

LEGAL MANAGEMENT

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LI Feature

LEGAL INDUSTRY/BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Content Creation: The Key to Kickstarting Your Brand

The right communication can help establish expertise and identity

Lawyers and legal administrators know how important it is to advertise their services on television, in local newspapers, and on billboards and benches around town. However, it's also crucial to create content online that showcases the firm and its expertise.



KYLIE ORA LOBELL
Freelance Writer

"If a lawyer is in a small town, then they can be generalists, but in any city, they have to be specialists. The way to really stand out is to have a niche."

TOM KANE

Principal,
Kane Consulting



If lawyers and managers pursue content marketing in the form of blog posts, white papers, videos, tweets and newsletters, they have the chance to establish or reestablish their firm's brand, draw in more customers, increase their revenue and ascertain their authority in their niche.

"Content creation is an opportunity for lawyers to engage people," says Kevin O'Keefe, the Founder of [LexBlog](#), which helps lawyers get started with blogging and content marketing. "It's a way for lawyers to demonstrate their passion, their care, their knowledge and their experience."

THE BENEFITS OF CONTENT CREATION

When lawyers put out content, they're establishing their firms' identity and brand online. If they produce it on a frequent basis, and it's consistent, they will reap the benefits that go along with content creation.

Mitch Jackson, a Personal Injury Lawyer at Jackson & Wilson in Orange County, California, has been posting videos on YouTube under the name Trial Lawyer Expert for five years. During this time, his firm has "watched our sphere of influence expand," he says. "It now has a global presence. We have been able to reach a large amount of people and help consumers get their legal questions answered."

The videos, which cover communication tips for trial lawyers, tactics lawyers can utilize in the courtroom to clearly get their message across, and questions to ask the jury, have helped Jackson's firm sign on some big name clients.

QUICK HIT 1

While advertising helps firms become known, content marketing is more about fostering conversations and relationships with leads, current customers and business associates.

“Putting out content is one thing. What’s even more important is engaging, interacting with, and helping with questions and the follow-ups that may arise.”

MITCH JACKSON

Personal Injury Lawyer,
Jackson & Wilson



Another particularly effective content method is regular blogging. “Creating content and putting it on your website in the form of blogs is a great proven tool to generate more traffic,” says Stephen Fairley, a Marketer at the [The Rainmaker Institute](#), where he’s helped lawyers with their marketing strategies. He pointed to a [HubSpot survey](#), which revealed that when businesses posted blogs at least 16 times a month on their website, they saw 4½ times more traffic than businesses that blogged less than once a month up to four times per month.

While advertising helps firms become known, content marketing is more about fostering conversations and relationships with leads, current customers and business associates. “It builds reputations within a field that you’d like to be known in, and it builds relationships that last a lifetime,” says O’Keefe. “It’s an investment.”

WHAT KIND OF CONTENT TO CREATE

Before lawyers and law firm managers start producing content, they should determine the goals that they wish to achieve. Do they want to brand or rebrand their firm’s image? Do they wish to bring in more leads? Are they hoping to strengthen existing relationships and make sure clients become repeat customers?

After law firms and departments establish their desired outcomes, they should figure out whom their idyllic client is, according to Gerry Oginski, a Medical Malpractice and Personal Injury Lawyer who founded [The Lawyers’ Video Studio](#), a company that teaches attorneys video marketing. “They should ask themselves what is the ideal case they want to handle, and what cases they would like to handle more of,” he says. “Once they’ve identified who the message is for, they can determine what content they should create for those ideal clients.”

Whether lawyers and law firm managers are putting out written content or videos, O’Keefe suggested keeping track of questions and concerns that people have raised, and then answering those questions within the content.

Fairley says that when lawyers answer clients’ frequently asked questions, “it’s a great way to identify yourself as a subject matter expert and demonstrate your expertise.” Lawyers should be careful not to speak in legalese, though. The content should be easy for any average reader to understand.

QUICK HIT 2

Before lawyers and law firm managers start producing content, they should determine the goals that they wish to achieve. Do they want to brand or rebrand their firm's image? Do they wish to bring in more leads? Are they hoping to strengthen existing relationships and make sure clients become repeat customers?

If lawyers and law firms want to set themselves apart online, and really brand themselves, they're going to need to pick a niche that they reflect within all of their content. "If a lawyer is in a small town, then they can be generalists, but in any city, they have to be specialists," says Tom Kane, who runs LegalMarketingBlog.com and Kane Consulting, a legal marketing and business development consulting firm. "The way to really stand out is to have a niche."

Fairley agrees. "[I believe] very firmly in the statement that the niches lead to the riches. You should pick a niche and go after it. Most people don't niche themselves far enough. It just has to be a niche that's big enough to support your firm."

The content shouldn't be overly promotional, or disingenuous. Above all, says Jackson, lawyers should aim to "add value, and be useful and helpful."

PROMOTING THE CONTENT

Once content is online, it must be promoted. O'Keefe sends out his content to his email subscribers, while Oginski posts his videos on Facebook.

When potential clients come to the law firm for guidance, lawyers can collect their emails, add them to their list and then send them their newsletters. If lawyers at the firm have Twitter accounts and Facebook pages, the content should be posted there.

On LinkedIn, lawyers have the chance to network amongst one another and establish valuable business-to-business connections. They can post their blogs and link to their websites on LinkedIn Pulse and within the legal groups to which they belong.

No matter what kind of content lawyers and law firms are creating, and where they're promoting it, Jackson says that they need to be the people that engage their audience.

"Putting out content is one thing. What's even more important is engaging, interacting with, and helping with questions and the follow-ups that may arise," Jackson says. Clients will trust them and know that they are putting out good content. The relationships they build with their clients are what is going to continue their firms moving forward."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Kylie Jane Wakefield is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles. She covers legal issues, blogs about content marketing, and reports on Jewish topics. She's been published in *Tablet Magazine*, *NewsCred*, *The Jewish Journal of Los Angeles* and *CMO.com*.

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The banner features a stylized map of the United States with a network of grey dots and lines. Three red arrows point to the West, Central, and East regions. The text 'CHOOSE YOUR DESTINATION.' is prominently displayed. The ALA logo (Association of Legal Administrators) is on the left, and 'BUSINESS OF LAW CONFERENCES' is on the right. A dark red banner at the bottom contains the text 'EVOLVING THE BUSINESS OF LAW' and 'Don't miss the premier event for legal management professionals!'. A red triangle in the top right corner says 'REGISTER NOW'. The URL 'Visit alanet.org/blc.' is in the bottom left.

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