



## The JD Supra-LinkedIn Story

The brainchild of a San Francisco-area attorney, JD Supra places lawyer-generated articles into streams of legal news on a wide range of subjects, which it then spreads over new media platforms like Google News, Twitter, RSS feeds, Facebook, syndication partnerships, and a JD Supra widget for maximum exposure. JD Supra's approach—to place legal news where readers have already gathered on the Web—showed results immediately. Within months of creating a simple, automated Twitter account for its [Real Estate Law articles](#), it had gained 5,000 followers.

But JD Supra's ideal social networking partner was always LinkedIn, which is largely closed to third-party applications. As it happened, the popular *TechCrunch* blog agreed. Last year, it published a post ([Law 2.0: JD Supra Frees Legal Content](#)) noting the natural fit between JD Supra and LinkedIn, which has a substantial professional readership with an interest in legal subject matter. Within a half hour of the *TechCrunch* blog post going up, JD Supra's phone rang.

It was LinkedIn, and they wanted to talk.

The call was a defining moment for the young company, born in 2007 when attorney Aviva Cuyler had an epiphany: shouldn't there be an online hub where lawyers could share and get exposure for their written work?

She bounced the idea off another parent at the Point Reyes Station school her daughter attended, who knew a thing or two about good ideas for the Internet: he had been the 28th employee in the door at Yahoo! When he didn't tell Aviva she was crazy, she was off and running.

A year later, JD Supra was ready for launch. By then, Aviva had brought that former Yahoo! employee, Adrian Lurssen, on board as VP of Strategic Development. And when it came time to find office space for the start-up, they picked a most fitting location: the former home of Janis Joplin.

What does a flower power icon have to do with a legal news service? Quite a bit.

A specialist in writing legal briefs, Aviva knew that having a virtual portfolio of one's best work would not only be a convenience for lawyers but also a powerful match-making tool between the attorneys posting content and the clients looking for their expertise. The more people who see your writings, after all, the more likely you are to find someone interested in them.

JD Supra's mission, then, became getting its members' articles in front of a wide audience of readers interested in legal subjects. The free-sharing ethos of the Internet, with its echoes of the 1960s, offered the perfect fuel for that to happen. By posting its content freely across platforms and encouraging the linking, sharing,

recommending, and forwarding of its articles, JD Supra delivers its most popular articles into the hands of tens of thousands of targeted readers.

The harmony between JD Supra's philosophy and the countercultural past of its office becomes clear when one considers the top contributor to the service: the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which has posted more than 1,000 documents. EFF, which promotes free expression on digital media, was co-founded by none other than John Perry Barlow, the former lyricist for the Grateful Dead who penned classics like "Hell in a Bucket" and "Mexicali Blues."

Of course, business-minded lawyers may be more impressed that the second-largest contributor to JD Supra is [Morrison & Foerster LLP](#), one of the nation's most prominent law firms.