

## LAWYERS.COM/MARTINDALE

I apologize if this has been discussed at length in the past, but have folks here generally found Lawyers.com & Martindale to be a good value or not? I am a new solo building a bankruptcy practice. I spoke with a representative today and liked some of what I heard. But the price is about \$175 a month. So I figured I would check with folks here before I started dropping that kind of change

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I just cancelled my Martindale sub. Complete was of \$150 a month.

David A. Shulman. Florida

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When I started my practice in the mid-1990's I had a listing with Martindale Hubbell for a few years. I didn't get a single client from the listings. It is my understanding that even the large firms are dropping their usage of high-priced legal directories. In my opinion, there are better values such as having your own website and being registered with the Bar's lawyer referral service.

Bert Krages, Oregon

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There may be some who like Martindale-Hubbell listings, but in my experience, it is a very poor value for the high price. There was a time when this was the best source of information about lawyers and law firms, but frankly that was decades ago. I am listed and I paid for the books for many years, but I cannot cite any benefit or client I ever got from it.

In other words the value was nil and it was a needless vanity, left over from when all my peers on Wall Street thought it was the only thing to do. When I went solo, I quickly realized that it was a waste of money.

Lawyers.com is similarly overpriced and I would not use it. They always have an attractive pitch, but it does not jibe with real life experiences, such as mine. There are several other high-priced directories of lawyers, and I recommend that you avoid all of them.

You are better advised to focus on having your own decent website, a blog and free Internet listings such as Hieros Gamos, to name only one. Most -- by far -- prospective clients today, from what I've heard, initially look to the Internet for information about lawyers.

That's why I have recently revamped my website and started my own blog, which is focusing on family businesses and estate planning issues for expats and locals in Japan. When you think about it closely, those cover a tremendous number of other fields as well,

such as business planning, restructuring, M&A, etc. It also gives me the opportunity to share information through the blog and linkages with many excellent colleagues with related practices. You will probably find, as I have, that our practices are sufficiently different in location or focus that we do not compete with one another.

I realize that you are only asking about marketing and advertising, but another component for success is actual experience in your field. Then you have something to talk about. Spend your money on resources such as books and CLE to ramp up quickly. Good luck.

Norm Solberg, Japan0

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M-H seems to be more about bragging rights to other attorneys, rather than impressing clients. I don't think most clients know what Martindale Hubble is.

Most people don't know what Standard & Poor's and Moodys is either . . .and that institutions pay them to rate them. If I paid you to rate me, and you give me a bad rating, I might not hire you again.

Royce Brent Bishop, Florida

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Thanks to all who responded. Sounds like a decent consensus voting against.

Andy Winchell, New Jersey

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M-H may be on its way out, and for my 28 years practicing law I have gotten very few clients or even inquiries from it (most of that time a big firm paid for the listing), but a few years ago I got one of my best clients from M-H, so even though it is tempting to drop the \$140/mo charge, there is no way I will.

Shell Bleiweiss, Illinois

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I am late to this question, and apparently naïve. What are they charging you for? I am listed on lawyers.com/martindale.com and it doesn't cost me anything.

Stephanie Hill

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It's a good question. I just filled out a form to try to get listed and got a call from a salesman about it. Didn't know I had a free option.

Andy Winchell

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There are the free listings you have, although I don't think they publicize them, but for money you get a much bigger listing, a hot link to your own website, etc.

Shell Bleiweiss

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I keep getting these e-mails telling me that, if I don't pay they will remove my listing. If I recall, the communications seem to be in the context that no one will know what my "Peer Review Rating" is if I don't pay.

So far, I have not paid, and I still seem to be "listed" (at least some information about me appears, although my telephone number, e-mail address, and other details are no longer included in my listing). Interestingly, my Peer Review Rating is one of the things that continues to appear.

All I can figure is that you must get more detail if you are willing to pay.

Brian H. Cole, California

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My experience is the same as Shell's; every once in a while a good case comes of it, often better than cases from other sources

Wendy Lascher, California

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I think it depends upon your clients. If you are doing PI or family law or estate planning, it is unlikely that those types of clients will be checking M-H. OTOH, in house counsel, some business clients, and attorneys looking for someone in a particular jurisdiction (probably older, large firm attorneys) are more likely to look at M-H. We debate every year whether to keep paying for our listing. Every time we finally agree to dump it, it seems we get a good client who says he/she found us in M-H or checked our M-H profile before calling. For many, there is a level of validation.

As with some others, we do not get any large number of clients from our

M-H listing, but we seem to get a good (if not very good) client every year or two.

Ken Yudell, New York and New Jersey

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I have gotten several clients and believe it is worth the price.

Richard J. Pinette, California

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