

Relying On the Tried and True (and the New) To Maximize Media Exposure

I remember getting a call from my father many years ago; his best friend had just published a book and was doing a reading and signing at the local book store. This was a huge deal ... to actually know someone who was an author (regardless of the topic or genre), who went through all the motions of finding a publisher, often making a substantial personal financial sacrifice, not to mention all the time and stress involved in meeting publisher demands and deadlines. Today, it takes roughly one hour on a website like Lulu or Blurb and \$10 (if you go the premium route) and voilà — you're published. The point here is that the universe as we know it is shrinking before our very eyes, and major life accomplishments like writing a book, recording an album or shooting a video are now a mere click away.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES

Relate this to your ability and opportunity to become an author or presenter in the area that you know best — legal IT. Thanks to associations like ILTA, there are a multitude of opportunities to have your voice and, more important, your subject-matter expertise be heard; you can write an article, participate in webinars and podcasts or land a speaking gig at a meeting or conference. While you might be on the fence about the what (should my topic be) and the where (should I try to gain exposure), the why (should I even bother) rarely comes into play anymore. We all understand the merits of creating value-added content, espousing our expertise and putting our name out there. But, quite frankly, the days of “I’m doing this for me” are gone as motivators to publish because, in today’s competitive climate, your boss stresses the importance of touting your knowledge, and your clients expect it.

HARNESS THE POWER OF THE WEB

At ILTA’s annual conference in Nashville, I had the privilege of moderating and participating in a panel discussion on “Generating Media Exposure for IT Leadership,” designed to help ILTA members improve their writing and promotional “game” by providing them with tips and best practices on seeking more writing opportunities and maximizing their exposure once published. As mentioned by fellow panelist Ayelette Robinson, Littler’s Director of Knowledge Technology and a seasoned author, law firm clients are increasingly looking at your staff’s expertise and broader media exposure. Thanks to Google+, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and similar social media channels, clients will know everything you have said, written and commented on before you ever meet them.

While this sounds incredibly scary and might compel you to do nothing but hide under a rock, I suggest you actually do the opposite and harness the power of social media overexposure to get yourself, the firm or a special project noticed for the right reasons.

Here are some tips and ideas on what you can do now to further spread the word for your article, blog, product review or case study:

Download the presentation and free audio recording of the “Generating Media Exposure for IT Leadership” conference session.
conference.iltanet.org/downloads



The Obvious Stuff

- **Bolster Your Web Presence:** Post your freshly published content within your firm's or department's "news" section and add it to your online profile. If you don't have a profile with vitals including a biography, articles written, presentations given and areas of expertise, create one and keep it current.
- **Share with Clients, Prospects, Partners and Colleagues:** Seek reprint permission for your content, so you can share articles at will with those who want to know (colleagues, firm management, clients, friends and partners) and those who ought to know (prospects, investors and other legal influencers).
- **Embrace Social Media:** Post new content on your Facebook page; pick some relevant LinkedIn groups and add your topic as a new discussion thread; extract interesting facts and tweet about them with a link to the original article; and send your content to bloggers you know, admire or would like to know for comment and feedback.
- **Enhance Firm Presentations:** Based on relevancy, make sure your articles and subject-matter expertise make their way into new business presentations and prospect pitches. Work with your marketing folks to figure out the right mix of self-promotion and thought leadership.

The Less Obvious Stuff

- **Turn the Article into a Webinar or Podcast:** Inexpensive technology tools now enable us to quite easily extend a static article into a multimedia bundle of content. Your article on a cloud-based DMS can be transformed into a 45-minute podcast on the same topic with the inclusion of experts that can share more information than the original article.
- **Contact the Editor or Publisher About Contributing on a Regular Basis:** If you enjoyed writing your article and like what you see on the exposure and feedback front, it might behoove you to seek a permanent contributor role with the publication. Many legal publishers are understaffed and low on resources, and oftentimes they are happy to add a regular columnist to help fill their pages.
- **Offer Your Services to Others:** Look for other media outlets (magazines, blogs, websites, e-zines and newsletters) that might be interested in what you have to say. Send them the article as an “FYI” and offer yourself up as a subject-matter expert. They’ll know who to call the next time they need an expert who deals with, for example, cloud-based security risks.
- **Encourage Feedback by Rewarding It:** Editors love to know what their readers think about certain articles and topics, but usually only those with complaints take the time to voice their opinions. Turn this paradigm on its head, and foster collaboration among your readers by rewarding them for being vocal. When promoting your content via social media tools, incent your community to comment on your blog post by offering up affordable freebies such as gift cards, t-shirts or other promotional items.
- **Manage Your Online Identity:** As you begin to amass content and increase your online exposure, take some time to manage your online presence. Companies such as Vizibility, for example, will help individuals or companies organize and share their online identities, including personalized Google search results and handpicked professional profiles. This provides a “one-stop, one-search” look at all your content and contributions.
- **Leverage QR Codes:** A Quick Response (QR) code typically points to an online resource, such as an individual’s profile or related articles, quickly accessed via smartphones and mobile devices. A recent Vizibility survey, “Infographic: QR Code Usage in Legal Marketing,” found that 86 percent of law firms plan to use QR codes to market their individual attorneys, with more than half pointing individual QR codes to biographical information and contact details. Why not use QR codes for your articles as well?
- **Integrate It All:** While achieving an integrated marketing approach to everything you publish will most likely require some heavy lifting from your marketing group, the value of having everything you say and do in one place, with the same message, accessible to a diverse target audience is incredible. Case in point: Fulbright & Jaworski recently published its latest “Litigation Trends Survey Report” and made it accessible via a dedicated Web page with options to attend a results-focused webinar, join a LinkedIn and Facebook discussion or follow key stats via their Twitter feed. The website also included links to official press announcements, as well as articles and blog posts dedicated to the topic.

SPREAD THE WORD

Whether you decide to pull out all the stops and leverage the tried and the new when promoting yourself and your subject-matter expertise or you stick to simply adding a link to the article on your firm’s website, it’s important to expose what you have worked so hard to create. But remember, your competition for clients, jobs and authoring/speaking opportunities is spanning the globe, and it might just come down to who has the most positive exposure. **ILTA**



Jobst Elster is the Head of Content at InsideLegal.com, an online community and advisory resource for legal technology vendors, law firms, legal technologists and thought leaders. He has spent the past 13 years in the legal industry, working with vendors, consultants, the media and law firms on various marketing consulting, public relations and marketsurvey initiatives. Jobst contributes to publications, including *Attorney at Work*, *Peer to Peer*, *Legal Management*, *ABA GPSolo* and *BtoB Magazine*, and has presented at ILTA’s annual conference on increasing media exposure for IT leadership. He can be reached at elster@insidelegal.com.