

Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition

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Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition

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Executive summary

TWITTER HAS exploded onto the social networking scene and experienced enormous growth since its modest beginnings in 2006. Initially dismissed by many as a pointless fad, there are now a growing number of tales of individuals and companies who have had great success from using Twitter to promote themselves or their services.

However, whilst there is now more interest in Twitter as a viable tool for business growth, many people still have reservations about taking the plunge. Lawyers, in particular, may doubt whether using this new-fangled social media tool is appropriate to their status as trusted advisers.

Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition explains why Twitter is an opportunity that cannot be missed. General counsel from major corporations and high-profile experts in the legal world are already using Twitter – shouldn't you be, too? This new guide introduces lawyers and other professionals working in law firms to the concept, benefits and challenges of Twitter and outlines some essential tricks to enable them to make the most of Twitter.

Chapter 1 puts forward five key reasons why people refuse to use Twitter – and goes on to outline why these arguments are flawed. There's nobody I do business with on Twitter: what about CEOs and general counsel of Fortune 500 companies? It's a waste of time: on the contrary, it's similar to highly-targeted networking at a high-powered cocktail party. Buying decisions aren't made online: simply not true! I don't understand the terminology: easily solved. It's too complex: messages are only 140 characters long – how complex can it be?

Chapter 2 explains how to build a profile that attracts people's attention – for the right reasons. Choosing the right profile picture, adding a link and crafting an interesting yet concise biography are all essential ways to encourage people to connect with you. This chapter teaches you how.

Chapter 3 exposes the six personality-types found on Twitter to help you decide which you want to be: the used-car salesman, the drag queen/king, Aunt Bessie, the celebrity, the Twitter pro or the true friend.

The following six chapters explain the main characteristics and functions of Twitter, to help you maximise its use.

In Chapter 4, practical advice is given on how to find and start following relevant and interesting people on Twitter, whether they are people you know or people you would like to know. This chapter will also get you started on building a following of your own.

Chapter 5 explains the etiquette for starting discussions on Twitter. In particular you will learn the function of the @reply and how to use it correctly. Tips are given on advanced usage and how to use the @reply for group discussions.

'Retweets', the Twitter equivalent of e-mail forwards, are covered in Chapter 6. The author explains the value of retweets, how they work, and how you can pique people's interest and encourage them to retweet your posts.

Chapter 7 explains how to ensure your conversations are found, by using the hash tag (#). This simple character ensures that a) you can easily spot conversations that interest you, and b) that others can search and find posts by you that are relevant to them. This chapter also gives the inside scoop on some commonly-used hash tags that may otherwise baffle the novice user.

Chapter 8 provides some tips on 'tweet-ups' – when the online world meets the offline world. The chapter outlines the importance of focus (think about what you want to accomplish, and ensure the participants have a common interest), how to find relevant people or another tweet-up arranged by someone else, and the best thing about a tweet-up: it's free!

Chapter 9 introduces the TweetDeck, a downloadable application which can help you organise messages and ensure you don't miss valuable information. The most useful features are explained, such as how to shorten URLs to save valuable characters, how to create groups (and why) and how to save searches. Twitter Grader, a handy statistics tool, is also introduced.

The following chapters get to the heart of the matter: how to integrate Twitter with the rest of your marketing and networking tools to ensure you are maximising the rainmaking possibilities.

Chapter 10 outlines how to create a Twitter-friendly website and use Twitter as a customer services tool. Chapter 11 goes on to explain how Twitter can be integrated with your website to enhance lead generation. Once your followers or other interested parties have found your website, there needs to be content that will convert their passing interest to a lead – or ideally new legal business. This chapter dispels three myths about websites and offers three tips for building a fit-for-purpose website. It further demonstrates how the traffic driven from Twitter can be converted into paying clients. Included is a detailed explanation of the close ratios and data needed to show the real return on investment of your Twitter activities.

Twitter is all about providing good, helpful content to your followers, and Chapter 12 goes into more detail regarding how to continue that trend of ‘giving’ on your website to capture leads, and to convince individuals to part with their e-mail addresses.

Chapter 13 explains the ways to identify, qualify and engage prospective clients using Twitter. Every relationship on Twitter is potentially valuable; this chapter gives you the keys to turning conversations into offline clients.

Chapter 14 addresses the concerns that many law firms express about allowing or encouraging their lawyers to use Twitter. Once written, comments cannot be taken back and, as in offline life, the maxim ‘Don’t say stupid things’ applies. However, whilst Twitter can magnify bad deeds, it also magnifies what is best about your firm and puts it in front of a wider audience. Do you really want to miss out on this amazing opportunity?

Is Twitter working for lawyers? You bet. Chapter 15 shares dozens of success stories from lawyers specialising in different areas. Other lawyers are bringing in great clients through social media. Are you?

Social media and Twitter are here to stay. Chapter 16 provides mind-blowing statistics that demonstrate social media is not a fad, but a fundamental shift in the way we communicate.

About the author

ADRIAN DAYTON graduated from Brigham Young University with a BA in Economics and started his own import company before attending law school. Subsequently joining Jaeckle Fleischmann & Mugel LLP as a corporate attorney, he worked on a team that closed a merger worth approximately 450 million dollars. He later formed Comrad Esq, a public relations firm that aids firms in marketing with a focus on social media strategy (see <http://adriandayton.com>). Mr. Dayton has since been recognised by the *Wall Street Journal*, the *ABA Journal* and *Above the law*. *Social Media for Lawyers: Twitter Edition* is the second book that Mr. Dayton has written. His first book, *The Year of 12 Virtues: Old World Virtues to Save the Modern World*, is anticipated to be released in 2010 by Shadow Mountain. In addition, Mr. Dayton has served a two-year humanitarian mission in Chile, studied developmental economics at the London School of Economics, and travelled extensively through Europe and Asia. He resides in Amherst, NY, with his wife and young son.

Dedication

TO MY brother Damian who introduced me to Twitter, Brian who explained to me how to use it, and Gini, Justin, Jeff and Julio who made me feel right at home online.

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I want to thank a good friend Rachel Nielson for taking the time to teach me how to write a good story. She offered plenty of free advice when I was working on my first book that has changed the way I think about writing forever. I also want to thank Gwynne Monahan who I met in Chicago, and who has been a trusted adviser and editor through the whole process of writing this book. I am a much better writer today because of the impact of these two individuals.

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Finally, thanks to my lovely wife Natalie for her tireless support. Even though she has had rough days raising our son downstairs while I work upstairs in my home office, she has never complained and has helped make it possible to live my dream of working from home, running my own company and travelling the world. I am so grateful to have her with me along for the ride.

Foreword

I LOVE the city. My flight didn't leave for a few more hours, so I decided to grab some sushi with two of my tallest friends, Noah and Ely Eyre. It was a perfect evening. 70 degrees, with the type of light that makes you feel like you're in a movie, shining on the sides of the buildings along Third Avenue. It was really a perfect moment, and you would think at a time like this I would have no interest in checking my e-mail. But it had been a few hours, and so I hit refresh on my Treo.

"Dude, you made the *Wall Street Journal*!" read the message on my e-mail. What in the world? How could I be in the *Wall Street Journal*? I wondered. I quickly opened up a web browser on my phone and tried to look for the article.

"What are you looking for?" asked Ely.

"Apparently I was just quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*. I want to see if I can find the article." My phone was too slow; I couldn't even find the search portion of the website. Then Ely handed me his iPhone. There was the article. It wasn't just a quote in the *Wall Street Journal*: the *Journal* had picked up one of my blog posts and written a whole story about it.

This had all started four months earlier. Ironically, it was the last time I was in New York City.

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As I walked up to the security guard I realised I had no business meeting with a New York City publicist. My book wasn't even finished, and not a single publisher had shown interest. I don't know what I was hoping for. Maybe they could wave a magic wand, and suddenly my book would be published and I would be a celebrity. A friend of a friend had used this publicity firm to get on 'Oprah' back in the 80s, and somehow my friend convinced them to have a meeting with me.

"Good morning! I'm Shannon," I was greeted by one of the most enthusiastic people I had ever met. "I need to apologize in advance, I am

feeling a little under the weather. I usually have a lot more energy.” Was she serious? She led us into an office that looked like something out of ‘Ocean’s Eleven’. Glass tiles, light coloured wood floors, and a conference room that was encased in glass. It didn’t offer much privacy, but it was so cool looking. I guess this is the type of place cool famous authors hang out.

After chatting a little bit, it was time to discuss my manuscript. With all the enthusiasm I could muster, I explained to her my manuscript with a working title of ‘The Year of 12 Virtues’. I explained how it would work, why it was different, and why it was so important that it get published. When I finished, there was silence for a second or two. So what did she think?

“I love the idea,” she said. “This sounds like the type of book we could absolutely promote.”

“So can you help me start promoting it? I was hoping to start speaking about the concepts and build some interest in the book in advance,” I offered.

“Well, you are kind of putting the cart before the horse. Do you have a publisher?”

“No.”

“Look, we love the idea, but until you are published, nobody is going to care what you have to say about the topic. We can recommend a few publishers you can submit manuscripts to, but you really need to get published before we can do anything.” Wow, this getting published and gaining publicity was going to be harder than I thought. I guess there is a reason there are so few famous people.

I walked out into that crisp January afternoon and light snow had just begun to fall. They liked the book idea, which was a good start, but what next? My brother Damian would know what to do.

“Hey brother,” I said into my cell phone.

“What’s up man, how are things going in New York?”

“Oh alright I guess. I just spoke to this publicity firm in New York. They said they really like my book idea, but I guess I’m not famous and don’t have a PhD or anything so they can’t really help me.”

“That’s a bummer.”

“So what do you think I should do?”

“Why don’t you start a blog and get on Twitter?” Damian suggested. “You really need to speak with Brian about it – he is a PR whizz.” (This was the

second time I had even heard of Twitter. The first time was on the radio, and I didn't even know what Twitter was at the end of the news story.)

So I called Brian.

There was no answer, and I hadn't spoken to Brian in years, so I decided to say something to break the ice in my message, "Hey Brian, this is Adrian. I was wondering if you could help me become the next big thing? Call me back."

A few days later we finally connected. "So, you want to become the next big thing, huh?" Brian asked with a grin.

"No, not really. I just want to get my book published. I think it's a really good idea, but I can't get any publishers to pay attention because I am a 29-year-old who hasn't won an Olympic gold medal or climbed Everest. My brother said something about Twitter?"

"Look, man, the type of book you are writing is exactly the type of stuff people love to blog about. There are whole groups of people online who just talk about self-help and concepts like the ones in your book. Let me give you three pieces of advice to get started:

"1. Start a blog where you talk about your concepts. This way people that are interested can start learning about your book.

"2. Read other people's blogs and leave comments. You need to become part of the community, and pretty soon they will take notice.

"3. Get on Twitter. It's a great way to find all these people who are interested in what you do."

It didn't take me long to start a free blog, build my profile and start using Twitter. I quickly realised that there was an entire world of people on there that I knew nothing about. There was so much to learn... how was I ever going to have time for this? Not to mention the fact that I had a full-time job at a law firm and a family to take care of.

Then the recession hit. For the next two months at my firm, there was no work. A few small projects here and there, but for the most part the new associates like me had no work to do. I decided that instead of being a curse, this was an opportunity. For the next two months I spent six to eight hours a day learning to use Twitter, learning to blog and crafting the techniques that help spread messages. Every week I was able to uncover new strategies and techniques to help me master Twitter. In week one I learned basic

communication, during week two I brought in my first client, and by week three I had made some amazing contacts that changed the path of my life.

You don't have time to spend 300 hours learning to use Twitter, like I did, figuring it out by trial and error. That's why I have written this book. Over the next 12 chapters you will learn, among other things:

- How to engage on Twitter without looking like a rookie;
- How to turn your profile into an 'elevator pitch' that will hook clients in the blink of an eye;
- How to rub shoulders with CEOs;
- How to bring in clients using Twitter; and
- How to make a name for yourself.

Adrian Dayton

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