

CONSISTENT MARKETING

How consistently do you market your services? Do you even have a marketing plan? Or are you like most search professionals who rely on a combination of word-of-mouth and occasional selling and networking when time permits? Great marketing doesn't have to cost a fortune. The secret is to get the right message to the right people on a consistent basis. And to do that you need a plan and a process that ensures you are regularly promoting yourself (and your positioning message) to people who will be interested.

Assuming you've created a sound marketing strategy (as outlined above), creating an implementation plan is quite easy. All you need is a calendar and about 30 minutes to plan. On your calendar, you want to plan three types of marketing activities:

- Activities to open doors with new clients
- Activities to expand relationships with existing clients
- Activities to improve your candidate relationships

On your calendar, you should outline one thing you will do each month for each type of activity. For example, you could:

- Send a personal letter to introduce your USP to a new group of prospects
- Share an article or idea you have that relates to the interests of your target audience
- Send a card or personal note to build relationships and keep yourself top-of-mind
- Share a case study or success story about how you helped a client solve a problem
- Provide a financial illustration outlining the economic value of search services
- Market appropriate top candidates via e-mail, direct mail or telephone
- Attend a networking event or better yet create your own networking event
- Host a seminar or webinar on a topic of interest to your target audience
- Conduct a survey
- Follow-up on past placements to verify client satisfaction
- Send postcards as a fun way to stay in-touch or promote your USP
- Create an e-mail newsletter on topics of interest to your clients
- Provide tips on how to make the search process easier

While this is by no means a complete list of possible marketing activities, you may notice at least one trend in this list. Most of the marketing tactics are client focused. At least fifty percent of your communication should be about topics that your clients find interesting. If your marketing is all about you, it will soon be ignored. But if you offer interesting information that truly helps your clients solve problems in their professional and personal lives, then they will come to value and even anticipate your marketing.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Paul Hawkinson entered the personnel consulting industry in the late 1950's and began publishing for the industry in the 1970's. He formed the Kimberly Organization and purchased The Fordyce Letter in 1980. The monthly newsletter provides information to nearly half of the nation's search and placement firms, as well as those in over 36 countries. Paul's background in search, placement, and personnel management inspired the development of the RAP SESSION series, a highly successful consultant-oriented program. His book Closing On Objections is one of the industry's best selling handbooks and has been selected by Management Recruiters International for its certification program. Paul is also the co-author of The Placement Strategy Handbook and Placement Management.