

Dear Boomers: Twitter Works, You're Just Not Doing It Right

Young people these days are pretty tech savvy. It's not hard for us, we grew up around this stuff. It's hard for us to understand life without it. It's also tough for us to understand why some people don't get it. There are two common misconceptions floating around in the legal profession about technology, and here they are:

1. According to Larry Bodine, [Twitter is not an effective marketing tool](#).
2. According to Scott Greenfield, [blogs don't really bring in business for attorneys](#).

My simple reply to both posts is this: if Twitter and Blogs are not working for you- you're doing it wrong.

Lets start with Twitter.

Larry Bodine shared a bunch of Twitter statistics in his recent article: Twitter Not Effective for Law Firm Marketing. Among them he shared that **in April 2009 Twitter had more visitors than LinkedIn, Digg, or even NYTimes.com-** but nobody really pays attention to that statistic. The only statistic they pay attention to is this one: **60% of Twitter users drop out after one month, according to Nielsen Wire.**

What does a 60% drop mean in practical terms? It means that of the 10 million plus people in the US who joined Twitter since March, 2009- as few as 4 million new users are still twittering. 4 million in two months is still pretty significant growth- and the growth just continues, so what's the problem? What Larry Bodine is trying to suggest with this statistic is that Twitter is a fad that won't be around in a few years.

So why are Facebook, LinkedIn, and Plaxo all trying to imitate the simplicity of the Twitter feed? Twitter succeeds at one thing better than any of the other social networking sites- it encourages sharing good ideas, good questions, and good articles with people outside of your existing network. This leads to building relationships with like minded people, and I have seen it first hand. Whether Twitter survives or not is irrelevant as far as I'm concerned, because the successful aspects of Twitter will survive in one form or another.

Larry Bodine said about Twitter, "I have seen few conversations that lead to new business." But Larry, Twitter is not about closing deals, its about building relationships. Thanks to Twitter I have found half a dozen paying clients, made connections that led to real life conversations with thought leaders like Kevin O'Keefe, Ed Scanlan, Alexis Neeley, Gini Dietrich and even Scott Greenfield. There have been so many amazing people that have become great friends- and I met them all through Twitter. If it wasn't for Twitter, I never would have been quoted by the the Wall Street Journal, ABA Journal,

or Abovethelaw.com, nor would I have been invited to host Blawgreview. So yeah, I think there is something to this whole “Twitter” thing.

Should Twitter be a large part of a firm’s marketing strategy? Probably not. Should it be a part of the marketing mix? Certainly. It has a unique ability to bring strangers together- and it costs nothing.

Now for misconception 2: Blogs don’t bring in Business for Attorneys

Scott Greenfield, in competition for the Grumpiest Boomer on the Internet (“GBI”) has had great success in building a thriving blog. He has a gigantic readership, and tons of online accolades. But he has one small problem according to his site-it doesn’t bring him any business:

Have I gotten a ton of inquiries because of this blawg? You betcha. Have these inquiries turned into clients? Nary a one. I get disorderly conducts from Des Moines, whiners from Wisconsin and free-riders from Fredonia. I can’t tell you how many people call to ask me to represent them for free because of this blawg. Woo hoo! You want a piece of that action? Let me know and I’ll send them all over.

My message to Scott is a simple one- you might want to adjust your strategy. You could easily build into your blog a referral service, a capture mechanism, or use any number of other tools to actually bring in business. You just haven’t designed your site for that purpose. Scott reports to have thousands of viewers to his blog each day, but NO buyers. Can you imagine a WalMart that had thousands of people walk through the store- without ever buying anything? That’s what happens on Scott’s blog, and why? He hasn’t designed it to bring in referrals or to convert traffic into clients. So don’t listen to him claiming online marketing doesn’t work just because he isn’t doing it right.

The most common misconception about blogs is that if you create original content and bring in traffic, then people will hire you. Getting them to your site is only half of the equation. Your site needs to hook them the moment they arrive. Most websites or blogs fail to generate business because they have no hook. The creators of the blogs are thinking like lawyers and not like prospective clients.

My generation sees technology like blogs and Twitter as just another tool. Twitter brings in traffic, blogs provide the hook, and then talented professionals have an opportunity to close the deal. Its not that complicated, but then again, I grew up with this stuff.

To read more details on why social media is so important for law firms, [click here for a free copy of the Rainmaker Alert](#)