Cheryl Janis AGENCY

CASE STUDY
SPEAKER REPRESENTATION FOR LAWYERS

JOSH BARON · CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY & LEGAL EDUCATOR

“If it’s gettable, we’ll get it.”

How Utah criminal defense attorney Josh Baron went from speaking now and then to 16 legal engagements in six months, and stopped having to ask for them himself.

> *“It’s night and day. Now it feels like I can get into the most important rooms that I want to get into.”*
>
> JOSH BARON

AT A GLANCE · THE FIRST SIX MONTHS

16

legal speaking engagements secured, with a calendar into 2027

WHERE THE 16 ARE

6	Utah State Bar sections and programs
6	Legal organizations and CLE programs
2	Law firms
2	Law school programs

Six months ago, Josh Baron spoke occasionally. He had a talk he believed in, "How to Not Hate Your Clients," a CLE on working well with people at their hardest moments. What he didn't have was a way to keep getting in front of the right lawyers.

Today he has 16 engagements secured across the Utah legal community, with a calendar running into 2027. His audiences include state bar sections, law firms, affinity groups, law students, legal services attorneys and family court professionals. When we asked him what feels different, he didn't hesitate.

> *"It's night and day. I spoke sporadically, occasionally before. Now it feels like I can get into the most important rooms that I want to get into, and speak at events that were kind of unthinkable to me before."*

The headline of this case study is how he describes his confidence now. When a room matters to him, his reaction is simple: if it's gettable, we'll get it.

01

Before: the job he didn't want

Josh knew speaking was good for his practice. The trouble was everything around the talk: finding the right audiences, tracking down the person who actually decides, following up, handling CLE details, and doing it all again for the next event.

For years that work sat on his to-do list and stayed there.

> *"It was this constant, 'I know I should be doing this, and I don't know how, and I don't want to, and I have lots of evidence that I won't.'"*

Josh has learned to treat that kind of resistance with curiosity instead of guilt. He mentioned the book *Who Not How*, which suggests that instead of asking how you'll do something, you ask who would make it easy. He used to think that was a lazy shortcut. Then he tried it.

> *"As I get older, I try to say, 'Isn't it interesting that I didn't do that? Who would do that, and who would love it and be good at it?'"*

02

Why it helps to have someone else make the call

Josh spends his working life advocating for clients. He knows something many professionals feel but rarely say: it's much easier to make the case for someone else than for yourself.

> *"If you're trying to book yourself as a speaker, it might be awkward, calling someone and raving about yourself. But there's something kind of cool about calling in and pitching somebody else."*
>
> JOSH BARON

"It makes me so happy that I don't have to do that," he added. That's the heart of what representation changed. Josh never wanted to feel like he was begging for a spot on a program. Now he doesn't have to. We do the reaching out, the follow-up with organizers and the advocating, so he can say yes to the rooms that fit.

03

The rooms: 16 engagements in six months

We didn't send Josh's name to every list we could find. We looked for legal communities where his message would genuinely help, then shaped the pitch for each one. The result reaches nearly every corner of Utah's legal world. Josh doesn't charge for these talks. The return he's looking for is relationships.

> *"I'm shocked how many yeses we've gotten. I just didn't dare to hope that it would be this many."*

UTAH STATE BAR

- Real Property Section
- Legal Entrepreneur Law Section
- Franchise Law Section
- Elder Law CLE at the Utah Law & Justice Center
- Business Law Section, Annual Breakfast CLE
- 2027 Utah State Bar Spring Convention

LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS & CLE PROGRAMS

- Utah Legal Services
- Women Lawyers of Utah
- Utah Association for Justice
- Family Law CLE
- Alternative Dispute Resolution CLE
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) Conference

LAW FIRMS

- JR Law Group, CLE Lunch and Learn
- Brown Family Law, CLE Lunch and Learn

LAW SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

- BYU Law, *Lunching with Lawyers*
- University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, full-day spring event with the Corporate Counsel Section

04

The talk got better by giving it again

One of Josh's biggest surprises wasn't about bookings. It was about the talk itself. For years he had tried to give a different talk every time. Giving one strong talk again and again turned out to be far better.

> *"You can't get it right the first time. You don't know how the audience is going to respond. You don't know what's going to be confusing to them. You only have educated guesses until you give it."*

Early in our work together, Josh was stuck about 20 minutes short. He felt he had already said everything there was to say on the subject. Working through it with us, he found the missing 20 minutes, and it became some of the strongest material in the talk.

Those 20 minutes mattered for more than polish. Utah counts CLE credit in 60-minute hours, rounded down to the nearest half hour. A talk that runs 40 minutes earns attendees half an hour of credit, not the full hour they came for.

Now the material lives in him. He described walking into a recent event without having rehearsed much and finding that the stories and statistics were simply there.

> *"I'm not nervous that I won't have the material, because the material is mastered. And I'm not nervous that I won't go to the right place, because you've got it on my calendar. I can just be there with them instead of being anxious about all those logistical questions."*

He was also surprised by how little energy speaking takes him now. That matters. A speaking practice a busy attorney can sustain is one that doesn't drain him.

05

Organizers who are glad they said yes

Every event comes with a stack of admin overhead: headshots, bios, outlines, slide decks, CLE paperwork, dates, attendance details. When a busy lawyer handles these alone, organizers end up chasing him. We send them before anyone has to ask.

Josh noticed what that does for his reputation.

> *"They're never like, 'Ah, freaking Josh.' They're always happy, because we've done what we said we were going to do."*
>
> JOSH BARON

Those organizer relationships are often the strongest ones to come out of an event. By the time Josh walks in, we've usually been talking with the organizer for months. As Josh put it, they've put a bit of their own reputation on the line by booking him. Making that an easy, good decision for them is part of the job.

Most of that work is invisible. We chase the link for an online CLE until it's on Josh's calendar, block travel time, and send a check-in text a few days before each talk. When a court date lands on top of a booked program, we work it out with the organizer. When kind notes arrive after a talk, we add them to his speaker materials, with his permission. See the details we handle →

06

Relationships that start with a gift

Josh has one firm rule about professional relationships: he never asks for referrals. One of his goals is simply not to beg.

Speaking fits that rule. Rather than hosting events and asking people to come, he can show up at someone else's event and give them something useful.

> *"How could I be at somebody else's event in a way that will be generous and joyful and appreciated by them? Right now, it's showing up and giving this little talk."*

Afterward, some attendees email or text him about something in the talk that hit home. When Josh invites those people to lunch, every one of them so far has said yes. The talk has already done the introducing.

> *"They kind of seem like they think it's a privilege that I'm asking them to go to lunch, instead of me being like, 'Please, would you please go?'"*

At those lunches Josh doesn't pitch. He asks how people are doing and means it. Sometimes they talk about cases or running a firm. Often they talk about what's hard, like parenting and providing for a family, without trying to fix it for each other.

Speaking has also turned acquaintances into colleagues. For the Women Lawyers of Utah program, Josh co-presented a panel with an attorney he had never met in person. They planned it together over lunch, and she came to the panel having thought hard about their conversation. "My relationship with her is very different than it was," Josh said. The panel gave them something real to build together.

He has also come to value time with people who already know him.

> *"I think sometimes we overestimate the value of brand-new people and underestimate the value of spending time with people that are already in our network."*

07

What about referrals? An honest answer at six months

It's too early to point to a case and say a talk produced it, and Josh doesn't pretend otherwise. Referrals in a law practice rarely travel in a straight line.

His firm asks every new client how they heard about him. Many say they Googled him, even though the firm doesn't advertise on Google. Usually that means someone recommended Josh, the client searched his name and read his reviews.

> *"Attribution is hard and imprecise, and you'd never capture all of it."*

What Josh can see is the groundwork. Organizers who know and trust him. A co-presenter who has become a colleague. Attendees who reach out and say yes to lunch. Lawyers he already knew, who just spent an hour with him and will remember him.

> *"They spent an hour with me. I think I'm in their brain quite a bit more, not forever, but for a week or two."*

He's comfortable letting that build. "I have this faith that good-quality relationships just always pay off," he told us. We'll look at the fuller picture together at the one-year mark.

08

Every level

Josh is still a criminal defense attorney first. But lawyers across Utah now also know him as a legal educator, someone who brings a thoughtful, human perspective to the hardest parts of practicing law. And he enjoys the work.

When we asked him to sum up what changed, he put it this way:

> *"You've helped the quality of the talk. You've helped me get into the right places. You've helped me build relationships through the talk. You've affected it at every level."*
>
> JOSH BARON · CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY AND LEGAL EDUCATOR

WORK WITH US

Have a talk you believe in, and no time to chase the rooms?

Cheryl Janis Agency is a small, relationship-driven agency for lawyers and other thoughtful experts. We help shape the talk, open the right doors and handle everything in between. You keep practicing.

Tell Us About Your Speaking →

or email cheryl@cherylrjanis.com

Every speaker's path is different. We don't promise a number of bookings, referrals or a particular financial return. Engagement figures reflect Josh Baron's first six months of representation.

ABOUT CHERYL JANIS AGENCY

Speaker development with Philip

Philip Morgan works with you to find the strongest idea in your experience and shape a presentation that feels true to you and valuable to an audience.

Ongoing representation with Cheryl

Cheryl Janis develops your audience strategy, builds organizer relationships, and manages the business of your speaking, from outreach to CLE coordination.

One monthly fee. No commission. No long-term commitment. We keep our roster small so the people shaping your strategy stay involved in the work.

Cheryl Janis AGENCY

Thoughtful voices.
Meaningful opportunities.