

# **CLE Marketing in a Down Economy**

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Prior to joining V12 Group, Amy held the position of Director of Strategic Marketing at American Law Institute – American Bar Association (ALI-ABA) from 2006 to 2012. Prior to that she was the Assistant Director of the American Law Network, the satellite and web cast network of ALI-ABA. Since beginning her career in legal services and education in 1991, Ms. Shapiro has held positions as the Director of Continuing Legal Education for the Center for Professional Education (CPE Inc.), where she developed and marketed seminars for both attorneys and CPA's, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Sales and Marketing Director of SMH Bar Review, and the Regional Sales Director for WEST BAR REVIEW, a division of West LegalEdcenter.

Ms. Shapiro is a member of the Association of Continuing Legal Education (ACLEA) and the Legal Marketing Association-Metro Philadelphia Chapter. She has held multiple positions within ACLEA including member of the ACLEA Executive Board as Director-At-Large. She has been a guest lecturer for ACLEA, Peach New Media and other professional organizations. She has lectured on a range of marketing topics including *Recent Trends in Technology in Continuing Education, Social Media Marketing and Communications* and *Email Marketing Planning*. Furthermore, Ms. Shapiro has acted as a consultant on social media marketing for the Institute for the Study of Business Markets at the Smeal College of Business Administration at Penn State University.

Ms. Shapiro holds degrees from the University of Pittsburgh and Widener University School of Law. Connect with Ms. Shapiro on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).

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Sarah Jean Kelly is the Director of Marketing & Business Development for Georgetown Law CLE. She oversees the marketing and sponsorship of each of the organization's CLE programs including Georgetown's Corporate Counsel Institute, Advanced eDiscovery Institute, and eDiscovery Training Academy. Sarah also oversees Georgetown's distance learning initiatives. Prior to joining Georgetown Law CLE, Sarah was the Assistant Director of External Relations at Georgetown University, and an Admissions Counselor at Wellesley College. Sarah is a graduate of Wellesley, and she holds a Masters degree in education from the University of Virginia. She is also a part-time law student at Georgetown. As a member of ACLEA, Sarah currently serves as Co-Chair of the Law School SIG and a member of the planning committee for ACLEA's mid-year meeting in Clearwater. Apart from work, she is an avid baker and occasional ice skater.

## Introduction

Since 2007 many businesses have been struggling to make ends meet. Budgets are being cut across the board. Jobs are being eliminated, salaries are being cut and marketing costs are being lowered. In fact, the marketing budget is often the first to be cut. And even if the marketing budget isn't being cut, many companies worry that investing money into marketing is too risky and costly.

Decreased funding and the perceived lack of incentive to take risks in marketing isn't new for the CLE industry. In fact, creating quality programming and then marketing it effectively with a small staff and budget has always been a struggle. With increased competition in continuing education due to the increase of low or no-cost online offerings, recruiting attendees to quality programs is increasingly a challenge. However, finding low or no cost marketing channels should not be. In her blog article, *9 Ideas for Small Business Marketing on a Shoestring Budget*<sup>1</sup> Dana Prince, a writer for Future Simple Growth University Blog<sup>2</sup> and founder of [www.danaprincewriting.com](http://www.danaprincewriting.com) outlines nine low or no cost marketing suggestions for those on a limited budget. They are<sup>3</sup>:

1. Start small. Set aside a small budget to begin with. Re-invest some of the dividends from these campaigns into further marketing.
2. Leverage free tools. Social media tools and many free online tools can help you do marketing well. Build a following on free social sites, create profiles on professional business sites. Submit your business to local online business directories.
3. Shop for discounts and coupons. Many marketing tools and programs will offer you a free trial. This can translate to profit before you spend any money. Google Adwords is a good example of this as Google will often give people a \$50 or \$100 Adwords coupon to start their paid search engine advertising campaign with. (Tip: Do some extensive research about effective Adwords campaign before using your free coupon so you can increase the chances of getting good results with it)
4. Try tier two advertising programs. If you think a search engine marketing advertising campaign sounds too expensive, consider doing an ad campaign on a specific site, instead. Facebook advertising for instance, can be less expensive than many other online marketing campaigns and can provide you with laser targeted focus to geographic areas, age groups, gender, interest levels, and so on.
5. Work on grassroots marketing campaigns which cost very little. Ask customers for testimonials and referrals. Strive to create viral content through blogs, YouTube, guest posts, and other online content.
6. Do small giveaways or contests in exchange for product reviews and testimonials. These testimonials will be a goldmine for you as they'll help you continually convert interested prospects into customers.
7. Recruit affiliates to help you with your marketing. Affiliates who refer sales can earn a commission rate. This is much cheaper than paying salaried sales reps and many professional affiliates have large platform and good-sized marketing budgets of their own to work with.
8. Write interesting content for your site. Your website is an essential tool for any small business and can work as a well-oiled marketing machine for you. Every page of your site can serve as a beacon landing page and can initiate a relationship with a visitor. Remember this when designing and authoring your website.
9. Analyze results constantly. Your ability to assess your marketing results will help you plan an effective strategy going forward. Examine the communities you participate in, your social media following, your

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<sup>1</sup> Prince, D. *9 Ideas for Small Business Marketing on a Shoestring Budget*, Retrieved December 26, 2012, from <http://www.futuresimple.com/blog/9-ideas-for-small-business-marketing-on-a-shoestring-budget/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.futuresimple.com/blog/>

<sup>3</sup> Prince, D. *9 Ideas for Small Business Marketing on a Shoestring Budget*, Retrieved December 26, 2012, from <http://www.futuresimple.com/blog/9-ideas-for-small-business-marketing-on-a-shoestring-budget/>

website traffic reports, your search engine rankings, and so on. All of this information will be useful to your future marketing efforts.

While these marketing suggestions are excellent and some of them will be expanded on throughout this paper before we even address these recommendations it is important to understand the trends in marketing and how to use those trends to effectively market, lower marketing budgets and have higher return on investment (ROI). Technology has provided us with a number of ways to effectively and inexpensively market and engage prospects and customers. Furthermore, everyone is different and each person's individual characteristics influences how they may want to hear about products and services. Because of this target marketing, market segmentation and multichannel marketing have become musts in every good marketing strategy. But how does one implement targeted multichannel marketing strategies with limited time and limited resources?

### **Target Marketing and Market Segmentation on a Limited Budget**

Target marketing is creating a marketing strategy that is aimed towards a certain group of people. Target Marketing involves breaking a market into segments and then concentrating your marketing efforts on one or a few key segments. It can be the key to a small business's success.<sup>4</sup> Segmentation allows your targeted marketing to become more specific by dividing broader markets into smaller ones in which they have shared characteristics. Four of the most common types of segmentation are geographic, demographics, psychographic and behavioral. The key to effective targeted marketing is to collect as much information about your customer as possible and then use that information to match your customer's needs and create marketing messages that speak to them.

How do you collect this information about your customers? And how do you do it with a limited budget? Create and maintain a robust and clean business and consumer database of your customers that will allow you to identify your best customers and understand how they spend their money, comprehend what triggers them to spend that money and recognize what they spend their money on. Collect all contact information including business and home addresses, cell phones, social media handles and all emails associated with that contact. Keep track of purchase history and spending patterns. Other demographic information like date of birth, gender, area of practice, MCLE deadline, years in practice, or size of firm/organization should be collected as well. All of this information helps you segment your target audience and tailor a marketing message that directly connects with your customer. It also affords you the opportunity to identify prospective customers through like characteristics, therefore expanding your target market.

Gathering this information about your customer should not be too difficult. Even the most basic Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems can collect and track contact information along with demographics and buying patterns. The challenge is getting the customer to provide the information you need to analyze. There are plenty of easy and inexpensive ways to collect this information and all of them are worth your while. The simplest way is to design a registration or purchase form that captures the information you want from your customer. Asking for a birth year, home address MCLE deadline or for additional emails through a paper or online registration system is not unheard of. Another effective way to collect demographics from customers, especially existing ones in your database, is to ask them a question or two each time they interact with your company. For instance, when they log in on your site or call on the phone have a system set up to ask the information you need. Another easy way is to send a contact update request via email or direct mail. Ask the recipient of the email or direct mailing piece to go to a landing page or call a telephone number to update their information and provide additional information as well.

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<sup>4</sup> S. Ward, *Target Marketing*, Retrieved December 27, 2012, from <http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/marketing/g/targetmarketing.htm>

We realize that this can be easier said than done. One way to make it seem more manageable is to make it a habit to review your registration form on an annual basis. At Georgetown Law CLE, we created a Data Planning Committee that includes the three team members who input and utilize the data we collect. We reviewed the registration form online and in our brochures and were able to remove questions requesting information that we did not use, and then fill those lines with requests for information that we found more helpful in marketing our programs and serving our attendees. This took a minimal amount of time, but wasn't something we had been in the habit of doing regularly. Now that we have made it part of our process, we will be able to react to our needs for different customer data more quickly.

Additionally, we've been able to take advantage of slower times of the year, and times of the year when we have increased assistance to update our data. Each summer we have student interns who are taking classes in DC at night who volunteer with our department during the day. Often they are able to make significant progress in updating our customer data. Finding low or no cost interns to assist with this task can make it far more manageable for small CLE organizations.

If you do not have the staff or time to collect the data yourself you can outsource it. A data service provider can accurately append your data with needed demographics and contact information. A good data service provider will provide you with multiple data fields to choose from including personal information like gender, race, lifestyle, interest and behavioral information as well as business information like size of firm, area of practice and title. Some may even have the option of appending with psychological data and personality profiles. Highly reliable and predictive personality profiles of your customers and prospects makes it possible to dramatically increase the response to your marketing and sales campaigns.<sup>5</sup>

When you outsource to a data service provider there are few things to keep in mind if you want good results. First, you want to make sure your database has both consumer and business data present and second you want to make sure the data service provider you choose follows the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) standards when it comes to data collection. Another thing is you want to make sure the appending service is affordable and simple. How does it work? Your data will be matched with the data service provider's data and in some instances outside sources. All matched data should be appended and quickly sent back to you in your original format. When appending with emails before they are sent to you as good emails they should be sent a permission pass from the data service provider. Only emails that have not opted out should be appended to your data. This guarantees you are getting good emails and will give you a higher return on investment.

No matter how you choose to target and segment your marketing efforts, the point of targeted marketing is to reach the right people with the right message about your goods and services. Doing so helps focus your marketing efforts and dollars on the right audience, can lead to a monetary savings and also increase your Return on Investment (ROI) for each marketing effort.

### **Multichannel Marketing on a Limited Budget**

The first question is what is multichannel marketing? According to Wikipedia, multichannel marketing is marketing using many different marketing channels to reach a customer. This includes direct mail, email, social media, blogs, mobile, public relations, RSS feeds and networking. In today's hectic world there are so many methods to reach a customer or prospect. Therefore it is important when you implement a marketing campaign you do so through multiple channels. But how do you do that on a limited budget and even more so how do you do it effectively?

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<sup>5</sup> V12 Group Inc., 2012, **The PYCO Personality Score**: The Science of Motivating Consumers to Respond [Whitepaper], Retrieved from [http://www.v12groupinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/PYCO\\_Personality\\_Score\\_WhitePaper.pdf](http://www.v12groupinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/PYCO_Personality_Score_WhitePaper.pdf)

Dana Prince's nine suggestions on marketing on a shoestring budget provide an excellent foundation for effective multichannel marketing on a small budget. Her recommendations begin by addressing the essentials of starting with a small budget and reinvesting money earned from the marketing efforts into future efforts and ventures into identifying free, less expensive or discounted online advertising opportunities that should most definitely be taken advantage of. She also wisely recommends sharing or allocating the costs of marketing through an affiliation. Furthermore she stresses the importance of analyzing and understanding the results of your marketing efforts so that you can make better marketing decisions in the future. While analysis is always important, when looking to reduce your marketing spend, it is increasingly so. At Georgetown Law CLE we produce a marketing and attendee analysis for each program we hold, and review information on which lists produced, which emails had the highest click-through rates, and how we spent the marketing budget for a specific program. We also analyze the attendees for a given program, which can provide important information on where the attendees for a given program are coming from, what their specialties are, and what stage of their career they are at. This is instrumental in targeting our marketing for the following year's program.

Also importantly, Dana Prince identifies multiple marketing channels that consumers frequent to retrieve information on needed products and services. She concentrates on digital and viral advertising through social media, search engine marketing and word of mouth marketing through testimonials. Her suggestions are valid and should be elaborated on. In addition, other methods of low cost marketing should be examined and not overlooked. Press releases, written articles, speaking engagements and email marketing are also means to effectively get your message out to your targeted audience at a low or no cost.

### ***Social Media Marketing***

Other than time there are little costs associated with social media marketing. We realize, however, that time can also be very difficult to come by for a CLE professional. Online outlets like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and YouTube are outlets you can use to get engage your current and prospective customers as well as market your products and services. Social media is means of interaction where people can create, share, exchange and comment on content that is posted online. It is more than social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter or Linked. Social media includes blogs, content communities, and virtual worlds. Taking time to search for all social media outlets that are relevant to your target audience and becoming active on them can be beneficial to your end result.

eDigitalFields provides 5 tips for Social Media Marketing on a Shoestring Budget<sup>6</sup>. They are:

- 1) Target social media sites where your customers are likely to be hanging out.
- 2) Use single administrative dashboards like Tweet Deck to help you manage your posts.
- 3) Create engaging content
- 4) Post as often as you can
- 5) Spend at least 30 minutes a day everyday responding to comments or questions on your blog

These basic tips are a great way to kick-start your social media campaigns. All five are fairly easy to implement but it is the first one that is the real key to the success of your social media marketing strategy. Knowing your customers, what they are interested in and where they are hanging out in the virtual world gets your foot in the door. Given how precious your time is, it is important to make sure that you are engaging with your customers and potential customers where they are. You can include questions on

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<sup>6</sup> eDigitalFields, 2012, *5 Tips for Social Media Marketing on a Shoestring Budget*, Retrieved from <http://www.edigitalfields.com/blog/social-media/5-tips-for-social-media-marketing-on-a-shoestring-budget>

your program evaluations requesting information on which social media sites your customers use. They utilize that data to determine where to allocate your resources. Participating in the discussions and posting relevant information to these sites makes you part of the community and builds trust among those who are interested in your goods and services. Thrive in the social media world by implementing the three E's of social media, **E**ngage, **E**nable and **E**valuate. Engage the marketplace with relevant content, enable the influencers and followers by giving them a reason to talk about your business and evaluate your efforts by looking at opens, shares and even in some cases conversion to customers.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to keep in mind when implementing a social media campaign that you will not see instant results. It takes months to build presence and relationships on social media. Therefore, taking your time to identify the right social media outlets and engaging those who are present on those sites with content and comments that are relevant to them will pay off but it will not provide instant gratification. Be patient and consistent and you will see positive results.

### **Search Engine Marketing**

Search Engine Marketing is a form of internet marketing that involves increasing the presence of a website in search engine results by optimizing the site through content and paid advertising. First there is website content optimization. This is much easier than it sounds and does not necessarily require an expert or a lot of money. Anyone who knows the basics of search engine marketing and optimization can find a way to increase their presence online. But how do you learn about search engine marketing? Hubspot has a free crash course on Search Engine Optimization. It is a three part course that teaches you how to drive traffic and leads to your website through SEO.<sup>8</sup> It is fairly basic and the guidance provided is useful and relevant.

Meanwhile, there are a few easy things to do that will help with your search engine marketing efforts. Submittedge®, the number one link building and SEO firm in the US and UK, provides a few do it yourself search engine marketing suggestions for a limited budget.<sup>9</sup> First it is suggested that providing intriguing, unique, relevant and valuable content or copy on your website through blog posts or articles will assist in raise your ranking on website search results. Each page on your website should contain this content no matter how it is posted.

Next, Submittedge® concentrates on the value of keywords and its placement within your content. In fact, once an individual searches using target keywords that exist within your content or copy on the website it is highly likely the next time they do a search your website will rank higher in their search results. But it is also important those keywords are placed naturally and appropriately. Using keywords on each web page or in titles where it belongs and not overstuffing the content with keywords is essential. You do not want your readers to be put off by your content.

The next suggestion is to obtain one-way links, links from other sites to your website, to increase your search engine optimization. This is easier than it sounds especially if your business or organization is affiliated with other organizations. For instance, if you are a state CLE provider you may want to have a

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<sup>7</sup> V12 Group Inc., 2010, *The three "E's" of social marketing*, Retrieved from <http://www.v12groupinc.com/marketing-data/the-three-es-of-social-marketing/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://offers.hubspot.com/seo-crash-course>

<sup>9</sup> Submittedge®, 2012, *DIY Search Engine Optimization For Your Limited Budget*, Retrieved from <http://www.submitedge.com/blog/diy-search-engine-optimization-for-your-limited-budget/>

link from the state bar association or local bar association to your site. Another option for one-way linking is to identify sites that list business or organizations that are similar to yours. Online directories or professional websites often have these listings. Another option is to create your own blog that has links that go directly to your website or you can write a testimonial or review on a relevant blog or site and have it link back to you. All of these options will help with SEO.

The last suggestion concentrates on the text you use in the link that links back to your website. Using target words instead of terms like “click here” or “more information” assists in SEO. Target keywords in the text of the link will get optimized as compared to generic phrases or calls to actions.

Relevant content, keywords and link building within your website are all viable options, but another option in search engine marketing is paid advertising. Google AdWords is the most popular means to advertise. A pay-per-click advertising campaign can give you decent placement in search engine searches. It requires creating a campaign in good AdWords and bidding on words for placement. It can become costly especially for general keywords like legal education, but if you look you can often find coupons or discounts. In fact, Google has something called Google Grants for non-profits. It is a grant for free advertising through AdWords advertising on Google for Non-Profits. For additional information you can go to <http://www.google.com/grants/details.html>

If this search engine marketing seems overwhelmingly expensive, there are other options. Two-tier advertising on sites like Facebook is another way to increase visibility. Facebook Ads are less expensive and provide an option to target by a number of demographics like age, gender, job, education and geography. Facebook also provides grants and discounts for a variety of businesses.

### **Press Releases and Articles**

Press releases and written articles in print and online are often underutilized for marketing purposes. People seem to shy away from writing due to lack of experience or confidence. Also there is a misconception that to release a press release or get good placement of an article can be costly. But nothing can be further from the truth.

First of all, in regards to press releases, any business can write a press release to announce a new employee, product or even a speaking engagement. They are not articles but statements or announcements. They should be short and simple, outline the “who”, “what”, “where” and “why” of the topic, should include a quote from a relevant individual and should always provide contact information in case someone wants to get more information about the subject. There are plenty of websites online that provide guidance on how to write a press release along with free samples. PR\*Urgent provides a reasonable outline to follow at [http://www.prurgent.com/press\\_release\\_help.htm](http://www.prurgent.com/press_release_help.htm).

Distributing the press release does not need to be costly. It can be emailed to a list of compiled press recipients, posted on any social media outlet that is relevant and can be distributed through any free press release distribution service online. Frank Marafiotte, MBA has identified the top ten free press release distribution services.<sup>10</sup> They are:

- 1) [Free Press Release.com](http://www.freepressrelease.com)

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<sup>10</sup> Marafiotte, F., *Top Ten Free Press Release Distribution Services*, Retrieved December 28, 2012 from <http://www.fmwriter.com/2012/04/17/top-ten-free-press-release-distribution-services/>

- 2) [Prlog.org](http://Prlog.org)
- 3) [1888pressrelease.com](http://1888pressrelease.com)
- 4) [I-NewsWire.com](http://I-NewsWire.com)
- 5) [PR.com](http://PR.com)
- 6) [Free-Press-Release-Center](http://Free-Press-Release-Center)
- 7) [24-7 Press Release](http://24-7 Press Release)
- 8) [Free-Press-Releases](http://Free-Press-Releases)
- 9) [PressAbout.com](http://PressAbout.com)
- 10) [PressMethod](http://PressMethod)

Writing press releases and distributing them has never been easier and quite frankly should not be overlooked as a viable and inexpensive means of marketing. In addition to press releases, writing articles on relevant topics and having them placed in blogs or print periodicals is another viable option. The first step in this is to identify the blog or periodical you want to place an article in and find out what their distribution schedule is. In many cases, particularly for printed periodicals, a schedule of topics for each issue being distributed is usually put together at the beginning of the fiscal year. For instance, many legal periodicals have an issue dedicated to a specific practice or technology. Identifying that topic makes it easier for you to target the audience you want to hit with your article.

Next is writing the article. Just because you wrote something doesn't mean that it is of interest to the audience or the outlet you want it placed. Know what your audience likes to read and look at trends in the industry you want to address and write about something that concentrates on those trends. Keep on topic and subtly tie in your goods and services into what you are writing about. Hitting anyone hard with a sales pitch within an article will not only cause the reader to lose interest but will also put a bad taste in the readers mouth about your business. Remember the point of placing an article is to get exposure not necessarily to sell, but you don't want to miss out on any potential sales opportunities.

Clearly getting an article placed takes a bit more time and effort than a press release. That is why using a press release as a stepping stone to a potential article is wise. In many cases, recipients of press releases will want additional information so that they can write an article for you. These writers either represent the blogs and periodicals you want to be placed within or at the very least have contacts that will help with placement. Complying with this takes the leg work off of you and helps with your exposure.

Whether it is through press releases or placement of articles in print or blogs, it is important to maintain relevancy for the recipients and to not implement a hard sell. The written word is meant to assist in reputation and helps brand your business. Use it wisely.

### **Speaking Engagements/Networking/Special Events**

Speaking engagements, networking and special events are an excellent way for your business to gain exposure. Speaking engagements position you as an expert in a particular area and helps gain credibility for your business. In some instances, an organization may be willing to provide you with a speaking opportunity in exchange for you having their flyers on your registration desk at your next event. Additionally, many organizations look for subject matter experts they can bring in to host an event. When looking for speaking opportunities, consider Law School Alumni groups in your town, legal associations, and other related nonprofit organizations. They are often thrilled to hold an event around your speech. Your company now has a name in the industry that has validity. The important thing to remember about speaking engagements is that when you do accept a speaking engagement, make sure that you are comfortable with the subject. Claiming you are an authority on a particular topic and then not delivering

what is expected, expert guidance, can do more harm than good. After all, marketing is everything you do and if you do something poorly...well.

Networking is another viable way for your company to expand its presence. Dan Barner, founder and lead strategist of Prolific Marketing, recommends using networking events as way to gain exposure.<sup>11</sup> He says that since networking events are held at business associations, chambers or other networking groups, it is an ideal way to meet people in your targeted audience or advance your business through cross-selling opportunities with potential affiliates or co-sponsors. Furthermore, most networking events are inexpensive and provide food and drink.

In addition to networking, Barner recommends holding special events and publicizing them on free social media sites. A special event could be anything from a fund-raiser to a workshop. In the case of CLE, you can offer a free 1 hour CLE at a location or a skills workshop. You can also partner with other thought leaders in a given practice area to provide free content. Georgetown Law CLE has partnered with government agencies, for example, to host panels on areas where we have strong programs, such as eDiscovery. We've then marketed those panels to our attendees as a "bonus" event for them, and have publicized them through email and on social media to try and attract new customers. We then make sure to have Save the Dates out at these special events for our traditional CLE programs. We also work to capitalize on the programming that the Law Center is putting on, by distributing brochures for our programs at non-CLE events and sending marketing emails to attendees at other Law Center events. Thought most CLE organizations are not part of a Law Center, the same could be done within a Bar Association. Barner further recommends using press releases, social media and email marketing to advertise the event. Online event calendars for related business organizations can also be used. Like speaking engagements and networking events, special events can help your company gain exposure and brand identity.

### **Email Marketing**

Email marketing is another low cost way to market. It is a great way to reach a larger audience in a short period of time. It is not an alternative to print marketing but it is a great supplement to your marketing efforts that can be targeted to the needs of your customer.

There are many affordable email marketing service providers (ESP) out there that provide a way to deploy emails to your own email marketing list. Each ESP has a variety of easy-to-use features that allow you to create emails, send and track their success. But which one is the best one to use? Top Ten Reviews is a website that researches and reviews products in multiple industries. It offers a top ten review on email service providers.<sup>12</sup> It outlines the features and costs for each ESP and makes it easier for the user to decide which ESP fits their needs. The pros to using an ESP are that they are a low cost and reliable way to deploy emails to your email marketing list. The negative to using an ESP, most only allow you to email to your own lists and do not allow you to email to purchased or acquired lists.

There is a belief out there that acquiring data, especially email marketing lists is a waste of time and money. There is negative article after negative article addressing purchasing emails and how they are

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<sup>11</sup> Barner, D., Marketing on a Shoestring Budget, Retrieved December 28, 2012 from <http://prolificmarketing.org/marketing-on-a-shoestring-budget/>

<sup>12</sup> TopTenReviews, *2013Best Email Marketing Service Comparisons and Reviews*, Retrieved December 28, 2012 from <http://email-marketing-service-review.toptenreviews.com/>.

unreliable, low on delivery rate and have a low return on investment. All of these are beliefs are myths. In fact, if you purchase emails from a quality data vendor that provides you with realistic expectations of your deliverability and open rates you will find that you will be fairly pleased with the end results.<sup>13</sup> In fact, Direct Marketing Association states that for every dollar you spend on email marketing you make \$39.40. That is quite an ROI. But in order to reach this you should make sure that the vendor you are purchasing from allows you to segment and target based on your goals and the profile of your best customers. The more targeted the list the more likely you will hit recipients who want and need your businesses goods and services. It is not about the number of emails you acquire it is about the quality of the list. Not only should you be able to segment and target but the list should be clean and accurate. Ask the vendor what their data hygiene process is and if it includes at least double verification of the emails as well as cleansing by removing opt-outs and bad emails every two months it is a good clean database.

Georgetown has also been able to decrease our annual marketing spend by reducing the costs for our traditional marketing ventures. We've been able to reduce the amount we spend annually on list rentals by bartering with some organizations for lists instead of paying the traditional list rental fee. Some organizations have been willing to waive the list rental fee in exchange for an exhibit table at one of our conferences, or for space to hand out their materials on our registration desk. Other organizations have waived their fees for the ability to use a classroom at the Law Center for a small luncheon meeting. Though not everyone has classrooms to offer, it is important to think about what you do have at your disposal and consider whether or not it would be to your advantage to offer it in exchange for another service you would typically pay for.

Additionally, we've been able to work with practice area specific organizations to market our programs. We've built relationships with a set of organizations that have agreed to distribute our brochures at their events, send our marketing emails to their members, and allow us to speak about our programs at their meetings in exchange for a nominal registration discount for their members or attendees. This allows them to publicize a new member benefit, while marketing our programs to a previously untapped audience at no additional cost to us. This has been very effective with a number of our programs.

Georgetown Law CLE has also been able to mobilize our volunteers to assist with marketing initiatives. We offer them a 5-10% discount off the registration fee for any friends or colleagues they refer to the program. This works better in some practice areas and with some Boards than with others, but in a few cases has resulted in Board Members or Program Chairs sending emails to hundreds of potential attendees, which has been extremely helpful in marketing the program. This is particularly important when we launch a new program, and having a Program Chair willing to assist with grassroots marketing has been instrumental in the success of some of our most recent new programs.

Finally, we would recommend evaluating the marketing services you currently spend your budget on, and looking at ways to potentially trim those expenses. It takes minimal time to send out bid requests, and can provide a huge savings for your organization. In doing so, Georgetown Law CLE was able to decrease graphic design expenses and printing expenses significantly, and was able to bundle some new design for signage and emails into the graphic design contract, which resulted in overall savings while receiving increased services. Evaluating these costs on an annual basis can result in significant savings over time.

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<sup>13</sup> V12 Group Inc., *Myths of Data List Buying*, Retrieved December 28, 2012 from <http://www.v12groupinc.com/myths-of-data-list-buying/>

So there you have it, multiple effective and low cost ways to market on a limited budget. In this fast paced world where people are easy distracted and there are multiple means of communication it is important to remember that not only do people expect to be communicated to in a variety of ways, but they need to be. Therefore, implementing a low cost and attainable multichannel marketing strategy not only is necessary but can result in a higher return on investment.