

## **What's the Harm In a Simple Status Post? How Social Media Can Affect Your California Personal Injury Case**

by [\*Jessica S. Grigsby\*](#) on 09/28/10

I admit that I am 100% guilty of what I'm recommending in this week's blog. So, I am officially qualifying this post by admitting wholeheartedly that I recognize the hypocrisy of my lawyerly ways and understand I am taking a "do as I say, not as I do" stance. Even worse, after finishing this week's entry, I will likely feature it on...you guessed it...my Facebook page. After all, I did recently post that I was enjoying the bounty of my time-wasting I-phone Apps on my company expensed cell phone knowing full well my boss is in fact my Facebook friend. Like I said, not a lot of forethought on the status posting on my part.



But here is the reality of social media sites. Much of the information is readily discoverable and can be used against you in your personal injury case. So I will answer my own question, "what's the harm in a simple status post" not as I have rationalized it in my head over the past few Facebook-filled years, but as I would like my clients to answer it: Yes, social media sites can be detrimental to your personal injury case.

Let's say this is you: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHtMbeqigs4> And your hobby of choice is mattress surfing. Let's say you got in a horrible auto accident claiming back injuries. At trial, the Defense plays this little ditty of you from YouTube for the jury. Suuurreee the jury is going to believe your injuries were caused by the car accident and not your little extracurricular activities. In reality, your case just wiped out like that ATV-pulled turn at mile marker seven. When you bring a claim for personal injury, you can be certain that insurance adjusters and defense attorneys alike will be searching for incriminating details regarding your personal injury claim. If you insist on using social media sites, here are a few tips to safeguard your privacy:

1. Check your privacy Settings. Try and make your personal information as private as possible, including status posts and photo albums.
2. Only select friend requests from people you know – when in doubt, click “ignore.”
3. Do not join groups with compromising names and/or discussions.
4. If possible block certain people from viewing your profile. In Facebook, this can be done under the privacy settings. You can also remove yourself from search results by selecting “Only Friends” under availability.
5. You can also remove yourself from Google Facebook searches by un-checking the box in Facebook under Public Search Listing.
6. Keep your case private. Do not post any photos or give any information about your injury.