

[Lawyers: Don't Be Toast or Even Worse — Burnt Toast](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 4th, 2013

[LexBlog's Kevin McKeown](#) is both a great friend and a wonderful source of information. Whenever we are together I feel like I learn something from him. I asked Kevin to share his thoughts with you.

As a lawyer, your digital footprint should create a positive first impression or chances are you're toast. And, if you don't have any "toehold" online then your toast is burnt.

Why?

These days all client and potential clients can be reached via social media and social networking channels. In fact, [98% of business decision-makers](#) read [blogs](#), [watch peer videos](#), and listen to [podcasts](#). In the [legal vertical](#) as an example, 74% of [in-house counsel](#) say they use social media in listen-mode only.



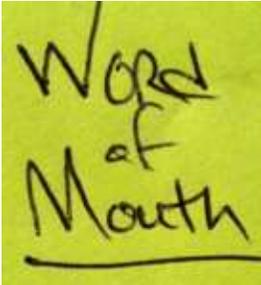
If you're not online driving your agenda someone else is...

Today, the Internet (online, digital, social) plays a big part in how the [word-of-mouth engine](#) works. Consider:

- 81% of all potential clients are [going online](#) to check out professional services firm during the buying process
- Four out of five buyers change their minds about purchasing based solely on [negative](#) online information
- 87% of buyers say that a [positive](#) online review influences their buying decision to make a purchase

That should be no surprise if you're paying attention to the world around you:

Today's buyers are increasingly sophisticated. While getting a referral from a trusted friend might start the ball rolling, the [potential client] will go home and do some more research. They will probably give your website a drive-by. Maybe read a few blog posts and look to see if you're active on their social channels. They'll even spend a few minutes on Google to see what pops up about your firm—positive or negative. —[Lee Frederiksen](#), Ph.D.



Because of the power of word-of-mouth, your clients have the potential to influence others to retain – or not to retain – your services. Positive and negative reviews certainly sway opinions about your law practice but so does sitting on the sidelines doing nothing. And frankly, I'm not sure what's worse: losing a potential client to a negative review or losing that potential client because they couldn't find any information about you online.

Don't be conspicuous by your absence.

So, how do you avoid the toaster?

1. Develop a business development plan AND execute ([Cordell](#) is a master coach).
2. Decide how you want to be [viewed](#) online (present yourself accordingly).
3. Demonstrate your passion and authority through your writing ([blogging](#)).
4. Make sure your content narrative complements and [leverages](#) your other BD efforts.
5. Know your [client's industry](#) cold (cultivating expert-level [influence](#) takes time).



Waiting for work to come in the door is no fun. Don't be that lawyer wishing for a positive online review. Having a well-structured online content strategy online is critical to your success.

How is the Internet changing the way you do your business development? I'd love your thoughts on this. You can leave a comment below, [email me](#), or catch me on Twitter at [@kevinmckeown](#).

About the Author



Kevin McKeown is empowering 8,000 lawyers to network through the Internet as [LexBlog's](#) President. The [LexBlog Network](#) is the largest professional blog network in the world. Kevin's career spans 27+ years. He's a veteran of Mitsubishi International Corporation and other emerging technology/Internet companies. Kevin is also an Attorney licensed in two states and a former federal law clerk. His blog, [LeadershipCloseUp](#), is about the collision of social networking, leadership and the business of relationships.

Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At *Jenkins & Gilchrist*, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started *Cordell Parvin LLC*. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, www.cordellparvin.com or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.