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Marketing Plan for the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Law Offices of Gregory T. Varian is a general practice law firm with a concentration in real estate, small business, life and estate planning, and administration. Gregory Varian, the only attorney within the firm, is well known throughout the city of New Rochelle due to his involvement in the community. Through his experience and commitment to the citizens of the greater Metropolitan area, Varian has successfully operated his law firm since 1996.

Varian has previously focused on gaining clients from networking and word-of-mouth predominately for real estate closings. However, during the economic recession many people held off and continue to delay purchasing or selling a house. Varian should strive to increase brand awareness of other services, mainly his concentration in land use, zoning, and variances. By targeting the media, Varian can target a new market and develop into the go-to expert on real estate law issues.

Other challenges the law firm faces are the increase in information provided on the Internet and a decline in income levels. With additional resources, these weaknesses can be transformed into strengths through the proposed action plans. The suggested action plans, when executed, will increase The Law Offices of Gregory T. Varian's online presence as well as establish a stronger relationship with members throughout the community.

The total cost for the proposed action plans is \$7,618. This is approximately 12 percent of last year's net income. These performance expenditures are expected to increase Varian's client referrals by 20 percent, the firm's brand awareness by 25 percent, and the number of clientele by 2 percent per year.

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PRODUCT STATEMENT

Known for his expertise in real estate law, Varian has run his own practice, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian, since 1996. Prior to, Varian has been an associate and then



partner of mid-sized law firms within Westchester County since 1981. His office is located at 270 North Avenue in downtown New Rochelle, New York. The law firm is a general practice firm with a concentration in real estate, small business, life and estate planning, and administration (Varian).

These concentrations include municipal law, real estate development and closings, code compliance, land use, zoning, landlord-tenant, small business and franchising, estate planning, trusts, and probate (Cox - Varian).

Varian is very active in the New Rochelle community. He is currently a President of the New Rochelle Public Library Board of Trustees and he was once President of the New Rochelle Bar Association and President of the Halcyon Park Neighborhood Association. Varian's civic commitments have a strong presence in the community consisting of arbitrator in the New Rochelle City Court, corporate council for the New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce, and guest lecturer for attorneys and architects discussing "Varian on Variances". The New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce took notice of Varian's vast achievements in 2007 and awarded him Professional Leader of the Year (Varian). His involvement in the community shows his desire to willingly help others and helps him network with local members of the community that may one day be in need of his services.



INDUSTRY TRENDS

The Law Firm Industry is estimated at approximately 417,500 firms with 38 percent of the industry concentrated in commercial law services, 18 percent in personal injury law services, 14 percent in intellectual property and trademark law services, 12 percent in property law services, and 18 percent in other services. This industry has been greatly affected by the changes in the economy, mainly for the worse. Many companies have cut costs by reducing spending on legal services. According to Kevin Culbert's industry analysis, "businesses of all sizes are reining in spending on nonessential legal services and increasingly using smaller regional law firms." Clients began missing payments and using legal services less. Culbert states, "By the third quarter of 2007, work slowed to a trickle as the effects of the credit crunch began taking their toll on real estate, structured finance and transactional law practices." Many firms had to shut down, letting go thousands of attorneys.

Due to many experienced lawyers being unemployed, recent law school graduates are having an increasingly hard time finding jobs with top law firms. Everyone in the Law Firm industry is experiencing smaller salaries and increased competition. But, "some of those displaced by the layoffs are under performers being replaced by stronger associates, a trend that can cause revenue per lawyer to increase" (Culbert).

The downturn in the economy may leave a lasting impression on the structure of the Law Firm industry. The majority of firms bill clients on an hourly basis, but with the recession clients are seeking firms that bill based on performance. When being billed on an hourly basis, costs tend to accumulate to a higher total regardless of the outcome for the client (Culbert).

The Law Firm Industry is also experiencing a decline from families and individuals due to the increased volume in Internet use. Many people are seeking services from websites that provide legal advice and are less costly and more time efficient than actually meeting with an attorney. A large quantity of information is also provided free on the website “which to many devalues the information provided by lawyers” (Varian).

COMPETITIVE TRENDS

Brand Competitors

Law Office of David Lacher: The Law Office of David Lacher is a general practice firm with thirty years of experience and a focus in real estate, business law, estate planning, and wills and trusts. Lacher's area of real estate law covers both commercial and residential real estate, which includes land use, property development and leasing matters.



The area of business law covers contract drafting, business entity formation, mergers and acquisitions, as well as small business operations. Lacher has two offices, one located in Manhattan and the other located in downtown New Rochelle. Potential clients can access Lacher's contact information, as well as information regarding his expertise online at www.LacherLawNY.com (Manhattan).

Law Office of Milton M. Kreppel: Milton M. Kreppel is a general practice lawyer with a focus in residential real estate, probates, trust, and estate planning, as well as litigation. His office is located at 271 North Avenue, Suite 1103, in downtown New Rochelle (Milton). Kreppel is also in charge of the Collaborative Learning Environment for the New Rochelle Bar Association (Contact Us). He teaches at Monroe College in New Rochelle and the Bronx. Unlike other competitors, Kreppel does not have a website set up for clients to access information about his law firm.

Marcus, Ollman, & Kommer LLP: Marcus, Ollman, & Kommer, LLP is a general practice law firm, specializing in personal injury claims and litigation. However, the firm also specializes in trusts and estates, as well as real estate transactions, estate planning, and probate similar to that of the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian. The firm “was founded in 1979 with a focus on representing residents and businesses in New Rochelle” (About). Its office is located at 145 Huguenot Street, Suite 402, in downtown New Rochelle. Attorneys at the firm are highly involved in the New Rochelle community and are members of the New Rochelle Bar Association (About). At www.MokLaw.com, clients can learn about the services provided by Marcus, Ollman, & Kommer, LLP, as well as find contact information, news about the firm, and articles written by attorneys at the firm.



Product Competitors

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom: Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom is the “big cheese” of big law firms in the United States and is the largest in the world based on revenue. The firm has 24 offices throughout the world and employs approximately 2,000 lawyers who are based predominately in the firm’s New York office. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom has an estimated 0.8 percent of the market share. The firm leads the market in mergers and acquisitions, as well as litigation. However, its lawyers also practice banking and institutional investing, corporate finance, government affairs, real estate, healthcare and mass torts and insurance litigation.



In 2009, the firm recorded an average of \$1.1 million of revenue per lawyer and “was rated ‘Law Firm of the Year: USA’ by *Who’s Who Legal* and ‘Law Firm of the Year’ by *Mergers & Acquisitions* magazine” (Culbert). Potential clients can visit www.Skadden.com to find office locations, contact information, as well as recent and relevant new articles about the firm.

Baker & Mackenzie: Baker & Mackenzie is a major law firm that operates in 39 countries with 67 offices including offices in major United States cities, Canada, Latin America, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East, and Africa. The firm has 720 partners and 3,900 attorneys with a major focus on antitrust law, international trade, mergers and acquisitions, and tax law. Other legal services are also offered. Baker & Mackenzie also has approximately 0.8 percent of the market share and recorded revenue per lawyer of \$992,000 in 2009. Culbert reports, “With only 20.0 percent of the firm's attorneys in the United States, roughly 66.0 percent of fees are generated abroad” (Culbert). Potential clients can visit www.BakerMckenzie.com for information regarding legal services offered, attorneys at the firm, office locations, and contact information.



Latham & Watkins: Latham & Watkins is one of the largest law firms in the United States, with more than 2,000 lawyers in 27 locations worldwide. The firm's main focuses include corporate, environmental, land and resources, finance and real estate, litigation, and tax. Latham & Watkins is also widely known for its pro bono services. The firm has also received numerous titles such as "Law Firm of the Decade" in 2007 by *Legal Business* and 2009's "Best Law Firm for Women" by *Working Mother*, as well as making *The American Lawyer's* A-List every year since its inception in 2003, ranking number two for 2009. In 2008, Latham & Watkins recorded revenue of \$1.9 billion, which was a 5.3 decrease from 2007 (Culbert). Potential clients can visit www.LW.com to find information regarding the office locations, services provided, and contact information for the firm.

Generic Competitors

- Lawyer referral services
- Consumer self-help
- LegalZoom.com
- Legal assistants
- Architects that will handle a zoning case without suggesting council

Total Budget Competitors

- Paying off debt
- Vacation
- College fund for children
- New electronics
- Down payment on a house
- New car

TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

Technological advancements are helping law firms stay competitive through the recession. Everyone is concerned with expenses and pressing lawyers to perform the same services for a lower cost. Many firms are taking this into account and creating new ways to provide their clients with accurate and easily accessible billing information. Foley & Lardner, LLP, a law firm, has developed a Web-based system allowing lawyers to enter their time and expenses into a budgeting system that their clients can access through a secure website. Nathan Koppel, a *Wall Street Journal* writer, states, "The software also marries cost data to budgets, so that lawyers can track when they have used up 75 percent of the budgeted cost for taking depositions, for example." Attorneys can easily keep track of their client's predetermined budgets, especially with the email alerts option offered.

Other firms are using technology to help clients become self-educated. Bryan Cave, LLP has "created a Web-based training service, called TradeZone, which it licenses to clients to help them self-navigate the dizzying array of laws that govern international trade agreements" (Koppel). This type of technology helps decrease the time spent with attorneys and therefore decreases costs billed to clients while increasing the value of the firm.

The use of the Internet has even allowed for some firms to completely eliminate their offices. The Virtual Law Partners is a law firm where all the lawyers work from home. Because office expenses do not exist, what is saved goes to the lawyers and their clients. Each partner of the firm sets his/her own billing rate but all associates pay an equal share of the malpractice insurance. All other aspects of the firm are the same as a traditional law firm minus the office space (Ward).

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Much concentration and concern has been on the United States economy. Almost everyone has seen the effects of the downturn including the government, large and small businesses, and individuals. However, many people feel as though the country is starting to improve. One of the best ways to measure the stability of the economy is through the gross domestic product (GDP). In the third quarter of 2010, the GDP had increased by 2.6 percent from the prior quarter and then increased another 2.8 percent by the end of the fourth quarter (Mataloni). There are many other aspects to consider before drawing a definite conclusion regarding the outcome of the economy. The most helpful factors include gross domestic product, income levels, employment trends, inflation, and the consumer confidence index.

Gross Domestic Product

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the real GDP has increased at an annual rate of 2.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2010. This increase “reflected positive contributions from personal consumption expenditures (PCE), exports, and nonresidential fixed investment” (Mataloni). Nonresidential structures investment increased by 4.5 percent compared to a decrease of 3.5 percent the prior quarter. Real residential fixed investment increased by 2.8 percent compared to a decrease of 27.3 percent the prior quarter. These increases show how the real estate investment market may be improving.

Income Levels

As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2009, the real median household income for the United States was \$49,777. This was a 0.7 decrease from the prior year. Both men and women who worked full-time, year round, saw an approximate 2 percent increase in real median earnings between 2008 and 2009 (Newsroom). The Bureau of Labor statistics reported that the average weekly earnings in February 2011 were \$782.15. This was an increase from the \$764.32 reported in February 2010: “Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 1.7 percent” (Employment Situation).

Employment Trends

The Conference Board Employment Trends Index (ETI) was reported to be 101.7 as of March 2011. This was the fifth consecutive month that there was an increase. In the past six months, “the economy has been adding, on average, about 110,000 jobs per month” (Courter - ETI Increases). There are eight different factors that are included in determining the ETI which are the percentage of respondents who say they find “jobs hard to get,” the number of initial claims for unemployment insurance, the percentage of firms with positions not able to fill right now, the number of employees hired by the Temporary-Help Industry, the number of part-time workers for economic reasons, the number of job openings, the level of industrial production, and the level of real manufacturing and trade sales (Courter -ETI Increases).

Inflation

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that over the last 12 months, the all items Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 2.1 percent. This 12 month upward trend can be seen throughout all major indexes. In February the shelter index rose 0.1 percent “with rent and owners’ equivalent rent both also rising 0.1 percent” (Consumer). Over the past 12 months, the shelter index has increased by a total of 0.8 percent with the rent index increasing by a total of 1.1 percent (Consumer).

Consumer Confidence Index

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index was reported to be 70.4 as of February 2011. This was an improvement from 64.8 in January and a reported 52.9 in June of 2010. The Consumer Confidence Index was even lower at 52.3 in March of 2010 (Rooney). Lynn Franco, the Director, says “The Consumer Confidence Index is now at a three-year high, due to growing optimism about the short-term future” (Courter - Conference Board). Consumers are feeling positive about the economy but are still unsure about employment. Consumers’ short-term outlook was more optimistic than in January, with “those expecting business conditions to improve over the next six months increased to 24.4 percent from 24.0 percent, while those anticipating business conditions will worsen declined to 10.4 percent from 12.2 percent” (Courter - Conference Board).

POLITICAL, LEGAL, AND REGULATORY TRENDS

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is subject to the laws, rules, and regulations governing the practice of law by the state of New York and the New York State and Federal Judiciaries (Varian).

CULTURAL, SOCIETAL, & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

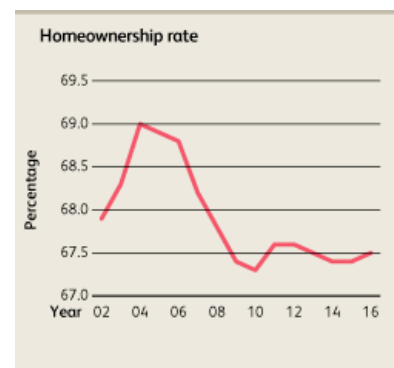
Cultural Value Trends

America was built on the land of the free and the home of the brave. Today, many people take that saying to mean the land of the free to sue and the home of the brave in court. People constantly use the threat of legal action in order to get what they want, because they have seen this tactic work for others, creating an increasingly litigious society. Television plays a large role by influencing viewers to believe that lawsuits are part of everyday life. There are many commercials from law firms and lawyer referral services encouraging people to call them if they have been in a car accident, taken certain prescription drugs, or even fallen down because they may be entitled to a cash settlement. There are numerous shows on television such as *Judge Judy*, *Judge Joe Brown*, and the *People's Court*, all depicting lawsuits and court cases as a form of entertainment. People enjoy watching "reality shows" in order to make themselves feel better. Judge Judy states, "People do stupid things, they get themselves in messes and I have to use my knowledge and intuition to find the solution. But if this [were] a perfect world with perfect people, I would have no show. So, I am very grateful for this imperfect world" (Berman). The law firm industry has embedded itself into American culture by using this media outlet.

Lifestyle Trends

With the increase in technology over the last decade, people commonly use the Internet to solve all their problems. There are even websites, such as WebMD.com, that allow people to try and diagnose medical issues without going to the doctor. As opposed to younger generations, “older generations use the internet less for socializing and entertainment and more as a tool for information searches, emailing, and buying products. In particular, older internet users are significantly more likely than younger generations to look online for health information” (Jones). It is important for the law firm industry to keep this trend in mind when creating their advertising campaigns, as well as introducing technology into the workplace.

Another lifestyle trend that America is experiencing today is the decline in real estate purchases and the increase in rental properties. For the third straight month in January, U.S. home prices fell, “adding to evidence that the housing market is weakening even though the economy is improving” (Zibel). Home prices are falling because houses are continuously hitting the market after foreclosures, causing buyers to postpone purchases because they continue to wait for a better deal to hit the market (Zibel). Robert Andrews’ states in his industry analysis, that “an increase in homeownership subsequently decreases the demand for rental property. This driver is expected to fall over the next year, making it a potential opportunity for industry growth” (Andrews).



Demographics Trends

The city of New Rochelle had 76.5 percent of its population 18 years and over, with 15.2 percent 65 years and over, on average between 2005 and 2009. These percentages were very similar to those reported in 2000. The 2005 to 2009 average recorded a median age for New Rochelle of 38.2 years, which was a slight increase from 2000, when the median age was recorded at 37 years. The 2005 to 2009 average for families below the poverty line was reported as 6.5 percent compared to 9.9 percent in the United States. This is a decrease from 2000, when 7.9 percent of families were below the poverty line in New Rochelle. In 2000, 80 percent of the population in New Rochelle had a high school diploma with an increased average for 2005 to 2009 reported as 83 percent (United States).

CUSTOMER ANALYSIS

Who?

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is a general practice law firm assisting clients throughout the greater metropolitan area of New York. Because Varian is well known for his knowledge of land use, zoning, and variances, many clients seek his real estate services. In any given year, the services Varian provides for buying or selling a home account for approximately 20 to 40 percent of gross revenues, with 30 to 50 percent of gross revenues generating from specialized real estate (zoning, planning, code, development, and land/tenant), 10 to 30 percent generating from small business clients (franchises and business acquisitions), and 10 to 20 percent of gross revenues generating from the services for estates, trusts, and probate (Varian).

Demographics and Psychographics: The company's clients range from all different income levels, educational backgrounds, ethnicities, and ages. Current and potential clients of all ages and lifestyles have a need for Varian's services from the "successful immigrants buying a home to the masters of the universe on Wall Street" (Varian). The company's clients range from those purchasing a co-op or \$100,000 home to those purchasing multi million-dollar mansions on the water. The majority of the clients purchasing homes are either married or engaged. The clients' lifestyles are "as varied as there are people" (Varian).

How Many?

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian has only one office with one lawyer so there are a limited number of clients that can be handled at any given time. Varian services approximately twenty clients on average with an estimated 2,000 clients over the history of the law firm. There are roughly fifty other attorneys in the area that compete with the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian on transactional real estate, as well as estate planning (Varian).

What?

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is a general practice law firm with a focus in real estate closings, specialized real estate services, small business client services, and life and estate planning.

Where?

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian was established in the Chase building located in downtown New Rochelle at 270 North Avenue, where Varian primarily services his clientele. Office space was shared with another local law firm, Kettner and Kettner. After the firm's growth, offices were moved down the hall of the same building in order to acquire larger office space. Varian currently uses Facebook and LinkedIn for social networking and to broaden his reach to potential clients (Varian).



When?

Consumer confidence in the housing industry directly impacts the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian's amount of business; and "therefore, the strength of the property market influences demand for law firms that have expertise in property legislation" (Culbert). However, it is projected that "over the long term, demand for wills and estate activity will likely increase as more baby boomers reach retirement age" (Culbert).

Why and How?

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian acquires many of its clients because of Varian's reputation. He is well known as an "enthusiastic advocate for his clients, profession, neighborhood and City" (Professional of the Year). Varian is also known in the area as a "competent provider of legal advice regardless of the specialty" (Varian). Clients can pay for the services provided either by cash or check, but credit is not accepted as a form of payment. The goal is for clients to always "pay in full at the time of close, or have enough money up front" (Varian).

Why Non-Customers?

Varian is well known throughout the community, but potential clients may not choose him as their attorney because they are not aware of his reputation and expertise. Culbert states "competition between industry participants occurs on the basis of service quality and price." Another reason clients may choose a different attorney is because they are not willing to pay what Varian charges. For small local firms, like the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian, "that perform general legal services, price is a key basis of competition

since households account for a large share of total revenue” (Culbert). Other factors that have an effect on the non-customer population are the variation in specialty, location, and availability.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian has had fluctuations in revenues for the past couple of years. Gross profit for 2007 was reported as \$122,160 but decreased to \$110,882 in 2008 and then slightly increased to \$111,680 in 2009. Net income has experienced similar fluctuations starting at \$53,169 in 2007, decreasing to \$43,004 in 2008, and increasing to \$45,120 in 2009. Expenses fluctuated between 55 and 61 percent of gross profits over this three-year period. In 2010, gross profit increased and was the highest over the past four years at \$126,186. Expenses decreased to 51 percent of gross profits, causing an increase in net income to \$61,516. The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is a private firm, and therefore, does not report Earnings per Share (Varian).

MARKETING STRATEGIES

Image

Started in 1996 in New Rochelle, New York, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian was formed to help friends and neighbors throughout the New Rochelle community. Today, Varian is still highly involved in the neighborhood and is known for his law services, as well as his volunteer work. All of the firm's actions are taken in order to keep the community growing in a direction that is both beneficial for businesses and the residences.

Target Markets

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian focuses on individuals and families in the greater Metropolitan area that need assistance with real estate issues, especially land use, zoning, and variances, as well as estate planning, wills and trusts, landlord-tenant, franchising, trusts, and probate. Through public services, Varian has been able to attract a wide variety of clientele. Clients are typically in need of an attorney with experience and a reputation for customer satisfaction.

MARKETING PROGRAMS

Product and Price

Any service provided by the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian begins with a consultation with the client at approximately \$300 per hour but is always based on a competitive rate. All services range in price depending on the client's needs. A real estate closing can range from \$1,200 to \$2,800 based on whether the closing is on a co-op or house, new development or foreclosure sale. Specialized real estate services can range from \$2,250 to \$15,000 depending on how many public hearings are required, number of variances sought, and the complexity of the matter. For small business client services, prices can range from \$900 to \$5,000, whether the client is determining the most effective business entity or selling or buying a merger. Estate planning can range from \$500 to \$25,000, again, depending on the details of the services provided. These rates generally place the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian in the upper-middle price range in the market for the Metropolitan area (Varian).

Caseload

During the real estate boom, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian handled approximately 50 new cases per year. However, this number declined after the boom and Varian only set up 24 new files for the entire year of 2010. The firm is beginning to come back from the recession and, in 2011, the firm has already set up close to half that amount in the first 3 months (Cassara).

Sales Promotions & Effectiveness

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian does not currently, and has not in the past, offered any form of sales promotions to its clientele.

Advertising & Public Services

Varian does not participate in any direct advertising. However, he is known throughout the New Rochelle area through his numerous public services. Varian has been involved in many community legal issues, such as the battle with Iona College for student housing locations and the zoning of the Dunkin Donuts on North Avenue. Varian attended City Council meetings on behalf of the community residents to argue against having Iona College student housing. At the City Council meeting held on December 10th, Varian stated that “Iona’s dorm proposal contradicts everything we’ve learned over 25 years of studies, comprehensive plans and common sense experience as to what it will take to make this dysfunctional section of North Avenue..... functional... And that is low rise and mixed-use along North Avenue, not single use high rise abutting single family residential neighborhoods” (Cox - Remarks). He addressed issues of zoning, claiming that what Iona College is doing is illegal.

Varian supported local residents when discussing the Dunkin Donuts situation at a City Council meeting. He argued that the “Zoning Ordinance prohibition against extended hours... all night hours... was enacted in 2004 to protect abutting residential neighborhoods” (Varian). Varian claimed that waiving the zoning prohibition for Dunkin Donuts would cause other businesses, such as gas stations, to then seek variances in order

to have the same hours. This would then lead to more and more businesses “effectively overturning city-wide policy enacted by our elected officials” (Varian).

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Statement of Internal Strengths	Company Performance					Importance					Strength Index Number
	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	
1. Experience					x					x	25
2. Product variety				x						x	20
3. Public relations				x						x	20
4. Location			x							x	15

1. Varian has over 30 years of experience within the law firm industry working both in mid-sized law firms, as well as his own private practice.
2. The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is a general practice law firm and therefore can offer any form of legal services; however, Varian mainly focuses on real estate, small business, life and estate planning, and administration.
3. Varian has done numerous amounts of volunteer work throughout the New Rochelle community, including battling Iona College and the Dunkin Donuts located on North Avenue.
4. The location of the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian is in downtown New Rochelle. This is a convenient location for those located in the surrounding towns and cities of New Rochelle within Westchester County.

Weaknesses

Statement of Internal Weaknesses	Company Performance					Importance					Weakness Index Number
	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	
1. Financial Performance		x							x		8
2. Pricing		x							x		8
3. Marketing/ Advertising		x							x		8

1. Although Varian is profiting from business, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian could report higher net income if expenses were decreased.
2. These rates charged by the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian place the firm in the upper-middle price range in the market for the Metropolitan area and therefore, do not give the firm a competitive advantage. Clients may choose not to use Varian's services because they are not willing to pay these prices.
3. Varian does not perform any direct advertising or marketing for the firm. The only exposure the firm receives is through word-of-mouth.

Opportunities

Statement of External Opportunities	Attractiveness					Success Probability					Opp. Index Number
	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	
1. Increase online exposure					x					x	25
2. Technological advancement				x				x			12
3. Increase in real estate investments					x				x		20

1. People are doing more research online before making purchases, which opens businesses to more advertising and marketing opportunities.
2. Many law firms are using technological advancements to lower the cost to the client, such as a Web-based system allowing lawyers to enter their time and expenses into a budgeting system that their clients can access through a secure website. "The software also marries cost data to budgets, so that lawyers can track when they have used up 75 percent of the budgeted cost for taking depositions" (Koppel).
3. Nonresidential structures investment increased by 4.5 percent compared to a decrease of 3.5 percent the prior quarter. Real residential fixed investment increased by 2.8 percent compared to a decrease of 27.3 percent the prior quarter. These increases show how the real estate investment market may be improving.

Threats

Statement of External Threats	Likelihood of Occurrence					Seriousness					Threat Index Number
	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	1= Low	2	3	4	5= High	
1. Decline in income levels					x				x		20
2. Decline in real estate purchases					x					x	25
3. Increase in online information				x				x			12

1. With a decline in income levels by 0.7 percent from the prior year, clients have less money to spend on non-essential items such as buying a new home or completing home improvements both of which may require an attorney's services (Newsroom).
2. Home prices are falling because houses are continuously hitting the market after foreclosures. This is causing buyers to postpone purchases because they continue to wait for a better deal to hit the market (Zibel).
3. Many people are seeking services from websites that provide legal advice and are less costly and more time efficient than actually meeting with an attorney. A large quantity of information is also provided free on the website "which to many devalues the information provided by lawyers" (Varian).

ISSUES ANALYSIS

The Law Office of Gregory T. Varian has an issue with marketing. Varian needs to begin a marketing campaign in order to expand the firm. Within the marketing campaign, there needs to be a promotion mix including advertising, sales promotion, and direct selling; none of which currently exist. In an industry flooded with commercial advertisements, radio advertisements, billboards, and bench advertisements, Varian needs to make sure his marketing campaign targets his customers directly and in a unique way.

Once a marketing campaign has been initiated, the next issue Varian will face is how to handle the increase in clients and caseload. He will need to evaluate his staffing situation and see if it is financially feasible to hire a full-time assistant, a partner, or any other employees in order to successfully manage the amplified workload. With more help, Varian can continue to expand the firm, as well as his marketing efforts and continue through the growth cycle.

MARKETING GOALS

- Position the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian as Westchester County's expert on land use, zoning, and variances through the use of a new marketing campaign
- Provide affordable and consistent services to those in the target market
- Network with the number one media contact in the New Rochelle area
- Gain new clientele that will turn into repeat customers
- Improve the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian's public image by continuing public services

OBJECTIVES

- Allocate approximately 12 percent of net income towards a new marketing campaign
- Encourage 20 percent of clients to refer the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian to someone they know
- Create brand awareness for 25 percent of the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian's primary target market
- Increase the number of clientele by 2 percent per year
- Complete 3 public services per year

TARGET MARKET DEFINITION

Primary Market

Demographic: The primary target market will consist of property owners within Westchester County that are looking to improve upon or alter their existing property. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2009 there were 361,609 housing units and approximately 18,344 building permits in Westchester County (New York).

Benefits Sought: The target market will seek benefits including aid in the process of obtaining land use, zoning permits, and variances. The target market will appreciate the assistance of a knowledgeable and experienced attorney who has had first hand experience in the area.

Secondary Market

Demographic: The secondary target market is comprised of real estate professionals and other lawyers that can provide referrals to Varian. Some real estate professionals included in this category are realtors and realtor firms. For the Westchester Putnam County area, as of 2007, there were 7,681 realtors and 845 realtor firms registered as members of the Westchester Putnam Association of Realtors (Westchester).

Benefits Sought: The benefits sought from targeting this market include an increase in the number of client referrals made to Varian for his services.

POSITIONING STATEMENT

To homeowners and business owners, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian provides exceptional services to aid in real estate processes especially those including land use, zoning, and variances.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Company & Product	Target Market	Benefits	Price	Value Proposition
Law Offices of Gregory T. Varian, Real Estate Law services	Property owners within Westchester County, looking to improve upon or alter their existing property	Over 30 years of experience within the greater Metropolitan area community	Upper-middle price range for this market	Experienced real estate law services provided to property owners

Action Plan 1: www.GregVarian.com

Objective: To obtain business from the target market and increase brand awareness regarding services provided, specialties, and experience in the industry

Target Market: Current and prospective customers within the New York City Metropolitan area and those looking to move into the New York City Metropolitan area. This includes those looking for more information regarding the general practice, as well as land use, franchising, estate planning and probate.



Description of website: The website will include information about the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian regarding services provided, contact information, and experience. Pictures of Varian will be displayed throughout the website of him during his community involvement and civic activism. Various news articles that have been written about Varian will also be provided on the website. Links to his current Facebook and LinkedIn page, as well as his future Twitter account, will also be included on the webpage.

Who: Varian will collaborate with a web designer, Jeremy Sherber, to ensure accuracy of all information placed on the website and that it is created to his liking while maintaining a professional, yet friendly, appeal.

Timing: Once the website is created it will remain in place as long as the firm is in operation.

Budget:

Incidental Costs (domain name, stock photo, etc.).....	\$ 100
Cost for a web designer (Jeremy Sherber @ \$100/hr for 15 hours).....	<u>\$1500</u>
Total Budget.....	\$1600

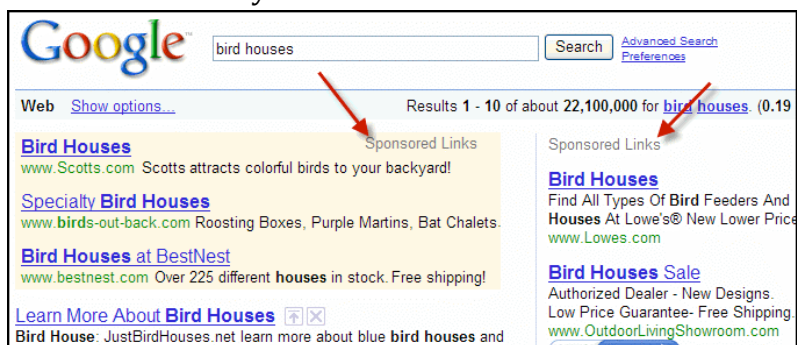
Measurement: The effectiveness of the website will be measured by number of visits to the website per day, as well as the amount of increased business resulting from those website visits.

Action Plan 2: Google Sponsored Links

Objective: To increase awareness of the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian and increase traffic to www.GregVarian.com

Target Market: Prospective customers seeking the services of an attorney in the metropolitan area

Description: The ads will include a short description of the main services that the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian provides, the name of the firm, and the name of the website. Sponsored links will be placed on Google search pages below the natural search results based on particular search terms chosen, within the metropolitan geographic region. Some examples of the search terms to be used include “New Rochelle lawyer”, “real estate lawyer”, and “New Rochelle attorney”.



Who: Jeremy Sherber, a web designer, will be hired to create and implement the sponsored link ads but Varian will monitor the progress and success.

Timing: The sponsored links will continue through the life of the firm as long as they are beneficial.

Budget:

Cost for link clicks (\$0.01/click x estimated 1,000 clicks per month)...	\$ 10
Cost for page impressions (\$0.25/1,000 impressions x 20,000/month)\$	5
Activation fee	\$ 5
Cost for a web designer (Jeremy Sherber @ \$100/hr for 5 hours).....	\$ 500
Total Budget for the first month.....	\$ 520

Measurement: Google allows sponsored link customers to track the number of clicks they receive per month, as well as the combination of search terms, geography, and ad content of the person that clicked on the link. All of these factors will help determine how beneficial the sponsored links are to increasing the firm’s awareness and client base.



Action Plan 3: Column in The Sound Report

Objective: To increase awareness of the knowledge and expertise of Varian

Target Market: Readers of The Sound Report in the New Rochelle area that will need an attorney with knowledge of zoning permits, variances, and land use. Readers that are homeowners and are planning on remodeling, selling, or buying a home will especially find the column beneficial. These readers will turn to Varian after realizing the depth of his knowledge from reading his columns.

Description of Column: Varian will right a column in The Sound Report, the Community newspaper, informing readers of issues and tips regarding zoning permits, variances, and land use.

Who: Varian will write the column and contact the publisher of The Sound Report, Howard P. Sturman.

Timing: The column will be published in The Sound Report every two weeks and will continue for as long as The Sound Report allows.

Budget:

Total Budget \$ 0

Measurement: Varian can measure the success of his column in the newspaper by the increase of clientele generated from the exposure of the column.



Action Plan 4: Westchester County Bar Association Referral Service

Objective: To increase the number of clients that is referred to the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian

Target Market: Potential clients that are searching online for an attorney in Westchester County

Description: A person searching for a lawyer on the Internet through the Westchester County Bar Association website will be directed to call the number listed during office hours. After explaining their legal needs, a lawyer will be referred to the person. The client then pays \$40 to the lawyer for the first consultation. If the client decides to let the attorney handle their legal needs then the attorney has to pay 10 percent of any fees attained from the client over the first \$500.

Who: Varian will submit the application to join the Westchester County Bar Association Referral Service.

Timing: The fiscal year of the Referral Service runs from September 1st of each year to August 31st of the following year. Membership dues are billed in August and due in September of each year.

Budget:

Yearly membership fee..... \$200

Total Budget for the first year..... \$200

Measurement: Varian can measure the success of the Referral Service by the number of clients he gains.

Action Plan 5: Press Kit

Objective: To provide personnel in the media with a quick reference guide on the services provided by the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian

Target Market: People in the media industry in New Rochelle such as reporters, writers, and editors



Description: The Press Kit will include information regarding any new information or service that Varian wants to highlight, as well as company background information, facts and figures, biographical information on Varian, and some in-depth research about the industry.

Who: Varian will work along side with Jeremy Sherber to create the Press Kit. Varian will be in charge of distributing the Press Kit.

Timing: Once the Press Kit is created, it will always be kept on hand for distribution with updates occurring after any major change or event for the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian.

Budget:

Cost for design of Press Kit (Jeremy Sherber @ \$100/hour for 4 hours) \$400

Total Budget **\$400**

Measurement: The success of the Press Kit will be measured by the amount of media industry personnel that refer to Varian for knowledge and expertise regarding zoning, land use, variances, and other real estate issues after receiving the Press Kit.

Action Plan 6: Radio Talk Forum

Objective: To provide WVOX listeners with advice on land use, zoning, and variance issues and to increase public awareness of Varian's expertise

Target Market: New Rochelle listeners of the WVOX radio station that need guidance in the area of land use, zoning, and variances

Description: The Talk Forum will occur on the WVOX radio station, a New Rochelle radio station located on 5th Avenue. Varian will start out discussing a general real estate topic and then accept call-in questions from listeners.

Who: Varian will contact William O'Shaughnessy, the President and Editorial Director of the WVOX radio station, to arrange the talk forum.

Timing: Varian will continue with the talk forum until it is deemed unsuccessful or there is no longer a use for it.

Budget:

Total Budget \$0

Measurement: The success of the Radio Show Talk Forum will be measured by the amount of additional clients, that were listeners of the WVOX Talk Forum, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian receives.



Action Plan 7: Social Media Internship

Objective: To expand Varian's social media presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter while allowing a student in the New Rochelle community to gain valuable work experience



Target Market: Members of the New Rochelle community that are active in social media

Description: The social media intern will create a Twitter account for the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian and Tweet regularly to update followers on Varian's legal dealings within the community. The intern will also update Varian's LinkedIn account with full descriptions of past and present work experiences, as well as create more connections. The intern will create status updates on Facebook similar to the information that is posted on Twitter.

Who: Varian will contact New Rochelle College Career Centers to have the internship opportunity posted as a part of the Resume Referral Program and made available to students. The colleges he will contact are Iona College, College of New Rochelle, and Monroe College.

Timing: Varian will begin the internship over the summer. Each school semester a new intern will be hired for that semester.

Budget:

Student will be an unpaid inter receiving college credit..... \$0

Total Budget **\$0**

Measurement: Varian will measure the effectiveness of the intern by the number of Tweets and Facebook status updates, as well as the quality of work performed by the intern on LinkedIn.

Action Plan 8: Webinar

Objective: To interact with potential clients and address their issues and concerns before setting up an initial consultation

Target Market: Potential clients within the greater Metropolitan area

Description: The Webinar will be held to provide potential clients, that Varian has sent invitations to, an opportunity to discuss current relevant topics, asks questions, and receive tips. The Webinar will be a great interactive opportunity for those that do not have access to the talk forum on WVOX or do not receive The Sound Report.

Who: Varian will purchase a monthly plan, from GoToWebinar by Citrix Online, which will provide him with the software needed to create the Webinar.

Timing: Varian will hold his first Webinar shortly after his first Talk forum on WVOX and his first article in The Sound Report. Depending on the success of the Webinar, Varian will decide if he wants to continue this event.

Budget:

GoToWebinar for 100 attendees (monthly rate)..... \$ 99

Total Budget for the first year (when paying monthly)..... \$1188

Measurement: The success of this action plan will be measure by the number of people that attend the Webinar and by the number of people that convert into clients.

Action Plan 9: Senior Seminar

Objective: To create a relationship with the target market and serve as an informant to the senior population

Target Market: The senior population within the New Rochelle community that are experiencing neighborhood changes, buying or selling their property, or are expanding on their property

Description: Varian will hold an in-person seminar that will inform the senior population about how to voice their concerns regarding their neighborhood, as well as the basics on real estate law.



Who: Varian will contact senior (60 year olds and up) members of the New Rochelle community through direct mail. Varian will send direct mail pieces through Hugo Dunhill Mailing Lists, Inc. He will also post flyers in the United Community Center of Westchester, the New Rochelle YMCA, the New Rochelle Public Library, and United Hebrew.

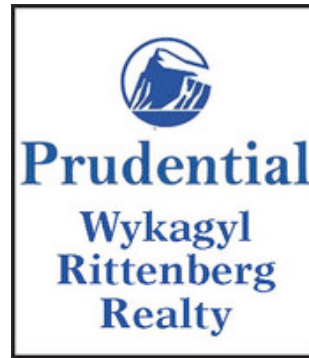
Timing: Varian will hold the in-person seminar two to three times per year.

Budget:

Rented space at the Radisson Hotel in New Rochelle (50 people)	\$ 500
Light refreshments (\$10 per person)	\$ 500
Direct mail (5,000 people with 1 percent response rate = 50 people).....	\$ 2700
Flyers	\$ 10

Total Budget..... **\$3710**

Measurement: Varian will measure the effectiveness of this action plan by how many people attend the in-person seminar and convert to clients.



Action Plan 10: Partnering with a Real Estate Broker

Objective: To increase the revenue per closing while decreasing the cost to the buyer

Target Market: Various real estate brokers that Varian could partner with

Description: By partnering with a real estate broker, Varian serves as an agent for the broker's subsidiary title company. Therefore, Varian gets paid by the title company, as well as a buyer, enabling him to charge buyer's less, but make more profit per closing.

Who: Varian will partner with either Houlihan Lawrence or Prudential Wykagyl/Rittenberg Realty

Timing: Varian will initiate the partnership immediately and continue as long as it is profitable.

Budget:

Total Budget..... \$0

Measurement: Varian will measure the success of this action plan by the percentage increase in revenue per closing.

MARKETING BUDGET

Rating	Title of Action Plan	Cost
1	www.GregVarian.com	\$1,600
2	Radio Talk Forum	\$0
3	Column in The Sound Report	\$0
4	Westchester County Bar Association Referral Service	\$200
5	Partnership with Real Estate Broker	\$0
6	Senior Seminar	\$3,710
7	Google Sponsored Links	\$520
8	Webinar	\$1,188
9	Press Kit	\$400
10	Social Media Internship	\$0
	Total Budget	\$7,618

The total proposed marketing budget, at \$7,618, represents only 12.4 percent of the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian's total net income. Each action plan was created with the intention to broaden Varian's Internet presence, increase the firm's brand awareness, or position the firm as the media's go-to contact on real estate issues. The action plans are listed in order of importance, with emphasis on the first. If the proposed budget is approved, the Law Office of Gregory T. Varian should experience a 2 percent increase in clientele and create brand awareness for 25 percent of the firm's primary target market.

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