



Social Media Changes Its Rules – Again!

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Using social media used to be simple. Write a blog for your website, add it to your HootSuite calendar with a few words of explanation, include a link to the website and it was done. On the appointed day, your content appeared everywhere.

NOT ANYMORE.

All the major platforms have tweaked their algorithms, changing what kind of content gets promoted to connections, followers, and friends. This means you must change the way you use social media to build recognition, increase credibility, and reinforce your personal and firm brand.

To meet these changes, we have altered our strategy for social media marketing for both our clients and for our company. To make an impact on social media today, you must:

1. Consistently produce unique, high-quality content.
2. Engage with your connections and followers by liking, commenting and sharing their posts.
3. Establish your firm as a thought leader; it is more important than sharing random links of interest.
4. Increase your personal engagement with others who like, share or comment on your content.
5. Consider adding video to the mix. You can use video on your website and upload it directly to LinkedIn and Facebook.
6. Post something to your social media sites three times a week.
7. Use graphics, illustrations or photos to gain “traction” and pull readers into your content.

Here’s how to leverage social media to your advantage and work with the new rules rather than against them to enhance your voice and brand.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn made major changes to determine which items in the feed get promoted and “pushed” into other people’s feeds. It’s all based on engagement.

For starters, its algorithm assigns points to what you post and how much engagement it generates.

Posts put in the newsfeed with video and roughly a 200-word description get the most points. But the video must first be downloaded from YouTube or Vimeo to your hard drive, then “natively” uploaded to LinkedIn. Plus, LinkedIn adds points for each comment, like and share you receive. And by the way, your reply to a comment counts, too; the algorithm also gives points to comments, not who posted them or even how long the comments are.

To maximize engagement, your content must be timely and relevant, and highly readable: LinkedIn is using AI to anticipate if your post will

generate engagement based largely on how readable it is. End each post with a question to encourage engagement and conversation.

But what the algorithm gives, it also takes away.

You’ll have points deducted if you include a link back to your website because LinkedIn doesn’t want users leaving its platform. The workaround is to add the link as a comment after you publish a 200-word summary of your blog post. Please note that material on your company page will not get any promotion unless someone goes to your website and clicks on the LinkedIn icon to see your recent posts. So, as a best practice, only add posts to your personal profile.

Anything originating at an aggregator like HootSuite will be ignored, as well.

FACEBOOK: MARK CHANGES IT UP

Like LinkedIn, Facebook limits distribution of posts that take users away from its platform.

Links going to your website may not even be seen by your friends and followers. Now, Facebook wants businesses to pay to boost their posts and to buy ads. Consequently, posts from company pages receive lower priority and less reach than posts on personal pages. And posts that don’t get much reaction will see the biggest drop in distribution.

Therefore, posts that get engagement — from likes, comments, and re-posts — are pushed at the top of your contact’s newsfeed. This means that your content will be seen by more of your contacts.

Additionally, it is no longer possible to post to a personal Facebook page via any social media management tool (SMMT) such as Hootsuite or Buffer.

But for many firms, there is far more engagement on a lawyer’s personal page than a company page anyway. It is even more important now to engage your friends into following your company page. Posts on your company page can only be seen by those who have followed your firm, and all these best practices will help your posts reach the maximum number of people.

Another tip: If you ask your

friends and followers to go to your company page and click the drop-down menu next to “like” or “Following,” they will see an option to “see this first” in their newsfeed.

A SHORT TWEET ON TWEETING

Few lawyers we work with are heavy Twitter users, and you don’t need to be to grow your practice. Remember that original content and videos will be published to Twitter similarly to LinkedIn. The biggest difference is that Twitter can use a SMMT to streamline the process.

Responding to Negative Reviews

If a client leaves a negative review about you on Google, Facebook, Avvo or any other review site, don’t engage if it means divulging information specific to the client. Take the high road, responding with, “I’m sorry you feel this way. I would be happy to address your concerns by scheduling a telephone call with you. Your satisfaction is extremely important to me and I am committed to resolving any outstanding issues.”

That said, positive reviews can be powerful to help increase your search engine rankings. When you close a case or matter, if the client had a good experience with you and your firm, send your client a link to one or two sites asking for a review. Most clients are happy to do this for you.

Social media is here to stay. We’re at the mercy of the big players. They can change their algorithms on a whim to better meet their needs, leaving users to figure out the ever-shifting landscape of social media effectiveness. I want these tips to help you maximize your presence on social media to better meet your needs as a lawyer.



TERRIE S. WHEELER, MBC, HAS WORKED WITH LAWYERS AND LAW FIRMS FOR OVER 25 YEARS, AND SINCE SOCIAL MEDIA’S INCEPTION HAS HELPED THEM NAVIGATE THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF TWEETING, POSTING AND BLOGGING. TERRIE EARNED A MASTER’S DEGREE IN BUSINESS AND SERVED FOR SIX YEARS ON THE MN LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY BOARD. TERRIE ALSO JUST LAUNCHED A UNIQUE AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAM FOR LAWYERS: WWW.CLE-CONNECT - ETHICAL MARKETING CLES ON-DEMAND. YOU CAN CONTACT TERRIE AT TERRIE@PSM-MARKETING.COM OR BY VISITING WWW.PSM-MARKETING.COM.