

# The ABCs of business development and marketing

By Jim Ries

Digital marketing – two words that have marketing teams across the globe scrambling to create social media accounts, disseminate more content and optimise company websites. In the technology-driven society we live in today, it is easy to become inundated with digital marketing opportunities, placing more traditional methods of business development on the backburner.

The business development process

does not have to be the complicated web it has become in today's digital era. At Offit Kurman, we have found that integrating the two is as easy as "ABC":

**Attract prospects:** One of the simplest ways to grab your target audience's attention is to provide quality content. Establish your firm as a thought leader by publishing informative and relevant articles, blog posts, press releases, and newsletters. Whenever possible, incorporate videos and interactive features into this content. Always distribute con-

tent early, often, and through a variety of outlets. In the end, worthwhile content will increase page views and website traffic.

**Build relationships and lists:** Prospects are everywhere – if you know how to find them. Collect contact information from email contacts, LinkedIn connections, website visitors and event registration lists. After compiling a master list, organise the contacts into subgroups such as industry type or position title. Once these subgroups are



organised, determine the best way to engage them. In our case, we formed a partnership with a local media source, and now conduct CEO video interviews on a regular basis. Through these video interviews, we have the unique opportunity to meet prospects in person and build stronger relationships with current clients, all while simultaneously promoting their businesses. In addition, this strategic partnership gives us access to CEOs and groups outside of our network.

**Close business:** After identifying potential clients and engaging with them, keep in touch by way of regular email outreach and event invitations. Extend invitations to seminars, panels, dinners, galas and other get-togethers that provide prospects with valuable information and networking opportunities. Not only will they appreciate the thoughtful invite, their attendance provides another way to interact with them in person again.

Although this business development process is uncomplicated in theory, it takes a fair amount of sustained effort and analysis in practice. Law firms and other professional service companies need to track their results, compare their performance against their peers,

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With over 30 years of management experience, **Jim Ries** is responsible for managing the performance, administrative functions, and business

development initiatives and activities of the Mid Market Business practice group at Offit Kurman. He also serves as the Global Vice Chairperson for GGI's Business Development & Marketing Practice Group.

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and continually integrate new technology to stay competitive in their industries.

No matter how large or complex it may be, any organisation can profit from a relationship-based and results-

driven approach to business development. The chosen methodology may be as simple as ABC, or it may even comprise the entire alphabet, but as long as prospects are first priority, it will lead to success.