

Is outsourcing social media right for you?

As we all know by now, a vast majority of today's professionals are active on a multitude of social media networks – for personal and, with increasing frequency, business purposes. What was once considered a new phenomenon in the legal industry – being present and active on social (digital) media – is fast becoming a “must-do” for attorneys.



Jaffe Guest Blogger

Yes! It's important, if not more important, for law firm attorneys to also “show up” online.

Over the last several years in particular, I have noticed more attorneys getting into and participating on social media networks on a personal level. I am also starting to see attorneys sharing content to increase personal or brand thought leadership in an effort to further their professional visibility within digital media channels.

However, getting an attorney to accept digital media as a true publicity- and business-generation tool has been a slow-growth process. Like it or not, social media for lawyers means building and leveraging online audiences to enhance public reputation, increase market visibility, and develop new and continued business. But knowing, even understanding, what to say and do online is another thing. After all, there's a lot that goes into how attorneys should use and leverage their social and digital media participation.

Delegate Reputation Management

The good news is that marketing and public reputation professionals are increasingly taking over and shaping the voice of law firms *and* attorneys on social media. This can be an especially important thing when attorneys hit a certain threshold of popularity – managing several social media accounts and an overall Web presence can be overwhelming for most. More importantly, publicists can help maintain a feeling of authenticity and keep an attorney's messaging on-point. Sometimes, expecting or even allowing a higher-profile or up-and-coming attorney to handle his or her own online presence and image can be a very tall order, if not a very precarious one. The more prominent an attorney becomes in the marketplace, the greater the effort must be to preserve online reputation and maintain digital brand presence.

Interact with Your Followers

The attorney/client (or potential client) relationship has also shifted away from a one-way delivery channel. Nowadays, attorney tweets, updates and posts are actually getting responses, and much of the social media process involves engagement with one's online audiences. It's important for attorneys to make an effort to maintain the connection with their audiences in order to build trust, and this too can be accomplished through public reputation managers – through either direct production services or personal consulting. Needless to say, it's so important for attorneys to be ready to provide a response that will resonate with online audiences in a positive way to provide an opportunity for increased

public reputation and eventually for new business opportunities. I believe that publicists and public reputation managers can thus help to ensure a successful outcome.

Be Authentic

Attorneys can also use a personal online presence to *change* their public image. Digital/social media can be a powerful platform to effectively shape public opinion of an individual or group of people. It can also lead to the downfall of some (which is why I think some attorneys need personalized support in this area); for others it means extended career and influence. Creating a “touchable” online presence benefits an attorney’s potential clients in that it provides a personal connection as well as the buildup of trust for those who may search for an attorney online versus asking for a referral.

Going beyond basic text updates and bland legal news blog posts and incorporating rich multimedia can also help to enhance one’s online presence. Photo and video sharing through sites like Instagram and Twitter, and even shorter videos on Vine, can provide a personal touch. In doing so, attorneys can develop an online authenticity, which is so important for building trust as well as reputation. Remember! Today’s online audiences can easily determine what is authentic and what is not.

So if you’re an attorney or a legal marketing professional working with a group of attorneys, relying on a personal publicist or public reputation manager to help manage a professional online presence may be more of a necessity than a luxury. Like its mainstream media counterparts (TV, radio, print), digital media is becoming an important part of doing and building business, and must not be approached or treated lightly!

Want to learn more about social media for lawyers? Contact me at lborsh@jaffepr.com. And if you are looking to get started with a social media policy, you can download Jaffe PR’s recently updated template [here](#).



Laurie Pehar Borsh is a 25+ year B2B and B2C public relations and promotions veteran who merged her traditional skill set into producing and managing digital publicity and public relations campaigns and projects for clients in the early part of the new century—the dawn of social media. As a social media publicity producer, Laurie’s mission is to help clients cut through the clutter of the overwhelming “new media beast” with better strategies and best-practice tactical plans to ensure a continual return on investment.