

# How Social Media Can Help Attorneys Generate Clients



What's the first thing most professionals do on social media? They beg. Add a new follower on Twitter or Facebook, and almost immediately, you're bombarded with a request or demand; your new "friend" wants a favor, one that requires you to share personal information, spend a lot of money, or donate your time. Attorneys using social media should take these steps to build valuable relationships and generate clients.

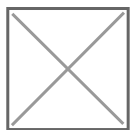
## Begging destroys business development opportunities

When I use the word "begging," I'm not referring to the indigent or those in need. I'm referring to those who can't be bothered to build a relationship with you the right way, *before* asking you for your time, resources, or energy on their behalf.

Here's how the scenario works: You're a corporate attorney, and you're trying to connect with small business owners online. You greet followers, and you work hard to engage with business owners authentically. On the other hand, these

business owners see you as a mark, just another customer.

So they spam your inbox with requests like this.



They're interested in the value you provide, but they also want you to invest what's yours in their business, for free, with no relationship established. This is the problem with business development and social media. It's the same problem many new law firms make on social media platforms.

## Successful business development begins with a relationship

Professional relationships are built around value. Inexperienced attorneys invert the value equation. They *immediately* attempt to extract value from new followers and connections. This immediately ruins the relationship with potential clients. Savvy attorneys work with the value equation to generate clients.

You're probably wondering, what is this value equation? It's actually two equations that work together.

1. **Value equation #1:** 80 percent giving, 20 percent receiving.
2. **Value equation #2:** Create X dollars of value. Capture Y percent of X.

This is how successful business development is done online. Now, let's take a closer look at these equations so we can use them effectively to attract and win new clients.

- **80 percent giving, 20 percent receiving:** 80 percent giving is exactly what it sounds like. You're spending most of the time you have allotted for social media business development, on sharing valuable information with prospective clients. 20 percent receiving, on the other hand, is different. You're spending 20 percent of your time, making an offer that creates more value for prospective clients.
- **Create X dollars of value, capture Y percent of X:** You create value for prospective clients, then you create a complementary offer that amplifies the potential value clients will receive if they choose to work with your law firm.

Apply these equations consistently along with the details you've learned about making and keeping friends, and you'll find business development on social media is fairly straightforward.

## How do you use social media to generate clients?

Imagine that you're a real estate attorney. You work with investors, real estate agents, and other corporations — you assist them with all things real estate. Now imagine that a prospective client is in the market for a real estate attorney.

They have a specific set of problems, but they're not sure where to start. How do you apply these value equations? How do you go about creating value for your clients? Here's a list of ideas we can apply to our real estate attorney example.

1. Answering real estate questions on [Quora](#)
2. Creating profiles on real estate forums like [Bigger Pockets](#) and answering questions with people
3. Creating city-specific groups on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to help people in your local area
4. Use hashtags and geotargeting to help locals on Twitter who need advice
5. Join a [Meetup group](#) to discuss real estate or create your own. Meet online and in-person
6. Create [YouTube videos](#) that focus on real estate
7. Join [Clarity.fm](#); add each of your junior associates as experts on their platform, then promote them as paid advisors
8. Make a list of all of the local [Eventbrite real estate events](#) in your area. Contact the event organizer and offer to speak or present at their next event
9. Reach out to influential thought leaders and publishers to generate clients (i.e., [Loopnet](#)) on social media and make an offer to create content for them (e.g., Q&A, articles, videos, podcasts, etc.)

These ideas are simple, but they require a long-term commitment. Once you become known for these ideas, you'll have the trust you need to scale business development.

Did you catch it? The equations in action? Each of these ideas is an example of the value equation in action. These ideas are focused on giving prospective clients maximum value. How do you capture a percentage of that value?

## **Generate clients with a lead magnet.**

You give them a helpful checklist, resource, guide, or book in exchange for their email address. [Using these tools along with local SEO](#), you will have a steady supply of leads. When clients are interested in purchasing a property, you're the professional they'll contact. Why? [The law of reciprocity](#).

Our cultural conditioning tells us that we're supposed to respond in-kind. If we receive a positive action, we're expected to reward the giver with positive action in turn. If we receive a concession during a negotiation, we reward that concession with a conciliatory reward.

Attorneys using social media to generate clients should build relationships through a value exchange; this is the secret to social media business development. This is how business is done at the highest levels.

## **Getting clients using social media is easy**

When you earn a friend, follower, or fan, build the relationship by looking for ways to add value to the relationship. To generate clients, focus your attention on giving and serving, spend most of your time focused on taking care of those around you and opportunities to receive will present themselves.

Work to avoid begging. Avoid professionals who can't be bothered to build a relationship in the right way. Give and serve before you ask. The attorney/client relationship hasn't been established yet, that's okay. Stay within the bounds of professional conduct but provide value.

Focus your attention on adding value, and you'll find prospective clients are begging for your help and support.