

# How a Set-It-and-Forget-It Soft Ask Led to a 125% Increase in Referrals

Ever been so excited about a product or service that you just *had* to tell a friend about it? How many times have you tried something because someone you trusted recommended it? Are you putting this concept in practice for your business?

One of the most popular ways to grow your book of business—and one of the most effective for doing so—is through referrals, or existing clients recommending your services. But what stops many from using this strategy is the ask: “Do you know anyone who could use my services?” doesn’t easily come up in conversation and can be seen as pushy. But after reading for years about the power of referrals, Ryan Marshall, CFP®, of Ela Financial Group, and his team decided to take the leap.

Marshall began using the automated referral campaign in 2018, available within his FMG Suite package. The platform’s emails provided a way to periodically get in front of clients and their teams broader network, prompting them for referrals without the awkward questions.

The referral efforts proved fruitful: from 2018 to 2019, Marshall saw a 125% increase in referrals, resulting in a 143% increase in assets under management from referrals becoming new clients. Marshall noted the caliber of his existing clients having a positive effect on his referral opportunities.

“The referrals we receive have a similar personality to our existing clients,” he explained. “Most clients are friends with people who share similar interests and these referrals usually fit our ideal client criteria. And, a referral will already have a level of trust because their friends are already using you.”

The team previously used other ways of soliciting referrals, like including mail inserts or referral information within letters, but found the automated campaign to be the most effective way to acquire new clients.

“The campaign emails are well written, and I strongly feel the biggest gamechanger for us is the consistency of the message,” Marshall explained. “It sends every single quarter and we don’t need to worry about scheduling the email to go out or the content inside the email. This is truly set it and forget it.”

## Stay Top of Mind

Gathering learnings and feedback from Marshall, Cetera’s Advisor Marketing team has developed an automated referral campaign, now available within MarketingCentral. This is a bi-annual campaign allowing you to check-in with you clients and send a friendly reminder that you are available to help friends and family in need of financial guidance.

## Ready, Set, Grow

Marshall and his team continue to send their automated messages, as well as other timely resources within MarketingCentral to keep his services and his readiness to help top of mind.

He encourages any financial professional who is thinking of pursuing client referrals as a growth strategy to start—and then stick with it. “Don’t be afraid to let clients know you are accepting new

clients and would love to help anyone in need,” he explained. “People want to help their friends and see them succeed. Why wouldn’t they want their friends to get advice from someone they already know and trust?”

*If you’re ready to grow your business through client referrals, MarketingCentral can help. Log on to [ceteramarketingcentral.com](http://ceteramarketingcentral.com) today to access pre-approved automated campaigns that keep you top of mind and pave the way for warm referral introductions.*