

Zen & The Art of Legal Networking

INSIGHTS & COMMENTARY ON RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS NETWORK

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Webinar Re-cap: Facebook & Twitter for Lawyers with Dave Kerpen of Likeable Media and Nancy Myrland of Myrland Marketing Part II



The ILN has offered a webinar series to our members for the past two years, and in 2010/2011, we offered a three-part series on social networking. In October, we started with, "[Social Networking Strategy & Blogging](#)," with Kevin O'Keefe of LexBlog and in December, we had Freesource's Nathan Egan discuss "[LinkedIn for Lawyers](#)." January's webinar with [Dave Kerpen](#) of [Likeable Media](#) and [Nancy Myrland](#) of [Myrland Marketing](#) focused on Facebook and Twitter for Lawyers.

Part II with Dave focused on Using Facebook to Grow Your Law Firm. As I mentioned in my [first post](#), due to some technical difficulties, our webinar didn't record any sound, so I'll be re-capping the presentations based on my (hopefully) excellent memory, and the slide decks of our presenters.

As we mentioned in the webinar introduction, Dave is the CEO of Likeable Media, a social media and word of mouth marketing firm. Dave is one of the leading experts on social media and Facebook marketing, and he and his work have been featured on CNBC's "On the Money," ABC World News Tonight, the CBS Early Show, the New York Times, and countless blogs.

Dave began with a quick overview of how his company got started - incidentally, it was getting married in a baseball stadium - and shared some of his clients. He added that he would be publishing "[Likeable Social Media, the book](#)," in May 2011 through McGraw - Hill.

Dave then jumped into a whirlwind of information about Facebook, saying that "like" is the new link. For those of you not overly familiar with Facebook, users have the ability to "like" pages, comments, and links on the site (thus offering personal information about their likes to Facebook helping to customize the experience) and more recently, users are now able to "like" articles and links OUTSIDE of Facebook, which then shares these with

their connections.

Dave, like Nancy, cautioned that social media is just not all about you - he illustrated this with a cartoon of a group sitting around a conference table:



(I'm hoping my audience understands why this is funny!)

Then, we got into the practical stuff and Dave offered 18 ways to "delight your customers, create an irresistible brand, and be generally amazing on Facebook and other social networks."

1. **Listen first and never stop listening** - Dave used the example of checking into what was supposed to be "the" hotel in Las Vegas. After waiting in line to check in for more than an hour, he tweeted his despair. The hotel didn't respond, but another hotel did and wished him a speedy check-in - they didn't try to sell him. So the next time he was in Las Vegas? He stayed at the other hotel. Listen to your customers - and your potential customers!
2. **Way beyond women 25-54: define your target audience better than before** - Facebook allows you to target advertising very specifically, which is incredibly useful.
3. **Think like your customer, and be "likeable," literally.** Dave talked about the two ways that users can view Facebook - either through the "most recent" posts, which include all posts by their connections and pages, or through "Top news." Top news posts are based on the posts with the most "likes" or most comments - viewing Facebook this way is the most popular, so the more people "like" you, the more people will see you on Facebook.
4. **Convert your current customers to like you first.** When creating a Facebook page, Dave encouraged the audience to invite their current clients to be the first to participate. He cited ten reasons that consumers "like" fan pages on Facebook based on reports from CoTweet and ExactTarget - these include:
 - a) to receive discounts and promotions
 - b) to show support for a brand to friends
 - c) to get a "freebie" (e.g. free samples, coupon)

- d) to stay informed about company activities
- e) for updates on future projects
- f) for updates on upcoming sales
- g) just for fun
- h) to get access to exclusive content
- i) to learn more about the company
- j) for education about company targets

5. **Engage!** As Nancy mentioned during her presentation, engaging through social media is one of the most important functions of the tools. Dave showed a couple of examples of how to do this, including responding to comments on Facebook pages. Which led into his next point...

6. **Respond quickly to all of the bad comments.** A lot of people's initial reaction would be to just delete negative comments, but these are an opportunity to convert someone who is unhappy (again showing all of your customers that you're listening to them). He showed a couple of examples of negative comments on Facebook, which the companies responded to within only a few hours. This resolved the consumers' issues and often converted them to being a more contented customer. In one case, the consumer went from threatening a lawsuit to talking about how much they loved the product.

7. **Respond to the good comments too, in your brand voice.** Responding to the good comments is equally important, because it's also about engaging with your audience. Using the brand's "voice" reinforces the brand personality and gives the audience more of a reason to "like" your company or firm.

8. **Be authentic (and even vulnerable!).** This can be a scary one for law firms, but it's important. Dave used the example of movie star, [Vin Diesel](#), who has the most popular fan page on Facebook - he posts directly to the page (rather than outsourcing it to staff), and this accessibility makes him likeable to his fans. This can work equally well for law firms.

9. **Be honest and transparent.** Your Facebook audience is very sophisticated, and they want to know the truth. The more honest and transparent you are, the more they can identify with you, and start to trust the firm's brand - and trust is what leads to relationships, and ultimately, referral opportunities.

10. **Should you ask a lot of questions?** Dave said that in a recent study, Likeable Media looked at status updates that
 - a) post a question or challenge directly to fans (ex; What's your favorite type of flower?" or "fill in the blank: summer is ____")
 - b) Ask fans to "like" it (ex: "like this status if you're ready for the weekend!")
 - c) Announce winners of a Facebook-hosted contest or sweepstakes (ex: "Congrats to Devin Sugameli, winner of a \$25 gift card from us!") and
 - d) Include "everything else" - all remaining status updates that didn't fit any of the above categories

They found that in 100% of the cases, engagement rates for posts that asked fans to "like" this were up to 5.5 times (on average 2.7x) higher than those for "other" updates. In 9 out of 10 cases, status updates that posed a question directly to fans were 2-6 times as engaging as "other" updates.

Some sample questions that Dave suggested included:

- a) What would you like to see more of in this community?
- b) Who are you inspired by most?
- c) Where is the most interesting place you've used our product?
- d) When did you first use our service?
- e) Why do you like this Page?

11. **Provide value (yes, for free!).** Law firms may be wary of this, so Dave showed an example of a law firm on Twitter (with 218 "fans") doing just that. They offered some tips for what to know before it snows, and said that anyone liking their page would be entered to win a free professional snow removal for December - March anywhere in Wisconsin. Depending on your area of law, this can be tailored, and a useful way to encourage people to learn more about you.
12. **Share stories (stories are social currency for companies).** We've known this one for a long time - that's why success stories that show how and why a company works are so popular.
13. **Inspire your customers to share stories.** Dave showed the audience a Facebook page called "I love Mary @ McDonalds/Chandler" dedicated to a McDonalds employee. The page has over 1,400 fans and in addition to supporting the McDonalds brand, it enables their fans to talk about why they love this McDonalds, which encourages other people who see the page to either visit that local McDonalds, or discover their own "Mary." Fiskars, Apple and Zappos have done similar things.
14. **Integrate social media in the entire customer experience.** Dave showed a northeast/mid-Atlantic law firm who have included links to their social media sites right on their website. Companies have included their Facebook information right on their brand packaging, or at their point-of-sale locations. Law firms can do this too, even though their customer experience is different to that of retail consumers.
15. **Use social network ads carefully and efficiently.** With Facebook's ability to effectively target various demographics and connections, their ads are more targeted than ever. Use these to reach your target audience and give them a reason to click on the ad.
16. **Admit when you f--k up & then leverage it.** Domino's Pizza is a great example of this - a number of customers were very unhappy with their pizza, so they've used this as an opportunity to re-invent themselves and their pizza. Their commercials and social media efforts are all dedicated to supporting this, and it's gotten the public's attention.

17. **Consistently deliver excitement, surprise & delight.** This may sound impossible - but it's not. Make sure you have someone enthusiastic as your social media brand "voice" and they will be excellent at interacting with the fans on your page.
18. **Don't sell! Just make it easy & compelling for customers to buy.** For Facebook marketing, you need to have awareness, which leads to educating your connections, followed by engaging with them and creating likeability. This then leads to sales, at which point it's important to repeat that engagement.

It may be difficult to avoid selling on Facebook, but one of the things I've often heard from lawyers is that they miss the old days when they "sold" by doing their jobs well, delivering results, and getting clients through word of mouth. Facebook is simply the new way of doing this - help your clients, educate your connections, engage with them, and this will give them the trust they need to want to work with you. Continue to deliver value to them, and they'll help you sell your services.

As in Nancy's presentation, Dave addressed how the audience could get started with Facebook marketing today. He emphasized that profiles and pages are two different things, saying that firm's should be setting up pages, not profiles. He said that if you can add a business as a "friend," it's not properly set up. Individual profiles are for individuals.

Groups are another option for Facebook, and these are organized around common interests. Groups have limited functionality, but give you the ability to organize large groups of people and can be public or private. As an example, the ILN has a [Facebook page](#) that is public and offers information about the Network to a general audience. The ILN also has a closed Facebook group for member firms, where they can connect and collaborate, in addition to receiving information about the ILN.

Fan pages are established for businesses and Facebook users can "like" these - they are completely public, and people don't need to be a member of Facebook to see them. They are also highly functional. In addition to fan pages, there are community pages. Community pages allow users who are not necessarily members of a firm or brand, to generate support for their favorite cause or topic. As it grows in popularity, it can be adopted and maintained by the Facebook community, rather than one single user.

Dave told the audience that the five most engaging status updates are:

- Photos
- Videos
- Links
- Questions
- Interactive Apps (like polls, quizzes, virtual gifts, etc.)

And he finished up by saying that if his 18 rules were too much to remember, they could be drilled down into four:

- Listen up!
- Be transparent!
- Respond to everyone!
- Just be likeable!

I couldn't agree more.

To get in touch with Dave:

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