shop: [Walmart, Target, Kohls, Nordstrom?]
  - x. What types of social media does he or she most often use?

### 2. Define the ideal client.

- a. If you could clone any single client, who would that client be?
  - i. Gender
  - ii. Age
  - iii. Income
  - iv. Occupation
  - v. Education level
  - vi. Marital status
  - vii. Children
  - viii. What type of car does he or she drive?
  - ix. Where would your typical client be more likely to shop: [Walmart, Target, Kohls, Nordstrom?]
  - x. What types of social media does he or she most often use?
- b. What about this client makes him or her valuable?

## GEOGRAPHICAL REGION

1. Describe the demographics of your region.
  - a. In what specific regions does your firm practice?
    - i. What term(s) should be used to refer to the region(s)?

## COMPETITION OVERVIEW

1. Your online competitors.
  - a. Google your main practice area keyword + "Near Me" Online, who shows up on the first page
    - i. \_\_\_\_
    - ii. \_\_\_\_
    - iii. \_\_\_\_
  - b. Do you consider these firms your competitors?
  - c. What should we know about these firms?
  - d. Why would someone choose one of these firms over yours?
  - e. What makes your firm better or different than these firms?
2. Identify your local competitors.
  - a. In your opinion, which local firm(s) is/are your greatest competition?
  - b. What should we know about these firms?
  - c. Why would someone choose one of these firms over yours?
  - d. What makes your firm better or different than these firms?