

Does Your Law Firm Social Media Strategy Put Humans First?

After attending a recent [Digital Summit Conference](#), it became abundantly clear that our use of social media has to be more human – and more authentic. That concept was the largest common thread throughout the two-day conference. The majority of people who follow social channels are looking for that personal connection, allowing them to feel they are part of the conversation. “Social” continues to be about [real stories](#) and real people, and is going beyond the brand itself.

To be real, social has to be run by people who will read and react to comments and concerns being posted on your social channels. This also means that your team of digital strategists have to be given a certain level of freedom. Your social strategy has to be more than an afterthought in the marketing plan. It has to tell stories (good or bad), and it has to react and allow for that personal side.

With the growth of mobile skyrocketing over the use of desktop computers, digital has transformed into being more personable and, at the same time, serving as the driving force behind marketing strategies. No longer is digital a seat at the marketing table; it has a table all of its own.

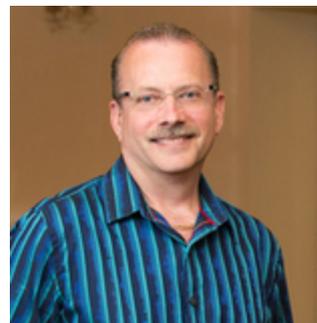
What does “being authentic” look like? How do law firms navigate the digital landscape in a way that connects with the modern digitally sophisticated customer? Here are four simple digital strategy rules that will help you achieve success.

Put Humans First

The goal of any digital strategy is simple: Start creating human-to-human interactions. People listen and follow people more than your corporate brand posts. They trust information posted from other people they are connected to, who often are peers, family members and friends. People who use social media as a sales/communication tool often outperform those who are not using social media platforms.

Fall in Love with Customer Problems

To succeed in social media, you have to be in the business of solving client problems. As a law firm, you don't have to be specific about how you can provide a solution, but there are ways in general that you can help. You may have a niche practice or practice focus area, so keeping your followers informed of any changes to their industries or of any precedent-setting legal rulings shows you are on top of relevant information. How does a corporation like John Deere get beyond green tractors? Everyone knows John Deere sells green tractors, but people don't buy a tractor because it is green. Green tractors are the visual brand for John Deere, but the presentation of stories and illustrations of how their



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products solve problems are what influence buying decisions.

Humanity Isn't a Trend

In marketing, humanity is based on four universal customer needs or human motivators:

1. Listening & Empathy: We need to listen to the good, the bad and the ugly. You need to have a human on the back-end who is listening and can respond. Social is a two-way opportunity to engage and dialogue, but we can often overlook this key aspect.
2. Relationships: We need to relate to our customers/clients one on one. Empower employees to be and talk on social platforms. Teach employees about your brand and goals, giving them the knowledge of what your firm/company stands for. [Use short videos](#) that can show a more personal side and connect people to people, while showcasing your knowledge.
3. Social Belonging/Community: Think about building communities around your key areas of practice by building ambassadors who are knowledgeable about the topic, too. These are people who will help you network and expand the knowledge base.
4. Trust & Security: People trust other people, not the brand or technical expert. They reach out to other people for recommendations. This takes us back to being human: People trust other people in their circles.

Businesses that are succeeding are putting their people, employees, advocates, customer communities and online influencers at the center of their marketing strategies.

Embrace Social Media Evolution

Human nature may stay constant, but the way people interact and communicate changes rapidly. We as marketers have to stay on top of these changes and adapt to them. People are moving away from intent-based marketing and searching on Google, and moving toward more social discovery. (Last year, the number of Internet users who turned to social networks to carry out [research on brands or services increased](#).) It is important as marketers that we research which social platforms are being used in our industry and target those social platforms, knowing that each law firm may require a different strategy.

How has your social media strategy changed over the past year or two? Leave a comment or contact me, [Alan E. Singles](#), at asingles@jaffepr.com.