

# Praise for *The Visible Lawyer* and Douglas McPherson

‘Bringing together practical tips, common sense, modern marketing theory, and a deep understanding of the challenges, motivations, and difficulties faced by all professionals, this book is a must read for all lawyers wanting to maximise their business development and marketing impact in tough, competitive times.’

**Lance Sapsford, director of business development and marketing, London at Ince & Co**

‘Doug really knows his stuff. He has demystified business development (or whatever you want to call it) and has focused on getting and retaining clients through the neat concept of simply being “visible”. This book contains useful insights and practical help to guide the busy lawyer through an area that does not always come naturally to many of them, but is of vital importance to their and their firm’s future prosperity.’

**John Seigal, managing partner at Clintons Solicitors**

‘Lawyers love a check list – and *The Visible Lawyer* provides a very accessible, practical, and usable tool for any lawyer looking for a straightforward, no-nonsense guide on how to do this “BD thing”. Don’t waste time worrying about doing BD or shaking in the corner at a networking event; get this book, use it to draw up your own plan that works for you, let your confidence and effectiveness grow, and reap the rewards.’

**Neil Cormack, head of marketing and business development at Lupton Fawcett**

‘If you’re looking for a guide as to how to improve (or even start) as an entrepreneurial, business-generating lawyer then look no further. Doug McPherson has put together a book which is long on practical tips and examples and, thankfully, short on marketing speak. It makes a rewarding read.’

**David Williams, chairman of Geldards LLP**

‘When it comes to working with BD consultants, Doug is breath of fresh air. His ability to listen and get to the heart of an issue quickly enables him to deliver focused strategic thinking that will take your business forward.’

Having previously worked in several ad agencies, I can safely say that Doug is the best copywriter I’ve ever worked with! Backed with his understanding of your strategic direction and the marketplace, Doug’s easy yet concise copy style will give you the tools to communicate your proposition clearly to your target audience using plain English.

I would recommend Doug to anyone looking for a business partner to challenge the status quo within the professional services environment – you won’t be disappointed.’

**Nick Birkett, marketing director at Stone King LLP**

‘I have received nothing but positive feedback from colleagues on the sessions Doug has run; he achieves great levels of engagement, he is straight talking, highly credible, and empathetic. He is able to focus people to a plan that they are bought into and motivated to deliver. One of the reasons he is able to achieve this is because he is so obviously genuine, and the fact he really cares shines through.’

**Neil Cormack, head of business development and marketing at Lupton Fawcett Denison Till**

‘Doug is exactly what we needed to help us create more of a “sales” culture within the firm. His one-to-one sessions with some of our team have proved invaluable in kick-starting their BD activities and his focus on achieving results has paid dividends.

Doug is a straight talker, and although diplomatic, he rarely sugar-coats what needs to be said. A true professional and a nice guy too.’

**Jason Edge, head of marketing and business development at Mayo Wynne Baxter Solicitors**



# **The Visible Lawyer:** How to Raise Your Profile and Generate Work



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Published by ARK Group:

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[www.ark-group.com](http://www.ark-group.com)

Printed by Canon (UK) Ltd, Cockshot Hill, Reigate, RH2 8BF, United Kingdom

ISBN: 978-1-78358-236-5

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ARK Group is a division of Wilmington plc. The company is registered in England & Wales with company number 2931372 GB. Registered office: 6–14 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ. VAT Number: GB 899 3725 51.

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# Executive summary

## **Introduction – What is The Visible Lawyer?**

‘Marketing’, ‘business development’, and (dare I sully the page) ‘selling’ are terms that are constantly redefined, reinvented, misused, and maligned in equal measure by the legal profession – to the point that all of these terms now have a different meaning to every lawyer in every law firm in every country. However, the truth of the matter is you could drop all of these terms tomorrow and replace them with a single word – ‘visibility’ – and the context in which they are used and the outcome they are designed to achieve will not alter in the slightest.

That is the idea behind *The Visible Lawyer*. Visibility is central to all of the themes, ideas, and suggestions covered in this book. Visibility is also central to your future success as a lawyer, irrespective of whether you are a solicitor or barrister in the UK or an attorney at law in the US, and whether you are newly qualified or an experienced partner.

If you are going to generate the maximum level of return from the limited time you as a lawyer have for marketing/business development/selling, then visibility must be your primary objective. You need to become a very visible lawyer.

In the coming chapters, we will look at visibility from every angle: where you need to be visible; how to achieve and, more importantly, maintain your visibility; and how to convert visibility into new work, whether the source of that work is new clients, your existing clients, or your professional contacts. You will also find practical advice you can put into immediate action.

All of the examples in the book are taken directly from my experience of working with solicitors, barristers, accountants, and IP attorneys across Europe, and all have proven to be successful in a professional services environment.

If working with law firms of all sizes has taught me one thing, that one thing would be that you did not enter the law to ‘do’ marketing, or business development, or selling; it is an add-on to your ‘day job’, and not always the most welcome one at that. However, the truth is that marketing and business development has never been as important as it is today. From a personal point of view, your career progression depends on your ability to generate work. From your firm’s point of view, increased competition and increasingly discerning and promiscuous clients mean that unless every fee earner is prepared to contribute to winning work, the chance of building a successful and profitable future will diminish.

Being technically good and sitting by the phone while work finds you is no longer an option; you need to up your game. But the good news is there is a raft of different options you can employ to help you become more visible so you stay best placed as opportunities arise.

Within the professional services, the default reaction is often that ‘marketing’ means ‘networking’, which means formal networking *events*, and for many – me included – that type of event is hugely unattractive. *The Visible Lawyer* takes into account that, while the legal profession may not be heavily populated by natural salespeople, everyone involved has different skills, different personalities, and different preferences that they can put into action to generate visibility, for themselves, their firm, and for their colleagues.

I know that not all of the suggestions will suit you, but there are enough options outlined in these pages to ensure you will definitely find a few that do. Better still, if you are able to take on those ideas and implement them, your visibility will not only create opportunities but will also negate the need to ‘sell’ or ‘close’. Being consistently visible will help you build effective interpersonal relationships that will lead to clients and referrers recognising you as the right person for the job, both technically and personally. As a result, these people will come to you to ask you to take on work, rather than forcing you to sell your services as one of a number of possible suppliers.

I also recognise that you have limited time to invest in creating visibility, which is why every idea in this book is designed to be implemented on a ‘little and often’ basis. All of the ideas can be put into practice around your fee-earning responsibilities so that the ubiquitous grumble of ‘I’m too busy’ can finally be kicked squarely into touch.

### **What does this book cover?**

Part One of this book (Chapters 1–2), focuses on the theory of visibility: the foundation on which this book is built. Chapter 1 looks at where you need to be visible, who you want to be visible to, and how you turn all of that information into an easy-to-follow roadmap that will lead you to the clients and the work you want.

Chapter 2 describes how you can achieve a consistency of visibility by applying the rule of ‘little and often’. It asks how you build visibility in the face of billing and client pressure, how you mix and match the various options available to create visibility, and what you can say and do to make sure the visibility you create translates into interest.

Part Two (Chapters 3–6) moves on to how you create visibility in practical terms. Chapter 3 considers ‘intelligent marketing’; that is marketing that creates visibility. We look at the difference between intelligent and effective marketing and tick-box marketing, and the proven three-step ‘intelligent marketing’ model (Confidence, Focus, Action). This chapter shares some low-cost/high-impact business development strategies that really work, and practical tips to manage your marketing activities on a day-to-day basis.

Chapter 4 provides guidance to help you *stay visible* to current clients and leverage your existing relationships. It explains why you should change your mantra from ‘client management’ to ‘client development’ and outlines effective client development strategies.

Chapter 5 shifts the focus from clients to another essential group you need to stay visible to: referrers. This chapter explains why referrers and other industry contacts are as valuable as clients. It looks at how to build a referrer relationship model

that really works, how you can grow your professional network, and how you can convert your relationships into work.

Chapter 6 provides actionable guidance on creating the visibility that wins new clients, including choosing the business development strategies that are best suited to you and how you leverage those strategies to create a personal BD plan that delivers. This chapter also explains how focusing on recognised industry groups or more defined geographies will help you generate the best return from the limited time and resources you have available.

Part Three of the book comprises a series of ‘mini-masterclasses’ with practical exercises that will help you craft your own visibility plan. Mini-masterclass 1 focuses on how to really network effectively: how to choose the right events and then achieve the best return on time invested in attending them, how to follow up, and how to stay in touch to maximise the likelihood that introductions will turn into instructions. The masterclass also considers the alternatives to formal networking events and how your more left-field contacts can help you build your professional network.

The second mini-masterclass focuses on how you can deliver presentations that create visibility by engaging your audiences. It addresses why public speaking is arguably the most effective BD strategy and which speaking platforms are available to you. It provides tips on creating and delivering presentations that really engage an audience, and explores how you can follow up on presentations to capitalise on the visibility you have created.

Mini-masterclass 3 covers how you can build visibility and profile through the written word. It asks which media will have the most impact, how you can harness the benefits of local, trade, and online publications, and what writing style and content will engage and benefit your target audience most.

Mini-masterclass 4 is your PR toolkit. This masterclass is guest-written by Sharon Cain, managing director at Quest PR, who steps in to help you to create an integrated PR and social media programme that will position you as a thought leader.

In the last of the mini-masterclasses, we examine the hugely valuable contribution research can make to your firm's business development activities, and how you can maximise the impact of the research you or your team undertake.

What gets measured is what gets done – and this also applies to your visibility plan. In light of this home truth, the final chapter of this book considers how to set personal objectives, how to make those objectives achievable, how to create personal templates that manage and record activity, and how best to publicise your success internally.





## About the author

After graduating in marketing and post-graduating in advertising, Douglas went into sales thinking that if he could sell he'd never be out of work. Although it was meant to be a temporary step – a purely education-finishing assignment – he has never looked back.

His association with the professional services began in 1994 when he joined Intellectual Property Publishing where he soon became sales manager of the IP portfolio, and ultimately sales and marketing manager for the owning group, Armstrong.

When Armstrong was sold to Lloyd's of London Press, Douglas was promoted to commercial director of the Lloyd's Marine Intelligence Unit with full responsibility for promoting, packaging, and selling Lloyd's of London's market-leading shipping data output. This role saw him continue to work closely with the professional services, most notably the international Admiralty Law, marine underwriting, and marine finance and actuarial sectors, across the world's major shipping centres.

In 2010, Douglas joined Bernard Savage at Size 10½ Boots, a business development agency that works solely with the professional services, helping professionals to win more new clients and more work from the clients they already have.

The tips, tricks, and shortcuts in *The Visible Lawyer* are the result of a combination of Size 10½ Boots' partners' corporate and professional services experience and the no-nonsense, plain speaking, straightforward approach they have developed alongside their constantly growing client list.

Because of the nature of self-employment, there is never a lot of spare time, but any time Douglas does have is spent with family, coaching youth football, collecting obscure soul records, and swearing profusely at Chelsea Football Club.