

Generating New Ideas for Staying Top-of-Mind with Clients and Key Prospects

By [LawVision](#) on April 23, 2015

You say cola, I say Coke. You say lip balm, I say Chapstik. You say tape, I say Scotch. It's easy, automatic, almost reflexive. Some brands are so common, so ingrained in our vocabulary, that the brand name is often used as a substitute for the general product name. For example, in the UK, they "Hoover" the rug. In marketing circles, this phenomenon is called "TOMA" or "Top of Mind Awareness." This is, of course, marketing Nirvana—the pinnacle of brand recognition. Some law firms and individual lawyers actually come close to TOMA—you say M&A, I say Skadden. You say trials, I say David Boies.

TOMA is a lofty and worthy goal. What law firm marketer wouldn't want prospects to think of a specific legal problem or type of action and immediately have one of the firm's lawyers come to mind as the solution? Most of us, however, only have a few people that fit into that category and they typically aren't the ones we have been hired to help. For those mere mortals with whom we work without a life-long career that has led to TOMA, complete TOMA is not necessary. What we really need is TOMA for the moment. This can be created by just being top of mind at the moment a problem occurs, not because we are the worldwide expert—most clients can't afford or don't need the worldwide expert anyway—but because they just need someone good.

As a marketer, you know how to do this already—staying in touch, offering suggestions to problems, asking good probing questions, creating content that is helpful, and sharing that content through a variety of mediums and social networks. But it can get dull; it's easy to get caught in the same rut—lunch, ball games, articles, posts. How do you change it up? One can do an infinite number of things to stay in touch and be top of mind for potential buyers of our services. Here is an exercise I've used with hundreds of firms. It's fun, it's cheap and, done correctly, it can yield some excellent new ideas for staying in touch with your key prospects.

1. Gather a group of lawyers together in a room—perhaps for one of your monthly business development lunches.
2. Divide the room into two teams.
3. Offer a ten-minute challenge for each team to come up with as many new ideas for staying in touch as possible—focus on quantity not quality.
4. Have each group report its progress.
5. Compare the lists; ask for more ideas based on what you heard.
6. Have participants vote on the top five ideas.

Here are some of the ideas I've heard in recent sessions.

- Rent out a theater for a Harry Potter debut (or some other new children's movie) and invite clients and prospects to come with their children
- Offer to babysit for prospects who are new parents (this led directly to new business—if you don't know why, you've never been a new parent)
- Musical chairs at big lunches so everyone gets a chance to get to know everyone else
- Offer a networking speed-dating event for your clients and prospects to get to know one another

- Re-send client alerts with personal notes and point out specifics relevant to a particular client problem
- [Land Rover driving experience](#) – I just came from a firm that did this and it was awesome!
- Backpacking with llamas and clients (note: the llamas run when they see bears but the clients' children loved it)
- Professional wrestling match (I'm not making this stuff up)
- Introduction to a good florist
- Use Google Alerts to stay up on news about a target

Use one of your new ideas in your next initiative or challenge those in the room to use something new. I guarantee you'll walk away with more than you had before.