

What's Hot and What's Not – in Business Development

By **Larry Bodine**, a business development advisor with a nationwide practice. He has helped 250+ law firms generate new revenue by devising strategies, conducting business development retreats and individually coaching attorneys. He can be reached at www.LarryBodine.com and 630.942.0977.



What's Hot.

- **LinkedIn is red hot.** [LinkedIn is seen as the most important social network](#) for business development, according to new data. Twitter and YouTube are close behind. 1,473,000 lawyers have profiles on LinkedIn and there are client's galore there. 100 million executives from 200 countries in the following industries can be found on LinkedIn: high tech, finance, manufacturing, medical, educational, consumer goods, recreational, corporate, construction, government, arts, media, nonprofit, transportation and services. Brian Burt of Phoenix has the best lawyer profile I've ever seen, at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/brianburt> -- he has 500+ connections, and an amazing 51 recommendations.
- **Internet marketing.** It's a great way for lawyers to generate leads. There are 194 million US Internet users -- 2/3 of the US population. Catch a free live presentation about it in Philadelphia at the Pyramid Club at Noon on June 15. Info is at www.lexisnexis.com/larrybodineseminar. 85% of executives consider law firm websites important sources of information in their search for lawyers, and 82% of the consumers who use local Web search sites follow up with in-person action.
- **Video marketing.** Google owns YouTube and use of video improves search engine results. YouTube videos were viewed 700 trillion times in 2010! YouTube is the #4 most visited website on the Internet yet I estimate that only 20,000 law firms have videos online. Video is in its infancy and now is the time to start a YouTube channel. I like the channel of O'Connor Parsons & Lane at <http://www.youtube.com/user/OConnorParsonsLane> -- lawyers explaining the law, not talking about themselves.
- **QR codes.** Those square blocks of code are turning up in law firm ads and on the back of lawyer business cards. QR codes can add websites, bios, v-cards, web searches PowerPoints to whatever you put them on. Anyone with a smart phone and a QR app can scan and read them. See my article about QR codes in Law Technology News at <http://bit.ly/19AViT>.
- **Winning legal business from medium size companies.** They account for 99% of all businesses and don't put lawyers through RFPs or beauty contests. They have 250 employees or fewer and annual revenue of \$75 million or less, and the decision-maker is the CEO or HR director. They make up their minds in a week. Dr. Silvia



Hodges, Professor of Marketing and Management at Fordham Law School in New York writes about it at <http://bit.ly/ji0rxp>.

- **Add a Twitter “Follow” button** to your blog, website or email signature, like the execs at AOL.com, CBS News, MarketWatch, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, and Yahoo! Local. As of May 2011, 13% of online US adults use Twitter, up from 8% who did so in November 2010, according to Pew Internet Research. Simply to go Twitter's [Follow Button Configuration Page](#), complete the online form and you'll have your own custom code to put a button online.
- **Mobile marketing – or the M-Dot Revolution – is here.** Your website and blog must be readable on small smart phone screens. New research found that 55.9% of smart phone users say they prefer using their smart phone to access the Internet over using a computer. See <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2011/5/prweb8492746.htm>. 33% of businesses currently have a mobile strategy in place and 82% of businesses plan to increase their spending on mobile phone marketing over the next year.
- **Free CLE.** Lawyers don't have to pay anymore to get mandatory educational credit, which is required in 37 states. The Network of Trial Law Firms launched a website where lawyers can get CLE credit instantly – see www.Trial.com/cle. Spent 20 minutes with one of their videos and learn how to try a case in a courtroom.
- **Lawyers using webinars as a lead generation tool.** Finally, there's a way to market without leaving your office. Presenting a web program confirms your expert status, differentiates you from low-tech lawyers, engages your clients and lets you interact with them. See my slides about the topic at <http://bit.ly/jNOHDp>

Not hot.

- **Yellow Pages**, which were just [banned from distribution](#) in San Francisco. Overall U.S. yellow pages advertising revenue declined 11.8% in 2010, and is projected to decline an additional 12% to \$1.47 billion in 2011. Save money and cancel your ad now.
- **Using money to motivate lawyers to market.** People do not become lawyers so that they would have to sell. Successful lawyers often speak passionately about the sense of fulfillment that comes from helping clients. That was why these men and women became lawyers. Smart firms work with individual lawyers to develop specific goals that will help the lawyer feel they had genuinely helped clients. See <http://bit.ly/m61Nyb>
- **Bankruptcy.** Surprise! Business bankruptcies are down 15% to pre-recession levels. The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts reports that in the first quarter of 2011, there were 12,376 petitions filed by businesses -- down 15% from the same period a year ago. This is less than the 4th quarter of 2008, the year when the recession got really ugly.

- **50 separate sets of state lawyer regulations.** The ABA Commission on Ethics 20/20 is considering a new proposal for uniform regulations for the delivery of legal services. 23 major law firms have joined business clients in the Association of Corporate Counsel to call for a uniform set of lawyer regulations, so that American lawyers can compete in the global economy. An informal survey I started at <http://bit.ly/jaur6F> shows support for the idea. You can vote in the survey yourself at <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22CAK9UBVDZ>
- **Lone wolves.** [Business development is a team sport](#) If you have a person on your team that continually shoots the ball and misses, provide constructive guidance and explain the importance of passing to others. This advice comes from a new book “Super Rainmaking” – see <http://bit.ly/jGEb7S>
- **[Women Lawyers Have Lower Billing Rates than Men](#)** This is not cool. There is a glass ceiling in the legal profession. The latest evidence that women are shortchanged in the law is found in the 2011 Billing Rates & Practices Survey published by ALM Legal Intelligence. Across the board, the average billing rates for women partners and associates are consistently lower than those of their male counterparts. This is wrong on so many levels.
- **Stupid SEO mistakes.** They include leaving title tags empty, lack of keywords in content, not using internal linking, and using flash for your website. For even more SEO mistakes see <http://bit.ly/luNzc2>
- **Marketing online at the wrong time of day.** The [Best Times of Day for Your Online Marketing](#) are very early in the morning -- 5 AM to 7 AM is a great time to catch people's attention, and so is after dinner when people leave the TV set and wander to their computers. Surprisingly, weekends are good too.
- **Zombie marketing.** Dead ideas still walk among us, such as rebranding, advertising, sponsorships, golf outings and brochures. They don't produce any marketing or financial results. To see even more undead marketing ideas, visit <http://bit.ly/fLate2>

For more on this topic, call:

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