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Stop trying to create content. Start being the content.

A PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR BUSY LAWYERS BUILDING A PERSONAL BRAND IN 2026

Walk into any courthouse, law office (even a home office), or look around your city, and you will find exceptional lawyers doing exceptional work. They are handling complex cases, guiding clients through their most difficult moments, preparing for trial with precision and intensity, and giving of their time towards mentorship, leading organizations, and empowering their communities.

Yet open Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, or YouTube, and you'll notice something equally consistent: Many of those same lawyers are barely noticeable, or nowhere to be found. That disconnect is worth paying attention to. We are operating in what can fairly be described as a trust recession, and the legal profession is not immune. Whether fair or not, there exists a baseline level of skepticism when people think about lawyers, which can be shaped by personal experiences, media narratives, and the actions of a few that cast a broader shadow over the many. Trust is no longer assumed. It must be earned.

In any business, and when it comes to searching for a lawyer, people are looking for someone they know, like, and trust. That trust is often formed before the first phone call to you or your office ever takes place. Potential clients, referral partners, future employers/employees, and even other attorneys are forming impressions of you online and often long before any direct interaction occurs. Whether we like it or not, visibility has become part of modern legal practice, and that does not seem to be changing anytime soon.

The issue is not that attorneys lack valuable insights or meaningful work to share. The issue is that most of that value is never seen.

This article is for attorneys who want to be more intentional about how they are perceived. Whether you are a law firm owner, solo practitioner, partner, associate, or just beginning your legal career, the opportunity is the same: To build

trust and grow your influence organically, and position yourself as a go-to authority in your field, your community, and your area of practice. What follows is a practical framework for doing so by documenting the work you are already doing. Simply, consistently, and without the need for perfection.

Your personal brand is not optional

When attorneys hear the phrase “personal brand,” it can feel like a marketing concept. Something separate from the actual practice of law. In reality, it is much simpler than that.

Your personal brand is *your reputation*. It is what people think or say about you when you are not in the room. That reputation already exists. It is shaped by how you communicate, how you prepare, how you handle cases, and how you show up for your clients. The only shift today is that your reputation is no longer confined to the courtroom or office. It now extends into the digital space.

And increasingly, people are forming opinions about you before ever speaking with you. They are looking at your website. They are looking at your social media. They are implicitly asking, “Who is this person?”

The question is not whether you have a personal brand. *You do*. The question is whether you are intentionally shaping it or allowing it to be defined by your absence.

The real value of being the content

There is a practical reason why building your personal brand matters. As mentioned, people do business with, and choose lawyers that they know, like, and trust. What has changed is that much of that trust is now built online. This is not something to be nervous about; rather, it provides an exciting opportunity to grow your presence and influence, regardless of law firm size or marketing resources.

We have seen this first-hand in our own practice. I have the great privilege of working with family and serving personal injury clients in the Inland Empire. My older brother, Kenny Ramirez, started the firm in 2020, and shortly afterwards I joined the firm, first as a law clerk, then as an attorney in 2021, learning both the practice and business of law and working with Kenny to get the business off the ground. One of the things we quickly realized was the importance of marketing our business; to let people know we are here, ready to serve our community. We had not been in business or in practice for as long as other attorneys in our field, and we did not have the advantage of decades of name recognition. What we did have, however, was the ability to be intentional about showing up online. We did not start with any fancy gear, a laid-out content strategy, or even an in-house marketing team, but we made a decision to start showing up consistently, particularly on Instagram (@kramirezlaw), which became our primary platform. We started our social-media presence in 2022, decided to start posting when we could, then committed to posting once a week, whether it was through a photo post or a video we made. We shared insights and content that felt relevant and showed who we were, our story, and what we valued. We also engaged in community service early on, which is a big passion of ours, by giving out scholarships to high school and law students taking the bar exam and shared that online. Over time, that consistency of showing up online compounded.

Our social-media presence stopped feeling like something separate from our practice and started becoming an extension of it, and something we still enjoy doing. Attorneys began recognizing us before ever meeting us. College and law students have reached out with questions or just to share how our content resonated with them. People have approached us

at conferences and events with a sense of familiarity. Speaking opportunities have followed. Professional relationships have developed. Potential clients have called already having formed an impression of who we were, how we communicated, and what we valued by what we posted online.

That did not happen because of one post. It happened because of repeated, consistent acts over time. And importantly, this is not the kind of trust that can simply be purchased through advertising. Digital ads are great and can create awareness. They can put your name in front of people, but organic content does something different: It allows people to spend time with you. It gives them a chance to observe you. How you think, what you care about, and whether they connect with the way you show up.

That distinction matters, especially for lawyers. In a profession where trust is critical, organic visibility can build a kind of credibility that paid reach alone cannot buy.

The wrong approach: Treating content as another task

For many attorneys, the idea of building a presence online immediately feels like an additional task on top of everything else you have to get done: “I need to film something.” “I need to come up with topics.” “I need to create content.”

That framing is what creates resistance and, ultimately, inaction. Because the issue is not that attorneys lack ideas or meaningful content. The issue is how they are thinking about it.

The assumption is that content must be created from scratch, it has to be planned, scripted, and produced as something separate from the actual practice of law. But that approach makes the process feel artificial and time-consuming.

A more accurate way to think about it is this: You do not need to create content. You need to capture it. *You need to be the content.*

The content you are looking to create is happening every day. It exists in the conversations you are having, the

preparation you are doing, the way you think through a case, the way you communicate with your team. These are not distractions from your work. They are the work. And when viewed through the right lens, they are inherently valuable, not just to your clients, but to anyone trying to understand how a skilled and thoughtful attorney actually operates. What may seem routine or normal to us in our practice, is something that’s exciting and unique to many others.

The shift, then, is not about becoming a content creator. It is about becoming more intentional in documenting what is already happening in your practice day to day.

A more practical approach: Capture first, figure it out later

One of the most common barriers for attorneys is the belief that something must be polished before it can be posted. The instinct is to wait, to find the right moment, the right words, or the right level of preparation before turning on a camera. But in practice, that often leads to the same result: Nothing gets captured at all.

A more effective and simple approach is: Capture first, figure it out later.

Instead of deciding in advance what is worth sharing, the focus shifts to documenting what is already happening. The goal is not to produce a finished product in real time. The goal is to create a record of real moments that can later be reviewed, refined, and possibly shared online.

Not everything needs to be posted. Not every clip needs to be polished. But if the moment is not captured, it does not exist. And while content can take many forms – graphics, written posts, or photos – there is something uniquely powerful about capturing video. Video stands out because it is more personal and there is a level of connection between you and the viewer that comes through on video that other formats do not fully capture.

For attorneys, this can be done in simple, practical ways. It may be putting your phone on a tripod and recording a

short clip before walking into court, after a client meeting, or during trial preparation. It may be capturing a moment from a team discussion or reflecting briefly after a long day. You can even show what you do after a day of advocating for your clients.

If you get asked to speak on stage or do presentations, whether it is at a conference, presenting a CLE in person or online, or participating in a panel, those moments should be captured as well. These speaking engagements are high-value opportunities where you are already demonstrating expertise, and often, they go undocumented. I cannot tell you how many times I have watched a true expert deliver an impactful speech or presentation, yet none of it was caught on camera. These are missed opportunities! A simple recording from your phone, whether placed on a tripod or held by a colleague, can capture content that reflects your experience and credibility in a way that no scripted video can replicate.

Importantly, none of this requires sophisticated equipment. A smartphone is enough. Ideally, I recommend one of the latest iPhone models as they have better camera quality than the older models. But if you are new to this, use what you have to start.

Another important note: When recording any speaking engagements, you will also want to have a good wireless microphone to capture clean sound. One of my favorite wireless microphones is the Hollyland Lark M2 Wireless Lavalier Microphone. The magnetic microphone attaches easily to your clothing and is very easy to set up on your phone or professional camera and carry around with you. You can find this on Amazon right now for around \$80. It is definitely worth the price.

Over time you will have a library of real, unscripted moments that reflect how you think, work, interact. From that library, content can be selected and shared in a way that feels natural rather than forced. And importantly, this does not add more work. It reframes the work that already exists.

As those moments accumulate, they begin to form something more substantial, a body of proof. Proof of how you prepare. How you communicate. How you lead. How you serve your clients and community. You are capturing and being the content!

More ideas of what this looks like in practice

The ideas are endless, and I encourage you to find something you feel comfortable with as well. It may be a clip of your morning routine before you get into the office, or reviewing a case file before the office gets busy. It may be a short video walking into the courthouse before a hearing or before trial starts. It may be a team discussion about litigation strategy, recorded in a way that protects confidentiality but still captures the care and thought behind the work you do. It may be a reflection after a deposition or mediation, where you speak generally about preparation, advocacy, or lessons learned.

Some of the most effective content is not scripted. It is observational.

A simple clip of you working at your desk can become a post about discipline. A team meeting can become a post about leadership or the responsibility of serving clients well. A brief moment before oral argument can become a reflection on readiness and the weight of representing someone in a difficult moment.

Lawyers also have strong opportunities for conversational content. Internal discussions, professional reflections, debriefs after events, leadership conversations, podcast clips, mentorship moments, and thoughtful exchanges with other attorneys can all become valuable content. These moments reveal not just what you know, but how you think. There is also room for content that shows the broader person behind the profession. Your routines, your discipline, your values, and your community involvement all contribute to how people perceive you.

Attorneys should also think beyond the obvious. Content does not always need to be a direct legal explanation.

It can be the drive to a speaking engagement, a behind-the-scenes moment from preparing for trial, or a clip from a podcast conversation about leadership, purpose, discipline, or growth.

And even if you miss the moment itself, you can still capture the insight. A simple reflection of “I just got off a call where...” or “I just left court and here is one thing worth remembering...” can still become something valuable. The content is already in your day. The real work is learning to see it. Again, capture the content and figure it out later. You do not need to post it if you do not want to, but at least you have it if you ever want to use it and post it online in the future.

The long game

If you pay attention to your own behavior when scrolling on social media, you will notice a pattern: You tend to see the same people repeatedly. Think about the top three or four accounts that show up on your feed. Over time, they become familiar. Eventually, they become trusted. That process is not driven by perfection. It is driven by consistency.

The goal is not to go viral. It is to become recognizable. For attorneys, this is where the real opportunity lies. In a profession built on trust, repeated exposure can shape perception long before any direct interaction occurs. And that perception compounds over time. One post will not change anything, and one video will not build trust, but consistent presence begins to do something more meaningful. It shortens the distance between you and the people who may one day need to know you.

This is the long game. It is not about immediate results, but about building familiarity and allowing that familiarity to develop into trust over time.

For many attorneys, however, the challenge is not understanding the value of consistency, it is overcoming the internal resistance to starting. The hesitation is familiar: Not having enough time, not knowing what to post, feeling that the content is not interesting enough, or

worrying about how it will be perceived or that it feels “cringy.” These are not technical barriers. They are internal ones, and they are common.

In many cases, attorneys underestimate the value of what they already know and what they already do. What feels routine, explaining a concept, preparing for a hearing, thinking through a case, can be highly valuable to someone else. There is also a concern that showing up online may feel unnatural or uncomfortable. But in practice, the most effective content is not performative. It is consistent and genuine. You do not need to become someone else. You need to become more visible as to who you already are.

There is also a deeper point worth recognizing. The camera does not create anything, it reveals. It reveals how you communicate, how you present ideas, and what you value. If there is discomfort in that, it is often because it is unfamiliar, not because it is ineffective. And like any skill, it improves with repetition and practice. When Kenny and I started turning on the camera, it felt awkward and unnatural at first. Over time, we have become more comfortable being on camera, and we continue to learn how to become more effective communicators.

For attorneys who are willing to approach this with consistency and a long-term perspective, this becomes more than content. It becomes a way to take control over how you are perceived. In a profession where others are already forming impressions of you, whether you participate or not, that control has real value.

The long-form advantage: Building trust through conversation

For attorneys who want to take it a step further, long-form content (a video that is longer than eight minutes is generally considered long-form) offers an additional way to deepen trust with others. This is not a requirement. It is simply another path that allows people to spend more time with you, hear more of your perspective, and develop a stronger sense of who you are beyond short clips or individual posts.

One of the most effective ways to do this is through long-form video, such as a podcast. At its core, a podcast is simply a recorded conversation. It does not need to be overly complex or highly produced. It requires a willingness to engage in thoughtful discussion, whether with others or on your own. What makes long-form content powerful is time. Short-form content allows people to see you and begin trusting you. Long-form content allows people to really understand you.

When someone spends 10 minutes, 30 minutes, or an hour listening to a conversation, they begin to get a clearer sense of how you think, what you value, and how you communicate. Over time, that familiarity deepens into trust. This is something we have experienced firsthand. In 2024, we started our video podcast, *Art of Purpose w/ Kenny S. Ramirez*, which is available on YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts if you would like to check it out. It was not designed as a legal podcast, but rather as a platform to explore something we care deeply about; purpose, growth, and the stories behind the people we admire. We committed to consistency and something manageable for us and we decided to release one episode every month. Some episodes feature guest attorneys, professionals, and individuals with meaningful stories to share. Other times, it is simply a conversation between us or with one of our family members.

Through that process, we have had the opportunity to connect with remarkable individuals, hear their stories, and share those stories with others. More importantly, we have seen how people engage with that content in a deeper way. Some have reached out not because of a legal issue, but because something resonated. Others have come to know us through those conversations before ever interacting with us professionally. In some cases, individuals encountered the podcast without even knowing we were attorneys. The connection came first. The professional relationship followed.

That is the value of long-form content. It creates space to connect on an

even deeper level. For attorneys considering this approach, there is flexibility in how it can be done. It can be guest-based, bringing on other attorneys or professionals. It can be solo, where you share your perspective on your area of practice, leadership, or lessons learned. It can focus on legal topics, or extend into broader conversations about business, discipline, or personal development.

From a practical standpoint, long-form content can also support your overall efforts. A single conversation can be repurposed into shorter clips to post to social media, written insights, and other forms of content. In that sense, it complements short-form content.

While it may require slightly more setup, it does not need to be complicated. A simple setup, a clear conversation, and a consistent approach are more than enough to begin.

Ultimately, long-form content is not about volume. It is about depth. And for those who choose to pursue it, it can become one of the most effective ways to strengthen the trust that is already being built through consistent, short-form visibility.

Content-creation tools that help

At some point, the question becomes practical: Once you begin capturing these moments, how do you actually turn them into something you can share?

For many attorneys, this is where the process can feel overwhelming. You may have recorded clips, conversations, or even longer-form content, but the idea of editing and packaging it can feel like another time-consuming task.

The good news is that there are now simple, accessible tools that can significantly reduce that friction, and many of which can be used directly from your phone.

In our own practice, while managing an active caseload and the day-to-day demands of running a law firm, we have relied on a handful of AI tools and apps that make this process more efficient and manageable.

Edits by Instagram is one of the

simplest places to start. It allows you to quickly trim clips, add captions, incorporate music, and prepare content directly for posting. For attorneys who want a straightforward way to take a recorded moment and turn it into something usable, it removes much of the complexity of video editing.

OpusClip is particularly useful for longer recordings. If you have recorded a presentation, a speaking engagement, or a podcast conversation, *OpusClip* can analyze that content and suggest shorter clips, highlights, and potential hooks. This can be especially helpful for attorneys who are already speaking, teaching, or presenting but are not capturing or repurposing that content effectively.

CapCut offers a range of templates that can help streamline the editing process. If you have multiple clips, whether from your day, a case-related moment, or a speaking engagement, *CapCut* allows you to quickly compile them into a cohesive video with built-in formatting, transitions, and music. It simplifies what would otherwise be a more time-intensive editing process.

Canva is a valuable tool for creating supporting visuals. Whether it is designing simple graphics, adding text overlays, or creating cover photos, thumbnails and visual elements to accompany your content, *Canva* makes it easy to produce clean, professional-looking materials without advanced design experience.

None of these tools are required. But they can help reduce the barrier between capturing content and actually sharing it. And importantly, they are all accessible. They can be used on a phone and learned quickly without the need for specialized training.

For those who want to take things a step further, there are also more advanced editing platforms such as *Adobe Premiere Pro* and *Final Cut Pro*. These tools offer greater control over video editing and are commonly used in higher-level production workflows. While they may require a steeper learning curve, they can be a strong option for firms that want to elevate production quality or build out

a podcast, particularly if you are using professional camera equipment or have someone on your team interested in developing those skills. For attorneys interested in exploring that path, I am always open to sharing what has worked for us.

The goal is not to complicate the process. It is to make it easier to show the work that is already happening.

It is also worth noting that ideas do not need to come solely from within the legal profession. Some of the most useful insights often come from observing how others communicate and create. I have personally learned a great deal from content creators and business coaches such as Omar Eltakrori (@omareltakrori), particularly in how he approaches personal branding and capturing real-life moments as content. There is value in studying individuals, whether they are business owners, entrepreneurs, or creators, who are effective at communicating clearly and consistently.

Conclusion: The content is already there; it just needs to be captured

At its core, and while this may sound contradictory, personal branding is not

about self-promotion. It is not about showing off, performing for an audience, or creating a version of yourself that does not exist.

It is about service. As attorneys, we are already in the business of providing value. We advocate for our clients. We guide them through difficult moments. We apply our skills, judgment, and experience to help people navigate situations they cannot handle on their own.

Building a personal brand should reflect that same principle. The goal is not to show off.

The goal is to show up with value. To share insights. To help others. To allow people to understand who you are before they ever meet you. When done genuinely, it is not a performance. It is a reflection. And in that process, your content can do more than inform. It can motivate, encourage, and create connection with future clients, your community, and many others. And importantly, this does not require doing everything at once. There is no need to post every day or create at a high volume. A more sustainable approach is to start small, committing to something as

simple as one post per week, and focusing on consistency over time. Those small, repeated efforts begin to compound. Over time, they build familiarity, and that familiarity can develop into trust. Because at the end of the day, people are not drawn to content that feels manufactured. They are drawn to people, to attorneys, who are genuine, consistent, and committed to serving others. The work is already there. The value is already there. The opportunity is simply to make it visible. This is your year to *be the content!* 

Sharon Ramirez is an attorney at Kenny Ramirez Law Firm, a catastrophic personal injury and wrongful-death practice based in the Inland Empire. She has been recognized as a Southern California Super Lawyers Rising Star since 2024 and a National Trial Lawyers "Top 40 Under 40." She is active in her community and currently serves as Treasurer of CAOIE, President of RCBA Barristers, and a board member of HBAIE. sramirez@ramirezlaw.com.