

October 2017 Strategy Call



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Lead Capture: Capture and Convert for Higher Profits with Robert Hoglund, Hoglund Law

Recording

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Key Points

- Robert Hoglund runs the largest single state bankruptcy practice in America
- He is a master of bankruptcy marketing and founded Hoglund Analytics
- In this 30-minute training session, we break down the lead:
 - 1) **Capture**
 - 2) **Warming/ Bonding**
 - 3) **Converting**

Call Transcription

Philip: Welcome to the Strategy Call for October 2017. Today's call is about Lead Capture: Capture and Converting for Higher Profit. I asked Robert Hoglund from Hoglund Advertising and Analytics and Hoglund Law to join us on today's call. Robert, how are you doing?

Robert: I'm fine. Thank you for the invite.

Philip: I talk to Bankruptcy attorneys all day long and I asked Robert to join us on this call because he is a marketer at heart. He is the #5 filer in the country and now it's based on Chapter 7 filings; 722 put out these reports every year. Last year he was #5 in the country for Chapter 7 and he is the only person in the top 5 in a single state. He runs a large bankruptcy practice, does Social Security and he has his own Analytics Company where he does Adwords for himself and other Social Security companies. He has marketing in his blood. It's great to have you on the call and talk to you about Lead Capture, Robert.

We are going to start off with some basic stuff. This call, like all of my strategy calls, will run for 20 to 30 minutes. It's going to be short. If you want more information, you can always reach out to me and I can point you to the right direction, if I can't help you myself.

Let's just start with a lead. Obviously, the bankruptcy business is so unique because we are paying for our phones to ring. We pay big dollars and this is not cheap. You can pay \$10-15 per Adword for this or pay \$35 up to \$75 per lead from Total Attorneys and NOLO. How do we bring these leads in? If we can close them instantly, warm them into our process and then convert them. There's three parts to this process: Capturing, Warming, or the Bonding with, and Converting. Sometime this whole process happens in one phone call or in months because people are not ready. When we say converting, it means it's converting to an appointment. Robert, we are going to break down these three areas: Capturing, Warming or Bonding and Converting. As I mentioned on this call, I wanted to talk about this and share from your experience what you've seen.

Let's start with Capturing. There's various ways to capture a lead. Like many people do, we can buy leads from Total Attorneys, Lead Mention and Nolo. You can also buy leads using Adwords where you handle Adwords on your own or hiring a company like yours to manage the Adwords or, they bring in referrals. When I bring up lead capture, other than this, what am I missing here?

Robert: With Lead Capture, it boils down to buying leads, whether it's from Total Attorneys, Nolo, Adwords, or from a PPC Company that we have with Hoglund Advertising and Analytics. Typically, you will get two types of delivery system; an email and a hot phone transfer. With PPC Campaigns, you get a hot phone transfer from elite companies such as Nolo. Most of their leads come by email. Other elite companies come with a high breed of hot phone transfers and emails.

Relative to the delivery system, the biggest thing is, if your phone rings and you are paying for these leads strictly from high phone transfers, you need to pick up the phone. You need to have protocols in your office to make sure that once the phone rings, someone picks it up especially in Digital Advertising, which we are talking about and not much so much of print or television. With Digital Advertising, it's such a volatile market. When you don't pick up the phone, it goes to voicemail or otherwise, you will likely lose these leads exponentially. They will just move on to the next vendor that they see while they are exploring the internet.

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You then have email leads that are very difficult to convert and take a lot more labor. Oftentimes, you are purchasing those leads at a cheaper rate. Just the same, you have to be there the same time that it's delivered to your office.

Philip: Let's circle back on the hot live transfer. I talk about this all the time. You need to answer these calls and sometimes people are calling at a lot of different times. I've seen campaigns where the calls are transferred and have had attorneys tell me they don't like calls after 4:00 PM and that matters. When someone calls, they want to talk to someone and they want to talk to someone now. They want people on the phone and not just an answering machine or answering service that take in some answers to questions and tell them that they will get back to them tomorrow. They want people who can answer to their legitimate questions. Is that fair from your experience Robert?

Robert: Exactly. The whole point of a hot phone transfer and answering that call is to give the client some skin in the game; to give them a reason to set an appointment to meet with your firm and a reason to show up for that appointment. When it goes to voicemail, you are not getting that. When it goes to a reception's business, it's going to be indicative of the quality and training of that receptionist. The coup de gras of a hot phone transfer is to have somebody, whether it's the attorney or someone in that office answers that phone or hit those emotional triggers of why these individuals are calling; what happened to them that they are reaching out and why they need a bankruptcy attorney and plan those emotional triggers to (1) set the appointment and (2) to set a strong appointment. It's not just the order taking but to give that client some empathy and a reason on how you can solve their problem.

A good example of it is, the other day, someone called in and they wanted to set an appointment because their wages are being garnished. Once you get into the emotional factor of that phone call, you pick their brain a little bit. This gal was asked "How is this garnishment going to affect you?" According to her "Well, if my wages get garnished, I won't be able to pay for my rent and if I don't pay my rent, I will lose custody to my child to my Ex." Really she wasn't calling about bankruptcy, she wasn't calling about garnishment. She didn't want to lose custody of her child which is huge. If you plan those emotional triggers, that's how you set up an appointment from a hot phone transfer. That's why the delivery system via email can be so daunting. It would be very difficult to email to (1) get a hold of somebody and (2) hit those emotional triggers to set that strong appointment.

Philip: I totally agree Robert. For those of you who are getting live transfers and want to immediately increase your leads and conversions, start having these live transfers go directly to your cell phone. Unless you have a big organization where you can't do that, have these live transfers go to your cell phone; you can see the number coming in, you know that it's a lead, you know that phone call needs to be answered, you answer it and you solve the problem. You set not just an appointment but a strong appointment, based on emotion and bring that person home. That's the best ROI that you can possibly do on your money. Go ahead Robert, what are you going to say?

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Robert: For the PPC bankruptcy attorneys throughout the country, I listen to a lot of their calls and help train them strictly on the topic that we are talking about today and I don't even charge them for that. One of the mistakes that I and many of our PPC bankruptcy attorneys throughout the country that often times made in the past is trying to sell bankruptcy on the phone right off the bat. It's too difficult as they can end up a law, there's exemptions etc. What you are doing is setting up an appointment. You are not selling the bankruptcy. People who call are not ready to be sold.

Philip: Robert, hold on to that as I want to get to that on the conversion part. Let me wrap up on this.

Another thing that you have to do on the lead capture and believe me most attorneys don't do this is as soon as the call comes in and as soon as you are talking to a lead which can be a live transfer or a referral call, whoever calls in, you start talking to them. You immediately tell them "Just in case we get disconnected, can I get your name and contact information so I can follow up with you?" Write down their name, cell number and get their email and go through the assumption that they will always give you their name, cell number and email. If they botched on the email, you can ask "Would you like some information on how to rebuild your life after bankruptcy? I can give that to you." Assume that they will give it to you. You need a system in place to capture this lead. Robert, any other thoughts before I go to the Bonding process and for the people who are not ready to file at this point?

Robert: No. I don't have anything else to add. For a fact, doesn't be an order taker off the bat. Get some very simple information; name, phone and even email are really good and backside that at the end of the phone call because not everyone will be comfortable in giving out an email. Once you talk to them a little bit, they'll give you their email right after they give you their name and phone number at least in case you get disconnected. You then get into "Why did you reach out today/ this week or last night that made you reach out?" "What changed in your life?" "What happened today/ this week or last night?" Most of them spill their guts a little bit. You can then capitalize on those emotional triggers as you go through the preliminary interview or otherwise, like on the first call on the client that we were talking about.

Philip: I love the distinction on this. There is a key difference between an appointment and a strong appointment. I love that takeaway.

Now that we captured the lead, we either set the appointment or not. The reality is not everyone who calls in is ready to file bankruptcy. We all know that. There's a lot of shame along bankruptcy. We don't think of it as shameful because we are around it constantly. A lot of people don't talk about bankruptcy. They don't realize that a lot of their friends have filed bankruptcy. It's a lot like credit scoring. Everybody is embarrassed to talk to me about credit scoring within a circle of friend. People walk up to me and say "Can I ask you something privately?" If they knew which of our friends have asked me privately about credit, they would be feeling much better because it happens to all of us.

On the Bonding process, Robert, talk about what comes to mind on the people who are not ready to file at the moment? I will then share to you what my thoughts are.

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Robert: Oftentimes, I would differentiate from the people who are not ready to file when they fill out a form fill versus a hot phone transfer. You have to be very careful when you buy leads from a form fill or email. You may contact a lot of these. Side track from initial contact from initial contacts to retain to file on all of our leads, I oftentimes find that vendors who sell form fills. We have a very good sales team here. They'll get a hold of them, set up the appointment, even show up and retain them but at the end of the day, a lot of them are not psychologically ready to pull the trigger and file the case. I see a lot of people drop off post-retained from form fills VS the hot phone transfers. Because of this, it's important to have to an email drip campaign, an actual physical follow up procedure and protocol for your clients.

Philip: I couldn't agree more. For those who didn't listen to our last month's Strategy call, all we talked about was the email lead follow up drip sequence. This is your chance to throw people in a sequence. It doesn't take precedence of you calling people back or texting them saying "Hey! Are you ready to file? Are you ready to file?"

For what I experienced around Credit Scoring and to this bankruptcy practice, when we can back people out of the corner and stop the embarrassment around bankruptcy, they are more likely to step up and say "I'm ready." The thing is, these banks would make you believe, and I am convinced that these are PR Campaigns that the banks put up, is that if you file bankruptcy, you are out to lunch for 10 years. Good luck in getting a home. You are going to overpay on cars and you're not going to have any credit cards and your credit score is going to be horrible for 10 years. It's not the case. When you can communicate that in various ways, the lead follow up system that we have created does the exact thing.

I see all the replies that come in for all our attorneys that are on the lead follow up system. In fact, we had a lady reply today and the subject line was "This will be you..." The email that she got was an automatically generated email that looked like it came from the attorney and talked about this guy who bought a home for his family, himself, his wife and two kids 2 years and 2 days after the bankruptcy discharged. She replied to the email saying, "I am so excited" She's replying to the bankruptcy attorney excited about getting this done.

During this Bonding process, you have to really back people out of the shame around bankruptcy. Although we don't think about because we know how normal it is, don't forget they feel shameful about it. What are your thoughts on that Robert? Anything comes to mind?

Robert: With the entire process, you have to be data driven to get the results you need. If you haven't, start now. Make it your New Year's resolution or otherwise. Data is relative to what we do in the bankruptcy world for practicing attorneys and law firms it's so critical. From your vendors, you want to track how many leads are you getting, how many leads are you generating, appointments scored and at the end of the month, the cost per appointment. Out of those leads, what are you retaining and what are you charging. You really have to do this as a business person. You have to have the data and have the performance of the vendors that you utilize. Without it, you are really running blind.

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Philip: Absolutely. If you don't, you can be paying more than you are making and not realize it. How many times have we seen that? Let's talk about conversion. We talked about the Capture, a simple thing to do. We now talk about conversion; how to connect and how to back people out of the corner. Let's start off with you Rob because you are going down this road and I love the road that you are in. Let's talk about what you mentioned; the difference between selling the appointment and selling the bankruptcy. So many attorneys across the country get too caught up in bankruptcy. I'll let you run with it.

Robert: As we know through law school and throughout our careers, we practice law; we are trained to be attorneys, maybe not necessarily sales people. Whether you like it or not, when you are buying leads, you or your staff is taking that call, they have to sell your services. Assuming that your firm is in the position to set up appointments over the phone, right then and there, which I don't think is a good idea, when you get an email or a hot phone transfer, the phone interview is done when they get the client. In my opinion and what I've seen, clients are not ready for that. They want to make a phone call to touch, feel and get some immediate gratification, some respect and some empathy to move that ball down the court to file that bankruptcy. Assuming that your firm is set up or you have an email of the phone call, as a back-up, you really need to sell the appointment. The client shows up and meets an attorney or paralegal, retains them and files the case. Too many attorneys get caught up in being an attorney. On that call or email, you are not an attorney. You are a salesperson. You have to put on your sales hat and selling the appointment.

From an initial phone call, it's very difficult to sell bankruptcy. You have to set up the appointment. You have to give that client the reason to set the appointment and then to show up. That's setting the appointment and setting a strong appointment. Setting up an appointment is really more on hitting those emotional triggers, like what I described in my garnishment hypothetical earlier. When you hit home on those emotional triggers, as we are not trained to typically ask those questions because we are not trained to be sales people, we were trained to be attorneys, it may seem odd or uncomfortable to ask those questions but they really work. Like in my hypothetical, you don't need to be that deep. You can certainly see the logic and the psychology in hitting those emotional triggers. Really pounding in to this gal's head that "Let's not have you lose custody over your son. It's very important for you to show up on this appointment. You will be with an attorney and they will be able to help you out based on what you described. I have been doing this for 26 years. I think you are going to be just fine. You know what Lisa? Nothing is going to change unless you show up to that appointment. Let's schedule that now. Are you available tomorrow at 2:00 pm? Let's get this scheduled."

Philip: I love what you are saying. Let me ask you this. If someone did have a garnishment and were just hounded by creditors and they called in and said, "You know what, I don't know if bankruptcy is for me. I just have some debt." Where would you take that emotional conversation to set a strong appointment? It's not about having a garnishment and not about them losing a kid but just debt.

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Robert: It's sort of open ended. I'll ask a few questions like "What types of debts do you have?" Do you have credit cards? Do you have medical bills? Do you have student loans?" They'd rattle off with what they have and I'd say "What are these creditors up to?" "Have they garnished your wages yet?" "Have they cleaned out your bank account yet?" "Have they sued you?" "Have they called you at work?" I kind of play around with "what's going to happen if you don't take care of this" Oftentimes they'd say "Oh yeah. I'm getting these nasty letters from the creditors as well." I'd say "Their next step now is to serve you paperwork at work or at home or otherwise. I'd also say "Can you afford to pay on this debt without ranting peer to pay Paul?" At times they'll say no. Typically, I'll get into "Well, there are not too many options you have". I think they're not on the bankruptcy ship. What I do is I put together a little spiel on they'll come in for a free consultation with our attorneys and put together a financial game plan for them and that works really well and then we include bankruptcy. "We also do debt negotiation. You might want to do some debt reorganization." We'll call it a Chapter 13. Or another option might be a Chapter 7.

Philip: I just want to unpack what you just said. It's so effective. First of all, if someone's just calling from a loop matter, you're unpacking and bringing things up like "Have they garnished your wages yet?" "Have they reached out to your employer?" You are bringing up very emotional and embarrassing things. A lot of people who call don't realize that they can reach out to their employer. How many times did someone say "No. When do they do that?" I'm sure you had that.

Robert: Not so much. It's usually pretty quiet on the other end of the phone. That's when I break in to the financial game plan. I'm not necessarily pushing bankruptcy. What I'm saying is "Hey! Bankruptcy might be an option, maybe not. You have other options. Let's find out what those are."

Philip: Incidentally, one of our bankruptcy attorneys in Dallas, Texas, what he does with 720, he says to them on the phone "Hey! Come on in. You may not need bankruptcy. You may need Credit improvement. We have the program called 7 Steps to 720. If you don't qualify for bankruptcy and you come in, we will give you this program absolutely for free. "Once again, it's backs them out of the corner to say "Okay. Maybe I don't need bankruptcy." Sort of like your financial game plan. It's brilliant.

Robert: I do throw that free 720 Credit program out there and people really dig it. What I say is "I'm so glad that you called our office because we are one of the attorneys in my area that I know of that offer this free 7 Steps to a 720 Credit score that values up to \$500/\$1000 and we offer that for free for anybody who utilizes our services and I think you'll find that very valuable" Typically they'll start talking right away like "Oh my God! That's great! I heard that I can't buy a home for 10 years", as you were saying earlier Phil. It makes and set that strong appointment. Talk about value and trust. It's never about price. You rarely mention about attorney's fees on the phone. We set 300 per month or on my law firm and maybe 3 to 4% of those, the client goes to hanging up before you give them a range on the attorney's fees. It's never about price. It's about trust and value. It's like "Do I trust you and does this give me value?"

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Philip: Robert, amazing. The only thing I want to add to the whole idea of conversion is ask directly. From a data perspective, the best email that we have in our drip sequence that converts is with the subject line "Can you meet next week?" It's by far the best. People reply and are like "Yes. Can I come in tomorrow at 2:00PM? It's a very direct and simple question of "Are you ready? Just come on in and talk about it." These are very simple things.

We are right up against our 30-minute mark. As I mentioned and as you know, I'd like to keep this short. Robert, I can't express to you enough how grateful I am that you've shared your knowledge. For all of you who listened in, thanks for joining. If you have any questions or you want to talk about anything, feel free to call me directly and if you want to Robert's number. You can google him Robert Hoglund or you can just email me and I can make that introduction.