



FOSTER
WEB MARKETING



SOCIAL MEDIA

FOR ATTORNEYS THAT FINALLY GETS YOU

THE CASES YOU WANT

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INTRODUCTION

This book is all about reaching a wide audience with your marketing message and ultimately getting the types of cases you want. The marketing method that we will be discussing in great detail has to do with social media.

There is something to all the hype about social media. While it might not be a magic tool that you can use to get results overnight, if done correctly you can use social networking to become the go-to attorney in your area. Both Google and Bing have officially disclosed that they factor social media influence into their search rankings. That's one fact that is hard to ignore.

Social media could even boost you to celebrity status among your group of potential clients. It would be a huge mistake to not at least try this fairly new marketing avenue. You really don't have a whole lot to lose except for a little of your time.

The first step in using social media to grow your practice is to understand what the heck it is. By definition, social media is the combination of using technology with social interaction to boost value. Social media has to do with user-generated content and participation with other people within your social network. It is something that is continuous, meaning it is a process, not a task. You don't throw together a profile on one of the social media sites and sit back and wait for people to start contacting you. Social media requires your active participation, but trust us, it is definitely worth it and you will be convinced by the time you are done reading.

Some of the largest players in social media, which we will discuss in great length throughout this book, include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Each site works differently and has its own purpose. We recommend that you get involved in each one and here's why:

- **Facebook** has over 845 million active users. On average, people spend more than 7 hours per month on this website. There are nearly 425 million active users who are using their mobile devices to access Facebook. Over 30 billion content pieces, such as links, news stories, blog entries and so on, are shared each month.
- **Twitter** has well over 465 million registered users. About 1 million new users sign up each day for this website. There are a total of about 140 million tweets sent a day and 400 million unique visits to the site every month.
- **LinkedIn** has more than 100 million members, which include executives from Fortune 500 companies. Every second, a new member signs up with LinkedIn.

- **YouTube** boasts that people are watching more than 3 billion videos a day on its website. Approximately 48 hours of video are uploaded every minute and the site receives about 800 million unique visits every month.

- **Google+** has an impact on search results and has an estimated 100 million users worldwide. It is now mandatory to have a Google+ profile in order to open YouTube and Gmail accounts or use any other Google product.

You can't read these statistics and then choose to ignore the significance of social media. It is the wave of the future and you need to get yourself setup so that you can benefit from it!

We partnered to write this book because we both have unique perspectives when it comes to marketing using social media. Tom Foster, the founder and CEO of Foster Web Marketing, has spent the last decade helping attorneys dominate the Internet. He has unique insight into what it takes to not only compete online, but to become the number one firm in your area when it comes to Internet marketing success. Mike Knetemann, the Marketing Director at Foster Web Marketing, is a social media expert who quickly realized the marketing potential of social networking sites while in college. He has learned through trial and error what works and what doesn't with social media and he shares his approach and philosophy throughout the book.

In each chapter of this book, we will share our advice and experience with social media. The chapter, *What's the Big Deal About Social Media*, will discuss some of the major benefits of social media and how lawyers are using it to attract clients. That chapter will also talk about how to create your own social media strategy. Each subsequent chapter is dedicated to the major social media sites that we believe are worth your time – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

It is up to you to take the information we provide in this book and put it to use. Social media is not one-size-fits-all, so you need to determine what is going to work for your particular practice. The greatest thing that you can take away from this book is that social media is no longer a way for young people to connect with their friends. It is a true marketing avenue that EVERY lawyer needs to take advantage of.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

Many people are still skeptical about social media and think it is all a bunch of hype – that it will eventually simmer down and become less popular. If you ask any marketing expert, this couldn't be farther from the truth. The people who are cynical about social media are the same ones who will get left behind, while all of their competitors are attracting cases, building relationships and meeting new clients. Which side do you want to be on – the believers or the skeptics?

Social media has a ton of benefits that have already been identified by those who are using it to grow their businesses. Some of these advantages include the opportunity to show your personality, build relationships, create a strong online presence, stay in front of people, and position yourself as an expert. Now, these are the benefits that lawyers have been reaping and time will tell what other advantages social media has to offer. You have to remember that it is fairly new marketing opportunity.

Let's look at each of the benefits in more detail:

Creates a strong online presence: We have used social media to dominate the Internet. People don't really talk about the search engine optimization (SEO) aspect of social media, but it is awesome. If someone searches your name on Google and you have been using social media, numerous listings will appear on the first page of the search results. Basically, these listings will take over the search results page, which is definitely a good thing.

When you are approaching social media from the perspective that you also need to improve SEO, then you need to be aware of social bookmarking websites. These sites, which include Delicious.com, Reddit.com, StumbleUpon.com and Digg.com, provide a way for people to store and save links that they find interesting. Why is that important to you? The more links on other websites that are pointing to your site, the better. These are referred to as "backlinks" and will help increase your page rank on search engines. It might sound like a confusing concept, but trust us, links are crucial when it comes to being found online. What is so great about using social bookmarking in conjunction with social media is that it's easy - you only need to set up an account and put minimal time into the effort - but the rewards are pretty great. You can read more about the different social bookmarking sites in *Appendix: Social Bookmarking*.

Builds relationships: Social media is a great way to build relationships with your ideal clients, before they ever step foot into your office or pick up the phone to call you. What is so amazing about social media is that you can connect with people you might never have met in person.

Building relationships using social media sites means that you have to be an active participant. You can't create an online profile and then keep your fingers crossed that someone will reach out to you and that this person will have a million dollar case for you to handle. It doesn't work that way! You have to be an active

participant. That means that you need to continuously post useful and interesting updates, tweets, videos, blogs, etc. However, being an active participant doesn't stop there. You have to engage your group, meaning you need to comment on other people's posts or respond to their comments on your social media pages. In life outside of social media, you can't expect that you will build a relationship with someone if you do all the talking and never listen to a word that the other person is saying. What will happen if you do? That person won't want to be your friend and probably won't think the best of you.

Shows your personality: Lawyers are viewed as boring. That might seem like an unfair stereotype, but it is just the way it is. The perception is that attorneys are stuffy and lack a sense of humor (sorry, if we have offended you, we're simply stating what we have heard). If you don't do anything to change this view, the group of past, current and future clients that you manage to get in front of, won't think any different. Social media gives you the chance to separate yourself from other lawyers. You know that lawyer advertisements all look very similar. Do something to stand out from the crowd and show your personality.

Social media allows you to "be different" by putting a face and personality to your name. It allows you to engage with the community and those from around the world. Think about how consumers choose vendors. The decision is often more emotional than anything else. The question when choosing a service provider becomes, "Do I like this person? Does this person have the knowledge to help me with my problem?"

There is some debate over how much personal information should be shared on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, which we will discuss in greater detail in the chapters to follow. You have to find a balance between how much personal and how much business information to share. Each has its purpose. If you decide – "Hey, I don't want my prospects to know about my personal life," you are not going to maximize the benefits you will get with social media. People want to feel like they know you, personally. Here is the rule of thumb to follow, if you wouldn't share a piece of information in mixed company, don't share it with your social network.

Ability to stay in front of people: How many times have you successfully helped a client resolve his or her case only to find out later that when this person needed additional legal services, he or she went to someone else? If you are like the majority of lawyers out there, this situation probably sounds a little too familiar. So, why does it happen? You might have done a great job and had good communication with your client, but unfortunately, that is often not enough. We all have short memories and it is too easy to forget about someone who has helped us. You need to stay in front of your past, current and future clients. It is crucial that you take steps so that they won't forget you. Of course, you know what we are going to say is the solution, social media!

We've been talking about how social media allows you to show your personality and build relationships, so it is safe to assume that it also keeps you "top of mind." You don't want your clients to even consider the option of going to someone else if they need additional legal help. You are the one who should be on the forefront of their minds when they need your services. Engage with these people using social media and continue to show them that not only are you an expert at what you do, but you are also a real person who has a lot to offer.

Positions you as the go-to person for legal information: This major advantage of social media coincides with the one we just discussed. When you use social media the right way, which you will after reading this book, you put yourself in a position where you are viewed as the "guru" of anything related to your legal services. Since you will be posting relevant and compelling information via your social network, people will be able to see firsthand that you are knowledgeable in your field. The best part about it is that they will come to this conclusion on their own, without you having to tell them how great you are.

You want to create the perception that you are *the* person to go to for legal advice. It doesn't matter what their legal issue is, they should still come to you. If you can't help them with a particular problem, then you start a referral relationship with another attorney. By adding social media buttons to your website, like Twitter's "Tweet" button, Facebook's "Like" button, or Google+'s "+1" button, you can even encourage people to share information you create with their network of friends, family members and acquaintances. Therefore, you will become the go-to person for an even larger group. You can't lose with social media, as long as you are strategic.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS WORKING FOR THIS SEATTLE LAWYER

Chris Davis with the Davis Law Group in Seattle, Washington, has a great story of how social networking can bring in cases. Chris made a connection on Facebook with an old friend from law school who practices a different type of law. In a matter of days after they re-connected, this friend referred a case to Chris that was worth about \$75,000 in legal fees. Not bad!

According to Chris, he has gotten cases through Facebook because of his social media relationships with his clients. For example, he has had clients connect with his firm on Facebook. Once their friends (who may have been injured in the same accident) see the Davis Law Group mentioned in a post or on a news feed, they also call Chris's firm.

We have to take a moment at this point and give a disclaimer. Social media is not some magic thing that will give you a pipeline of cases. You will get cases, people will call you after watching your video on YouTube or reading your tweet via Twitter, but it doesn't happen overnight. Social media compliments your personality and what you are doing already in terms of marketing. With all that being said, you need to approach social media with a strategy. Determine how much time you are willing to invest and whether you will tackle social media yourself, or hire someone to do it for you.

When you get on a site like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, your time can quickly be stolen away. It is easy to waste time, which could be spent on other things. Decide in advance how much time you are willing to spend on social media and stick to it. Mike spends about one hour a day on social media. He has applications on his phone that allow him to access many of the social networking sites, so it is simple for him to post a quick comment or tweet a message, while waiting for an appointment or sitting at home.

One of the big questions that is often asked when using social media as a marketing tool is if it is a good idea to hire someone to manage it. There are advantages and disadvantages of hiring someone and you are the only one who can answer this question. All we can do is provide you with the information to make your decision. Let's start with the advantages, which are pretty obvious. When someone handles your social media campaign for you, it frees up your time to do other things. You know that your campaign is in full swing and you don't have to worry about trying to fit in time to post updates, videos and so on. While these are good advantages, there are some major drawbacks to not doing it yourself. When someone else takes care of your social media efforts, everything that is posted is going to be more businesslike. There won't be as much personality. Imagine going to a cocktail party where all everyone did was talk about their businesses and what they are doing. You would want to get out of there as soon as possible. Social media is basically one big cocktail party.

There is a happy medium between hiring someone to do your posts. You can have this person focus on the business postings, while you concentrate on the postings that will show your personality.



Facebook, in our opinion, is all about personality. It gives you the chance to interact in a more natural way, just like you would in the real world. With Facebook, you are able to show pictures and communicate in longer sentences than other sites, like Twitter. Think of it as a personality-driven website, but also think of it as a way to attract clients.

History of Facebook

Have you ever wondered how this site got started? Hundreds of millions of people have signed up for this site, so at one point you had to have wondered who got the revolutionary idea of networking online. Facebook was actually the idea of some college kids. Okay, they were Harvard students, if that makes any difference. They created the site in 2004 as a way for their fellow students to stay in contact with one another, share pictures and meet new people. It didn't take long for word to spread about the website and it grew in popularity, fast. One month after the website was launched, it was grown to include students at Stanford, Columbia and Yale. Eventually the social networking site expanded to include other groups and the rest is history. You can learn a whole lot more about Facebook by watching the movie, *The Social Network*.

How Facebook Works

Facebook is set up in such a way that it is easy to share information. When you sign up, you are assigned a profile page, which is basically the Web page that other people will see if they look you up on the site. Once you have your page, you can request to be friends with other Facebook users, which means you will be able to communicate via the website and share information. Facebook is not limited to individual people. The website also allows organizations, such as businesses, schools, charities and so on, to set up pages.

From a business perspective, Facebook is amazing. You get a unique opportunity to get in front of literally hundreds (maybe more) of people who care about what you have to say. It gives you the chance to let people get to know you – people whom you probably would have never been able to meet otherwise. You can establish yourself as the expert on everything relating to your practice areas. Plus, when you are an active participant on Facebook, you will constantly be in front of your prospects. When it comes time for one of your Facebook friends to hire a lawyer or recommend one to a friend or relative, who will be the first one on his or her mind? YOU!

Getting Started on Facebook

Now that you are so pumped about Facebook and what it has to offer, let's discuss a step-by-step approach to getting started. Keep in mind that Facebook constantly evolves, so be sure to visit our website, <http://www.socialmediaandattorneys.com>, for the latest updates.

Step One: Get an Account

The first thing you need to do is create an account. Setting up an account doesn't take long. All you have to do is answer a few questions about yourself, including where you went to school, where you work, what city you live in and what interests you have. If you are also setting up a business page, which we recommend, you will need to provide details about your firm. When you have a business page created, people can "like" it, meaning you don't have to manage friend requests.

You might want to create a separate email account that will be used to receive Facebook emails. It doesn't take long for your inbox to become filled with auto-generated messages from this website.

We often hear the question – how many business pages should I create? The answer is however many pages you can handle and actively provide new information. Ten to 14 pages might be a little overkill. Two to three pages for your different practice areas will be much more manageable. For instance, if you represent bankruptcy, eviction and personal injury cases you might consider creating a Facebook page for each of these practice areas. You can then develop three different blogs that have feeds tied to the appropriate Facebook page. There is no crossover.

Step Two: Choose the Right Username

When you sign up for a personal account on Facebook, your username is going to be your name - you don't have a lot of options. However, when it comes time to choose your business username, don't use the name of your law firm. Instead create a username that contains the keywords for which you want to be found. For example, if you represent injury victims throughout Virginia, you should make *virginiajuryaccidentlawyer* the Facebook username for your business page.

You can also choose a Facebook username for your business page by visiting this page: <http://www.facebook.com/username/>.

Step Three: Decide on a Profile Picture

You need to put a face to the name. Choose a profile picture that shows off your good looks. Don't use your company logo as a profile picture for your personal page, as you will quickly turn a lot of people off. However, you can use your logo for your business page icon. Consider creating a custom logo that includes your phone number and website address.

Step Four: Design Your Business Page

Facebook recently introduced major changes to personal profiles and business pages called the Facebook Timeline. Rather than the static left sidebar and open wall for posting, Facebook now presents a mosaic of photos, videos, maps, text and vital information that can be sorted by month or year. The new layout places a huge emphasis on visually stimulating media like photos and video and also provides individuals and businesses the ability to post "Milestones" like birthdays, marriages or the date your firm was founded.

Also intriguing is the ability to add a “cover photo”. This allows you to give your page some personality. The large photo below is Foster Web Marketing’s cover photo, while the smaller photo is our profile photo, which is seen in the news feed.

Keep in mind that most Facebook users will see your posts in their news feed which has not changed. Typically, users will come to your page when they become a fan, and only periodically afterward. Your profile or timeline is your home base on Facebook but most of the action and engagement will happen right in the news feed.

We would recommend that you get the assistance of a graphic designer in creating your logo and a professional photographer to take the picture for your cover photo. You want it to look professional and not something that is thrown together in a graphics program.

Take advantage of the photo albums on your business page. Snap pictures of your staff or office. Get a great shot of you and your staff doing something memorable. If you have a client coming into the office to collect a check, take a picture. Take photos of you shaking hands or touching the shoulder of one of your clients...you get the idea. Photos show the human side of your office and they communicate the relationships you have with your clients.

If your office is involved in charity work or some other worthy cause, share that information on your business page. You don’t want to be viewed as only a lawyer. You want people to know that you give back.

Here is a picture of the business page for Foster Web Marketing:



Step Five: Find Friends

There are various ways that you can find “friends” on Facebook. You can search networks and look through the list of members to find someone you would want to befriend on Facebook. It is easy to sort Facebook users by their age, gender, political views and other criteria.

Facebook can also pull contacts from your email account. All you have to do is provide Facebook with your email address and password. Your list of email contacts will be automatically compared to the list of members that are in Facebook’s

database. When there is a match, you are given the option to add that person as a friend.

You can also find friends by looking at other people’s lists. If you send a friend request, which is how it is done on Facebook, and the person accepts, you can view his or her list of friends to see if there is anyone you know.

If you are using Facebook to increase your business (which we are sure you are, since you picked up this book), you are probably wondering who should be your friends on Facebook. Do you mix your personal contacts with your business ones? You should be friends with everyone you can be if you are trying to get business. What you want to do is project a friendly, open image and the best way of doing that is to be friendly and open. You should, however, consider segmenting your friend list and changing privacy options so that your “competitors” friends do not see your posts.

After finding your friends, you can recommend your business pages to them. People will start contacting you for referrals. You will get messages asking you if you know a lawyer who represents a certain type of case. If you can’t help them, you can still be the funnel point or the person who is viewed as the center of influence – the person to go to for information.

Step Six: Start Participating

Once you have set up your pages and have found friends, you need to start using Facebook. That means you need to post updates, videos, links and other interesting information. You should also comment on other people’s postings. Think of Facebook as a relationship, the information sharing can’t be one-sided. If it is, your relationship is doomed to failure. It can’t be all about you, no matter how interesting you think you are.

You should mix it up when it comes to the type of content you post on your Facebook personal profile. You might post an update about something that happened in the office or in your personal life.

For example, if you just signed a new case, write a post such as “a wonderful client who was involved in a very bad slip and fall accident in Fairfax just signed with us.” This type of post accomplishes two things – it shows what you do and it has keywords. A post like this one will also help you stay “top of mind” with people. You will be the first person they think of when they need a lawyer or know someone who does. One time, a client posted a comment that mentioned a case where the other driver didn’t have enough insurance coverage. His client could only get \$50,000 (sound familiar?). He put on Facebook that “you need to make sure you have uninsured or underinsured motorist coverage.” It was amazing the amount of responses he received from people wanting advice, from that one post.

You might be wondering what information is appropriate to share on Facebook. We discussed this briefly in the previous chapter, but we will mention it again. Only post information that you would feel comfortable sharing with both personal and business contacts. If you are not sure, don’t share it. Also, if you have written articles about fatal car accident injuries, don’t link it to your personal page. These

types of posts should be limited to your business pages.

People will latch on to things that will surprise you. Some things will stick and some won't. Tom will post video clips that generate a lot of feedback on Facebook. People will ask questions, which means the public will have similar questions. What a great way to determine how to reach the right people at the right time!

As of the writing of this book, Facebook is the most popular social networking site around. Don't sit on the sidelines while your competitors use Facebook to steal YOUR clients. Get involved!



In 140 characters or less, answer the question "what's happening?" If you are able to do so, you are half way there with Twitter.

Twitter is the fastest growing social media website today. It initially began as an experiment in 2006, but the popularity has since skyrocketed. To give you an idea, one billion tweets (messages sent via Twitter) are sent every day. The website currently receives about 180 million unique visits every month. Twitter has become so significant in our society, that the Library of Congress plans to archive the website's collected works. One associate librarian referred to Twitter tweets as the "second-by-second history of ordinary people." Seems hard to believe that tweets will be added to our national archives!

When it comes to Twitter, it seems like there are two groups of people – the ones who use Twitter and love it and the ones who just don't get it. In theory, Twitter sounds straightforward enough. According to the website, it is "a real-time information network powered by people all around the world that lets you share and discover what's happening now." CNET Networks describes Twitter as "an online service that enables you to broadcast short messages to your friends or 'followers.'"

If you don't approach Twitter with a strategy and an overall understanding of how it works, you are going to become overwhelmed, fast. You won't know who to follow and how to get followers. If you take the tactic of some Twitter users and follow just about everyone you can find, you are going to be inundated with tweets.

Twitter can be a great marketing tool. It can help you build rapport with prospects and eventually attract cases, the ones you want. You can find people, in real-time, who could be in need of legal services. Twitter can also help you locate news that is happening right now. In fact, you can sometimes get updated on news faster using Twitter than the media.

Understanding Twitter

As we mentioned, Twitter is all about answering the question, "what's happening?" As a Twitter user, you can use up to 140 characters to answer the question, which is the length of an average sentence, including punctuation and spaces. Your tweets should be public (there is a privacy setting, but it is worthless for businesses), which means that your message may appear if someone searches for that particular topic online. Twitter has its own real-time search and now other search engines, including Google and Bing, have the capability and permission to index tweets.

If you are a lawyer, Twitter offers you an interesting opportunity. You are able to communicate and connect with your potential clients. According to Twitter, participating with other Twitter users "shrinks the emotional distance between your company and your customers." You can also search your name or that of your firm's to see what people are saying about you. Twitter gives you the chance to share helpful information and stay updated on events that could impact your practice.

Using Twitter

Twitter is confusing, we are not going to try to convince you otherwise. However, if you follow our recommended steps, it will make Twitter less complex. As we mentioned previously, social media is always changing. Therefore, you should regularly check our site, <http://www.socialmediaandattorneys.com>, to get updates regarding Twitter.

Step One: Sign up for an account.

You should fill out the account information as much as you can with your target keywords and descriptions. You should even consider including a link to your website. Provide information on why people should follow you and listen to what you have to say. This description can only be 160 characters. You should include that you are a San Diego personal injury lawyer in your description. It is important that you incorporate personal details too, so people can relate to you as a person, not just an attorney. For example, include the city in which you were born and raised or identify your favorite sports team. Show them that you are human!

When you are picking out your username, choose something that you want to use as your social media brand. That could be your law firm's name, but a better approach would be to create a username that contains your geo-location and what you do, such as San Diego injury lawyer or Dallas divorce attorney.

Step Two: Pick Out a Profile Picture

Here is a mistake that many people make when they are using Twitter to drum up business – they use their logo as their profile picture. That is a bad idea. Using your logo as your profile picture is going to make you appear as a "spammer" and you know how that irritates people. A much, much better profile picture would be one of you or your staff. A human face will make people believe that there is a real person behind the name. They will lower their guard and listen to you a lot more. Consider taking off your tie!

Step Three: Find People to Follow and Attract Your Own Followers

Now comes the fun and challenging part, you have to find people you want to follow. Twitter explains on its website that in order to receive messages, you have to follow other people and companies that you have an interest in. Their tweets will appear on your Twitter page. Same happens when someone follows you.

There is a certain pattern that serious Twitter users stick to - when you follow them, they will generally follow you. They want to give back. Our experience has shown that there is about a 75 to 85 percent follow back rate. With all that being said, don't follow just anybody. Only choose people whom you want to hear what they have to say. It is tempting to get on Twitter and start following as many people as you can. The problem is that will defeat the purpose of using Twitter. Remember, you are using Twitter to build relationships with your potential clients.

When it comes to finding people to follow, there are a few techniques you can use. You can search for people who have your city listed in their biography and have a lot of followers. Those would be good ones to follow. You can look for people in your market area and follow them. There are also directories, such as legalbirds.com, that you can use to find other lawyers who are relevant in your industry and market and share your same interests. You should also make sure that you are listed in these directories.

A client of ours took the approach of searching for people in his market area who had a lot of followers and looking for other lawyers using legalbirds.com to follow. Since he got his start in 2008, he now has 4,600 followers, which is better than the average Twitter user. The average lawyer has about 500. The top lawyers have 20,000 to 30,000 followers. We are not telling you all of this to brag. We are trying to show you that it is possible to attract followers and get in front of the right people.

Step Four: Start Tweeting

Now that you have your profile, your username and a decent following, what are you supposed to tweet? The answer is that it depends on what is going on. You should auto-syndicate your blog feed, if you have one, to Twitter. Each time you post a blog, it will then appear as a tweet, without you having to do a thing. If there are things you are interested in, such as legal news or a good story, tweet about it. Just like we explained with Facebook, you should tweet personal and business messages. Personal tweets humanize you. People don't know you from Adam, so you need to give them a rounded picture of who you are.

Re-tweeting is also big on Twitter. It refers to re-posting someone else's message and throwing in your take on things. Of course, you always need to give credit to the person whose message you are re-tweeting. That is commonsense and goodwill. You will find that people will also re-tweet your stuff too. In the beginning, you will do a lot of re-tweeting. Probably about 80 percent of your posts will be re-tweeted information and 20 percent will be your own personal messages. As you find more followers and your comfort level increases, only about a third of your posts should be re-tweets and the rest should be your original thoughts.

What you don't want to do on Twitter is over promote yourself. It will become pretty transparent that you are all about finding business. Even though that is your goal, you don't have to make it obvious.

Sign Up for a Program to Help You

Twitter's site is not easy to use. It makes you want to close your browser and never log onto the website again. The good news is that there are many tools that can help you manage Twitter, including Tweetdeck.com, Hootsuite.com and Twuffer.com.

Tweetdeck allows you to organize Twitter using columns, saved searches and groups. You can stay up-to-date with the people you are following and search out the topics you want to learn more about. TweetDeck describes itself as "air traffic control for Twitter." You can use it to schedule your tweets and categorize and group people together. TweetDeck even gives you the capability to send the same information to multiple social media platforms, including Foursquare, Google Buzz and Facebook. In short, it saves you time.

Hootsuite is a Web-based program and is very similar to TweetDeck. You can even download the program on your smart phone, such as a Droid, Blackberry or iPhone. Hootsuite allows you to manage multiple social media platforms and even track your results. The website has a dashboard, which makes using Twitter a whole lot easier. You can use Hootsuite's auto RSS feeds to tweet and even auto re-tweet his multiple accounts.

Twuffer doesn't offer as many features as the other two programs, TweetDeck and Hootsuite, as its main purpose is to allow you to schedule tweets. You can pre-write your tweets, post them on Twuffer and choose future posting dates. The website is fairly simple to use.

A lot of our clients are huge fans of TweetDeck and Hootsuite. After using these programs, Twitter starts to make more sense for them. You can organize Twitter using both applications. For example, you can have a column in TweetDeck that identifies when someone tweets "Fairfax accident" so that when someone tweets "I was in a car accident in Fairfax" you will be notified. You can then send a message something to the effect, "hey, I'm sorry to hear about your accident. Is there anything we can do?" One out of 10 will respond and say, "Yes, I want to talk to you." The majority will say, "Thanks, I think I will be okay. I appreciate you looking out for me." You aren't actively soliciting, but instead offering free advice.

When it comes to Twitter, we want to provide some closing thoughts. Do anything, everything – just be different. Everyone in social media is trying to do different things. There is no right and wrong. Even the experts are attempting to figure the whole thing out. If you have an idea for Twitter, try it. It could work. Don't be afraid to test things out.



LinkedIn is a lot different than Facebook and Twitter, as its main purpose is to connect with other professionals, not necessarily clients. This site is good if you are looking for a job or want to meet other people in your line of work. With LinkedIn, you are able to keep a list of contact information of people you have met in the business world. You don't use LinkedIn to share personal updates or post vacation pictures. The goal is to network professionally.

In a way, LinkedIn is like a virtual resume or CV. You throw your information into your profile that relates to your line of work and education. Once you have a profile created, you can connect with other people. Your list is referred to as your "connections."

LinkedIn has been around since 2002 and now has over 150 million registered users in more than 200 countries. Supposedly, someone signs up for a LinkedIn account almost every second. Those are some pretty impressive figures. That is why you have to get involved in LinkedIn and integrate it into your Internet marketing plan.

Getting Started on LinkedIn

You have to invest some time in LinkedIn, but don't invest a lot. Below are the steps to utilizing this site:

Step One: Create a Profile

Your profile is going to read like a resume. It will focus on your work history and your education. You are not going to be listing your favorite quotes of all time or the type of music you like. There are fields you complete that ask about your employment and degrees. You do have the option of writing a short summary about your professional experience.

Step Two: Find People

After you have created your profile, it's time to find people to invite into your network. One of the options LinkedIn gives you is allowing you to look up contacts using their email addresses. You can even give the website permission to search through your address list in your email application to find people who have LinkedIn accounts. Some other ways to add connections include searching for colleagues, classmates or doing a direct name search. When someone accepts an invitation to join your network, this person is considered a "direct connection." You are able to communicate directly with one of these people. There are additional classifications of connections, which are described below:

- Second-degree connection: This person is one who is linked to one of your direct connections.
- Third-degree connection: Stay with us on this one – people who are con-

nected to your second-degree connections are considered three degrees away from you.

Anyone who is connected up to three degrees from you is considered to be part of your network on LinkedIn. However, you can only email your direct connections. You have to upgrade your LinkedIn account, which costs money, of course, if you want to reach out to your second and third degree connections.

Step Three: Participate in Groups

There are groups you can join on LinkedIn. For example, there is an injury lawyer legal marketing group. Search out groups that have to do with your practice areas and join as a member. It is like having an online forum with other professionals. By participating in groups, you are making yourself visible to other professionals, so you can get referrals.

Here is one benefit you can take from being involved in a LinkedIn group – you can get ideas for your website content. LinkedIn groups are kind of like Avvo in that you can read a post from another lawyer. You can take that snippet and create a frequently asked question or article about it. It is a great way to brainstorm ideas.



The way we look at it, you have two options. You can choose to stay behind the times and miss out on countless leads or you can grasp the opportunity provided by Web video and YouTube. Which one do you choose?

That question obviously doesn't leave you a real option besides choosing Web video. What you need to understand about online video is that it is not just something we think is great; it is a tremendous force that has taken over marketing. People are turning to videos on the Internet to find the information they are looking for. Many of these individuals don't want to take the time to read text. They want information fast and they want it now. A video on a website provides them with quick answers.

YouTube is by far, the most popular video website around. It gives users the capability to upload and share videos. Do you know that, YouTube averages about 4 billion views a day. Do you need a moment to let that figure sink in? Think about it. 4 billion views a day! There is no room for argument that YouTube is an extremely powerful website – one that has the potential to reach your target market.

People love video and you need to make sure to take advantage of that fact. Not only should you have video on your own website, you should also upload your video clips to YouTube. That will help you reach an even broader audience.

Benefits of Web Video

When we talk about YouTube, we also need to address the major benefits of Web video. It is easy to look at the impressive numbers regarding YouTube, but it is sometimes harder to see the relevance to your marketing campaign. From our experience, here are some tremendous benefits of online video:

Benefit #1: People will feel like they know you. Video gives your potential clients the chance to get a feel for your mannerisms and personality. Web video conveys emotion that website text cannot. People will hear and see you, which will help them decide if they want to call you. Not everyone is ready to pick up the phone and call an attorney, after an accident, when faced with divorce, etc., as you already know. By watching your video, they can determine if they like you, before they call you or set foot in your office.

Benefit #2: You will be able to build trust. This benefit goes along with the first one. When someone starts to feel like they know you, they will also begin to trust you. In their eyes, you are someone who will help them with their problems and listen to their story. Trust is a huge first step in building that client relationship.

Benefit #3: Video establishes you as an expert. You spent a lot of money on your education and you have invested quite a bit in your career. You know the law. You know how to successfully resolve cases. You know what you should do when facing a legal situation. Let your prospects see your knowledge. Video will be your platform to showcasing your amazing expertise and understanding of the law.

Benefit #4: You can provide answers to common questions. It doesn't matter what areas of law you practice, if you are like the 99% of lawyers out there, you get the same questions over and over again from your clients. These are the questions that are raised when they call your office or sit down for a face-to-face meeting. Here is the great thing about video – you can create video clips that answer these questions. Not only will these videos help you weed out the cases you don't want, you will also save time. By the time your prospects call your office, they will have already heard the answers they were looking for. You can get straight to the details of their cases.

Benefit #5: Video is great for search engine placement. Your video has a better chance of ranking high in search engine results than website text. Don't believe us? Here is a quote from a principal analyst with Forrester Research, Nate Elliot, "on the keywords for which Google offers video results, any given video in the index stands about a 50 times better chance of appearing on the first page of results than any given text page in the index." (*The Easiest Way to a First-Page Ranking on Google*, posted on Forrester.com) Those are pretty good odds, if you ask us. You can optimize your video titles, summaries and tags to include the keywords in which you want to be found. According to researchers, only a small percentage of marketers are optimizing videos. That is good news for you, as there is less competition!

Benefit #6: You will be able to convey a greater sense of emotion. Articles, blog posts and other written text have a purpose, but they cannot convey the same level of emotion as video. When people get to see and hear you describe a case or explain a legal problem, they will feel what you are feeling. If you want to attract more contacts through your Web marketing campaign, you must appeal to your prospects' emotions.

Benefit #7: Web video allows you to reach a large audience. We have already shown you the numbers – people are using YouTube to find information. Web video gives you the opportunity to reach a potentially massive audience at a relatively low cost. A television commercial or other advertising spot won't achieve nearly the same amount of coverage as an online video.

Benefit #8: Video saves time. This benefit goes along with #4 in our list. You can use your video to answer commonly asked questions or to give the presentation you would normally make to a new client. By the time someone walks into your office, you can skip a lot of the introductory information and get straight to the details of his or her case.

Check out our book, *The Small Business Guide to YouTube*, for additional benefits and other information.

You get the idea at this point – you need to utilize video, if you want to maximize your marketing efforts.

YouTube Channels

Once you have your videos created, you can upload them to your YouTube channel. Basically, the channel is the home page to your YouTube account, where people can view your information and the videos you have uploaded to the site. It increases your exposure on YouTube.

Setting up a channel is pretty simple. You are automatically assigned a channel when you sign up for a YouTube account.

When you sign into YouTube, you should see your username at the top of the screen. Clicking on your username should take you to your YouTube channel. Once you are on the channel, write down the URL, so you can share it with other people. That will be the URL to your YouTube channel.

You can customize the background and color scheme for your channel. You can also decide what will appear on the page. For example, you can choose the following modules for your channel:

- Comments
- Friends
- Subscribers
- Subscriptions
- Recent Activity

There is an option to incorporate other users' videos into your YouTube channel. If you are a car accident attorney, you may consider adding adding videos of car crash tests and child seat recalls to your channel. These videos are from NHTSA, so you aren't isn't promoting a competitor. However, you should subscribe to your colleagues' YouTube channels to keep an eye on the competition.

Below are pictures of our YouTube channels:



If you are a Foster Web Marketing client, you can create a dedicated video page using the DSS system. DSS also allows you to broadcast your videos to YouTube.

Video is a great way to communicate your message and information that is important to your market. If you are not already using Web video, you need to start... TODAY!



As of March 2012, Google+ had an estimated 100 million users worldwide, quite an impressive number for a product that was only released in June. It has become evident that Google is going to do everything they can to be a major social media player, even going as far as to force anyone who wishes to use Gmail or create a YouTube account to also sign up for Google+. While this has caused several cries of protest, it cannot be denied that Google+ does have inherent value as a marketing tool.

Google+'s main goal is to simulate how people interact with people on a day-to-day basis. They recognize that people don't necessarily want to share certain aspects of their lives with everyone in their social network and that generally individuals have several "circles" that they move in and out of on a daily basis. Google+ has built their entire social network on this idea and allows you to group people into different "circles" such as coworkers, college friends, family and clients. You can then send highly targeted messages to different circles, making this a highly effective marketing tool.

Setting up a Google+ profile is relatively simple and comparable to how you set up a Facebook and Twitter profile. The same basic elements are there: you need to put up a professional looking profile picture, put as much or as little personal information as you deem necessary and offers the ability to upload pictures and videos to you profile page. Just like Facebook, Google+ offers the option to create a business page, what they call a "Google+ Page," and this is where Google+ gets really interesting in terms of SEO.

While Facebook and Twitter have little to no SEO value on Google, the search engine giant has recently incorporated "Search Plus Your World" which has given preference to Google+ accounts that contain keywords relating to an individual's search. This means that Google+ pages that have the right keywords will appear in search queries and that your "About" tab for your business needs to be loaded with keywords, especially the "Information" section as this is the main part of the profile that the "spiders" "crawl" for relevant information relating to a query. However, this does NOT mean you should just mindlessly put all of your keywords down and be happy. Just like with your content, your Google+ page needs to seem natural.

As well as having major SEO pull, Google+ also has some great features with huge marketing implications most notably the “Hangouts” aspect of the site. This unique feature allows you to use a web cam to video chat with 9 people at once. This feature can be used, for instance, if you are an estate attorney who needs to meet with several family members who can’t all be in the same place at the same time. To give you an idea of how well Google+ hangouts work, President Obama used the platform to hold an online “town hall” meeting in January 2012.

While Google+ is still in its infant stages, all signs point to it being here to stay, especially if Google continues to favor it so heavily in “Search Plus Your World.” Now is a great time to start using Google+ as the chances of you hitting marketing gold are greater than other social media sites because it is so new.

CONCLUSION

Social media is a compliment to your own personality and marketing. It is how you will build and cultivate relationships with your past, current and future clients.

You have to realize that it is different than other forms of marketing. Your return on investment (ROI) won’t be apparent immediately. In fact, you may never be able to quantify it. Trying to determine your social media ROI is almost like asking what the ROI is of having a telephone. You know you need it to run your business. Think of social media the same way.

As far as social media is concerned, don’t be afraid to experiment and test things out. Be different. Everyone in social media is trying different things. There is no right or wrong. If you have an idea, try it. It might work. You have nothing to lose by testing things out.

Throughout this book, we have provided you with a good case as to why you need to start using social media to take your practice to the next level. You now have all the steps you need to get involved with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Google+. What we are trying to tell you is that you no longer have an excuse for not using social media! It is not hard and the time commitment is really up to you. Jump on social media sites whenever you have downtime. Be wired in wherever you go and constantly look for interesting things to share with your social network.

Your competitors are using social media. If you want to sit back and watch them steal your clients, then go right ahead. If you want to jump in and grab a share of your target market, then get going on social media now!

Remember to visit our website, <http://www.socialmediaandattorneys.com>, for the latest news and updates regarding social media.

APPENDIX I: SOCIAL BOOKMARKING

Excerpted from FosterWebMarketing.com article, “Why You Need to Start Social Bookmarking NOW (and Continue in the Future).”

There is a little known secret that many of the savvy attorney Internet marketers share and you can be one of them.

Social media and blogging are important to creating a strong online presence, but if you are willing to take it one step further you will dominate the Internet. When people search your name, or a topic you have written about, you can give yourself a better chance of showing up on the first page of Google.

What’s this big secret that will capitulate your ranking on search engines? It is social bookmarking.

Social Bookmarking isn’t Complex

Social bookmarking might sound like a time consuming and complicated process, but it is actually the opposite. It is the practice of saving bookmarks to specific Web pages. There are websites that store your bookmarks for you and allow you to create tags (or labels).

Here is another explanation from Wikipedia.org: “In a social bookmarking system, users save links to Web pages that they want to remember and/or share. These bookmarks are usually public, and can be saved privately, shared only with specified people or groups, shared only inside certain networks, or another combination of public and private domains. The allowed people can usually view these bookmarks chronologically, by category or tags, or via a search engine.”

Why Social Bookmarking is Worth Your Time

Social bookmarking websites, such as Delicious, Reddit, Digg and StumbleUpon, give you the opportunity to bookmark your favorite websites. Social bookmarking has been known to quickly push a blog post to the top of search engines. Also, social bookmarking creates a lot of “link juice,” and can help create more backlinks to your website.

How to Approach Social Bookmarking

The first thing you need to do to get started is to create a free account with various social bookmarking sites. However, don’t get carried away. Simply choose a handful of social bookmarking sites that you will be able to focus on. When creating your username, consider incorporating some keywords.

You should bookmark often, but bookmark other Web pages besides your own. You don’t want to be viewed as a “spammer.” You should always be on the look out for content to share.

APPENDIX II: MORE SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES & TOOLS

We have spent a great deal of time talking about the major social media websites – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. While these sites are all big players in your social media campaign, there are many other social media websites and tools in which you should invest your time.



Avvo is a website where anyone can find, rate and review lawyers. If you haven't signed up Avvo yet, don't worry because you still have an account. Avvo has signed up every lawyer in the United States. You can claim your already existing profile to add information including photos, videos, client testimonials and frequently asked questions. You can also engage with prospective clients by answering legal questions. People can already find you there...make sure they like what they see!



Quora is Yahoo! Answers for small business owners and especially lawyers. Anyone can post questions, answer them, follow topics and "thank" people for providing answers. Legal questions that confound the average Joe are often a breeze for a lawyer. So why not help out someone who needs it and get your name, links to your site and brand out there?



JD Supra helps you turn all those boxes of briefs, court filings, articles and newsletters into effective marketing tools. Create a portfolio of your work and let JD Supra syndicate your work to other social media sites, blogs and even the media. JD Supra will optimize all of your content for search engines and allow you to track the results. It is a powerful tool for lawyers to connect with prospective clients and other lawyers.



Most lawyers have at least a few PowerPoint presentations on their hard drive. You can use these to market yourself on the Web with SlideShare. Upload presentations, PDF's and even webinars to SlideShare so the world can see how well you know the law. Twitter and Facebook are already integrated, so you can share with the click of a button.

Find more social media tools, which will make your life just a little easier, by visiting <http://www.socialtoolsforlawyers.com>.

GLOSSARY

Application Programming Interface (API) – An interface that makes it possible for one software application to interact with another application.

Bit.ly – A free service that allows you to shorten a URL.

Blog – Short for Web log. A blog is a website that makes it easy to add fresh content on a regular basis.

Comments – Opinions or replies to a blog entry, social media message or other posted content.

Hashtag – A hash symbol “#” is generally used in front of the word to categorize the tweet or post.

Keyword – A word or words that strongly relate to a page/site topic or search engine query.

Landing page – A page that is optimized and very targeted towards a particular subject. An effective/valid optimization and sales conversion strategy when implemented correctly.

Link building – The process of attracting inbound links. Link building is used to boost search engine ranking.

Link popularity – A gauge of a site's popularity based on the number of inbound links. Link popularity is a factor in search engine ranking and has greater strength (in theory) where inbound links are from other quality sites.

Message board – A place where people can discuss a topic or voice their opinions on a subject. Message boards are able to facilitate online conversations.

Microblogging – This refers to broadcasting short messages or updates on a blog or social media website.

Natural search results – Search engine results, which are not sponsored or paid for in any way.

Organic link – Organic links are those that are published only because the webmaster considers them to add value for users.

Pagerank – A value between 0 and 1 assigned by the Google algorithm, which quantifies link popularity and trust among other (proprietary) factors.

Podcast – An audio or visual recording that is broadcast on the Internet and generally available for download.

RSS – Short for “Really Simple Syndication,” RSS is considered the standard for delivering Web content.

Search engine – A program, which searches a document or group of documents

GLOSSARY

for relevant matches of a user's keyword phrase and returns a list of the most relevant matches. Internet search engines, such as Google, Bing and Yahoo, search the entire Internet for relevant matches.

Search engine optimization (SEO) – The process of increasing the number of visitors to a website by achieving high rank in the results of a search engine. The higher a website ranks in the results of a search, the greater the chance that users will visit the site. It is common practice for Internet users to not click past the first few pages of search results, therefore high ranking in search engine results pages is essential for obtaining traffic for a site. SEO helps to ensure that a site is accessible to a search engine and improves the chances that the site will be indexed and favorably ranked by the search engine.

Social bookmark – A form of social media where users' bookmarks are aggregated for public access.

Social media – Various online technologies used by people to share information and perspectives. Blogs, video sharing, forums, social bookmarking, user reviews and rating sites (digg, reddit) are all examples of social media.

Social media marketing (SMM) – Website or brand promotion through social media.

Social network – Facebook and LinkedIn are prime examples of social networks. A social network is an online community generally comprised of friends, co-workers, family members and anyone else to whom you are connected.

Tags – A keyword added to a video, photo or blog entry that is relevant to the topic of the content.

Tweet – A message that is posted via Twitter.com is referred to as a "tweet."

Web 2.0 – Internet applications that facilitate information sharing and collaboration.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Tom Foster

Tom Foster is the founder and owner of Foster Web Marketing. He entered the world of technology initially to focus on sales and marketing in 1991 after serving a six-year tour in the Marines. The USMC is where he learned his initial technology skills while being stationed in Top Secret Military Communications Centers around the world. After his dedicated service to his country, Tom's goal was to break into an industry with big growth potential. Retail software was the biggest thing going and large-scale distribution was on the horizon. Tom jumped on

the opportunity and was distributing software solutions to retail chains, such as Best Buy and CompUSA, where he was able to polish his business and sales skills with executives in the corporate world.

After many successful years in the software technology business, Tom wisely recognized the future of the Internet and decided to go out and start his own Web design company. Foster Web Marketing was launched and quickly gained national recognition. The company's websites gained rave reviews from respected legal marketing consultants like Ben Glass, who was so impressed with the company's early work that he personally endorsed Tom and his company's effective Web services to other attorneys and professionals.

Since launching in 1998, Foster Web Marketing has evolved from a "one guy in his basement" website design and SEO company to a full-scale Web marketing boutique. With over 200 clients and counting, the company currently has a dedicated team of designers, project managers, content writers, sales and customer service associates, and Web marketing professionals who work closely with clients on a monthly basis to increase their online exposure and generate leads and cases online. They opened a video studio in Fairfax, Virginia in early-2009, which is fully equipped with a green screen and the latest editing and recording equipment to produce Web-friendly video solutions.

Tom is also the creator of DSS (Dynamic Self-Service), a powerful and highly effective online application that allows his Web clients to update every aspect of their website.

Tom and Foster Web Marketing have quickly established themselves as the leader in professional Web marketing services, and remain dedicated to the customer service and superior design qualities that helped set them apart from competitors since the beginning.

For more about Tom go to http://www.fosterwebmarketing.com/bio/tom_foster.cfm



Mike Knetemann

Mike Knetemann is a social media marketing specialist at Foster Web Marketing. A native of Mount Vernon, Virginia and graduate of Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH, Mike worked for Saint Anselm's Office of College Communications and Marketing, and as an intern for Montagne Communications in Manchester. During his time with Montagne Communications he grew to love public relations, marketing and business development, and helped run public relations and social media campaigns for the state of New Hampshire's Department of Travel

and Tourism Development, New Hampshire Grand and Taste of the Nation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to end childhood hunger in America.

For more about Mike check out <http://www.fosterwebmarketing.com/bio/mike-knetemann.cfm>

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A WAY TO GET IN FRONT OF A GREATER NUMBER OF POTENTIAL CLIENTS AND IT DOESN'T COST A THING?

Sound too good to be true? If so, you need to read *Social Media for Attorneys That Finally Gets You the Cases You Want*

Social media is no longer just for the younger generations. It has revolutionized the way that we interact with our peers, family members, friends and best of all...prospects. And social media is here to stay.

Social Media for Attorneys That Finally Gets You the Cases You Want takes the mystery out of social media and walks you through how to:

- Develop a social media strategy that actually works
- Create dynamic accounts with the major social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Google+
- Determine how much time to allocate to social media
- *Use social media to get more cases!*

Social Media for Attorneys That Finally Gets You the Cases You Want will act as your guide as you develop a powerful social media marketing campaign.



www.FosterWebMarketing.com

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Tom Foster is the founder of Foster Web Marketing, an attorney website design company on the cutting edge of Internet marketing.

Mike Knetemann is Foster Web Marketing's Social Media Marketing Specialist who has spearheaded the social media education and development of effective social media strategies for Foster Web Marketing clients.