



## How to Make It Rain: Social Media Marketing for Lawyers

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# Leveraging Social Media

Gone are the days of attending endless events every week. Now let's be clear, nothing beats nor will ever replace face-to-face networking. Social media extends your message to your prime prospects, amplifies what your firm specializes in, making the process of business development more efficient and effective.

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**“If you want to make it rain, the best way is to optimize your social networks and leverage them properly. “**

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You may have heard that in order to be ahead of your competition, you must be able to accept change. A common assumption held many law firms is that social media is just a fad, soon to die out. It has been almost 10 years since the inception of Facebook and it is bigger now than it has ever been. Major social channels such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Google Plus reach and engage with millions of people world-wide. And new channels are being embraced by people all the time -- Snapchat, Vine and Periscope are bursting onto the scene and companies are investing increasing larger percentages of their marketing efforts behind social media.

In order to remain competitive, your law firm needs to accept that the ways business gets done is changing. Embrace the change, or get left behind.

Social media marketing is a highly effective and cost efficient means to help your firm make it rain. The expansive reach and engagement you can generate with a well-crafted social media campaign, puts your law firm in front of the right people.

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Thankfully, it's not still not too late to start networking on the social media channels. Although entirely possible, don't expect overnight success nurturing relationships online. So let's get started.

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## **Blogging**

Start a blog. Making it rain starts with creating quality content. Begin with sound research to clearly identify your target market to develop a sound content marketing plan. A well thought out strategic plan will shape your content so that you attract the right readers. Here are a few tips you should know when writing blog posts.

**1. Talk to one person, not to every person** – When you're writing your blog develop a writing style that is more of a narrative, as if you're talking directly to the person, just one. Don't make the reader feel like they are part of the crowd, but that they are the only person you are talking to. Make it personal. Make it easy to read, and keep them engaged so they keep reading and wanting more. Blogging is perhaps the best way to talk directly to your audience, to build credibility, trust and establish your firm as authority in the field of law.

Don't get hung up on what to write, check out what the other law blogs are writing about. Analyze how often they write, what they write about, if the articles are long or short. Take the best parts you like about each blog and then come up with some great ideas of your own.



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Get an idea of what kind of blogs are out there by visiting the Blawg Directory which lists over 3,000 law blogs and even selects the top 100 legal blogs called the Blawg 100.

**2. Link reputable sources** – One of the top goals of content marketing is to establish your firm as an influencer in your field of law. An influencer is the leading thought leader in your industry – a reputable source of information. When you link other reputable sources to your material, not only do readers start to trust your choice of resources but search engines do as well. Google favors your posts when you link a reputable sources to your articles. And that results in higher rankings on the search engines.

**3. Know your Audience** – Knowing who you’re talking to will make writing your articles much easier. If the majority of your followers are women, then write a few women empowerment articles or highlight a gender equality case you think may stand out. Knowing and catering to your audience may be something that will change over time. Analyze your site’s analytics, identify what content is getting the most hits or what age group, education level, or gender is visiting your pages the most. Cross-reference your website’s analytics with your social media channels to begin to develop your brand’s persona. This will shape who you target your messages to and the tone and content of your narratives.

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**4. Optimize your Content** – Familiarize yourself with the basics of SEO, search engine optimization. Optimizing your content will help your audience find your content more readily and help establish your firm as a leader in your field of law. Basic meta-data goes a long way to ranking your posts high on search engines.

One of the best CMS, content management systems is WordPress. That is because WordPress blogs integrate meta-data into the posts, helping to rank well with the top search engines. Well-crafted headers (60 characters or less) along with meta-descriptions (approximately 160 characters max) will help get your articles get ranked on the first page of searches for topics you write about.

Keywords are buzz words that people use when searching for news, products or services. Your headers and body content should include top keywords that are relevant to your article. For example, if your article features tips on tax laws in New York State, then include the keywords <tax law> and <New York State> in your heading and be sure to use those keywords within the body copy of your article. Your article will be found more readily as a result of tactically placing keywords in the header and body.

## Twitter

Twitter is a fast-paced, complex, and advanced social media for heavy social users. You may notice in your time on twitter that keeping up with your news feed is near impossible. Tweets are streamed constantly on Twitter, every tweet pushes down the last tweet much like the newsfeed on Facebook. For better results on Twitter post and repost content frequently, several times a day and days each week. Tweets are not summarized as posts are on Facebook (under your notifications). Finding the right frequency to tweet your content is key.

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**The 4-1-1 Rule ‘For every one self-serving tweet, you should retweet one relevant tweet and most importantly share four pieces of relevant content written by others.’**

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Identify the most active, smartest and most interesting people in your field and follow them. Use lists to group feeds into specific topics or industries to leverage the power of Twitter effectively. Lists are customized feeds you compile by adding specific types accounts to them. For example, you can add your business law feeds into one list so when you want to view business law material you can quickly look up the list.

Twitter takes time – you need to build relationships with the people in your industry through social interaction. Twitter has a big follower drop-off rate so don’t get discouraged when you lose followers. Some people employ the ‘follow then unfollow’ tactic to build their base of followers. Always follow the people that matter most to you. Follow the influencers in law, the firms and the legal news networks that will provide you with the best content and place you in the right streams to engage your prospects.

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**Shari Davidson, President of On Balance recommends following Above the Law (@atlblog) and the Wall Street Journal Law Blog (@WSJLawBlog) on Twitter.**

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**A great tactic to follow for Twitter is the 4-1-1 Rule.**

A rule coined by Tippingpoint Labs and Joe Pulizzi of the Content Marketing Institute, the rule states:

“For every on self-serving tweet, you should retweet one relevant tweet and most importantly share four pieces of relevant content written by others”

This rule allows you to self-promote and engage with the twitter community. A mix of both is important when tweeting.

**When using Twitter, consider these rules of DOs and DONTs:**

**DO** use hashtags. Hashtags will categorize your tweet under a certain topic. Sometimes these topics can trend and will spark a conversation between people following the hashtag feed. Be careful when overusing hashtags, keep them down to 2 per tweet, 3 is pushing it.

**DO** be mindful of the time of day. Most audiences are on during the day and on weekends. Tweeting during the day will generate 30% more interaction due to higher traffic. People also tend to be more active on the weekends, with 17% more engagement happening on the weekend.

**DO** follow key influencers in your field. Retweeting influencer content will give people a sense that you understand what is going on in your field. Build a relationship with your influencers and follower alike. If someone retweets or follows you, thank them for engaging with you and have a brief conversation if it comes to it.

**DO** learn what your competition is doing and stay a step ahead. Follow your competitors. See what industries their interested in and look for ways to expand your practice or client base.

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**DO** make your tweets more attractive – A few words may get the job done if it's interesting enough, however try adding a link or an image to get your followers to stop and take a closer look at your tweet. Make sure the image speaks to your audience.

**DON'T** tweet about sex, politics or religion. The trio of conversation faux-pas, avoid these when tweeting. Remember everything you say on the internet stays there forever. Like a wise man once said, don't post anything online that you wouldn't want on the front page of the news the next day.

**DON'T** tweet too much. Tweeting too much can be annoying and can push people away. If you're inundating someone's feed they might end up unfollowing you, don't let that happen.

## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is paramount when it comes to your career growth. With 220 million members worldwide, there is huge potential for networking opportunities, employment opportunities and connecting with colleagues.

If you are not on LinkedIn I suggest you get on it immediately. If you are already on the network, make sure your profile is at All-Star status. Fortunately, LinkedIn gives you hints and suggestions on how to fill in your profile to get to All-Star status. Some of these tips include:

- 1. Uploading a photo** – Make sure your photo is professionally taken. Do not ever put a photo up of you on vacation or at a bar. Make yourself approachable in a professional manner. Remember, your photo is a representation of yourself and your firm.

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2. **Write a killer headline** – You want your head line (120characters) to encompass everything you are as a professional. It should stand out and include important key words that are specific to your field or practice. It is your sales pitch.
3. **Grow your network** – Don't just connect with people. LinkedIn is too big of a platform to simply just connect with people. Join groups that relate to your practice.
4. **Write a compelling summary** – Tell people more about you in a conversational tone. Be interesting and inviting, you want to make people want to connect with you.
5. **Experience** – make sure your experience is relevant to your current practice. Don't add a summer job as a lifeguard if you want to practice law. Remember that you're also not bound to an 8.5 x 11 inch piece of paper. Be specific, include projects and lots of examples and numbers.

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**“The key is to become an influencer.  
Be the person people go to when they  
need advice or help.”**

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## Making it Rain

Now that you've gotten acquainted with ways to leverage social media, it's time to make it rain!

The beauty of joining social groups is that you'll be joining a number of professionals in your field that hold a range of discussions related to your practice.

Groups don't have to be all about law though, if you're interested in the environment, join a group on environmental issues. Chances are you may meet a new client that way. Familiarize yourself with the type of discussions that are held within that group. You can start by commenting on people's posts and reading through existing discussions to get a good idea of the tone that group uses. When your confidence rises, you can begin to post your own content on the page and start your own discussions.

After you've achieved All-Star status, you should have a very good looking profile. Now maintain consistent activity within your network and groups.

If there are questions that need answering or if you want to contribute something of your own, go ahead and do so. The key is to become an influencer. Be the person people go to when they need advice or help.

Also keep in mind, when posting on LinkedIn's non-legal forums, you want to avoid any risk of creating an inadvertent client relationship. If your jurisdiction requires a disclaimer be sure to add it to any comments. It is also good practice to include your disclaimer in your profile itself.

So how can we use all three of these together to really bring in the money? It all starts with your blog and branches out into your social channels.

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After each blog post you should be leveraging Twitter and LinkedIn. On Twitter you can share much more content and blog posts than LinkedIn. For LinkedIn one post on your profile is sufficient. Don't forget the 4:1:1 rule and share content on your LinkedIn profile from experts in your field of business. Then tweet your LinkedIn posts and LinkedIn shares on Twitter.

Share your posts 3-4 times a week for a month at different times each week on Twitter. Stay consistent. Remember to make your tweets attractive, add a great photo and add relative hashtags to get more engagement.

When scheduling posts it is important to include a call-to-action. Develop a CTA that is turn-key and easy for your followers to click-thru to your website or your web pages. Make it rain -- give them an incentive to reach out to you whether it be a free consultation or a discount.

**Now that you have their attention, make sure you make the most of that.**

Making it rain may seem daunting, but it is certainly doable. You have got to create and consistently deliver your content. Create and consistently meet an expectation – post articles weekly, or monthly but consistently meet the expectation. The difficulty is usually the commitment. Build relationships by engaging with your core stakeholders.

Across all traditional and digital channels, speak with one voice – create and remain true to your brand identity. The voice you speak on twitter should not be that different from the way you speak on your blog or LinkedIn.

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I hope you enjoyed this white paper and found it of value. Setting up an effective social media strategy can seem overwhelming, if you need any assistance you can set up a meeting over the phone or visit us at [OnBalanceSearch.com](http://OnBalanceSearch.com) to discuss your goals and strategy. We can help you get started or evaluate your current strategy to make it even better. Its time you take the next step and become a rainmaker.

#### **About On Balance Search Consultants**

On Balance offers great insight and industry intelligence. Shari Davidson is president of On Balance Search Consultants, she advises law firms on how to take a firm to the next level and helps rising talent make the transition to the right law firm.



Contact us today call 516.731.4300 or visit our website at <http://www.onbalancesearch.com>.

*Please note that the content of this blog does not constitute legal advice and is only intended for the educational purpose of the reader. Please consult your legal counsel for specifics regarding your specific circumstances and the laws in your states pertaining to social media and any legal restrictions regarding the law.*

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