



The Mottley Law Firm

8001 Franklin Farms Drive, Suite 125
Richmond, Virginia 23229

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THE RISE OF WOMEN'S SPORTS

Fans, Brands, and a Growing Game



It wasn't long ago that women's sports felt like an afterthought. Media covered games sparsely, few people attended in person, and brand sponsorships were non-existent. But now, things are changing quickly.

Over 18.5 million people watched the NCAA Women's College Basketball Championship in 2024, and nearly 10 million tuned in this year. The WNBA has also seen a surge in viewership recently. During the 2024 season, viewership was up 170% over the year before, with an average of 1.2 million viewers per game. And the league had a 322% increase in online search growth, the most significant increase of any major sports property.

Basketball isn't the only women's game getting more attention, either. The Women's World Cup is pulling in crowds that rival men's soccer in some markets. And the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), once seen as a niche league, is drawing serious attention.

Fans are showing up in a big way. They're watching games in record numbers, but they're also invested. They follow the storylines, know the

players, and care about the outcomes. And the brands? They're starting to catch on as well. Sponsorship in women's sports is growing 50% faster than men's, but companies aren't just putting logos on jerseys. Brands like Nike and Ally Financial are funding programs, signing long-term partnerships, and working alongside athletes to strengthen women's sports even further.

However, despite this progress, a large gap remains between men's and women's sports. Many brands still struggle to understand the women's sports market and its ROI potential. In fact, only 6% of Fortune 500 companies have women's sports sponsorships. And that's saying nothing of the pay gap between male and female athletes. Whether it's prize money or a salary, men make anywhere from 15%–100% more than women across all professional sports.

Despite the remaining challenges, it's clear the momentum is there. Fans are showing up, brands are getting involved, and the energy around women's sports is building fast.



THE MOTTLEY CREW REVIEW

09/25

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The Mottley Law Firm

Your Network Is Your Net Worth

A FATEFUL JOURNEY TO A FIRM WIN

This has been a fantastic year for our law firm.

In last month's edition, I told you I recently took some time off to recharge my battery due to the busy pace we'd been keeping for the past eight months here at the firm. This decision came after handling several cases scheduled for trial during the first half of the year. By July, I was exhausted and in need of a break.

Two of these cases involved tractor-trailer crashes that occurred on Virginia's infamous Interstate 81. As many of you know, I-81 in Virginia is a north-south highway that runs through the Shenandoah Valley and the western part of the state. Having attended Virginia Tech, my experience with the highway goes way back. It's a highway that has gotten more and more dangerous over the years due to the volume of traffic it sees every day. On a recent trip out to the western part of the state, I started randomly counting the number of tractor trailers I could see up ahead versus the number of cars. The result I kept getting was that there were four trucks for every car in my field of view, which is a remarkable ratio.

Our clients in each of these cases were from out of state. If you drive on I-81 these days, you'll see lawyer billboards have cropped up that specifically target people injured in crashes with tractor trailers. When you do what I do for a living — represent people who've been seriously injured — you spend a good deal of time thinking about how to land your next case. So, when I

see these billboards, I wonder, how well do they work at getting cases? It seems somewhat implausible to me that they work all that well. But I guess these other lawyers are doing them for a reason.

We don't do billboard advertising in my firm (at least, not yet). So, how did we get these cases?

Most lawyers will tell you their best cases come from other lawyers, and that has been my experience. One of these cases came from a lawyer in New York I met at several lawyer conferences over the years. I had stayed in touch with him and, when he needed to refer someone in his community to a Virginia lawyer, he called me. I am still trying to figure out exactly how the other one came to me. But it, too, was a lawyer's referral. The route was a little more circuitous, going through at least three out-of-state lawyers before a Virginia lawyer, I presume, recommended me.

The point of the story is clear: Somehow, along the way in my 29-year career, I met a lawyer — whose name I still don't know in connection with that case — who thought highly enough of me to suggest my name to an out-of-state lawyer when asked for a personal injury lawyer in Virginia.

This tale demonstrates the importance of constantly cultivating contacts in and out of your professional life. How do you build a great network? By being kind to people, doing great work, taking notes, and staying in touch with people through things like a newsletter — which, in my case, has been sent out religiously every month for years now. I can't point to a specific edition of this newsletter that caused that person to raise my name when asked for a contact, but I can confidently say they learned about me through The Mottley Crew Review.

For those of you who have previously referred a matter to me, you have my most heartfelt thanks. Thank you for entrusting me with the responsibility of helping people who are coming to you for advice and guidance in a difficult situation. And to my readers, I express my most heartfelt appreciation for your trust as well. I'm deeply honored to be a part of your network.

—Kevin Mottley



RETHINKING RETIREMENT

The Rise of Part-Time Retirees

These days, more people are scaling back on long working hours, especially Gen Z and millennials. Many pick up part-time work or projects that give them space without completely severing ties to working life. It's a slow shift — not a sudden stop — and it's gaining traction. And for those approaching retirement, it's something to consider. Retirement doesn't have to mean walking away for good.

This shift is partly fueled by remote and flexible work options, making it easier to downshift without leaving the workforce. A recent study from Fidelity Investments found that 66% of younger workers would prefer a phased retirement, and more than half of all respondents said they plan to work part-time during retirement.

The reasons vary. Some want more time for travel, hobbies, or personal projects, but still value structure and purpose. Others want to stay active or involved in their field. Working in some capacity can also help with cash flow, delay Social Security, or cover insurance, which is especially important for those retiring before age 65.

That said, partial retirement brings its own planning challenges. Health coverage is often limited for part-time workers. Income from consulting or part-time jobs could also reduce early Social Security benefits. And scaling back hours usually means scaling back contributions to retirement savings.

Still, for those who plan ahead, semi-retirement offers a flexible way to ease into the next stage of life. It provides space to try new things without giving up the financial or emotional benefits work can offer.



Proximity Power

TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR LOCAL NETWORK

As discussed in this month's cover article, growing your network is essential. To expand on that topic, I recently researched a few ways small businesses — particularly those in the Richmond area — could broaden their footprint so someone would think of them immediately, just as the lawyer I mentioned in my cover article had thought of me. Here are a few tips on strengthening your network locally.

Zoom in on your zip code. Naturally, building a name for your business locally means more than just putting up a sign outside your building and waiting for folks to walk through your door. If you're hoping to build a network in your neighborhood, you must know that neighborhood. What is your area's culture? What are the values residents hold dear? What other industries exist in your area? Knowing the answers to these questions will help you set a foundation for identifying how your services will most benefit your community members.

Suppose your business provides a service that people in your area typically travel out of town to receive. In that case, you can draw greater attention to yourself by offering special discounts or exclusive promotions to folks within your zip code.

Support those who support you. Just as attracting people to your business is essential for growth, so is leaving your four walls and traveling to them. Sponsoring a team at your local high school, attending local events, or participating in area fundraisers are fantastic ways to engage with your community and build word of mouth, as they will put you in close contact with those who may depend on your services in the future.

Add strength to your SEO. You don't need to be a marketing expert to know that most people find the businesses they need through their phones or laptops — even in local areas. These days, having the best keywords to attract consumers online is essential. For example, including the name of your neighborhood or city in your keywords will help people find you quicker.

Have any of these suggestions worked for you in the past? Have you been utilizing other methods to great success? If you have embraced a local-based strategy that has grown your network, I'd love to hear about it!

—Kevin Mottley

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SUDOKU

Grilled Teriyaki Flank Steak

INGREDIENTS

Inspired by TheShortOrderCook.com

Marinade

- 2/3 cup red wine
- 1/2 cup soy sauce or tamari
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup sesame oil
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1 tsp minced garlic

- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp ginger powder
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes (optional)

Meat

- 1 1/2 lbs flank steak

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, whisk together marinade ingredients.
2. Place the flank steak in a large, rimmed dish. Pour the marinade over the meat.
3. Refrigerate and allow to marinate for 15 minutes. Flip and let marinate for another 15 minutes.
4. Preheat grill to 400 F.
5. Add the meat to the grill and cook for 3–5 minutes on each side. Leave the grill lid open to avoid overcooking.
6. For a medium-rare steak, remove from grill at 130 F internally, and for medium, remove at 140 F.
7. Let the meat rest on a cutting board for 5–10 minutes. Then, slice against the grain into thin pieces and enjoy!

DING DECENCY DAMAGE DUTY DONE RIGHT

Recently, someone I know accidentally collided with a parked car in Richmond. By the time I was notified about the problem, this person had left the scene. However, I was pleased to hear they had left a note on the parked car's windshield — which had no occupants — that included the at-fault driver's name, contact details, and insurance information. Despite this positive news, I soon realized after doing some research that Virginia law requires the at-fault driver to do more than just leave a note.

Firstly, a driver who collides with an unattended vehicle or other unattended property must make a reasonable effort to find the property owner and inform them of the incident. If the owner can't be found, the driver should leave a note with their name and contact information.

But here's the kicker: They must also report the accident in writing to the state police or the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours. In this day and age of cameras being



everywhere, you need to assume there's a recording somewhere of everything you do on highways or roadways. Now more than ever, you must ensure you do things exactly as the law states. Otherwise, you may unintentionally get yourself in a tough spot legally.

The evening following the accident, horrific storms blew through Richmond. The next day, I encouraged the driver to revisit the accident scene to make sure the note on the windshield hadn't blown away. Thankfully, both the damaged vehicle and the note were still there. From there, he contacted and met with Richmond Police at the scene and reported the incident to them. Using the damaged vehicle's license plate, they tracked down the owner, who lived in a nearby apartment. The owner was pleasant and very thankful that he had done so much to address the situation.

Although that's how you're supposed to handle this situation per the law, I'd also advise you to take a photo of the note you leave and all the damage you can see to your car and the other vehicle.

Inspired by this recent event, I plan to take things further and create laminated cards for each member of my family. Each card will include their name and contact information — and, of course, a brief apology for hitting the other person's car.

—Kevin Mottley