

Five Tips for Starting Your Own Legal Blog

The fine art of blogging has been around in some form or fashion now for decades. While the basic elements of a blog have remained consistent over time, blogging's *raison d'être* has evolved.

What began as a vehicle for screaming into the void of the internet has taken on a host of functions. Some bloggers have turned their hobby into a lucrative writing career. Meanwhile, many businesses have discovered that blogging can play an important role in business development. That includes law firms, which are particularly well-suited for blogging. Lawyers tend to be strong writers, and the intellectual nature of their work makes ideal fodder for blog posts.

For lawyers, starting a blog can offer a number of benefits. Most importantly, it allows firms to demonstrate their expertise to potential clients. With each blog post, a law firm is showing the world how it thinks about its chosen subject matter. For prospective clients, those posts can be far more relevant, revealing—and influential in their choice to hire a lawyer—than an attorney bio. Even if a firm's blog does not reach prospects directly, it is a very efficient way of building a professional reputation that will, in time, result in a higher profile and increased referrals. Successful legal bloggers develop large networks of peers who respect their writings. They are also frequently consulted and quoted, by members of the media who come to rely on them as authorities in their fields.

For lawyers and firms looking to start their own legal blogs, here are five tips that will keep readers coming back for more.

1. KEEP THE SUBJECT MATTER NARROW

The idea of starting a blog that touches on all nooks and crannies of the law, legal profession or legal trends may be tempting for some. Unfortunately, the jack-of-all-trades approach makes it difficult to develop a dedicated audience of readers. It also means you're likely to venture off into topics that you're not qualified to discuss. (Who cares what a securities lawyer has to say about the Supreme Court's latest employment law decision?) Blogs like Biggs, Ingram & Solop, PLLC's [Construction Law Toolbox](#) or Crivelli & Barbati, LLC's [New Jersey Public Safety Officers Law Blog](#) have well-defined subjects that draw in readers with interest in those subjects.

Stick to what you know best, no matter how arcane. You will be more likely to find an audience that appreciates your insights into your area of specialization, helping to build your credibility and reputation in the field.

2. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Much like the issue of subject matter, it's important to build your blog around the idea of a target audience. If your goals tend more toward thought leadership and conversations with other legal minds, your topics can be a bit more esoteric. The same goes for the language you use in your writing—terms of art are more acceptable.

On the other hand, potential clients reading your writing will click away if they see too much jargon or feel they need a law degree to understand what's in front of them.

3. POST REGULARLY

Orphan blogs and sites that sporadically post new content are legion around the World Wide Web. Don't be that legal blogger.

Posting regularly on your blog keeps readers in the habit of coming back to your site for information and analysis. If your posting schedule becomes haphazard, it can quickly turn into a case of “out of sight, out of mind” for a once-dedicated audience.

Posting on a consistent basis also helps keep your writing muscles in shape.

4. CONSIDER ADDING CONTRIBUTORS

Adding more writers and contributors to your blog increases the size and scope of your audience. For law firms, divvying up the blogging duties among members of a practice group is a way to keep the non-billable burden to a minimum, and maybe even build a sense of camaraderie. Developing editorial calendars for blogs can also be helpful in thinking about other business development initiatives.

Additional contributors should be even more welcome if they already have a significant presence on social media channels such as Twitter® and LinkedIn®. (It goes without saying that you should be using those outlets to promote your blog as well.)

5. LET YOUR PERSONALITY AND POINT OF VIEW SHINE THROUGH

Don't just summarize news or the buzz around the latest legal trends in your blog. Readers can find that information elsewhere from sources that are far better equipped to provide it to them.

Give your audience insight and context that might not be available anywhere else. You don't have to be the world's greatest wordsmith to develop a popular blog. Just concentrate on making sure your personality, depth of knowledge and passion for the material come out in your writing.

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