

What is the Difference Between Writing a Blog and Writing an Article?

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on August 22, 2011

I see to many blogs by lawyers that read more like an article. I even saw a post last week that included detailed footnotes.

LAW The Contractor's Side

Traveling the measured mile

Contractors need to take the right steps to collect for lost productivity.

When contractors seek additional compensation for changes, differing site conditions or delays they must convince the DOT or court of the amount they are entitled to be paid. In my experience on highway construction projects, whenever those events occur there is a substantial loss of productivity on the project. Yet, contractors are frequently unable to prove the appropriate amount.

I always suggest that contractors determine their lost productivity by a "measured mile," comparing the cost of "impacted" work with the cost incurred to perform the same or similar "unimpacted" work. Courts far prefer the measured mile approach to total cost, modified total cost or published industry impact estimates because it is the difference between two actual productivities achieved by the contractor on the same project. In the total cost or modified total cost analysis, there may be bid estimate errors, contractor-caused inefficiencies or a variety of other things that are not the DOT's responsibility. Published industry production rates are often challenged because each project is different. Because the measured-mile calculation is based on comparing the impacted productivity and unimpacted productivity on the same project, it is a more credible approach.

The rules of the measured mile

Applying the measured-mile method is straightforward if the contractor has kept productivity records by location, type of work and crews. First, identify and define impacted work. For example, years ago I handled a concrete paving inefficiency claim on I-80. Aggregate designated by the DOT to be suitable for use in the concrete were not available because of clay lumps.

Next, identify the impacted and unimpacted time periods and project locations for the analysis. Selecting the unimpacted (measured-mile) period and location for the project is critical. Most common tasks on projects are completed in different phases, at different times of the year and in different locations. On my I-80 project it was easy, the eastbound lanes were paved inefficiently because of the difficulty producing concrete for paving. After a different aggregate source was designated, the contractor paved the westbound lanes at

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Client Development: The Two Major Questions

Posted by [Cordell Parvin](#) on August 15, 2011

Answering these two major questions will help you determine if you are visible and credible and if you are doing what you can to make yourself more visible and credible.

1. If a client, potential client, or referral source does a search for your area of law and your geographic area will they find you on the first page of Google?
2. How many places are you putting content you create?

Let me give you a personal example of my answer to the second question. After Enron and Worldcom, the Department of Justice began a more rigorous investigation into the construction industry. I began writing articles about the importance of compliance and ethics.

[Hear Me Now](#) was one of the many articles I wrote on ethics for contractors. The articles led to speaking opportunities around the country, including my [Corporate Ethics What Every Contractor Should Know - Presentation](#) at a statewide Florida Construction Conference. Speaking live at construction industry conferences led to an [Associated General Contractors Webinar: Stay in Business! Protect/Defend Against False Claims, Antitrust and Other Serious Allegations](#).

These three links are only a handful of those that existed at the time I did the articles and presentations. But, I hope they will give you an idea of how you can repurpose your content so it can be found in many places.

Articles written by lawyers tend to be:

1. At least 675 words (one two column page) and likely longer
2. Factual
3. Formal
4. Include discussion of a case, legislation or a rule
5. Only words with headings to break up the text
6. Headline more like a brief
7. One way communication
8. Facts and law
9. Rarely include bullet points and lists

I like law blogs, and I believe your potential readers will like law blogs, that are:

1. Concise

2. Conversational
3. Show a little of the blogger's personality
4. Tell a story
5. Include a visual or video clip
6. Start with an interesting headline
7. Written to elicit a response and comments
8. Include opinions (not necessarily legal opinions)
9. Include bullet point and numbered lists

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 or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.