

# A Valuable ASSET

HOW TO START A SUCCESSFUL LEGAL BLOG AND WHY YOU SHOULD.

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**ONE OF THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE AND PROVEN METHODS** of bolstering a law firm's online presence is starting a blog. Developing a successful legal blog primarily takes dedication and consistency. It's also a continual learning experience, but if you devote the time and resources to it, a blog can become one of your law firm's most valuable assets.

## Five Components of an Optimized Law Firm Blog

- *Two Distinct Page Layouts:* Your blog

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should have page layouts designed for both a main blog page and a blog post page. The main blog page should showcase the most recent several posts in reverse chronological order with clickable links, have an easy-to-use archive of past posts by month and by year, and have a sidebar contact form. The individual blog post page layout should show the post author, publish date, category, image, other recent related posts and/or other posts by the same author, and allow for easy social media sharing.

- *Publish Date:* Each blog post should list the date it was written/published, which provides context to the reader. Even if you remove the dates from the user's view, Google can still see the publish date in the code, so you can't trick search engines into thinking it's newer than it is.
- *Author:* Each blog post should be associated with an author, complete with a link to the author's online biography. Ideally, on a law firm blog, the authors are the attorneys and their author byline should link to their website biography.
- *Practice Area Association:* Each blog post should be associated with one of your firm's practice areas and/or an industry you serve. This can be accomplished by using categories for each blog post.
- *Images:* All blog posts should include relevant, high-resolution imagery that is appropriately resized so as to not slow page load time (if the image is too large) but large enough to render well on the blog post itself and when the post is shared elsewhere, such as on social media.

## Three Reasons Lawyers Should Blog

1. *To Improve Search Engine Rankings for a Law Firm Website:* Successful search engine optimization relies heavily on the presentation of valuable content. Websites with blogs that provide consistently reliable information will rank higher in search engine results.
2. *To Share Expertise and Become a*

*Thought Leader:* If you blog about your practice areas of focus for several years with consistently high-quality content, you will become known as an expert on these topics. Over time, people will begin to view you as a valuable source of information.

3. *To Reach a Worldwide Audience You Would Not Reach Otherwise:* By using a blog to put your law practice out there, you can and will get in front of audiences you normally wouldn't be able to access.

## What Should You Write About and What Can You Write About?

One of the most difficult aspects of blogging is creating better content than what's already out there. Remember that search engines want quality over quantity. Utilize a well-planned content marketing strategy to determine what your target audience is searching for, how you can address their questions, and ensure your posts are optimized and shared appropriately for digital success.

As always, lawyers must abide by mandatory advertising rules and ethical guidelines when transmitting information to the public.

## Measuring Blogging Success

A successful legal blog should help you effectively engage with a variety of audiences. You can find out which blog posts are most interesting to users—and therefore among the most successful—by analyzing metrics like how many readers share your blog posts on social media or whether your posts generate comments. **TBJ**

*This article was originally published on the Stacey E. Burke blog and has been edited and reprinted with permission.*



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