

Using Social Media to Accelerate the Referral Process

By Stephen Fairley

<http://bit.ly/oQRGxT>

Social media has become a fundamental shift in the way we communicate and find information -- or rather, the way information finds us.

When you consider the overwhelming number of people who are now using social media, the question you should be asking is not, are my prospects, clients, and referral sources using social media? The question you should be asking is, *which* network are they using most often?

A survey last year by the American Bar Association's Legal Technology Resource Center found that **56% of attorneys are already using a social network**. This means for you skeptics out there, if you are not maintaining a presence on at least one social network you are already behind the curve. Of those networks, LinkedIn is the most popular, followed by Facebook – however, Facebook is still the social site favored by prospects.



For attorneys who are looking to connect with consumers (versus business owners), like criminal defense, personal injury, bankruptcy, estate planning, and family law just to name a few, Facebook should be your primary focus because of the sheer number of people that can be found there (over 950 million registered users and growing). Depending on the demographic of your clientele, you may have more success with one social media platform compared to another -- but **it is important that you have a presence on them all**. For example: Business oriented attorneys, like business litigation, securities, and intellectual property, should focus more of their efforts on LinkedIn. However, LinkedIn also has the highest number of attorneys who use the network so it's a little more difficult to stand out as compared to Facebook or Twitter.

What many people fail to understand is how people are starting to use social media. **Social networks are more and more being used as personal search engines** mainly because Google has become too generic and they often don't trust what they find there.

This trend is especially true in the under-30 age group. In fact, many social media experts are starting to point to Facebook as the new Google! Tens of thousands of searches are conducted every day on Facebook for resources and reviews of products, services, and service providers.

The long-time phenomenon of asking your friends and colleagues for a referral has simply gone viral and online. Social networks are quickly multiplying the number of connections a person can ask when seeking a referral to a trusted advisor.

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One of the secret tools of Internet marketing for attorneys is the power of having a targeted blog. In a report on the influence of blogs, eMarketer.com found that 51% of Internet users in the U.S. (that's over 91 million people) read blogs, and they project that usage will go to 60% (150 million) in the next four years! Still think blogs are a fad?

Here's what you'll discover when you read this report:

- Why you must have a blog in order to stay relevant
- 3 keys to successful blogging
- 7 Guidelines for achieving ROI
- Your 3 choices for managing your blog and social media efforts
- And much more!



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Stephen is the CEO of The Rainmaker Institute, the nation's largest law firm marketing company specializing in lead conversion for small law firms and solo practitioners. Over 8,000 attorneys nationwide have benefited from learning and implementing the proven marketing and lead conversion strategies taught by The Rainmaker Institute, LLC.

He works exclusively with attorneys and partners at small and solo law firms to find new clients fast using online and offline legal marketing strategies and to convert more prospects into paying clients using automated marketing and by fixing their follow up systems.

Stephen is a nationally recognized law firm marketing expert and the international best-selling author of 12 books and 7 audio and video training programs.



He is a Registered Corporate Coach (RCC) through the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches, has a Master's degree in Counseling and a second Master's in Clinical Psychology. Stephen's doctoral training is from Wheaton College (IL) in Clinical Psychology and he practiced as a therapist for several years in Virginia and Chicago.

After leaving the field of clinical psychology Stephen founded and ran two technology companies, one in the restaurant industry and another in the health sciences field prior to launching Today's Leadership Coaching, LLC, a Chicago-based professional business coaching and consulting firm.

The Rainmaker Institute, LLC grew directly out of his experiences first speaking to, then coaching, consulting with, and training attorneys. Since that first event at the State Bar of Wisconsin, Stephen has worked with over 8,000 attorneys from virtually every state in the country and almost every practice area.

Stephen's work has been noted and quoted in the American Bar Association's Journal, Entrepreneur, Inc., Fortune Small Business, Harvard Management Update, Business Advisor, the Chicago Tribune, Crain's Chicago Business, and on the front covers of AdvantEdge and Choice magazines. He is a member of the prestigious National Speaker's Association and his Rainmaker seminars are sponsored several times every year by some of the largest state and local bar associations in the country.

On a personal note, Stephen loves to travel and has been to 28 countries, has taken 12 cruises (all over the Caribbean and recently to Alaska), he enjoys boating, fishing and his two Bichon Frise dogs, is married to his college sweetheart, Ruth, and loves living in the desert just outside of Phoenix, Arizona.

For more information Please go to:

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