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RANKINGS AND DIRECTORIES

HOW TO MANAGE THE PROCESS AS A SMALL/MID SIZE FIRM



WHY PARTICIPATE

- Rankings and directories are used by clients of all sizes as a factor in selection
- The increase of procurement teams running pitch/panel selection has sometimes made these more important as they are a definable metric
- It can be an effective way to easily increase visibility to clients globally
- The best directories have a rigorous submission process and the efforts for this can be used in other BD activities

WHY NOT TO PARTICIPATE

- Data on the actual effectiveness of such rankings is patchy
- Many clients may not use them or only use them as part of the selection process
- The process can be time consuming and sometimes very frustrating

WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE PARTICIPATING

- Why are you considering this?
- Do you need more clients or referrals?
- Where do you need these- nationally or internationally?
- Consider how this will fit with other BD activities.
- Will it enhance your efforts, allow you to be more organized and use information across different outlets?
- Will it be too time consuming and ultimately unrewarding?
- Will you need to invest in additional resources?
- Consider your ROI

GOING FOR IT

*You've decided to participate in a directory.
The question is which one?:*

- Avoid anything that asks for payment before participation. Clients do not find anything that has a direct relationship between commerce and inclusion compelling.
- Ask what their distribution, readership, web traffic is like?
- Make sure they adequately cover your practice area so you are not misrepresented
- Be strategic – clients often use directories for unusual geographies or practice areas

JOURNALISTIC

A key differentiator is journalistic vs. directory research approach.

- Need an angle/newsworthiness
- Snapshot of the year
- More people focused
- Less methodological
- Often good if you have had an exciting matter but is not an area you are noted for
- Good for publicity
- Examples: The Lawyer Hot 100; Lawdragon 500; National Law Journal

DIRECTORY

- More methodology but more submission process
- Historical reputation is a factor
- May need an accretion of feedback before inclusion
- Examples: Legal 500; Chambers; IFLR

THE DIRECTORY LANDSCAPE

- Legal 500
- Chambers
- IFLR
- Best Lawyers
- Superlawyers
- Lawdragon Insight Guides
- Benchmark Litigation

SUBMISSIONS

- Be brief and factual
- Focus on work that sets you apart:
 - Punching above your weight with clients/cases
 - Complex matters
 - Legal Innovation
- Name names, where possible, to benchmark your practice: both clients and counsel you work with or oppose
- Concentrate on getting one or two lawyers listed each year
- Show where the distinct features of your firm as a smaller firm in a network are advantageous

CLIENTS

Clients are key to most rankings. If you participate in multiple rankings make sure you use client names carefully and prioritize.

- Pick clients who have good working knowledge of your lawyers
- Pick clients who will respond
- Ask the client's permission
- Make sure contact information is correct
- Check with directory on how they contact clients and when
- Ask directory for feedback on client response rate

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