

Popular Threads on Solosez

Your First Client

I'm absolutely blessed in that my father is also an attorney, and he can offer me reasonably priced office space to rent, and 20 hours of paid work per week as a safety net until I find enough cases on my own to make ends meet. My partner can get me on his health insurance, which would also be key. I'm just in that agonizing period where I'm trying to decide if I can make it work now, or if I should look for another job for now and wait a few more years first before striking out on my own.

Also, here is my question to all of you - how did you find your first client when you first started your solo practice?

ANONYMOUS

Nice intro! Welcome to the group. I think you should go solo. You have many built in resources that many solo attorneys would love to have. Take advantage of it and see if it works for you. As for getting your first client, it usually starts with an advertising effort or a networking effort. Define your practice area and figure out how to market to your target market. Blogs, websites and other online avenues are a great way to begin marketing. You will find this list very helpful!

Jennifer N. Sawday

You are at a great advantage with your family connection. That 20 hours of work that your father gives you....work it and make contact with the client as much as you can, make sure they know you are doing the work. There is a good chance, that the next time they need help, they will call you, rather than your father. I don't think your dad will mind too much if you steal his clients..... Work your connection with your judge. If you want to do criminal defense, he (and the other folks you worked with at the courthouse) can drop your name.

Hubert G. Plummer

The decision to go solo is frightening, but if I had been offered reasonable rent and 20 hours of work per week as a safety net, there would be no question. I would have jumped at the chance.

As I was establishing my office, I went to a local printer to get my business cards. While there, I met the owner's sister who had come into the shop to pick up something. She noticed I was an attorney (from the cards). When I went back a few days later to pick up my cards, she was there again (fate) and told me she was having a problem getting full payment from a client who was using their poorly worded contract as an excuse to not pay in full. Long story short, she hired me. I was able to get her full

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payment and she has been a great source of referrals ever since.

Marian Palma Cardona

OK, when I opened up I did the following:

I took out an ad, two weeks running, in the (very) local weekly paper to the effect that I had opened a practice, here's my phone number, address and areas of practice.

I put a large sign on a heavily traveled road saying "Attorney 347-2288"

The weekly paper was kind enough to run a story about me opening up a practice; As was one of the local daily papers.

In spite of that, checking my files, my VERY first client had a mobile home kitty corner to where my practice was; he walked in and said "I need a will".

But all of the above paid off; People saw the sign and called; people saw the articles and ads, and in come cases saved them for up to a year "just in case I need a lawyer".

Ronald Jones

I started my first client in Memphis with an attorney of the day project. The second was through a barter club which are great and its turned out great I think I've billed around 10k in trade credit.

Then legalmatch.

Then my website though my website seems to get real nice clients.

My blog generally doesn't generate clients directly but it appears to get alot of people onto my website. Your blog is awesome by the way. My theme is legal tips + restaurant reviews. You might want to do one on restraurant law and food. I've heard its an interesting subspeciality.

Mine is www.mymemphislawyer.blogspot.com

Make sure your site has some new york title in it if at all possible. It gets ranked easier.

Small business clients rock.

David Sandy

My first client was a referral from my mother-in-law's hairdresser.

Barry W. Kaufman

I got my first client through a barter club, also. For more, see the next

issue of the Solo Newsletter. Along with articles from other Solosezzers. Due in your mailbox any day now!

Sharon Campbell

I sent out emails to everyone I knew in town, joined the Chamber of Commerce (which ran a newsletter article on me as a new member), sent releases to the local papers, but did no other advertising in the first few months. My first two clients were tire-kickers who talked about needing an attorney, but never came back. My first paying client, about 2 weeks after I opened, came as a referral from a friend. Most of my clients todate are folks I knew or knew of me during my old career of 22 years in the same place in a management position.

Steven Boster

Welcome to the group!

I recently went on my own after working in 3 firms over a period of almost 10 years. For me, I have no regrets about working with firms before going solo, as I feel that I developed more as an attorney by being in law firm settings than I would have just going on my own. I think I write much better after having had attorneys critique my work, am a better problem-solver after having been exposed to different methods used by different attorneys, and am better with organization and file-keeping after having worked with numerous assistants and seen what works and what doesn't.

With that said, I got out of law school with this idea that it was more "glamorous" to be in a high-profile, known firm than on my own. What I learned was that the surroundings quickly get old and you have to put up with a lot of bull**** no matter how much you like the firm and the people. My experience has been that the bottom line in most big firms is keeping money in the senior partners' pockets and that means working the associates as much as possible - I worked in one firm that had huge turnover among associates, but because it didn't affect the partners' bottom line, the firm did nothing to increase morale. (I realize I sound a little bitter, but the reasons I left to go out on my own are still a little fresh in my mind!)

If you want to go out on your own, I think you will do fine because you already have a better safety net than most with your dad being an attorney and having some guaranteed work for you. You may miss the friendships that you make in a firm, but this group fills some of that void. If the only thing that keeps you from going out on your own is fear about "making it," I say go for it - you will surprise yourself!

.....as for getting my first client, I was with a friend over at the courthouse. She introduced me to an attorney friend of hers and told him I had just opened up my own practice. He immediately told me he had a case for me and had the client call me the following day.

Dondra S. Bass

Solo Newsletter? What is this and how do I get it? Michael D. Caccavo

First client was referral from attorney I wrote for during school. 15 years later, I still do work for him.

John Page

Join the ABA and the GPSolo section- no, that's division.

Sharon Campbell

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