



Be a Social Media Rock Star With Your Firm's Blog and Win More Business

Top 10 Tips for Generating New Business Through Blogging and Social Media

How do blogging and social media marketing connect attorneys with potential clients?

When a consumer faces a crisis—a failing business, an unfaithful spouse, a family member in trouble—that person is more likely than ever to turn to the Internet looking for answers to his or her legal issues.

Three out of four consumers who sought an attorney in the past year used online resources, including search engines, websites, YouTube™, Facebook® and other tools at some point in the process, according to a recent survey.¹

So by including information about legal topics being frequently searched, an attorney's blog will be more visible on search engines results—and that increases the chances that consumers and referring attorneys will find and select that attorney's firm.

In fact, one out of two respondents to a recent survey (from firms of nine attorneys or fewer) who are blogging reported retaining clients directly or via referral as a result of their legal topic blogging.²

That's landing actual paying clients.

Enhance your firm's ability to attract more, higher quality prospects through blogging and social media marketing by following these proven techniques.

1: Based on a survey of 4,000 adult Internet users (Internet users comprise 78% of the U.S. adult population** and the U.S. adult population comprises 235 million according to the U.S. Census 2010) conducted by The Research Intelligence Group (TRiG), March 2012. ** According to The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project's Spring Tracking Survey conducted April 26-May 22, 2011.

2: The American Bar Association 2012 Legal Technology Survey

1 Identify Your Business Goals. Answer these critical questions to get started with your blogging and social media program.

- For which areas of my law practice do I want to be known?
- Do I want my blog to focus on local or national issues – or both?
- Do I have the time to learn the different social media networks and set up my profiles?
- How much time will I be able to devote to blogging each week?

These answers will form the basis of your blogging and social media marketing strategy.

2 Make the Best Use of Your Time. Spend your time actually blogging, instead of building your blog. Design and development, analytics and content creation are the top three areas that social media marketers are outsourcing.³ If it makes sense for you, working with support professionals (designers, researchers, writers, proofreaders, etc.) will enable you to spend more time blogging and connecting with potential clients.


3 Project the Right Image. Ensure your blog looks professional, inspiring the confidence consumers need to contact your firm for a consultation. Make sure branding (text and images) is consistent across all channels (website, blog, LinkedIn®, Facebook, Twitter®, Google+™, JD Supra®, etc.). Use appropriate images and have a separate set of eyes proofread all content prior to posting. Like many of your competitors, you may want to hire professional designers to help you achieve the visual quality you demand.


4 Integrate Social Media and Search Engine Marketing Strategies. Search engines reward fresh, relevant content with higher rankings. Blogging generates that type of content on a regular basis. Select the right keywords to include in your content and power all aspects of your online marketing. If you are not entirely certain what keywords you should use, reach out to a specialist.


“You have to be able to attract a reasonable share of people to your site and then impress them when they land. When it’s done right, blogging and social media can help you do that.”


– Michael M. Wilson, M.D., J.D., Washington, D.C., a medical malpractice attorney who generates new business through his blog. (Visit: <http://www.wilsonlaw.com/blog/>)


5 Use Blog and Social Media Channels Appropriately. Social media channels can be used for varying purposes:

 Firm Blog: Position yourself as an expert, generate calls from the media, respond to comments.

 LinkedIn: Make contact with business clients and potential clients, and connect with more referral sources.

 Facebook: Be found where social media users spend the most time and converse directly with your target audience.

 Twitter: Position yourself as an information source, share your own content and attract followers.

 Google+: Participate in this growing social media channel and ensure visibility in search engines for local searches in the communities you serve.

6 Blog on Topics Relevant to Your Practice.

Topics can spring from many sources.

- Read Google Alerts™, newspapers and magazines for ideas.
- Ask yourself, “What is my target client’s biggest concern?”
- Re-purpose research from your actual case work.
- Make a prediction or share info on a verdict and/or judgment.
- Create a “Top 10” list or “How To” post about a recurring legal issue.
- Write a sequel or follow-up to a past post.
- Recruit a guest blogger.

7 Maintain Control.

Select an easy-to-use content management system that allows you to approve, edit and post a blog in real time. Depending upon the amount of time you can devote to social media marketing, you may want to supplement your blogging with assistance from legal content writers. If you do, make sure you have the opportunity to review all copy before posting. And make sure visitors’ comments do not appear automatically; instead, adjust your settings to ensure you can moderate (approve/reject) comments before they appear publicly.

8 Have a Complete Blogging and Social Media Strategy.

Have your blog configured to post content automatically to your social media profiles. Blogging should be the cornerstone of your larger social media strategy. How many of the must-haves on the checklist to the right does your firm have?

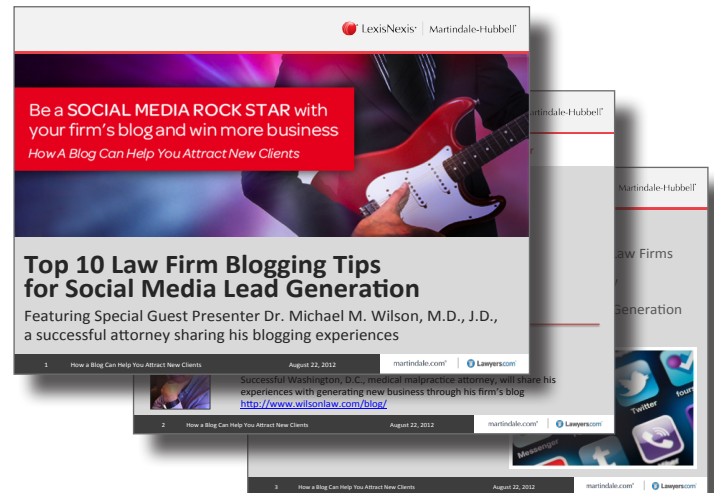
My Law Firm’s Social Media “Must-Haves”

- Custom blog, developed by professional designers, including firm’s branding
- Setting up and maintaining my firm’s social media presence on Facebook®, Twitter®, Google+®, JD Supra®, and LinkedIn®—branded uniformly and linked to our blog.
- Posting of blogs at least once per week, with quality content related to our key practice areas, written in consumer-friendly language
- Automated, instant sharing of blog content to our social media profiles and other external sites
- Multiple listings of our blog on major blog directories and key legal websites
- User-friendly content management system to edit or post our blog content in real time
- Easy-to-find phone number and an online contact form posted on our blog that can be tracked
- Blog publishing plan tied to a calendar, anticipating key upcoming events related to our practice areas

Social Media Marketing Webinar

We invite you to download a free recording of the LexisNexis webinar that focuses on this topic and more:

<http://www.lexisnexis.com/law-firm-marketing/resource-center/>



9 Research Ethical Considerations. Ensure compliance with your state bar. Be sure you approve all comments made on all social media platforms before they are posted. Focus on the facts and refrain from making false, misleading blog post comments, website content, tweets, status updates, and client testimonials. If you work with a vendor, even if you're not making the communication, you're still responsible. Being mindful about what you are doing, it is entirely possible to engage in social media without creating an attorney-client relationship.

10 Consider Launching a Stand-Alone Blog. Fresh content from a blog can increase the search engine optimization value of your website. But if you already have a strong blog on a well-performing website, you may want to consider building on your success to generate even more leads. Developing a blog independent of your site enables you to own more of the search engine results page (where your stand-alone blog, your website and your pay-per-click ad can all appear for the same search). Multiple blogs can also help firms promote multiple areas of practice.

Schedule Your Free Social Media Consultation

- Compare your online presence (including your blog and/or website) with those of competitors.
- Evaluate whether you are using the latest best practices.
- Learn how to measure ROI.

To schedule your free consultation and receive a complimentary, custom "Blogging & Social Media Grader Report Card," please visit: www.lexisnexis.com/social-eval or call us at **877-440-5783**.

