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**What Every Attorney Needs to Know Before  
Spending a Dollar on Advertising**

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# **What Every Attorney Needs to Know Before Spending a Dollar on Advertising**

By: Paul Wingo<sup>1</sup>

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## I. Introduction

You can be the best attorney in the world but if you don't have cases you don't have a law practice. Client acquisition is not a required class in law school but is fundamental to every law firm. There is no one size fits all answer to advertising. What works today may be legislated out of existence tomorrow. The goal of this paper is to give lawyers some basic business practice tools that can make advertising a little less of a shot in the dark, whether you are just starting off or are looking to capture more market share.

Lawyer advertising in Texas is everywhere; on the road, on your TV, in your social media, pretty much anywhere you turn there are advertisements for personal injury attorneys. This is good in the sense attorney advertising clearly works, or it wouldn't be everywhere. It's bad because you are faced with a saturated marketplace that has numerous costly traps for the unwary. To make matters even more difficult attorneys are reluctant to share information in this area because of a basic sense of competitive self-preservation.

Here are some interesting statistics on attorney advertising that should show how ill-informed most attorneys are regarding basic business principles. 54% of law firms actively advertise to acquire new clients, yet 91% of firms can't calculate a return on their advertising investments, and 94% don't know how much it costs them to acquire a new client.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, attorneys will advertise, but fail to follow up. 42% of the time, attorneys take more than three days to respond to a potential client's new message.<sup>3</sup> That could mean that a firm is missing out on 42%

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<sup>2</sup>2017 Legal Trends Report, CLIO (2017).

<sup>3</sup>Conrad Saam, *ABA Benchmark Study on Law Firm Intake Process: Part I*, LAW TECHNOLOGY TODAY (Feb. 1, 2016), <https://www.lawtechnologytoday.org/2016/02/benchmark-law-firm-intake/>.

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