

## Overwhelmed by the Internet? You're not alone.

Many people must find the Internet both exhausting and exciting at the same time. I know I do. There's all this talk about blogging, tweeting, pinging, embedding & linking. It's become very overwhelming. And this stuff isn't just for fun, now it's about marketing. And lawyers are supposed to be doing all this too? What ever happened to phone book ads? They're really expensive, but isn't that how people really find a lawyer? Well, maybe not. And it's all changing so fast, it's unbelievable. The Internet gurus tell us that social networking sites are just as effective as the phone book ad used to be. But are they right? I guess only time will tell. So what does it take to effectively design your own phone book ad on the Internet? Must you go to dozens of social networking sites, upload photos and profile information on each one; build up a following by posting useful information; then manage all those sites daily (if you don't forget about some of them)? Why do you have to manage them daily? Well because there's so much information out there that your posts are really old news in a matter of minutes (or seconds in the case of Twitter feeds). Social networking requires that you post tidbits almost daily to ensure that you stay relevant to your 'followers.' This can prove to be hard work and very time consuming. So what should a lawyer do if he or she doesn't have the time for social networking, but knows they need to build a Google presence somehow?

You could set set up your own blog page somewhere (e.g., WordPress) and gain a following of people, eventually; but do you have the time to gain that following? And are you inspired to write blogs about whatever pops into your head? If the answer is no to either of these questions, then maybe you should consider posing on other people's sites that have a significant following already. But what kinds of sites are the most effective? Well that depends on which audience you want to speak to. Is it other legal professionals or potential clients; or both that you want to reach? Networking with other lawyers has unquestionable benefits. Lawyers refer work to one another all the time; so it's good to get your name out there. There are many sites that offer opportunities for this (blogging and commenting on slaw.ca or posting documents on JDSupra, for instance). But maybe you want to network with potential clients directly, as well as other lawyers. One site that offers this option is the Canadian site, AdviceScene.com. On that site, lawyers and other legal professionals (most notably a Canadian judge, Justice Harvey Brownstone) answer legal questions from the public; and post blog topics. The forum allows for 'podcasting' as well as text-only legal answers. It's an interesting way to help 'democratize the law' (to use AdviceScene lingo) while you market yourself without actively soliciting work. Members and guests of the forum may contact you directly, but more importantly, posts in the forum are indexed by Google. Even a seasoned Yellow Page lawyer gets web traffic from this site. By answering questions from the public you'll look like you really know what you're doing when it comes to online legal marketing, although you're simply answering legal questions, something you likely do each day anyway.

So, if you have the time, write informative legal articles, post comments on legal sites, and set up your own blog page too. Get tweeting, pinging, facebooking, linking, & embedding! They're all great ways to market yourself for free online. But if you only have time for one kind of online marketing option, and you want it be free, consider AdviceScene.com.

To get started, add yourself to the free directory and you'll automatically be registered in the forum:  
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