

Zen & The Art of Legal Networking

INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS NETWORK

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Tips for Tuesday - LinkedIn

This afternoon, I had the pleasure of sitting in on the Legal Marketing Association's Social Media Special Interest Group's (a long name, so we shorten it to LMA Social Media SIG) first webinar. Our presenters today were my friends [Gail Lamarche](#), the Director of Marketing for Henderson Franklin and [Laura Gutierrez](#), Marketing Multimedia Communications Coordinator with Winthrop & Weinstine.

Their focus? One of my favorite social media topics - LinkedIn!

I won't recap the entire webinar, since participation in the SIG, and as a result, access to the webinars, is a benefit of membership in the Legal Marketing Association. But I did learn some great tips from Laura and Gail, which I wanted to share with you.

- **Use LinkedIn for research:** During my LinkedIn series, I talked a bit about this in terms of following your clients' companies to stay up to date on what they're doing. But Laura suggested that you use LinkedIn any time you're meeting with someone new - look up their profile and see what extra information you can garner. Maybe they're runners and you have that in common, or maybe they're a photographer too - find those common bonds that show that you're really invested in that person and use them to connect when you meet face to face.



- **Put your summary and job experiences in the first person:** I assumed this went without saying, but as soon as they pointed it out, I realized what a big pet peeve of mine this is. LinkedIn (and other social network tools) are, by definition, *social*. People want to talk to YOU, not to a third person - LinkedIn isn't your website biography, so be bold and write as yourself!
- **Lead by example:** This one was particularly directed at law firm marketers, because as Laura pointed out, you can't counsel and advise your attorneys on how to use social media if you don't have an active presence yourself. It not only helps you learn the tools better, it shows you to be an expert to your attorneys.
- **Open is better:** It is true that privacy is a valid concern for social media. However, just because you're on a social media site, doesn't mean that you have to share everything. And some sites are designed to be more private than others - for example, Facebook is often a far more personal site, so if you want to make that super private, that's fine. But LinkedIn is considered to be the most professional social network, and this is where your clients and prospects are going to look when they're doing their due diligence on you. If all they can see of your LinkedIn profile is your name, they're likely not going to go to the effort of connecting to you. So if you're going to spend all that time inputting your information into your LinkedIn profile, make sure it's accessible so the right people can see it!
- **LinkedIn creates a dialogue:** The more you post to LinkedIn and your other social networks, the more opportunity you have to create a dialogue with your connections. Gail related the story of one of her attorneys who came to her to find out more about the Twitter hashtags and names that were included in her LinkedIn updates - it gave her an opportunity to educate that attorney and connect to him (in person). I've found the same to be true with our attorneys - because of my social media activities, I've connected to ILN attorneys who aren't attendees of our conferences or regularly involved with the group - they share articles that I can use to highlight their practices (and learn more about them in the meantime!), and it makes them feel more comfortable coming to me with questions about referring work and how to best leverage their membership. Everyone wins!
- **LinkedIn & RSS:** The LinkedIn updates that appear on your home page can be extracted as an RSS feed - this means that you can include these updates in the reader that you're using for the blogs you read. That way, you don't have to remember to regularly visit the LinkedIn site, and you're staying up to date on what your contacts are doing, so that you can visit LinkedIn and comment only on those things that are relevant to you as they come up.
- **Would you say that to your grandmother?:** One of the best tips was to only post things that would be suitable for your grandmother to read (across the board; yes, even on Facebook). While my grandmother may not be on

Facebook, I'm friends with my college roommate's grandparents there, so that's always a good check for me - and it's good advice for you too. Laura cautioned that LinkedIn especially is closely tied to your employer - you're listed as an employee of the company and your profile includes information about your position there. So if you have even a *little* inkling of hesitation about posting something (whether in your profile, in a status update, in an answer to a question, etc), don't post it. Similarly, be VERY careful when using humor or talking about politics or religion - without the benefit of tone of voice and facial expressions, things can very easily be misconstrued online.

Laura and Gail offered some excellent advice to the attendees - I invite all LMA members with an interest in social media to check out the group and join in the conversations on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages!

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