

The Group Blog v. The Personal Blog

By [Adrian Dayton](#)



The firm that blogs together, stays together.

Are you a superstar or a team player? When it comes to law blogs, the question is: do you have your own blog, or are you part of a team that writes a group blog? With [over 45% of the Am Law 200](#) now using blogs, amid mounting evidence that blogs bring both publicity and business, many firms are trying to figure out the best way to build a successful blog.

For those of you who have been living underground for the last year, here is how the two different types of blogs work.

The Personal Law Blog

Lawyer X starts blogging. He is an expert in [Computer Fraud Law](#), and as he blogs and shares his knowledge, he gains credibility and brings publicity to the firm, in the form of website traffic and media mentions. He starts to be seen as a subject matter expert, which helps him build relationships and expand his book of business. The firm makes more money and everybody is happy.

This is one strategy. The second strategy is to have multiple authors in a group law blog.

The Group Law Blog

Lawyers A, B, C, D and E come together as a group to write a blog about [Video Game Law](#). Each week, one or two authors write a blog post that leads to greater exposure for the firm. The practice group is seen as more cutting edge, RFPs can mention the blog, and the increased web traffic results in phone calls that lead to more business. Everyone is happy.

So which type of law blog is right for your firm? I took this question to several active members of the online legal community to get their perspectives....

1. The Group Law Blog

“Big law blogs definitely work better with three or more participants,” explained Aden Dauchess, Director of Online Marketing at [Womble Carlyle](#), where they just launched their fifteenth law blog. “I don’t think most big firm lawyers can individually blog. There are probably five to ten lawyers in our entire firm (out of 450) that could do it if they really put their minds to it.”

Personal blogging takes a huge time commitment, and to be honest, it takes a lot of creativity to continually come up with new content. Not every lawyer has the personality for it.

“Groups are much better,” Dauchess continued, “plus we use that as a way to increase communication within teams and practices. Whole service areas have been created because the lawyers liked blogging as a group.”

[Daniel Schwartz](#), sole author of [Connecticut Employment Law Blog](#), disagreed. “Blogs that are written ‘by committee’ or are from a law firm tend to be more like a firm newsletter. That’s fine if you want a newsletter, but newsletters tend to be fairly boring by design. They provide information without providing the opinion that makes such information valuable.”

So isn’t there a way to make the group blog more personal? We will talk about that in a moment. But first, let’s take a look at the pros and cons of the personal law blog.

2. The Personal Law Blog

“Overall, I favor personal blogs if written well,” Schwartz explained. “Those blogs tend to have a frame of reference and a ‘voice’ that is very difficult to transfer from writer to writer.”

In other words, the personal nature of the law blog provides a window into the real person behind the blog. The blog has the potential to make lawyers seem much more approachable.

“The power of the personal law blog is that it reflects the personality, character and interests of the author,” explained [Bob Ambrogi](#), media lawyer, consultant, and former editor of the National Law Journal.

The personal law blog is a substantial time commitment, though, and that is the biggest reason most firms decide to go with group blogs. In addition, the group blogs will always remain part of the firm, whereas a personal blog could be easily continued by an attorney no matter where they worked.

So which is the better choice? Is there a way to create a group blog that will still reap the benefits of the personal blog?

Yes, according to Ambrogi: “Just look at [Scotusblog](#); it is the gold standard.” But both Ambrogi and Schwartz pointed out that Scotusblog benefits from a full-time professional journalist writing for it, namely, [Lyle Denniston](#).

“To be successful a group blog needs a significant number of attorneys to be invested in it,” said Ambrogi. “If it is seen as a task from the marketing department, it will fail.”

What has worked for your firm? Group blogs or personal blogs? Or does your firm allow blogs at all?