

## [What if Your Firm Doesn't Blog or Use Social Media?](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on December 3, 2013

It was 2010. I was on a cross-country tour of a large firm giving presentations and answering questions on blogging and social media. At the time, the conventional wisdom in this large firm was the firm should not be blogging or using social media tools. I was sent across country to try and change the conventional wisdom.

If you are a regular reader, you might recall this story. I was sitting in a conference room with eight of the firm litigation practice group partners. I was there to answer their questions. The first question came from the youngest lawyer (about 40) in the room.

Cordell, suppose our practice group decides not to blog and not to use social media, do you think we will be behind our competitors in five years?

My response came to me right away.

Suppose in the mid-90s your practice group told firm leaders that you did not want to be a part of the firm webpage, and you did not want to use email, do you think you would have fallen behind your competitors in five years?



I think I made the point. But, the firm now has 10 blogs and litigation is not one of them.

You and I both know that law firms, and lawyers, have never been early adopters. To get the idea, read a LexisNexis [White Paper: PERSPECTIVES ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN LAW FIRMS](#). This White Paper covers knowledge management, but I believe some of the points are broader. It begins with:

Since the beginning of the office technology boom in the 1980's lawyers have been accused of being Luddites, fearful and reluctant to adopt modern technology. Lawyers are often compared unfavorably in this arena to accountants and even doctors. A more objective view of lawyers demonstrates that they will adopt effective technology with enthusiasm when the tools are appropriate for the professional tasks that they face.

I had to look up the definition of Luddites. Here is what I found:

1. Any of a group of British workers who between 1811 and 1816 rioted and destroyed laborsaving textile machinery in the belief that such machinery would diminish employment.
2. One who opposes technical or technological change.

In my career I can think of many lawyers and law firms who fall within the second definition. I will just mention one. Do you and your firm still have documents on WordPerfect? At my old firm, it took years before we abandoned WordPerfect for Word.

What about lawyers? I know lawyers who:

1. Have never created a business plan
2. Have never set goals
3. Never personally sent an email

4. Still do not have computers in their office
5. Have never, or rarely visited their clients
6. Think that blogging is unprofessional

I could go on, but hopefully you can think of other examples.

Last Monday, my friend and marketing guru, [Eric Fletcher](#) posted a guest post I wrote: [For Greater Success, Try Something New and Different — A Guest Post by Cordell Parvin](#). I wrote about ordering something new (Cassoulet Toulousain) that I would have never tried from a restaurant menu. I even gave a link to a recipe: [Cassoulet in 10 Easy Steps](#).



But, my guest post was not about ordering something new at a restaurant.

My experience doing it last week in Montreal simply served to remind me that real breakthroughs in my career occurred when I tried something new and different as an early adopter.

Take a look at Eric's blog. I find it valuable because he stays on top of what is new and different in client development.

Finally, I will leave you with this [Seth Godin](#) quote. Think about what kind of lawyer you want to be and become.

You need to know conventional wisdom inside and out. NOT TO OBEY THE RULES,  
BUT TO BREAK THEM.

# Cordell Parvin Blog

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LAW FIRM RAINMAKERS

**Cordell M. Parvin** built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of ***Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout*** and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, [www.cordellparvin.com](http://www.cordellparvin.com) or contact him at [cparvin@cordellparvin.com](mailto:cparvin@cordellparvin.com).