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SPECIAL ISSUE
Everything you need to know about social media!



The Lawyer's Guide to Social Media

Social media has given lawyers an opportunity that has never existed before.

Through social media, you can reach potential clients on a personal level by building trust and creating real relationships.

Some of the biggest questions I hear from attorneys regarding social media include – *Which sites should I be using? How often should I engage with my social network? How much time will be involved?* These are all great questions and the answers will make an impact on your social media marketing campaign.

Which Social Media Websites to Use

There are numerous social media websites out there, so it can be overwhelming trying to figure out where to begin. To use social media to boost your business, you should narrow your focus to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Avvo. Each of these websites works a little differently:



Facebook: This social media website is one of the biggest in existence. I would recommend that you create a personal profile as well as a business profile. You should post comments, videos, images and other interesting information to engage your prospects.



Twitter: Twitter is a microblogging site that allows you to share short messages with your followers (other Twitter users). It is a great way to give your opinions, provide tips and helpful information and to let people know when you have created a new video, blog, post or other content.

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STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Conor Tarpey may be only 19-years-old, but he has a drive and passion for his work that is nothing less than impressive. He recently joined the Foster Web Marketing crew as a video editor.

Conor was born in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, but later relocated to McLean, Virginia. He graduated from Gonzaga High School in Washington DC and attended Fordham University in New York. Conor has set high dreams and goals for his future and has consequently made the decision to join the U.S. Marines.

According to Conor, he chose to become a Marine because, "I feel that I owe something to the country that has given me so much. I have always wanted to serve the military, but I chose the Marines because they are the first to fight and the elite."

He hopes to become a Mustang, which is an officer who began his military career as an enlisted Marine. While this level of officer is rare, it is not dissuading Conor from pursuing his dream. After his first military contract is completed, he plans to return to college on the GI bill and then continue on to Officer Candidate School to receive his commission. Conor begins boot camp in October.

Before Conor embarks on his journey to serve our country, he will continue to excel in his video editing duties, as well as the other myriad of tasks that are thrown his way. Conor has proved to be an exceptional team player, willing to pitch in when needed. 🌐

Who is the soon-to-be-Marine who has joined the Foster Web Marketing team?



Tom Foster, pictured here with his daughter Maddie.

Photo by Jim Folliard of the Fairfax Video Studio.

Q: How can I use hashtags effectively on Twitter?

A: If you are new to Twitter.com, the hashtag feature may baffle you.

A hashtag identifies a particular topic or event by placing the hash symbol, “#” in front of a word. It helps Twitter organize information and makes it easier for people to search for that word or phrase. For example, during the last Great Legal Marketing event, we used the hashtag, #glms11, which we placed in any tweets related to the conference. People who attended the conference used the same hashtag, which generated over 300 tweets.

The key to using a hashtag is to not overdo it. Also, if you put a hashtag in your tweet, you have to remember that people might not know what you are referring to. Either make what you are talking about apparent or write a brief message that explains the hashtag.

Q: How much time do you spend on social media each day or week?

A: Social media takes commitment. If you are ready to get serious about your social media marketing, you need to block out time on your calendar each day.

The ideal goal is to spend anywhere from 30 minutes to one hour on social media daily. That doesn't mean you have to be glued to your computer. If you have a smart phone, download the various social media applications, so that you can engage with your social network from any location. If you are waiting for an appointment or sitting at the bar, grab your phone and tweet a message or post a Facebook comment. It doesn't need to be a complicated process.

You should be taking a least one action per day, whether that is creating a short video for YouTube or answering a question on LinkedIn. Social media has great potential and can bring in more cases, but you have to devote some time to it. If you don't have time, hire someone. It's *that* important. 🌐

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The Lawyer's Guide to Social Media



LinkedIn: In a way, LinkedIn is a virtual CV.

It provides an avenue to connect with business colleagues, co-workers and other people you have come into contact with on a professional level. There are also groups you can join that are relevant to your areas of practice. Plus, there are forums where you can answer questions.



YouTube: People want instant information,

which is one reason YouTube has become so popular. Your clients are searching YouTube for information regarding their legal problems. Make sure you are uploading videos that answer their questions. You can create a free YouTube Channel that will showcase your uploaded video clips.



Avvo: If you are an attorney, you have an Avvo

profile. It is a website where people can find, review and rate lawyers. You might as well take advantage of your profile by including as much information about your firm as possible and by actively participating with prospects. Through Avvo, you can add informative guides and answer people's legal questions.

Time and Effort Involved

Social media puts you in a position where you can engage and interact with people who are interested in your practice areas. Therefore, social media marketing needs to be high on your priority list.

Create a social media calendar that notates the amount of time you are spending on each site every day. I would recommend that, at the bare minimum, you take one action a day. For example, tweet a message on Twitter or answer a question on Avvo. If you really want to succeed, devote an hour a day to your social media campaign. That is what San Diego attorney Ross Jurewitz has done and he has increased his business as a result.

If you don't think you have time to devote to social media, hire someone who can do it for you. So, stop procrastinating. Decide how you are going to tackle your social media marketing and get started immediately. 🌐

Social media is still a relatively new concept for many attorneys. If you fall into this camp, make sure you order a copy of our new book, [Secrets of Social Marketing for Attorneys Revealed](#) (see inside for details).

Dedicated to your success!

Tom