

A Social Media Primer for Lawyers

Jeffrey S. Krause, Esq.
Krause Practice Management, LLC
Lawtopia, LLC

What is Social Media and Should You Be Using It?

- ◉ Almost every lawyer can benefit from some form of social media
- ◉ Social media is about information and relationships
- ◉ It provides an easy way to build and maintain relationships with clients, prospective clients and referral sources
- ◉ Law firms thrive on long term relationships with clients and the people they refer

Who Is Using Social Media

- Not everyone uses social media
- The people who do span just about every possible demographic group you can imagine
- Are they using it to find a lawyer?
- Even if the answer is “no” they are getting an increasing amount of their information from and spend a lot of time on social media
- Social media can help you reach them

Creating vs. Consuming Social Media

- If you think social media has no place in your marketing plans, you are thinking of it as a consumer
- Someone has to create the content
- If you create the right kind of content, people will start to anticipate that content
- You control the content and how much time and energy you spend on it

Types of Social Media

- The most common tools for social media today are:
 - Blogs
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - LinkedIn
- Google+ will be a major player in social media by the end of the year

Blogging

- Articles delivered over the web
- No regular publishing schedule
- Articles can be long and informative or short and introductory
- Some authors just want to get content published
- Others want to start a discussion

Getting Started with Blogging

- Cost is free or minimal
- Blogger.com offers free blogs
- WordPress.org offers free blogs
- WordPress software can be installed on any web host allowing you to install it alongside your current website
- The software used to design your website may have blogging tools. Ask your web designer.

What to Blog About

- If you can name a subject, there is a blog about it
- Legal blogs can be about substantive legal issues such as the latest Supreme Court decision, changes to the tax code, etc.
- There are also many legal related subjects suitable for blogging

Blogging Demonstration

Blogging Tips

- You don't have to blog on a regular basis although it helps if you are trying to develop a following
- Legal blogging is not about legal advice
- Legal blogging is about demonstrating your knowledge and expertise
- Make sure your software allows commenting and prevents comment spam

Facebook

- Facebook allows you to post information about yourself and what you are doing
- People “friend” you and your information is visible to each other
- Facebook users can create pages for their business
- People “like” a business and follow the content put out by the business

Getting Started with Facebook

- Setup a personal account
- “Friend” some family members or acquaintances (your kids are probably on it)
- Once you know how to use Facebook, setup a business “Page”
- Ask clients and colleagues to “Like” your business page
- Add a link to your website/blog asking others to “Like” your business page

What Can a Law Firm Do with Facebook?

- ◉ On your business page, you can:
 - Post information to your Wall
 - Create Events (invite people to attend or just show them how busy your business is)
 - Start Discussions
- ◉ Information on your Wall can be as simple as a link back to your latest blog post

Facebook Demonstration

Facebook Tips

- Create a business page
- Keep personal and business separate
- If a business contact asks to be your friend, politely tell them to “Like” your business page
- Use your Facebook Wall to link back to content you are creating in other places
- Use the Event feature on the business page to advertise speaking engagements, etc.

Twitter

- Twitter is a social media news feed
- Millions of users keep the ticker going 24/7
- Like a news feed, posts are very short (140 character limit)
- Tweets can be on anything from current events to very personal information
- Tends to be noisy with lots of chatter but at least you can choose who to follow

Is Twitter a Useful Tool for Lawyers?

- Twitter is probably the hardest social media tool to incorporate into your marketing efforts
- 140 characters is not much room to get your message out
- Twitter does allow you to post links to your other web content so you can use it to get the word out about that content
- Other users may “re-tweet” your posts sending others to your content

Twitter Demonstration

Twitter Tips

- ◉ Establish separate identities for personal and business
- ◉ Link back to your other marketing efforts
- ◉ Don't get lost in the chatter

LinkedIn

- LinkedIn helps you create relationships through “connections”
- LinkedIn is used mainly for business
- Less chatter than Facebook or Twitter
- Helps you keep up with job changes, promotions, etc. regarding your connections
- It is a useful tool for any professional who seeks to build relationships

Using LinkedIn

- Create an account
- Complete your profile (mostly questions about employment and education)
- Use the search feature to connect with a few business friends or colleagues
- Review the connections of your connections and invite people as appropriate
- Accept connections from others

LinkedIn Groups

- One of the more useful features of LinkedIn for a business looking to market itself
- Create discussions, post links or ask questions
- Groups are semi-private and can be by invitation only
- Everyone in the group sees your message
- If anyone replies to your message, their connections see that they replied

LinkedIn Demonstration

LinkedIn Tips

- ◉ Connect!
- ◉ Connect some more!
- ◉ Seriously, LinkedIn is about connecting to as many people as possible
- ◉ There is no real downside to connecting
- ◉ Periodically review the connections of your connections and invite others to connect
- ◉ Unlike Twitter and Facebook, most people who use LinkedIn are using it for business

Google+

- Google+ is a new social media site
- Currently it is only in beta
- Google+ allows you to filter your incoming content much better than Facebook and Twitter
- Create “circles” based on the types of people you are connecting with
- Separate your contacts into circles to control the stream of information coming to you.

Benefits of Social Media

- Cost effective (free or almost free)
- Demonstrate expertise
- Redirect people to your other more relevant content
- Uniquely personal way to market
- Benefits for Search Engine Optimization
- Like your business, it is about building relationships

Negatives of Social Media

- Social media requires an investment of time
- If used improperly, it can be a great time waster, especially the chatter sites like Facebook and Twitter
- It is easy to get wrapped up in consuming social media rather than creating it

Concluding Comments

- ◉ Every lawyer can benefit from some form of social media
- ◉ A blog is an especially useful tool because it allows you to market at almost no cost in a format that you are probably already good at (writing)
- ◉ The chattering sites have their uses but you have to hope others will see your message among the noise

About the Presenter

- Jeffrey S. Krause
- Marquette University Law School, 1996
- Legal Technology Consultant since 1998
- Founder of Krause Practice Management, LLC
 - www.krausepm.com
- Co-Founder of Lawtopia, LLC
 - www.lawtopiallc.com
- jeff@krausepm.com