

***WOMEN LAWYERS OF UTAH***

***ANNUAL RETREAT***

***Saturday, November 7, 2009***

***Session II: 9:00am to 10:15am***

***“Practicing Law in Hard Economic Times”***

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*( 1.0 hours of general CLE credit approved )*

## ADVERTISING FOR SMALL LAW FIRMS IN A ROUGH ECONOMY

### Why Advertise When Things Are So Rough Economically?

- It's a Catch-22. You need to advertise to get business, but need business to afford to advertise.
- Statistics show that those who advertise in a bad economy experience the highest increase in business, not only during the period of bad economic times, but following the a period of two years or more after the bad economy has ended or rebounded.
  - Advertising may not bring more work in during the bad times, but consumers remember consistent ads and will seek the business of the company that advertised during the bad economy. There is a perception that if the company advertised so much, it must be indicative of an great ability to weather the storm.
  - Maintain focus, strength and consistency in advertising
- Advertising during bad economic time follows the rules of supply and demand, resulting in more favorable pricing for advertising. Advertising sources are willing to deal.
- Adapt your advertising to fit the economy, including perhaps:
  - o Offer lower fees or creative fee structures
  - o Offer bundled services at more cost-effective rates
  - o Offer new or modified services
  - o Focus on client needs rather than client wants
  - o Be sensitive to clients' expectations

## Where To Advertise

- Website: Fast becoming the means considered most effective in advertising legal services. Initial costs for establishing the website may be costly, but can be self-managed by the moderately tech-savvy attorney. Companies are expected to have a web presence—just make sure it's a good one. A poor website, or one that is "minimalistic" can turn away business.
  
- Blogging: Can be effective, particularly if you have a practice specialty that potential clients may search out through web surfing.
  
- On-line directories: Can cost very little or a lot, and wise selection is important. On-line directories are plentiful and you need to make sure that the one you pick provides the most or best exposure for you and/or your firm.
  
- Print advertising: Perhaps the most costly means of advertising, and possibly the least-effective for the dollar of expenditure. Can still be effective, however.
  
- Radio advertising: Also costly, but can have potentially more effectiveness due to continuous exposure. Radio advertisers are also in position to negotiate rates.
  
- Newsletters: Also considered to be a very cost-effective means of plumbing the two most fertile sources of client-development- current clients and other attorneys. Self-publication makes newsletters ideally priced.
  
- Referral Services: Can be very inexpensive, but can be very ineffective as well, particularly if you are one of several persons with a particular specialty listed in the referral service.

- The "Don't Waste Your Money" Category:

- Yellow page advertising: Very costly and virtually ineffective for the cost involved. Most people do not use phonebooks anymore.

- Direct Mail: Fairly inexpensive, but not very effective either.

# About.com Entrepreneurs

## A Pocket Full of Business Cards

Timely and consistent follow-up is the key to successful marketing  
by Scott Allen for About.com

Meeting new people in person is still one of the best ways to market your services. If you do a good job at this, you will quickly end up with a desk drawer filled with business cards. But then what do you do with them?

Timely and consistent follow-up is the key to successful marketing. Meeting someone once is rarely enough to bring you business -- repeated contacts are what do the trick. You always want to follow up with prospective customers, of course, but you should also follow up with potential referral sources.

A good referral source is someone who interacts with your desired customers on a regular basis. For example, as a business coach who works with many start-ups, I look for referrals from accountants, attorneys, career counselors, and people who teach small business classes.

There are three avenues you might choose to follow up with people you have met: by phone, by mail, or in person. Let's look at the uses of each one.

### Phone

With prospective customers, you can phone them to see how interested they are in what you do and try to set up a meeting. The meeting might be in person or by phone, depending on the nature of your business. You can mail them a marketing letter, or a brochure with a personal note. You could also call or write to refer them to your web site or invite them to your next presentation.

The most effective way to contact prospects is usually call-mail-call. Call first to develop interest, and if you can't reach them to set up a meeting on the first try, send them something by mail or e-mail. Then call again to see if they are ready to take the next step.

If someone is a potential referral source rather than a prospect, your best approach is to establish a reciprocal relationship. You might call to begin getting acquainted, exchange information about yourselves by mail, or arrange to meet in person to find out more about each other's work.

It is completely appropriate to call another business person you have met and say, "I think we might be serving the same type of customers; could we get to know each other better so maybe we could exchange referrals?" Another easy and friendly way to follow up with anyone you meet is to send a handwritten "nice to meet you" note with only your card enclosed.

### E-mail/Fax

Be careful when making contact by fax or e-mail. Many people are offended by faxes or e-mail messages that are essentially generic marketing letters. It's more advisable to use these media as tools to communicate more personally with people you have already opened a dialogue with. If you choose to fax or e-mail someone who isn't expecting to hear from you, be sure to personalize what you write for each prospect.



After your initial contact, think of ways to keep in touch on a regular basis. Call to see how people are doing, or to tell them what's new with you. Send a note with a clipping or cartoon, or e-mail a link to an interesting web site. Don't forward jokes or inspirational stories, though, unless you know for sure the recipient will appreciate them.

### **In person**

To follow up in person, schedule lunch or coffee, or invite your contacts to an upcoming event you plan to attend. Once you have a large follow-up list, consider a regular newsletter, ezine, or postcard mailing.

To manage your follow-up activities, you need a contact management system. When your list is short, you can use a notebook or 3 x 5 cards. You will quickly outgrow a manual system, however. By the time you reach 200 contacts or so, you'll be ready to graduate to a computerized system designed for contact management, such as Microsoft Outlook or ACT!

However you choose to keep track of your contacts, the important thing is to stay organized. Always have one central place where you record who you meet, what contact you have had so far, and when it will be time to follow up next.

If a business card you have collected doesn't belong to a prospective customer or referral source, throw it away. There's no point in keeping the card of someone you don't plan to follow up with.

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C.J. Hayden is the author of *Get Clients Now!*<sup>1</sup> Thousands of business owners and salespeople have used her simple sales and marketing system to double or triple their income. Get a free copy of "Five Secrets to Finding All the Clients You'll Ever Need" at [GetClientsNow.com](http://GetClientsNow.com)<sup>2</sup>.

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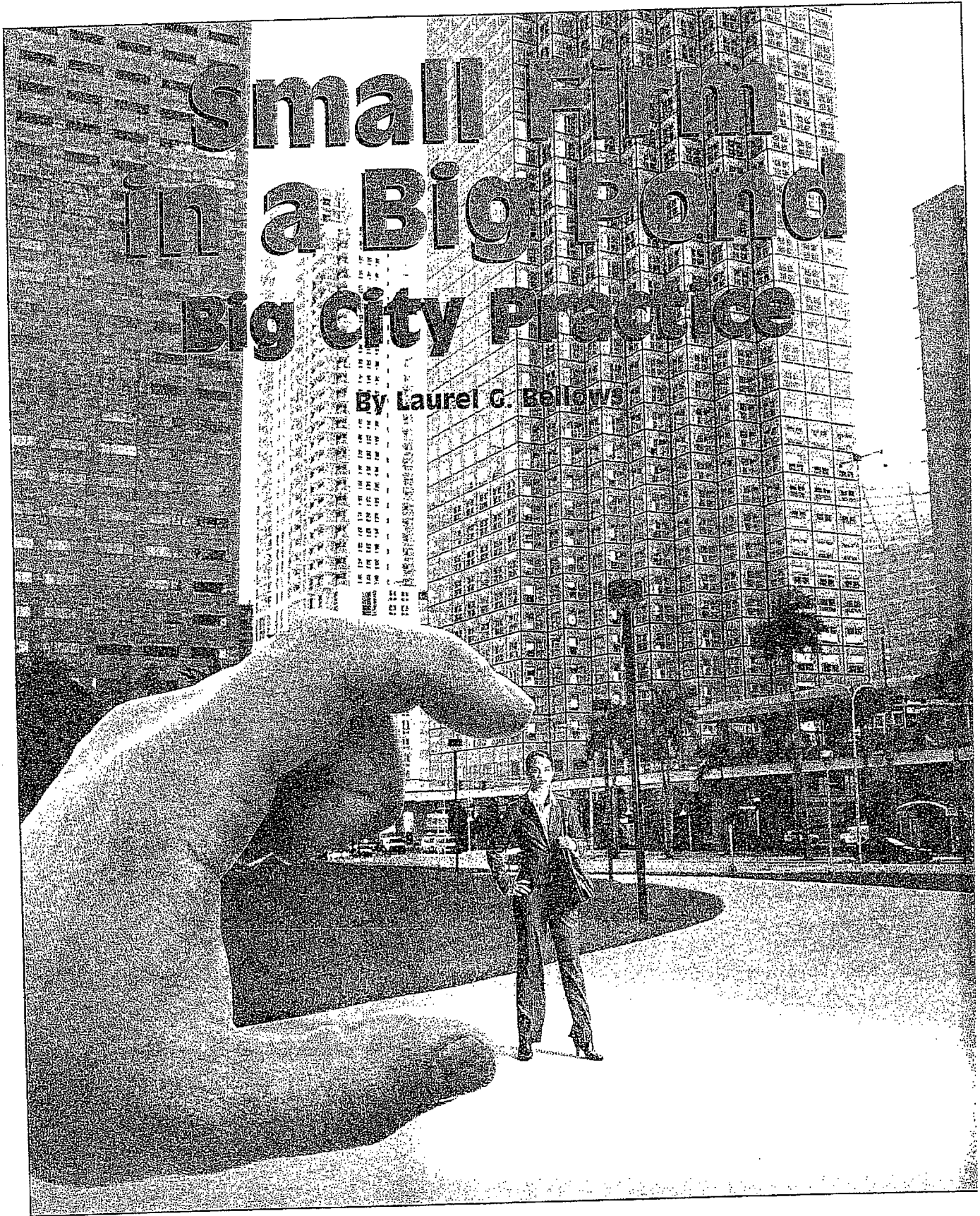
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#### **Links in this article:**

1. <http://www.getclientsnow.com/>
2. <http://www.getclientsnow.com>

# Small Firm in a Big Pond Big City Practice

By Laurel G. Bellows



**S**mall is spectacular, but I'm biased. At five feet tall I have that "good things come in small packages" attitude. Of course, co-partnering a nine-lawyer law firm with my husband, Joel, in downtown Chicago requires attitude. We share the entrepreneurial spirit imbued in solo and small firm practitioners. It's the extra edge of a "can-do" attitude, loving the challenge of proving the competence and credibility of our firm each day—the attitude that ensures success for those solos and small firms that choose to swim in a big city.

There is no cookie-cutter approach to big city practice. The big city offers lots of food, lots of space, and lots of diversity. Survival in the big pond requires small firm lawyers to be creative, adaptable, responsive, strategic, and energetic. Chicago clients have an array of law firm choices: size, cost, expertise, and location to name a few. So how does a small firm position itself to attract and retain clients in the midst of so much competition?

### **Expertise**

You need to showcase your expertise and develop a reputation for excellence. Whether you choose a niche practice or a general practice, small firms need to separate themselves from the competition and distinguish themselves to call attention to their existence. But how do you develop an expertise and how do you flaunt your knowledge?

Although the advent of videos and teleconferences provide easy access to CLE opportunities, these programs should not substitute for local bar associations and in-person seminars to develop both your expertise and rapport with other lawyers in the big city. Teleconferences fill an important gap and certainly transmit knowledge, but the chance to question presenters about specific areas or hypothetical applications that would assist you in matters on

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your desk is important. At in-person seminars you can build a small network of similarly interested and capable attorneys with whom to trade questions and answers in the future. You can connect with the seminar expert speakers to obtain their future assistance or hire them to augment your skills in complicated matters.

If you have a general practice firm, you don't have to turn down business from your corporate client and chance losing the client because you have never done a commercial lease, or lose a business client who is building a house and wants someone to review her architect's or developer's contract. Although you may be familiar with these matters, you might also miss important details that are routine to someone with expertise. Large cities provide a wide selection of experts, one of whom will be conflict-free on the matter at hand and willing to bill you for a few hours of time to provide the special knowledge a particular matter requires. Small firm lawyers can refer this business to a small niche firm that doesn't handle general business work and won't steal your client. You can hire the expertise of a large firm that can't charge fees as low as yours, or you can hire the best tax, construction, or estate planning guru for your client, maintain control, and retain your client while providing the best advice money can buy.

Using your own expertise, you can develop visibility on a national level by joining national associations of your particular specialty and become the go-to firm in that specialty in a particular city, or become part of larger referral networks such as the International Network of Boutique Law Firms, which serves as a referral network among single-focused law firms. If you have a general practice firm, try networking through the ABA General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Division. Join the Division and take part in the many opportunities it offers, such as writing an article in one of its newsletters or magazines to flaunt your knowledge.

Attracting and retaining both professional and support talent are also essential to building credibility and maintaining a reputation for excellence. Although there is increased competition to attract and retain top lawyers, especially in the face of large

**How does a small firm position itself to attract and retain clients in the midst of so much competition?**

**Small firms should not become dependent on a single client. Big cities offer a variety of dependable, consistent business.**

firms willing to pay huge money for first-year talent, many lawyers are leaving large firms in the city and looking for a different way to practice law, with more hands-on experience or a closer family workplace environment. In small firms we have fewer required hours and more client contact. The pressure of 2,200 billable hours per year placed on even the senior partners in large firms doesn't exist in the small firm. Yes, we have difficulty attracting top talent because we don't, can't, and won't pay \$160,000 to a law school graduate. However, small firms can find other ways to incent associates such as paying for bar membership, special CLE, or graduate education to be more competitive with larger firms. Use organized bar CLE, law school and business school conferences, and programs in finance, accounting, organization development, and technical and computer training to assist in attracting and retaining professional and support staff.

Large firms have also woken up to the urgency of attracting minority associates and developing them into partners so the firms can meet the expectations of their large corporate clients. This might pose a significant challenge to small city firms looking for diversity. On the other hand, the big city's larger and more diverse population and larger number of law schools provides a chance to diversify your firm and support staff to meet the expectations of your clients.

Positioning your firm also requires identifying the cases and clients you want to represent. What clients are you seeking? Large corporations, small businesses, individual clients for divorce, real estate, or estate planning? In the midst of so much competition, targeting ideal clients and cases allows you to attract the clients and cases you want.

When positioning yourself, don't forget about location—your office is a reflection of you. Small firms can match their individual personality to their office location in the big city. Downtown, midtown, or suburban; burgeoning neighborhood; local storefront, skyscraper, brownstone, or home office. Choose a short commute from home so you can attend school functions and return to the office midday or join the family for dinner and head back to work.

A small firm can also match office location and expertise with a particular neighborhood. Choose an office in an ethnic community to build a client base where you have roots and language facility, or a real estate practice in a burgeoning community, or a convenient location that attracts immigration or workers' compensation clients who may appreciate evening hours. If you're a litigator, opt for an office close to the courthouse.

We chose downtown, which offers transportation choices to professional and support staff, thereby widening the hiring pool. Lawyers can bill time on a commuter train or telephone time while driving. Being downtown also gives you a chance to remain competitive among all the downtown firms. But neighborhood practices reduce payroll.

Our firm opted for one of Chicago's landmark buildings: the Rookery, a smaller, famous building that features a bronze plaque identifying our office on the outside of the building. Architecturally unique, the Rookery sets us apart from other downtown offices. Our building is a combination of the talents of Frank Lloyd Wright and Daniel Burnham and was highlighted in the recent best seller *The Devil in the White City*. Clients like to come to our office, and they enjoy bringing their team to us as an outing to see the building—a big plus.

### **Marketing**

**Media.** We are used to media coverage of high-profile personal injury cases and lawyers. Non-personal-injury practices should also use media sources to increase their visibility. These sources include city newspapers, business journals, social publications, free corner publications, neighborhood news and bar publications, as well as traditional media. Media can be used to advertise your firm and also to publish articles where you can highlight your expertise. Also, stay updated in Martindale-Hubbell and any statewide or local attorney directories.

**Referrals.** Conflicts from large firms serve as a great referral source because a large city equals large firms equals large clients which equals lots of conflicts. Referrals also come from other lawyers and businesspeople. Attend community and business events and openings. Most large

cities have alumni chapters from colleges across the nation that draw old classmates who in turn serve as a great referral network. Let's not forget that we have an instant pool of clients and referrals through family and friends. These contacts are available through our regular social routines, including get-togethers, potlucks, nights out on the town, sports leagues, and even weddings.

**Community involvement.** Making time to be involved in local bar organizations and community events is key. Become an event co-chair or speak at a CLE. This increases your profile within the legal community and the community at large and builds credibility with lawyers and judges. If you are of a particular ethnic background or speak a second language, you have a unique advantage. Attend events and networking lunches that cater to your ethnic community and develop a name for yourself. The big city offers a plethora of networking groups such as the chamber of commerce. Banks, brokers, and human resource seminars are always occurring in big cities, and attendance is free or requires only a small registration fee. Opportunities for political activity, neighborhood groups on your own street, condo associations, churches, and nonprofit boards are all abundant in the big city and offer great networking avenues.

**Internet.** Information about you or your firm can be found easily on the Internet. This information should be positive and should highlight the image you want to present. For many small firms, implementing, developing, and maintaining a website may seem like high overhead, but remember: Your potential clients' first contact with you may be via your website, even before they meet you. Conveying a competent and professional image is critical to compete with larger firms. Maintain a user-friendly, regularly updated, and professional-looking site. The Internet also provides networking tools where you can market yourself and your firm and remain competitive, such as blogging or LinkedIn.

**Entertaining.** Don't forget about the most satisfying way to go about getting business: entertaining. Informal entertaining is the perfect way to build personal trust. Large firms often have institutional clients with decades of accumulated trust

for a particular lawyer or firm to manage huge amounts of business. Small firms know that attracting clients is about building relationships over the long term.

The big city offers many opportunities for small firm practitioners to entertain clients and build long-term relationships. Ideas include music concerts, theater, ballet, opera and symphony, foreign films, and university lectures. Clients love variety. Creative entertaining affords the chance to impress your client with proof of your ability to bring different perspectives to cases.

Art exhibitions, theater, shoe sales, or even spa days. Join a sports team with a client and bond once a week over an entire season. Even professional sporting events are not just for big firms anymore. Whether you're a baseball, football, basketball, or hockey fan, you can always find a client to attend. Even bowling is back. And what about cooking lessons? Do you have clients who want to learn to salsa or tango and use the large city nightlife to practice in downtown clubs? I haven't even mentioned golf . . . the list is endless. Planning a special event that caters to your client's special interests shows you care, listen, and are willing to expend the extra effort, which translates to the type of lawyer you are or would be. When wooing a client, think about the impression you want to make. The entertainment you plan speaks loudly about who you are and how you practice law.

#### **Support Services for a Small Firm**

Shopping for support services (printers, tech support, web providers, telephone systems, etc.) in a big city exemplifies the pros and cons of big city practice. Choices abound, but selection of the best presents challenges. As with lawyer reputations, a big city can become a small town. When it comes to reputation of service providers, people remember the Great and the Terrible. So ask around and use other small firms for suggestions and references.

Although price is frequently higher for those providers that have the option to work for larger firms, there are many small companies looking to compete for your business. Many graphic designers, web designers, and printers are small firms like us. Many are young start-ups

looking for opportunities to prove their own credibility and build a roster of satisfied clients. Large cities are filled with small businesses that can provide quality, cost-efficient service. Big cities also offer a range of higher educational institutions from which to select experts as well as a number of litigation support service consultants.

#### **Did I Mention Fees?**

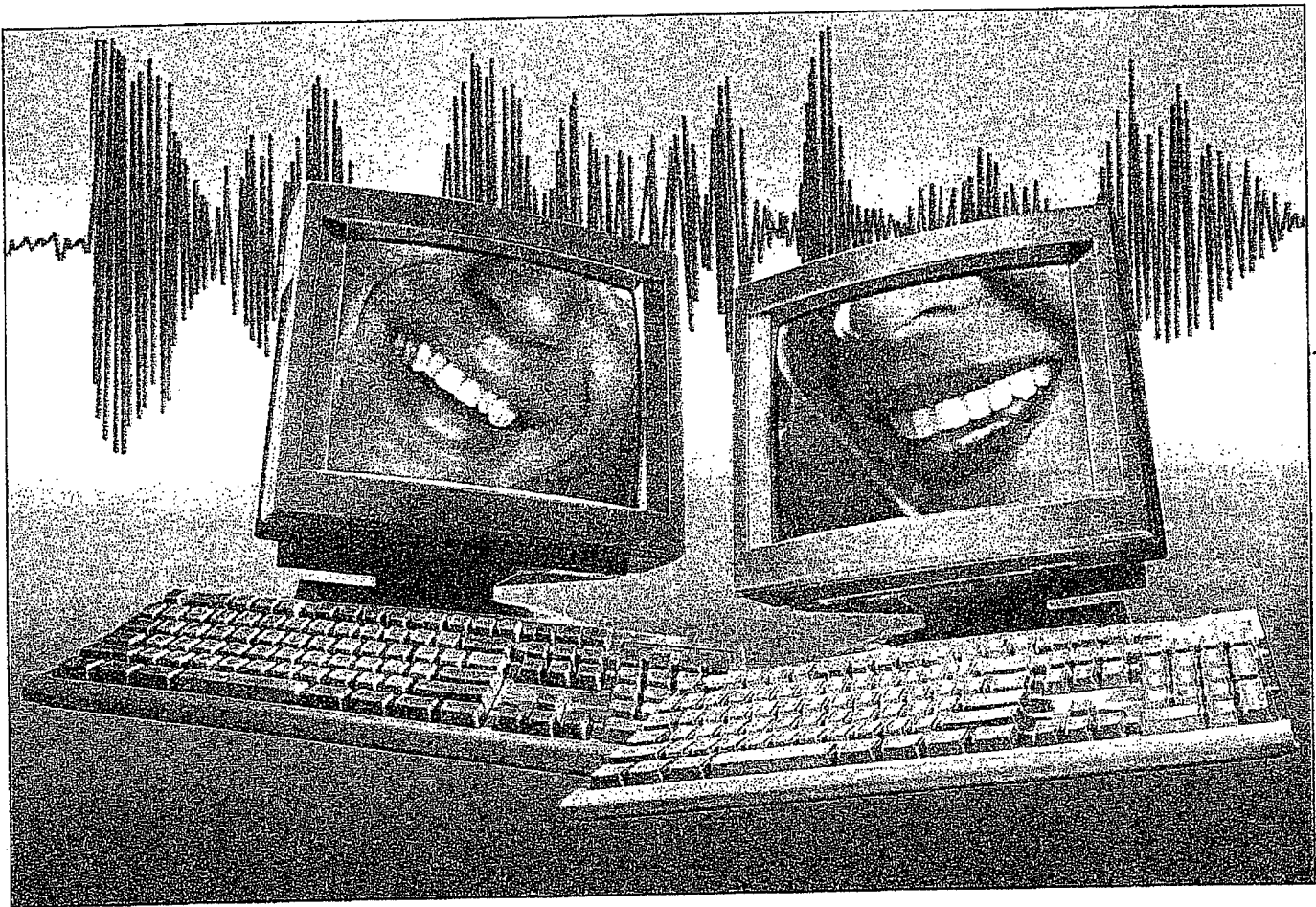
In large cities, large firms equal large fees. Small firms have a great deal of flexibility and can adjust their hourly rates depending on the matter, competing in complex matters where they have expertise because they can handle repetitive but complex work more efficiently.

Small firms don't have to go through the committee process to accept a contingent fee, to obtain approval for a special flat-fee billing arrangement, to cap fees, to reduce the hourly rate for a new client, or to reduce an invoice when the results simply don't warrant the unanticipated total.

Small firms that excel in a city of expensive law firms are attracting the attention of large corporate clients. Even more importantly, small firms are retaining consistent hourly billable work from business clients that value the attention and focus they receive from giving repeat business to a small firm. Remember, small firms do not want to develop dependence on a single client. We want a variety of dependable, consistent business. Big cities offer this variety.

#### **Bottom Line**

There is tremendous opportunity for small firms in the big city. Opportunities clearly outweigh the challenges. The thrill of maintaining control over who you are and how you practice is equaled only by the satisfaction of serving clients who select your firm because they depend on the personal attention and responsiveness of a small firm lawyer. **INSURE**



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# **Social Networking for Lawyers**

## **The Lawyer's Guide to Making Friends**

**By Susi Schuele**

**F**acebook, Twitter, LinkedIn. They are not just for college kids anymore. There are many valid reasons for lawyers to use social networking tools, but the main rationale is to establish relationships. While the business benefits of social networking are becoming more and more obvious, it is really the cocktail party atmosphere in which you are engaging that provides new friends who are more than willing to share information, tools, resources, opinions, knowledge, and support. Social networks are places to demonstrate your expertise, engage with your community, and present yourself as a leader. All of these things combined will give you ROI—not only “Return on Investment,” but also “Return on Influence,” which is even more powerful. Best of all, there is no cost. Most social networks are free to set up and use.

#### Set Up an Interesting Profile

Setting up a profile on a social network is as important as creating a professional-looking business card or website. Be clear in your description of what you do and take advantage of any applications that may be offered to make your profile stand out. An example of such an application is Facebook's Profile HTML tool, which lets you bring graphics or an opt-in box to your profile. Here are some other tips to make your profile stand out:

- Define your specific skills and expertise that set you apart from the rest.
- Add a *professional* photo.
- Provide your “30 second elevator speech” in your introduction. Tailor this to the specific social network.
- Be interesting and memorable. Share your passions, interests, and

unique traits or accomplishments. Be friends. Post pictures.

- Tag your profile with key words relevant to your business.
- Include key links to your blog, website, and possibly other social networks.
- Make sure your profile is readable and easy to follow. Keep paragraphs short and concise.

#### Be Social at the Networking Party

There are many different social networking sites. Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)), Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)), and YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) are the big players, but there are also more specific, “niche” sites geared to lawyers, such as [www.lawyrs.net](http://www.lawyrs.net). You should view this collection of sites as a whole.

Every time you're on one of these sites, act as if you've just stepped into a party. Now, if you're at a real party, do you talk only about what you do for a living? Do you just walk up to people and say, “Hi, my name is Tom and I practice law. Do you need a lawyer for anything?” People would avoid you like the plague. Instead, you talk about their lives and about what's going on in your life; you talk about your kids; you talk about your family, current events, sports. And maybe, someone comes up to you and says, “Hey, I hear you are an attorney. Can you help me with this or that?” And you *help* them, or you tell them stories, or you try to entertain them a little bit.

At a social networking site, you do everything you would do at a party. Basically, you make friends. (For more tips, see the sidebar “Ten Ground Rules for Social Networking” on page 42.)

#### Blogging: Another Way to Network

Another part of social networking or social media marketing is the blog. A blog (a contraction of the term “web log”) is a website usually maintained with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as pictures, graphics, or video.

As an analogy, think of your blog as your house. It's your home and it's where you live. It's where you have most of your

**Social networks are places to demonstrate your expertise, engage with your community, and present yourself as a leader.**

*Susi Schuele (formerly Santa Maria), owner of My Virtual Project ([www.myvirtualproject.com](http://www.myvirtualproject.com)), has been a legal technology consultant for more than ten years. She now provides virtual assistance for small businesses and specializes in social media marketing. She may be reached at [info@myvirtualproject.com](mailto:info@myvirtualproject.com) or 262/510-1236.*

## Ten Ground Rules for Social Networking

1. Social networking requires "active engagement." The rewards are many, but it is not a "set it and forget it" operation. It requires vigilance.
2. Be a community builder. Honestly get to know people and let them see a bit of your personal side. Be relationship-oriented.
3. Experiment with a number of social networks, but only focus your time on three or four. Don't spread yourself too thin.
4. Consistently add value to your groups. Share expertise, add great content, write recommendations.
5. Be selective and strategic about inviting "friends." Facebook has a limit of 5,000 friends, but that doesn't mean you *have* to hit that limit. (And there are always Facebook Pages—a topic for another time.)
6. Avoid any aggressive marketing tactics. Would you do that at a party?
7. Build memorable profiles. When you set up a social networking account, fill it all the way in. Don't skimp on the information.
8. Establish a routine. Set aside 15 to 20 minutes a day to "tweet," blog, or post as a regular part of your schedule.
9. Be professional and personable. A good rule of thumb is to post in thirds: one-third personal, one-third informational, one-third about your business.
10. Do not forget why you are social networking in the first place: relationships.

thoughts, most of the things that interest you, things you want to store and save, memories of fun places you've been. What's the first thing you notice when you walk into someone's house? *Pictures.* They're everywhere. People have their family photos all over the house. They also decorate the house with collections representing their passions. You walk into a house and you immediately know what the owner loves. It's an instant conversation starter.

When you maintain a blog, it lets you pull aside the interesting people at the party and say, "Hey, why don't you drop by my house sometime so we can get to know each other better?" Now, maybe when they come to your "house," they'll find you very interesting as a person, but they won't be interested in what you do. They like you, but they just don't need your services. And that's okay because, eventually, here's what happens: They will meet someone who says to them, "I really need an expert in bankruptcy and I was going to call that guy I saw on TV." So now, that person you met at the party will say, "Hold on. Before you go out looking, I met this really great guy at a party. I went to his house and he told me that he practices bankruptcy law and has for 20 years."

### The Numbers Game

So you see, it works online in relatively the same way as it does face-to-face. But there's one important difference: The people you meet at a real party might know 50 people, 20 people, ten people that they talk to on a regular basis. The people you meet at Twitter, Facebook, or other social networking sites know *hundreds* of people, *thousands* of people, *tens of thousands* of people. Facebook, as of this writing, has more than 175 million active users and gains approximately 450,000 new users per day. Twitter, as of March 2008, had more than 1 million total users, including 200,000 users per week sending 3 million Twitter messages per day. LinkedIn saw record traffic in September 2008, with 11.9 million unique visitors, up more than 10 percent from August, and a gain of 193 percent since 2007. So even if the people you reach directly don't find your

message useful, they can pass it on to an unbelievable number of other users—and some of them will surely be much more receptive.

### Tools to Manage It All

If this seems a bit daunting, fear not. You'll get into the rhythm of the social networking mantra in due time. It's not something that requires all-night research like you might do when preparing for trial. It's a social, "learn-as-you-go" kind of thing. But it does help to have a few tools under your belt. Here are some tools to help you research, track, and analyze:

- FriendFeed ([www.friendfeed.com](http://www.friendfeed.com)) allows you to manage and track all of your social network accounts (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and 40 others) from a single site. This tool is also a great way to track others' social network activity in one location.
- Twhirl ([www.twhirl.com](http://www.twhirl.com)) is a neat little Twitter desktop application that runs in the corner. It will notify you when you have new tweets, allow you to send a DM (direct message) or respond to someone else's tweet (@replies), or re-tweet (RT) a message you found particularly good. There is also TweetDeck ([www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com)) for the more technically adventurous.
- Twellow ([www.twellow.com](http://www.twellow.com)) helps you find Twitter users in your particular area of interest.
- Digsby ([www.digsby.com](http://www.digsby.com)) is another application that keeps your big social networking accounts together on your desktop for an at-a-glance view. You can also have your webmail in this application (Yahoo, Gmail, etc.).

### Conclusion

Make friends. Help them. Be kind, complimentary, considerate, and supportive. Invite them to your house. Give them plenty of free stuff. Pretty much, do all the things you'd do at a party. At your barbecue, you'd give your guests a burger, chips, dip, a beer . . . that's called "content." In your blog or social networks, content could be tips, links, and maybe

## Popular Legal Blogs

The [non] billable hour ([http://thenonbillablehour.typepad.com/nonbillable\\_hour](http://thenonbillablehour.typepad.com/nonbillable_hour)) by Matthew Homann

Legal Tweets ([www.legaltweets.com](http://www.legaltweets.com)) by Nicole Black

Real Lawyers Have Blogs (<http://kevin.lexblog.com>) by Kevin O'Keefe. See in particular his January 25, 2009, entry "Why Do Lawyers Who Don't Use Twitter Feel the Need to Diss Twitter?"

Martindale-Hubbell Blog ([www.martindale.com/blog/default.aspx](http://www.martindale.com/blog/default.aspx))

just a touch of advice or a resource your guests could check out ("I recently found this great tool to do X"). And there should be stuff about you, not necessarily about your business. Just cool stuff. If you find a great inspirational article, quote, or video, put the link out there to help people find it. They'll like you for it.

At the end of the day, after they learn all about what you do, they may say, "Well . . . I don't know, I'm not really in the market for your service." You can say, "No problem. I'll tell you what. I'll put you on my list and send you my newsletter, and you'll get it every so often to keep you up to date on what I'm doing. Maybe one day, there will be something you need or there will be something I can help you with." And perhaps they'll invite you to their "house" or their "party."

Author Jeff Herring has written that "a massive web presence isn't built in a day. [It] is built a little bit every day." Doesn't that hold true for relationships as well? **GPSOLO**

# **About.com** Entrepreneurs

## The Importance of Being Memorable

Five ways to help people remember you (in a good way!)

by Scott Allen for About.com

Have you ever attended a networking event, collected a bunch of business cards, and when you go through them the next day, you can't remember who many of them are? Or try to think of someone you met and had a conversation with, but you can't remember their name or their business to look them up?

Well, you certainly don't want to be one of those that other people can't remember, do you? It's all well and good to pass out business cards, but if people don't remember you well, they probably won't be calling you to follow up, and they certainly won't keep you in mind for their future needs or possible referrals.

Here are five tips on how to make yourself memorable (in a good way) when meeting other people face-to-face:

### 1. Be distinctive.

A brightly-colored, hand-painted tie, an unusual necklace or other jewelry, a good (but not overpowering) cologne, even just impeccable grooming can all help you stand out in a good way. It's not that you want to be remembered and identified for that, but anything that helps people separate you from the crowd helps them remember the rest of you. You don't have to be outlandish -- although some people work that quite well -- just don't blend in completely with the crowd.

### 2. Be fully present.

Be fully engaged and fully aware of the people you interact with. You can break this down into smaller, somewhat mechanical pieces -- listen well, respond promptly, maintain eye contact, etc. -- but if you are truly present in the moment, those things will happen naturally. Many people only seem to be "half there", so being fully engaged helps you stand out.

### 3. Ask thought-provoking questions.

Networking expert Bob Burg has some good suggested questions<sup>1</sup> in his book *Endless Referrals: Network Your Everyday Contacts into Sales*<sup>2</sup>, such as "How did you get started?" or "What do you enjoy most about what you do?" But the very best questions can't be communicated in a book because they're specific to the person you're interacting with and will arise in response to your initial conversation. Do #2 and this will flow naturally. As Dale Carnegie suggested, you must "take a genuine interest in other people".

### 4. Reinforce your keywords.

People aren't going to remember long descriptions of what you do, or likely even that 15-second intro that many experts teach you to make. People will at best remember a few key things about you:

- Your name
- Your company name
- Your business/industry (in three words or less)
- Your product
- Your location

What you want to do is find ways to unobtrusively increase the occurrence of these things in your conversation. For example, is there some kind of story behind your name? Have it ready to use if there's an opportunity. Does your business have an unusual name? What's the story behind it - what does it mean? Refer to your place of business when telling an incident that occurred ("I was driving down 17th Street leaving my store, when...").

Anything you say that reinforces one of the five items above helps make you more memorable. And if they can

remember just three of them -- "Joe the barber from Soho" or "Maria the translator who wrote 'Spanish in Six Weeks'" -- you're doing great.

### **5. Contribute to the group conversation.**

Don't hog it, and don't say just anything in order to say something publicly, but saying one really smart thing at your table or in front of the whole group will make you much more memorable than half an hour of semi-conscious small talk. Create value for others and you create value for yourself.

When we look at brand strategy<sup>3</sup> in marketing, one of the most important concepts is that a brand is not just a memorable name or logo -- it's an experience. A great brand communicates values and emotions that get called to mind whenever someone thinks of the name or logo.

Here we're talking about your personal brand. Remember that *you are your business*. The impression that you make on people is the impression they will have of your business, so make it good and make it memorable.

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**Tips for Saving Money** (When Translated from the Obvious Means: Spending Some Money or Non-billable Time to Learn How to Manage Your Time Better So You Can Be More Productive So You Can Earn More Large Amounts of American Money and Not Become Insane in the Process)

Marji Hanson, Law Office of Marji Hanson

As business owners we need to invest time to improve our business practices, even with limited available time. If you are experiencing a lull in business, take this time to make changes in how you manage your practice to make it more productive.

Here are a few management ideas that, through a small investment of time, can have the biggest impact on clients, office productivity, firm profitability, and your quality of life.

**1. Is Your Overhead Low, Does it Wobble To and Fro:**

This is the kind of advice along the lines of be smart, be efficient, don't procrastinate. Great advice in the abstract, hard to put into practice. You can run your law firm on a shoe string if you keep your overhead low. You need to identify your needs, learn what your practice demands and know your limitations.

Try not to use credit, and as a bankruptcy attorney, I say this from the bottom of my heart. Build a six month cash reserve and protect it with all your best efforts: there will come a day when you will need it.

Don't buy many books or subscriptions. If you feel confident, roll the dice on used or refurbished office equipment: I got a sweet Fujitsu Snap Scan for \$32.69 six years ago and it just won't quit.

Vendors want to sell you a lot of stuff that they promise it will make you money. Well, if you buy it, it will guarantee that someone makes money, but it will be the vendor, not you. Be very careful, these

people do not have your best interests in mind and you will be left holding the bag. Be distrustful, it's your job, make it work for you. You can be friendly, you should be polite but you are running a business.

You are not responsible for causing or alleviating all of the problems of the world. That one piece of advice right there should save you all kinds of emotional capital.

## **2. We Don't Need No Stinking Offices:**

Consider the advantages of a virtual law practice from your own home. It may take you longer in the beginning to conquer the technology necessary to create a successful virtual practice, but the long-term savings could be huge. It's not for everyone, but you don't know until you give it some serious thought.

<http://untetheredlawyer.com/>

<http://stayviolation.typepad.com/chucknewton/> (The Third Wave Law Blog, Chuck Newton)

## **3. I Think I've Got a Form for That, or, Systems, Systems, Systems, You Have to Have a Good Systems:**

Create forms and templates for repetitive applications. Three cheers for not reinventing the wheel each time you need to complete a routinely performed service. Do it right the first time, organize it, make it routine, provide your staff with checklists, procedures, tickle lists and calendars to avoid any unpleasantness with the OPC or if you get hit by a bus and someone has to step in and figure out what you've done.

Get training on the one piece of software you use the most. If that is MS Word (embrace the auto text function), then go online to take a class or hire a trainer to come in for half a day to train everyone in your office.

Take some time to learn more about your legal software or system you rely on most to produce forms (even if you don't use a proprietary

program that generates forms, take a course to learn how to make Word or Excel work better for you).

RoboForm ([www.robiform.com](http://www.robiform.com)) is an add-on to Internet Explorer and Firefox that helps generate and securely remember all of your online passwords and makes online form completion much easier.

The 'Lectric Law Library is a great beginning point for free legal forms: <http://www.lectlaw.com/forma.htm>

Get yourself a Dymo label maker, pay for some postage on-line, <http://www.indicia.com/> and quit going to the Post Office.

Call an expert instead of wasting time and beating yourself up. I recommend Daniel Peterson at PC Housecalls, <http://www.pchcinc.com> for assistance with your computers and networks.

#### **4. Find Your Sweet Spot and Guard It, Zealously:**

Find your most productive time of the day. It will vary for each of us. For me, it is almost always 9:00 am to noon. Guard this time. Unless you are needed in court or for a client meeting you just cannot avoid, use it to do your most important work for the day. If at all possible, do not allow interruptions and that means the phone AND email, although it is hard to ignore the siren call of the Outlook audible notification bing bong.

#### **5. Find the Zen of Inbox Zero:**

If you are drowning in e-mail, check out the Inbox Zero strategies at [43Folders.com](http://43Folders.com), a helpful, and funny, blog focusing on productivity. Just a few minutes of education can help you cut hours off of your e-mail activities.

#### **6. Welcome to the Blawgosphere:**

So many great ideas, it would be a shame to not read them all, every day, and follow all the links, run down every idea until, What? It's 5:30

pm and you have to drive like you are trying to impress a NASCAR sponsor to pick your kids up at daycare?

There are dozens of law practice management sites. An archive search through the ABA Solo Sez discussion group, [www.solosez.net](http://www.solosez.net), will always turn up helpful information.

Here are some that I find useful, but don't get sucked in too far or too long, talk about your time sinks:

<http://jimcalloway.typepad.com/>

<http://www.myshingle.com/>

<http://www.legalandrew.com/>

<http://lawyerist.com/>

<http://futurelawyer.typepad.com/>

<http://www.michaelmorsesblog.com/>

<http://rossipsa.com/>

<http://rossipsa.com/>

<http://www.technolawyer.com/>