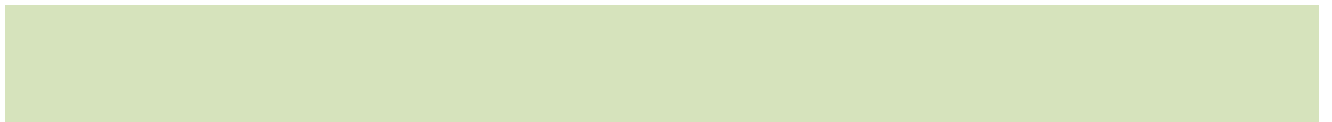




S O C I A L M E D I A
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/ ad - van - tage / advocates¹
¹excellence in research & writing

Introduction

Where are your clients? More and more, existing and potential clients are on-line. They are looking for information. They are looking for services. They are looking to be entertained and to make connections.

Social media offers a means of tapping into these interests. It is a low-cost, high-impact opportunity for networking and marketing. On-line networking using social media tools is particularly useful for professional practices, where reputation and trust are crucial to attracting new and repeat business. Lawyers are familiar with the power of “word of mouth” marketing. Consider the Web to be “word or mouth” marketing with a turbo boost. In the real world, marketing efforts are bounded by time and space. On the Web, marketing takes place at any time and can reach around the globe, even while you sleep. While the concepts are the same, the scope and reach are anything but.

Return on social media efforts depends on completion of three tasks:

- **defining the message**
- **targeting the audience**
- **exploiting outlets with a consistent and positive presence**

There are many tools to these ends. But it is not just about understanding and using the tools – it is also about working the relationships between the tools. The tools include your “outposts” on the Web and your “conduits” between outposts. This report identifies and explains these tools and how to connect them to best effect.

Why Social Media:

What is gained from this type of marketing? There are three immediate benefits to social media marketing in general and blogging in particular:

- **Increasing exposure for you and your firm in a world that increasingly is looking to the Web for information**

The best exposure comes from exploiting as many outposts as possible and actively managing the connections between them. You must predict where your potential clients will look for assistance and establish your presence in those venues.

Why Social Media?

The Outposts & Conduits

- Blogging
- Microblogging
- Social Networking
- Listservs, Podcasts, Video & Slideshare

- **Enhancing brand awareness**

You and your firm are “brands” to be developed on the Web. The various outposts recognize the “branding” interest and are constantly generating and updating applications and tools to help. Finding a “brand” or identity early in the game is important - it helps cement an image in the minds of potential clients about who you are and what you can provide. But, to really put the spotlight on your brand, you must actively use the outposts and applications.

- **Giving your Web Site a boost**

Staking your claim on the outposts affords an opportunity to link back to your main outpost: your website. Increasing links to your site increases its “search engine optimization”, or visibility to the “spiders” that crawl the web looking for information in response to search inquiries. Ideally, when someone searches your name or your firm’s name, the first page of results should show your website, your LinkedIn profile, your Twitter profile, your Facebook profile and your blog.

The process of developing profiles and making on-line connections may seem daunting at the outset, particularly when looking at a full calendar with little time to spare. Fortunately, much of the process can be automated after the initial start-up. There are some tasks that will require periodic attention, but even those can be streamlined and partially automated to best effect. And there is always the option of outsourcing some of the work.

The Outposts & Conduits

“Outposts” are places on the Web where you can make your presence and brand known. “Conduits” are the means of connecting the outposts. Outposts and conduits include:



Blogging & Blog Networks



ListSers / Message Boards



MicroBlogging



Podcasts



RSS



Video & Slide Sharing



Widgets



Social Bookmarking



Social Networking



Social Sharing

Blogging



Blogging is an outpost and perhaps the number one branding tool on the Web. Professional blogs offer an ever-changing album filled with snapshots of your expertise.

You have complete control over image and message. And blogging can cost little or no money, while it exposes your expertise to the world!

Some advance planning will improve the quality of the message and increase readership. Consider the following steps in maximizing the impact of your blog.



Identify Your Subject and Audience. This is the very first step. Answering this question shapes your content and your use of the outposts.

Finding the right niche is not terribly difficult – it should track your expertise. Carefully consider the scope of that niche as it will affect traffic volume: a narrow niche can more readily drive specific traffic to you and your sites but will filter out broader traffic. In setting your scope, determine if your ultimate goal is to drive more traffic or to drive a more targeted audience to your blog or site.



Develop Your Content. The next step is developing content that is relevant and timely. Find and read blogs that are appealing to you. What do you like about their content? Identify blogs that you find less compelling and determine why. Plan your own content accordingly.

There is no question that current hot topics will generate the most search-based hits. These are the topics that also will increase the chances that a subscriber to your feed will click through to your article.

Ideally, new content should issue at least weekly, if not biweekly. Publish to your blog for maximum impact. On-line readers are looking for lots of information in short bursts. As attention spans decrease, the importance of making frequent impacts increases. Your goal is to keep your message in front of the vast morass of on-line information.

To this end, break up larger posts into smaller segments and serialize them. Segmenting your posts with announcements regarding upcoming posts will encourage readers to return for more.

Save time and effort by taking content from presentations or demonstrations and morphing it into blog posts. Break blog posts into twitter entries or email blasts. Think of this process as the “recycling” or repurposing of content to increase exposure.

From Wikipedia:

A blog (a contraction of the term weblog) is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.



The primary tool for broad-based research and topic development is RSS, short for “really simple syndication.” RSS is an incoming conduit of current news in any field or area of interest from websites or blogs into your reader. RSS also is an outgoing conduit for feeding your blog to the various social media outposts.

For reading the incoming content, check out [Newsgator’s](#) FeedDemon, which operates on your desktop(s), Web and phone, and [Google Reader](#), which is web-based. Most versions of Outlook also offer some form of RSS-feed-reading capability. You can fill your reader with content by:

- **visiting a directory of RSS feeds, such as [UncleFeed](#), [Syndic8](#), or [2RSS](#) which list feeds by category.**
- **searching for blogs and RSS feeds using an RSS search engine – [Technorati](#), [Google Blog Search](#), or [Blogdigger](#).**
- **subscribing to RSS feeds from major news outlets or respected news sources for your particular industry.**
- **finding RSS on your favorite websites. Both Google Reader and FeedDemon allow you to find RSS feeds on a site by simply entering the URL in a search box.**
- **using your browser. Most, including current versions of IE, offer RSS feed support in-browser.**
- **using a keyword-based RSS feed generator, such as [Kebberfegg](#), which allows you to pull feeds based on specific search terms.**

There are tools to help you manipulate, organize and control RSS content on your desktop or in your browser. Here is a list of several that can make your RSS experience a bit easier:

- **[Feedgit](#)** Create your own RSS feed from major news, blog, video, image, and other sites. Enter keywords, select the type of RSS reader you use, and Feedgit generates an RSS feed from those keywords. “Subscribe” to that feed in your reader - whenever your search terms appear on that particular site, you will be instantly notified.
- **[PonyFish](#)** Apply a feed to a site that does not have one. Plug in the URL of the site and click on the links you want to see when it is updated.
- **[Yahoo Pipes](#)** Search feeds for terms and combine them into a single RSS feed. Whenever search terms are mentioned at any of the identified sites, receive them from one unified feed.
- **[FeedRinse](#)** Apply a filter to your feeds. Specify words or phrases you do not want to see, and FeedRinse sends only the stories of interest.

- **Notify Me** Forward RSS headlines to your mobile phone, instant messaging or e-mail.

It takes some time to set up custom research tools. However, once they are in place, the information comes to you. Scan your reader as frequently as you can to pull ideas. Once ideas are identified, turn to the Web or other research resources to flesh them out.



Put Your Plan In Place. Readers will return to your blog if they feel that they will be treated to valuable and valid information. A little advance planning goes a long way toward simplifying the process and developing a positive message. That positive message starts with your blog entries.

First, consider setting up an editorial schedule and publishing plan. On a micro level, it will aid the development of consistent and timely posts. On a macro level, it will help establish your authenticity and trustworthiness.

Next, consider the tone of your posts. This extends to all of your on-line activity. Excessive promotion will detract from your trustworthiness. Allow your personality to filter through your on-line presence - it will enhance authenticity. On-line networking is about information-sharing and illuminated guidance. People are on the Web to gather data, find resources and be entertained. If you are informative, entertaining and engaging, you can fill these needs with honesty and integrity and potential connections will return for more.

Next, develop a citation plan. Proper citation promotes integrity. Try to hyperlink to anything used in the blog, particularly if there is a direct reference to another article or resource in the post. Some of the automated blog applications, such as [Zemanta](#), will offer suggested links for concepts in a blog entry. Other links can be inserted manually using your blog editing program. Or consider downloading a desktop blog editor, such as the fantastic program [Windows Live Writer](#), which makes blog entry, editing and hyperlink generation very easy.

Automate! Depending your browser, there are programs and add-ons for enhancing your blog. Mozilla Firefox is an extraordinarily customizable browser for manipulating Web content. Zemanta is an add-on that automatically suggests related content, articles and media for your blog, Gmail or Ymail messages. Simply click on their suggestions and they are incorporated into blog entries. A re-blog tag makes it easy for another blogger to reference your content. Zemanta seamlessly incorporates into a Wordpress blog editor.

Scribfire, another add-on, puts a button on the bottom of the browser. While browsing the Web, activate Scribfire and a blog editor box pops up at the bottom of the screen. Drag and drop content from the active page, automatically insert links to the page or add related photos from Flickr or Zemanta, as well as related links and articles.

Depending on your interface, you can email posts from your blog. Blogger and Wordpress-based blogs allow for e-mail blogging - blog titles are the subject line of the email and pictures can be inserted as attachments.

For legal references, follow the general rules of citation applicable to legal writing. Consider locating open source versions of cases or statutes cited and provide a hyperlink to those sources for the convenience of readers.

Another way to properly reference Web content is through trackbacks. Trackbacks are used to refer to another person's blog in your own blog entry. The trackback sent from your blog appears on the

referenced blog as a comment. Your blog readers can view the other blog by reading your blog's trackbacks. It can also serve as an indirect promotional tool, encouraging networking with other bloggers.

Depending on your blogging software, trackbacks may be automatically generated when you quote material from another blog. There is a manual means of creating trackbacks, available upon request.

One final note – don't overlook your blog titles. Catchy titles encourage people to click through to blog entries when they show up in search results. Spend some time on a title that describes your topic but adds a "twist" of interest to peak reader curiosity.



Make Your Blog Pretty. The layout of your blog is crucial for attracting and retaining readership. Keep a clean, easy-to-read layout. Include buttons to your other social media outposts so readers can quickly click through to your other Web activities.



Widgets on your blog identify your outposts. They are conduits that funnel readers to your other web content. [Retaggr](#) is a widget offering a badge listing all your other URLs, profile links, and contact information in one box.

There are many other widgets and add-ons that can be used to enhance your blog. The ability to use the various widgets depends on your blog host and format.

Include additional pages on your blog. Consider adding **Profiles** of all of your contributors on an **About** page. For legal blogs, a **Disclaimer** makes sense. Some blogs include an **Ethical Practices** or **Scope** page describing the limits of the author's subject matter and relationship (or lack thereof) between the blog and his or her employer. Include pictures and personal information about your regular contributors to associate a human face with your subject matter. A **Current Events** page can speak in generic terms about your contributors' accomplishments, upcoming events or speaking engagements, and other honors or professional accolades. Include a **Contact** page with links back to your firm or business and email addresses, postal addresses or phone numbers, and messaging or Skype contact information.

A firm's website and blog should be at separate URLs. This permits the sites to feed the other, increasing links and enhancing SEO. With traditional search methods on the Web, the more links to a site, the higher it will appear in search rankings.

Consider adding pictures and other media to the posts. Readers on the Web are drawn to visually stimulating content. There are video- and picture-sharing sites that make it easy to add multi-media content to your blog. [Flickr](#) is the most popular Web photo-sharing site and [YouTube](#) is the most popular Web video-sharing site, although others are gaining in prominence. Sites like [Vimeo](#) and [12seconds.tv](#) allow you to upload your own video conversations. Video versions of blog posts "mix up" your content and create interest. You also can create free animated videos of scripted text on sites such

as [Xtranormal](#), adding yet another dimension to your presentation. More information on some of these sites is provided below, under **Listservs, Podcasts, Video and Slideshare**.



Connect Your Blog to the World. It is not enough to just put words out there on the Web. Become part of the conversation. Find others who are in or near your niche and engage them. By notifying bloggers and other Web professionals of your blog, you open the conversation. Continue the conversation by advising other bloggers in your niche when you post a blog that might be of particular interest to them.

Consider adding a **blog roll** to your own blog and offer to include other relevant blogs in your roll. Reciprocal links will increase traffic and web visibility. Once you set up your blog roll and are established on another's blog roll, hits will happen nearly automatically.

Read and **comment** on other blogs, particularly those relevant to your niche. Include a link to your blog in your comments. Respond to comments on your own blog and return to respond to answers to your comments on other blogs. Comments will increase your exposure by building connections between you and other commenters and by keeping your name in front of readers across the Web.

Highlight the work of others relevant to your niche on your own blog. While it might seem counterintuitive to promote a potential competitor, it encourages the connections that will build traffic to your own blog and website. As you build connections through the blog and other outposts, invite others to guest post on your own blog. You also can offer space to clients looking to profile new products or to other bloggers related to your niche.

Identify niches that are related to your topic and build relationships with bloggers and professionals operating in those niches. You can obtain material related to your content and open avenues for connecting to your mutual benefit.

You can also set up such cross-blogging opportunities within your own firm if other firm members are blogging. Offer **email** service for your blog. Provide posts in their entirety or "blasts" of content summaries with links to your blog. Most blogs allow for installation of a subscription widget.

Submit your blog to **blog networks** or RSS submission sites. These sites offer a means of finding your blog among the masses of blogs out there. The [ABA Journal Blawg Directory](#) will put your blog into a category and in front of other lawyers and professionals familiar with the ABA.

There are hundreds of blog networks on the Web. Participating in all of them is time-consuming. Instead, focus on the top sites, adding additional sites as time allows.

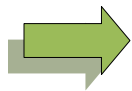
General interest blog directories offering categories

<http://technorati.com/>
<http://www.blogcatalog.com/>
http://publisher.yahoo.com/rss_guide/submit.php
<http://blogs.botw.org/>
<http://bloglines.com/>
<http://newsgator.com/>
<http://about.com/>
<http://blogpulse.com/>
<http://vlib.org/>



Track your blog's progress. Your blog program or platform should offer built-in monitoring capability with statistics for tracking your blog's progress. Incoming links and outgoing links show where readers are coming from and where they are going. This gives a picture of who they are and what they are interested in

Greater tracking detail is offered in add-on applications, like [Google Analytics for Wordpress](#) or services like [Google Feedburner](#). Statistical tools reveal trends and you can time your blog posts accordingly. Make sure new posts are in place before your normal traffic peak to maximize exposure, particularly if you are planning to publish once each week. Posts can be written anytime and set to publish at your target time.



The six steps outlined above should position your blog for increased traffic. The more strategic planning you can incorporate, the greater your potential return. Growth does not happen overnight, but is certain to move in a positive direction as you work these strategies.

MicroBlogging (Twitter)



Over the past year, the interest in microblogging has exploded into the real world, with celebrities like Oprah, Ashton Kutcher and Larry King getting in on the action. There is a growing community of professionals on these sites actively seeking to connect with other professionals, share information and even refer business.

What to Say? Although there are plenty of other microblogging sites out there, Twitter currently is the undisputed king of them all. Among other benefits, Twitter has become an indispensable means of blog promotion. However, it shouldn't be used solely for that. Twitter readers are fast becoming desensitized to excessive advertising and may not respond as readily to you if the only information they are seeing is self-promotion. The best use of Twitter mixes your original content, comments on others' information, reposts or "retweets" of interesting information from others, sharing of news items from your RSS reader and just enough of your life to give that Twitter avatar a personality.

Automate!

Applications can automatically feed blog entries into Twitter. [Twitterfeed](#) will send new blog content to your Twitter feed as it is posted via RSS. Using Google Reader, you can share items with your Twitter feed. With [TweetLater](#), you can write and schedule tweets throughout the day in one sitting.

Focus your "free" Twitter information on areas designed to attract relevant followers and, more importantly "listeners." Establish some "Twitter-cred" in these areas and readers will advance to your blog for more great information.

From Wikipedia

Micro-blogging is a form of multimedia blogging that allows users to send brief text updates or micromedia such as photos or audio clips and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group which can be chosen by the user. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, email, digital audio or the web.

The content of a micro-blog differs from a traditional blog in that it is typically smaller in actual size and aggregate file size. A single entry could consist of a single sentence or fragment or an image or a brief, ten second video. But, still, its purpose is similar to that of a traditional blog. Users micro-blog about particular topics that can range from the simple, such as "what one is doing at a given moment," to the thematic, such as "sports cars," to business topics, such as particular products. Many micro-blogs provide short commentary on a person-to-person level, share news about a company's products and services, or provide logs of the events of one's life.

Who Will Listen? Twitter is most effective when you find and follow others in your field of interest. As you follow them and support their content, they will follow you and reciprocate. Twitter is an invaluable tool for opening up connections with other legal practitioners, which in turn will increase blog and website traffic.

There are many Twitter directories listing Twitter members by subject matter. [Twubble](#), [Twellow](#), [Twits Like Me](#), [WeFollow](#), and [TwitterPacks](#) offer categorized lists of users. Don't overlook this great resource at [JDSupra](#) – an unofficial list of attorneys on Twitter, which currently stands at over 700.

Automate! You can “auto follow” - find people using keywords and automatically follow them. [Twollow](#) is one of the many services out there providing this service. A new application, [TwitterMass](#), combines keyword searching for follows, auto-follow of search results and auto-drop for follows that do not reciprocate within a few days. I personally am not a fan of auto-following, instead preferring to grow a “twitter-verse” slowly and deliberately. Nonetheless, “auto following” can be an effective means of finding people to follow and gaining followers in return quickly with little effort. TweetLater (link above) will schedule automatic Direct Messages to new follows thanking them for the follow or offering a blurb about yourself.

Automate! Use your RSS reader to keep track of your name, blog and firm. [Google Alerts](#) allows you to set up multiple keyword searches of the Web with results fed daily into your reader. [Twitter search](#) can find instances of desired keywords on Twitter and feed them into your RSS. Use either service to automatically search relevant keywords pertinent to potential clients or blog topics or mentions of existing clients.

Twitter now offers a search function onsite that can be used to find relevant follows. Search key terms to find tweets on subjects of interest and check out the profile of the “tweeter.” This can lead to industry professionals and others who might be interested in your content.

Keep track of your own presence on Twitter and any mentions of you or your firm so you can monitor your brand. Periodically search your name or firm or the name of your blog using the Twitter search box. Employ multiple searches on the same screen using a web tool called [TweetGrid](#). You also can use Tweetgrid to track mentions of keywords related to your interest and find new follows or cutting-edge, real-time information for your blog.

As you grow your Twitter-verse with more followers, you may want to consider one of the desktop Twitter applications. [TweetDeck](#) or [Seismic Desktop](#) aggregate and organize status updates from Twitter and, in the case of Seismic, other social media sites like Facebook.

Social Networking



For purposes of this report, there are two main categories of social networking: (1) social networking sites; and (2) social bookmarking and sharing sites. Social networking sites are outposts and include the familiar LinkedIn, Facebook and MySpace, as well as smaller, more specific Web locales. Social bookmarking sites can be both outposts and conduits and include Delicious, Digg and Stumbleupon, where people are looking to find and share Web content. Social networking sites represent the largest “hangouts” on the Web and are actively used by people seeking content. They should not be ignored as venues to promote your blog and brand.

The first step to using these sites is to sign up. Complete a profile. Then become an active participant. Obviously, the term “active” is bounded by your time-constraints. To keep these venues as viable conduits for your own content, it is necessary to go beyond merely feeding your information into these sites. You must devote some time to contributing to the conversation. The more time you can invest, the better the return on your investment.

Different sites have different rules of engagement. What might work to facilitate communication on one site will fall flat on another site. Target the best sites by matching the message to the audience. For example, My Space makes the most sense for musicians and artists looking to promote their work, while LinkedIn is the better option for networking professionals. Facebook is moving in the direction of professional promotion and time spent exploiting Facebook’s professional tools is certain to reward.

Among the bookmarking and sharing sites, Digg caters to the technical crowd, while StumbleUpon has more mass appeal. There are more tailored social networks for many industries and practices and it is worth identifying and participating on these more targeted platforms. Here is a link to a list of [social networking sites for entrepreneurs](#).

First and foremost, these sites are **social**. It behooves you to make friends and connections. Each offers tools to import existing connections from your email accounts or other social networking activities and to make new connections. The more social and generous you are on these sites, the bigger your brand will grow and the better your brand will be regarded.

From Wikipedia:

Social media are information content created by people using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies. At its most basic sense, social media is a shift in how people discover, read and share news, information and content. It's a fusion of sociology and technology, transforming monologue (one too [sic] many) into dialog (many to many) and is the democratization of information, transforming people from content readers into publishers. Social media has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world to form relationships for personal and business. Businesses also refer to social media as user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media



LinkedIn

Customize Your URL: LinkedIn is the first place to turn for making professional connections on-line. But there is more to LinkedIn than just filling out a profile. Make the most of that profile: if you haven't already done so, customize your LinkedIn URL to include your name or your firm's name. Make sure you select "full view" on the URL options.

Use your custom LinkedIn URL as part of your e-signature: You can include your LinkedIn URL on communications or on your cards. Include a link to your LinkedIn profile on your blog and website using conduit widgets like Retaggr.

List Your Sites: Make sure that your relevant outposts are listed on your LinkedIn profile, including your link to other social media sites, your law firm site, and your blog. You can customize the headings in LinkedIn for your URLs – use the drop down menu to "other" and enter the text you want to describe the link, such as "Face Book profile", etc. Linking serves as another conduit between your outposts.

Join relevant groups: There are groups on LinkedIn for just about anything and admission can be had for the price of a simple request. Once a member, connections within the group can be made based on group membership. Follow the comments and post replies. In the News section, start conversations and include links to relevant information, including blog entries. One strategy is to pose a question as the title to your comment and include the link to your blog post with your answer in the body of the comment. As always, it is important to temper marketing efforts with adding value to your fellow members and connections.

Answer LinkedIn Questions: Scour the questions for issues relevant to your practice by searching via keywords. Your answers might lead to a client or potential connection! You can set up the LinkedIn questions to feed into your RSS reader. To increase link traffic, you can include links to your site and blog in your answers.

Automate! Put your blog front and center on your LinkedIn profile. There is a Wordpress application that streams content from Wordpress blogs onto your profile. Blog Link does the same for other blogging platforms. Once the add-ons are activated, the process of streaming content from your blog is automated and you need do nothing other than add content to your blog to get updates in front of your LinkedIn network.

You also can use the LinkedIn Status message to announce new blog entries. These status entries also are broadcast to all of your LinkedIn connections.



Facebook

Facebook isn't just for students anymore. Its membership has been booming over the past six months and that is not only with respect to numbers: much of the expansion has been in the over 30- and 40-year-old "boomer" crowd. Interest in Facebook as a business marketing tool has sharpened and Facebook has responded by offering more ways to promote branding.

Facebook includes personal profiles and business or fan pages. The latter can be linked to your personal profile and it makes sense to create both. Your personal profile can be to a professional audience by carefully posting and your privacy settings. Personal groups and professional groups can be set up among your "friends" with different privacy settings, with content targeted accordingly.

Use fan pages for your firm and blog. Actively solicit fans from your friends on Facebook. Facebook can publish ads broadcast to the entire community based on Facebook's interest-based algorithms.

Promote your business with Facebook applications, such as:

Define Me (a cloud of words defining your business); **GL Print Business Cards** (electronic business card); **IEndorse** (endorsements for business and business database); **My BusinessBlinkWeb** (widget placed on own and friends' profiles to advertise your business or blog); **Professional Profile** (tab on your profile that collects your professional information); **Posted Items** (sharing app for "goings on" and firm news); and **Testimonials** (IEndorse without the database). There are also some great communications tools within the Facebook applications, such as conference calling features from your Facebook profile and voicemail. You can create a **LinkedIn badge** on your Facebook profile.

JD Supra is a legal document sharing site where members upload pleadings, articles, memoranda, blog posts and other non-confidential work product. [JD Supra's site](#) offers content and member profiles accessible by search. JD Supra has an application for sharing work-product and other content on Facebook. JD Supra promotes members and content on both their site and Facebook. Membership in JD Supra offers another opportunity to profile yourself or your firm and create another link between your outposts and is JD Supra is a fantastic means of showing expertise and supporting on-line branding.

Automate! There are at least four applications within Facebook for blog promotion: Networked Blogs; Notes; RSS Connect; and, Simplaris Blogcast. These applications announce to Facebook friends and subscribers that there is new content from your blog or RSS feed. Once set up, blog content feeds automatically into these applications, which then show up in your friends' news feeds. Each has different features and benefits.

Twitter and Facebook can be connected as well. Twitter updates can automatically be sent to your Facebook status using various Facebook applications.

For a broader reach, you can use a service like [Ping](#), which permits you to send a single update across multiple social networks and services.



Social Bookmarking & Social Sharing

Social bookmarking and sharing sites also are outposts for promoting and sharing web content. If your content attracts attention on these sites, you will be amazed at the viral growth of and interest in your material.

The primary sites are Stumbleupon, Delicious and Digg. You can use these sites to vote up your own content, by “Digg-ing”, publicly tagging on Delicious or “Stumbling” your own posts. It is not recommended that these sites be used solely to “vote up” your content. Instead, consider voting for, Digg-ing or Stumbling other good content along with your own. Such props offer another opportunity to network with bloggers operating in related niches.

Make promoting your content easy by installing widgets on your blog linking to the various sharing and bookmarking sites. A typical badge looks like this:



Other, less familiar venues in which to promote your blog and brand include [Squidoo](#), a social network offering members the ability to create “lenses.” “Lenses” are similar to on-line brochures on a topic of interest. Joining and creating content requires a time investment but can result in a searchable, sharable article.

Listservs, Podcasts, Videos & Slide Sharing



Listservs can be an effective means of making legal connections on-line.

Listservs are similar in concept to on-line bulletin boards. They remain popular despite the rise of social media sites and microblogging. The ABA-sponsored listservs track many of the ABA committees, offering a similar experience, albeit via e-mail. The [directory](#) at the ABA site includes many legal listservs. Consider linking listserv membership to a stand-alone e-mail account, such as a Gmail account opened just for that purpose. The quantity of mail can overwhelm your main inbox and is better managed in its own “filing cabinet.” Use the listserv membership to connect with other practitioners in the field and direct connections to your blog.



Podcasts are another means of increasing exposure. They can be as simple or as complex as desired. If you want to dabble in the world of podcasts,

consider [Odiogo](#) – a free service that automatically converts your text blog entries into audio and distributes them through iTunes and elsewhere. The podcast is available on the Odiogo site and a button to the Odiogo podcast can be added to the blog.



Video can be used to promote. [YouTube](#) is the main venue on the Web for presenting video content but there are others to consider. Some sites offer simple uploading and sharing. Some allow recording right on the site. All that is required to create a short video is a computer outfitted with a webcam and microphone. Once uploaded, videos can be distributed to other social media outposts. Consider creating a video version of a blog post and embedding the video as a blog entry to vary your content.

[12seconds TV](#) is a site offering quick video uploading, publishing and storage. [Seismic](#) combines Twitter with Video, in a format offering follows and followers and a public timeline. [Vimeo](#) is similar to YouTube, but adds groups and channels along with hosted on-line space.

From Wikipedia:

A podcast is a series of digital media files, usually digital audio or video, that is made available for download via web syndication. The syndication aspect of the delivery is what differentiates podcasts from other files that are accessed by simple download or by streaming: it means that special client software applications known as podcatchers (such as Apple Inc.'s iTunes or Nullsoft's Winamp) can automatically identify and retrieve new files when they are made available, by accessing a centrally-maintained web feed that lists all files associated with a particular podcast. The files thus automatically downloaded are then stored locally on the user's computer or other device, for offline use.



Slide Sharing is another great media resource. [Slideshare](#) is a site that permits uploading of PowerPoint presentations or Word docs for public or private sharing. Slide shares can also be embedded in your blog or shared from the Slideshare site. Consider using Slideshare to publish Power Point presentations created by firm members in other contexts or new content and use this sharing to link back to firm and blog.

Conclusion

Social media marketing requires little monetary cost, but a significant investment in time, at least in the start-up phase. There are no set rules regarding how and when to use the tools outlined in this report. The only given is that the more time you can invest in the process, the more rewarding the result.

Many of the tools and techniques outlined in this report can be outsourced to firms like Advantage Advocates. Consider how much time you can devote to the process in formulating your social media strategy and plan accordingly. Above all, be creative, inventive, assertive, initiative and repetitive! If care is taken in establishing and maintaining your on-line brand, there is nothing to lose and everything to gain!