

## TRANSCRIPT:

**Mary:** Welcome to today's episode of Vandennack Weaver Truhlsen law visionaries, a weekly podcast discussing updated legal news, as well as evolving methods of providing legal service. My name is Mary Vandennack I'm CEO, founding and managing partner of Vandennack Weaver Truhlsen LLC and I will be your host as we talk to experts from around the country about closely held businesses, tax trusts, estates, legal technology, law firm, leadership, law, practice management, and wellbeing.

**Mary:** On today's episode. My guest is Janet Falk. Janet is a public relations and marketing communications consultant from New York. Janet has extensive experience in assisting solo practitioners and small law firms with distinguishing themselves in the market. Today, we are going to discuss how to improve your marketing RBI. In a previous episode, Janet talked to us about why her and not me and helped us with how you can be an attorney, that reporters call. So that episode is also well worth listening to welcome back today, Janet, I really appreciate you talking with me again.

**Janet:** I'm very excited to continue our conversation, Mary, thank you.

**Mary:** So, I'm just interested in exactly what this term marketing RBI means. Can you explain it?

**Janet:** Sure. Baseball is the national sport. Some say and RBI stands for runs vetted in. So that's the way you win the game, right? To score more runs. I got this concept from a consultant who advises consultants. His name is David Afield, but I have applied the baseball theme to the five components of the marketing RBI, which are networking, speaking, writing, being active in the trade association of your target market, and finally promote everything that you do online. I hope I'll have the chance to explore this in more depth.

**Mary:** Well, first I must tell you that I'm from Omaha and this is the home of the college world series. So, I love the baseball analogy. That's been my thing to take my son too. He takes two weeks off every summer and go to the college world series. So that makes sense to me. So let's start with that first part networking.

**Janet:** So Mary I'm sure you've had the experience that networking is the best way to attract new clients and grow your business and your practice and most people say that their best clients come from referrals. Where do referrals come from? They come from your network. So it could be your network of past clients, or it could be your network of people that you know, who are also legal professionals. Now, I want you to think that there are different kinds of networking groups that you can participate in. There are heterogeneous groups and homogeneous groups. So a heterogeneous group is for example, business networking, international BNI, or chamber of commerce. You have people who are from the same geographic area who come together and they represent different professions. They could be accountants, they could be architects, they could be financial advisors. They could be public relations professionals. Now that's a heterogeneous group and there are reasons to be involved with them because they are in touch with a great many and diverse sources. But you might also want to get involved in a homogeneous group. So a homogeneous group is people who have the same profession or who serve the same client base. So you would be involved in the local bar association, or you could be involved in a group that specializes in a particular client. For example, I was a member of a networking group for people who had nonprofit organizations as their clients. So I was in public relations and someone else was a grant writer and someone else was a CFO, but we were a homogeneous group in that we serve the same client base. Now I have a certain strategy that I use when I go to a networking event and now that we're back to in person networking, I encourage your listeners to follow my strategy. Basically, it's pre-event marketing. I build a welcoming committee. So before I walk into a room, there are people there who want to meet me and a lot of people are nervous about going to a networking event if they don't know anyone else who's there. So I suggest they follow my approach. You go to the website of the organization and you determine who are the leaders and the movers and the shakers. So you want to talk to the president, the vice president, the membership chair, and the program chair, because they know everyone who's worth knowing in the organization. Now you figure out their email address, which you should be able to do, because usually it lists the name of the company that they're affiliated with and if you can't find their email address, then you can find them on LinkedIn. Because if they're not on LinkedIn, then they're not in business. This is the email that you're going to send to them. Will we meet at the April 23rd networking event? And you saved the following. Your name came to my attention as an officer of the,

let's say, downtown accountants association. I am looking forward to attending this event because I'm an attorney and I often work with accountants and in fact, one of my clients, you know, ABC accountants is a member of your organization. I look forward to meeting you there. Now, Mary, if you were the membership chair or the president of the downtown accountants association, and you got this email from Janet, at Janet L Falk.com and you don't know who this person is and they say, will we meet at the April 23rd networking event? What would you do?

**Mary:** I would look them up on LinkedIn, Google them, see who they were and probably arrange to meet them.

**Janet:** Exactly. I'm sure that you would write back to me and say, Janet, I'm so excited to learn that you're coming to our event because I am the president or the membership chair, because your thought is, I've got a hot one here. She wants to join our organization. I better latch onto her and make sure that she comes to this event so I can meet her and I can recruit her because I'm vested in the organization. I want to see it grow. An attorney like her would be a good person to have in our downtown accountants association. Right? So I get this email back from Mary saying, of course, I'm going to be there. I'm an officer and I look forward to meeting you, Janet, and I'm gonna reply to her and I'm gonna say, Mary, thank you so much for your note. I'm even more excited to attend and because I know it's going to be a very heavily attended event, I'm going to stand out by wearing my pink jacket. So you'll be sure to find me in the crowded room. Now, Mary, I know that as an attorney, you can't always wear a pink jacket. I'm in public relations. So I can't, but instead you could have a pink scarf, or if you are an attorney who's going to court, then you could have a pink pocket square, something distinctive so that a person will be able to find you in the crowded room. So now we're getting ready to go to the event and I post on LinkedIn looking forward to attending the downtown accountants association and I put that @ symbol in front of downtown accountants association so that it'll stand out on LinkedIn and everyone who's connected to the organization will see it on LinkedIn and I'm excited to meet, you know, Mary Vandennack and Janet Falk and Barry Simons and I put an @ in front of all their names because they're the officers of the organization and here's the URL for the registration to attend the event. Right? So now I am supporting the organization and I am supporting the officers of the organization and I haven't even walked in the door. Now Mary and Janet and Barry are all excited to meet me because I am

promoting the organization. So when I get to the actual networking event, I can stop at the registration desk and I say, is Mary Vandenack here? Because I'm supposed to meet her and they'll say, oh yes, she's the woman over there in the pink scarf and so I go over to you and I introduce yourself and I say, Mary I'm, Janet Falk. We had that email correspondence. I'm so excited to be here. Tell me about the organization. So you can see how this pre-event marketing makes it so that when you walk into a room, you've already connected with people who are the movers and shakers of the organization and they will want to recruit you and you will want to become a member of the organization. What do you think of that?

**Mary:** I think that's great but since we're using a baseball analogy, I just have to throw you a curve ball. Okay. My, my very best networking and the most clients ever picked up, I'm a lifelong gym rat were at the gym. So how does that fit into that? I'm thinking, wow. I think I've underdone that I should have been like getting to know all the gym owners and everybody though.

**Janet:** I think it works in the same way in the sense that you make yourself available and open to having conversations with the other people that you're meeting there and I'm sure you have a very succinct elevator pitch where you can describe what it is about your practice that people need to know and walk away from a conversation with you saying that Mary, this is what she does. I'm going to have her in mind for the next person.

**Mary:** I think for me, I'm just really passionate about what I do and love what I do. So I tend to just talk about it or I think some people really have to work on the elevator pitch that, okay. So let's talk about some of the other strategies. So we're here on a podcast, obviously that's an, an example of speaking. What are some speaking opportunities?

**Janet:** So some other speaking opportunities are first, if you don't have much experience, start with your networking group, right? Because most networking groups give their members an opportunity to speak before the rest of the room for maybe 10 or 15 minutes. So that's a good way to dip your toe in the water and to get started. Now look around your local community and see, is there a center for economic development or an incubator because that's where people are starting their businesses and they're going to need your help. They're gonna need your help as a real estate attorney, to help them with their lease. They're gonna lead your help

as an employment attorney, to help them with their contracts. They're going to need your help with employees. They're going to need your help as a, as a business attorney who can help them with other kinds of contracts and so on. There are other groups that you might consider partnering with. So if you have a referral source, that's a member of a certain kind of industry or professional group, then you can partner with them and create a session so that the two of you will be speaking to that person's audience. Or you can get involved by teaching a course or a lecture from time to time at the local college or the local law school or the local business school. So those are opportunities that you have for speaking people may not need your services right away, but as their experience and their business grows, then they will want to come back to you.

**Mary:** I love the whole idea of partnering with a client or others, because that gives you a nice balance between here I offer the legal aspect you offer the practical business aspect. You've done this. It gets you in front of an industry. Does this work for writing as well?

**Janet:** Yes, absolutely one of the things that you can do is you can reach out to the industry publications of your client's industry and then when you propose an article, don't write the article right away, just propose it. That will give you in the editor's eye more credibility, because your co-author speaks the language of the industry and will understand the problems that are keeping industry executives up at night. Developing an article together means that you will be in very close communication. So that's going to strengthen your relationship and it's gonna make the co-author look brilliant to all the people that matter to them in the industry, because they're gonna see that your co-author who is their colleague was published in the industry magazine or the industry newsletter. So there's a lot of reasons why you would want to partner with someone who's already in that industry, because it will improve your relationship with them and it will grant you greater access to the publication because the editor will say, you know, the co-author really knows the business here.

**Mary:** I noticed on your website, I looked at your website. I think it's fabulous by the way and you know, you have the podcast note when you're on a podcast, you post the highlights of the discussion. So I like that. There's this link I was telling everybody, look at the whole double dipping concept of, you know, you're going to speak right. Use those topics together. Can you speak to us about how the speaking and writing overlap?

**Janet:** Sure. in marketing speak, there's an acronym called C O P E, which stands for create ones, publish everywhere because people are receiving information in a variety of platforms. They're looking on social media, they're listening to podcasts and they're reading industry publications. So if I will take my highlights of something that I have spoken with on a podcast and then say, you know, these are the topics that we discussed, then someone else who doesn't really like to listen to podcast can look at the highlights and they can say, oh, these are the things that she talked about. Maybe I will invest 27 minutes in listening to that podcast. So by having the highlights available, I can drive listeners to the podcast. You can also take segments of the podcast and you can get the audio clip or the video clip, and you can post those as social posts. I want to talk about something that's kind of related, which is I went to a conference and it was with leaders in social media and it was a two day conference and what I did was I wrote up the highlights of each day and at the end of the first day I wrote the highlights, and then I posted on let my letterhead, this document on my LinkedIn profile and of course in the LinkedIn post, I cited the names of all these social media leaders so that their followers and their connections would see my post and I did this as well for the second day, Mary, you can't imagine how many views I had of those two posts. Take a guess.

**Mary:** Thousands?

**Janet:** 18,000.

**Mary:** Okay. That's awesome.

**Janet:** Okay. Now how many of them went on to view my website? I can't tell you, right, but I can show you that says that, you know, people want to read information online and imprint just as much as they want to hear it on podcasts or at conferences. So that's a way that you can be driving home, the create once publish everywhere approach.

**Mary:** I really like that. We are going to take a brief break from our episode for a word from one of our sponsors

**Mary:** Okay, let's continue. Our episode. The fourth part of your marketing RBI is being active in the trade association of your target market. I really

think that's overlooked a lot of times and it is very important and I can also see how that taps into all three of the points you've discussed, networking, speaking, and writing. Can you tell us a little more about that?

**Janet:** Sure. I focus on attorneys who have a small firm or a solo practice. So I joined two networking groups one is in New York called deliberate solos. You can see what that's about and the other is a national organization called women owned law. So it's for women who are partners or who have their own law firm or who have their own solo practice and it's also for women owned businesses that serve the legal market. So the fact that this is about law is really not important to the audience. That's more that I found my target market and I found a way to get involved. So here's how I got involved. First of all, I've given already two webinars and I'm going to give a third, right? So that's speaking. Second, I was writing a column for the New York law journal and for the New Jersey law journal and for my column, I would quote attorneys of my acquaintance guess where I found my attorneys. They were members of women owned law who happened to practice in New York or New Jersey and so that was a benefit to them. I also am associated with the monthly newsletter. So I'm always soliciting articles from the membership and occasionally I contribute my own articles to the organization. So whether it's speaking or writing or using my expertise as a writer and editor, I am contributing and promoting the organization and of course my own practice. Now, if you're an attorney, you have certain skills that you bring to the trade association of your target market. You can help them with employment issues. You can help them with reviewing their bylaws. If you're a real estate attorney, you could look at their lease or their rental agreements. So there are a lot of professional skills that you bring to the table. It's not just speaking and writing about topics that are interesting to you and to your audience, but you know, the actual on the ground functional matters that they might need help with. So just as I apply my writing and editorial skills, an attorney with a real estate practice could apply their reading of lease agreements.

**Mary:** So staying with your baseball theme, Janet, we hit a home run. Well, tell us what the fifth component is.

**Janet:** All right. So the fifth component, and I've mentioned this a little bit throughout, and that is promoting whatever you do online. So you remember I said, when you go to a networking event, promote in advance that you're going to be attending the event. Well, here's how you can

promote it afterwards. When you're at the event, take a selfie of yourself and one of the officers that you met there, and then you can post on LinkedIn great conversation and really enjoyed the meeting at the downtown accountants association and here I am with Mary Vandennack and we had a wonderful conversation about trusts and what's happening in that world. Right? So whatever you do, whether you are at a networking event or whether you're promoting a speaking engagement or a podcast that you were on, or whether you're promoting an article that you wrote, or whether you're promoting the success of the organization that you've joined, you should be sharing it throughout on your social and online activities. One thing that people often overlook is their email signature. How many emails do you send in a day, Mary, you know, 50 or a hundred?

**Mary:** Probably about 500.

**Janet:** 500. Okay and did you ever think about the valuable real estate that your email signature represents? So you're not only including your website URL and your phone number and your email address, but you could also include latest article or latest newsletter or latest podcast and have a link to all of those materials so that people would be not only seeing your contact information, but here's, what's new with Mary and they would be able to look at your newsletter or your report, or, you know, listen to your latest podcast.

**Mary:** That's a great idea. I have like my little marketing signature, but I haven't been doing that. So I think I'll add that today. So, you know, one of the things I was talking with, one of my attorneys, who's struggling a little bit to develop her business and her comment was I just hate marketing and my comment to her and I think you've talked about this and so I'm going to ask you next. I said, well, what do you mean that you hate? Because marketing contains so many different types of activities. Let's talk about what looks for you. So everybody has different levels of comfort with various activities. Do they have to do all of these things?

**Janet:** I would encourage them to at least try right and find what area you are most successful in getting your RBI, which is the one that is paying off for you. Right? So I enjoy speaking and writing. I have a monthly newsletter. I've introduced myself to a lot of podcast hosts, and I find that I get responses in those ways, but it may be that someone else is not as comfortable doing those activities, but I encourage them to at least try all



five and see which ones work. But you can't just do them one time. You have to do them over a period of three to six months because you're planting a seed and you have to cultivate it and watch it grow. Nobody's going to end the moment, say yes to you. But the more they see your activity, whether it's through meeting you at events, because you've joined a networking group and you're going there every month, or because they're receiving your monthly newsletter, or because they're listening to you podcast or, or speaking at an event, the more they're going to see you, the more comfortable they're going to, as they say no, like, and trust you. So I would encourage everyone to try all five activities and one thing that I do is every Thursday, I look at myself and I say, what did I do of my five RBI's? And if I didn't do well on one of them, I still have Friday where I can catch up.

**Mary:** So how often should an attorney calculate their RBI?

**Janet:** Well, I do it weekly, but if that's too much effort, you know, you should do it monthly, monthly might be often enough and certainly there's plenty of time in the month to do networking, speaking, writing, trade association activity, and promoting everything else online.

**Mary:** Well, Janet, I really appreciate you being here with us today. Do you have any last thoughts?

**Janet:** Well, I would encourage your listeners to take a look at my website. [janetfalk.com](http://janetfalk.com) I have a lot of resources available. I have tip sheets. I have worksheets, I have samples and I have a monthly newsletter, so they can subscribe to that and all my newsletters are on my website. So just because you're meeting me now, it may be that I wrote something last March that would've been interesting to you. So you'll be able to find all that material. Most of it is available for free. A few times, I might ask for your email address or you can buy my book, create and monitor your marketing RBI It's only \$9.99.

**Mary:** Well, thanks again, Janet. That's all for now. I want to thank our sponsors, interactive, legal, and course, and wealth. Thanks for listening to today's episode and stay tuned for our weekly releases.