

TECHGEAR

The HTC One (M8) smartphone (from \$199.99 with contract) offers front-facing speakers that direct audio toward the user, a dual-lens rear-facing camera that supports artistic effects, and a feature that allows the user to control a television and connect with other viewers.



WEBLINKS



As of counsel to Ramey & Browning in Houston, **HARRY LAXTON JR.** litigates civil matters, including intellectual property disputes. He has tried more than 40 jury trials to verdict and is certified as a mediator in Texas. Laxton is a Baylor Law School graduate. Read his blog at lawyerlaxton.com/blog.

statutes.legis.state.tx.us

This user-friendly site provides fast access to all Texas statutes.

patft.uspto.gov

I use this site to search for and retrieve U.S. Patent and Trademark Office materials, particularly patent file histories.

freepatentsonline.com

This is my go-to resource for patents and patent applications.

uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/mpep/

When I need to review the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, I go here.

uscourts.gov/Court_Locator/CourtLocatorSearch.aspx

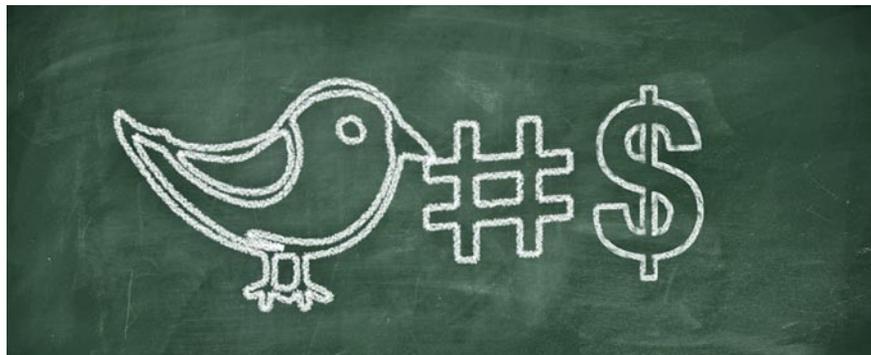
With links to court websites, this is the best source I have found for identifying the specific court for a city or region.

dictionary.reference.com

This is a good starting place for patent claim construction, partly because it incorporates and cites many other dictionaries.

hcdistrictclerk.com/Edocs/Public/search.aspx

This site features court-filed documents in Harris County.



Don't Become a Twit

How Twitter is good for business—when you know what you're doing.

BY BHAVEENI PARMAR

Lawyers in Texas are slowly embracing the idea of using social media, particularly Twitter. Successful users typically engage with the audience in a meaningful way. Those of us who have tweeted for a while can easily spot when a lawyer on Twitter is using the platform for self-promotion. It simply does not work, and it is rare that such lawyers have a good Twitter following. Even worse, some would say, is the lawyer who has a Twitter account and rarely ever uses it.

Twitter is often characterized as a micro-blogging tool used to disseminate information to others with 140-character messages, or “tweets.” The messages can include links to websites, news, blogs, photos, videos, and other media. Once I got onboard, Twitter quickly supplemented my normal reading list and became my personal feed to the latest legal developments. Online search tools such as wefollow.com and twellow.com have proved helpful in identifying thought leaders and newsmakers to pay attention to on Twitter. Using my Twitter “handle” or username—@TechSavvyLaw—I began to follow these experts’ Twitter feeds, and eventually, other tweeters interested in the topics I tweeted about began following my feed.

Over time, I was following more “tweeps” than I could manage. So I began categorizing Twitter accounts and placing each account into Twitter lists, such as “Savvy Lawyer Tweeps” and “Savvy Techies.” I use tweetdeck.com and hootsuite.com to view Twitter feeds and parse traffic by keywords. I’ve also become a huge fan of bufferapp.com and use it to schedule what I consider to be optimal times to post my tweets. Buffer allows me to view the number of clicks a tweet receives and which tweets are retweeted. Based on a particular tweet’s popularity, I may post follow-up tweets on the same subject matter. Tools such as followerwonk.com help with sorting and analyzing followers and tracking those of competitor accounts. To clean up your Twitter following list and delete those who are not following you back, there are a number of tools that can help, including refollow.com.

It took some time for me to learn Twitter language (like RT means retweet, MT means modified tweet, DM means direct message, and #FF means Follow Friday). I recently discovered twittonary.com, and it has become a useful resource for staying current on the ever-increasing vol-

ume of Twitter-related jargon. When possible, I include hashtags in my tweets. Hashtags are simply the # symbol followed by a keyword or subject that describe a particular tweet. For example, when I tweet about a social media legal issue, I try to include the #SocialMedia and #law hashtags. Hashtags, such as #PassionForward for Ms. JD's recent conference, also are used by event promoters and attendees. These tags are searchable, and can be used to follow or join conversations on a particular subject by identifying users who are discussing it. It is a good practice, however, to limit the number of hashtags to 2 to 3 per tweet to avoid unnecessary clutter.

Sites such as hashtag.org, tagdef.com, and netlingo.com are handy resources for figuring out what hashtags are currently trending on Twitter and identifying a particular hashtag for the concept or subject you are trying to convey. Tools such as twitonomy.com can help provide analytics and insights into the subjects that appeal to your audience. Once such topics and corresponding hashtags are identified, consider aggregating and curating tweets from your Twitter feed into your personal online newsletter using services such as paper.li. The newsletter can easily be shared over Twitter or emailed to third parties.

By engaging with others on Twitter and disseminating useful information to a target audience, I often have been retweeted to hundreds—if not thousands—of other users in Texas, across the United States, and even internationally. While Twitter is a powerful engine to disseminate information quickly to the masses, Twitter communications by lawyers about their legal services are subject to the State Bar of Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. I also refrain from voicing opinions on the content of the links I tweet, and I do not discuss client matters on my Twitter feed. I am also mindful not to

tweet any solicitations for business or advertisements for my firm.

My goal on Twitter has been to distribute information to those who may be interested. The time and energy I invest on Twitter has been fruitful to my business and, when used properly, may be a good development tool for most lawyers. Keep in mind, however, that everyone can see your tweets (as long as your account is set as public). If you create a Twitter account, go all

in, be engaged, and avoid becoming a sideline twit. **TBJ**



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Vehicle Accidents

Has Your Client Made a Full Recovery?

Have you asked yourself: Is anything wrong with the vehicle's safety systems that may have caused your client's injury or death?



- Did you check if the airbag deployed late or not at all?
- Did you check the seatbelts for evidence of unlatching?
- Did you evaluate roof crush?
- Did you check to see if a door opened?
- Did the seats deform?
- Did the vehicle catch on fire?

Vehicle safety systems routinely fail during accidents and expose people to the risks of serious injuries and death. To ensure your clients' have obtained a full recovery, a crashworthiness evaluation of the vehicle must be conducted.

At the TRACY law firm, we constantly question how the vehicle's safety systems perform during an accident.

The TRACY law firm is a nationwide law practice dedicated to the issue of identifying vehicle safety systems that violate the principles of crashworthiness.



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