

## In-House Attorneys Now Use New Media Platforms to Find Lawyers

**By Larry Bodine**, Esq. of Glen Ellyn, (Chicago) IL. He is a business developer with 19 years experience who helps law firms attract and keep more clients. He can be reached at 630.942.0977 and [LBodine@LawMarketing.com](mailto:LBodine@LawMarketing.com). For more information visit [www.LarryBodine.com](http://www.LarryBodine.com).



Larry Bodine

In-house attorneys are turning away from print sources, and now are using new media platforms to deepen their professional networks, and to obtain their legal, business, and industry news and information, according to the new [Corporate Counsel New Media Engagement Survey](#).

**The social networking and new media tools that in-house counsel most frequently use for professional reasons are LinkedIn, blogs, and -- surprise -- Wikipedia.** Other highlights:

- **Blogs** are an increasingly preferred mechanism for obtaining business and legal industry information. Half of in-house counsel agree or somewhat agree that in the future, high-profile blogs authored by law firm lawyers will influence the process by which clients hire law firms.
- **Online beats print:** Corporate counsel now are getting more of their business- and legal-industry related information online than from traditional print sources. 62 percent of in-house counsel prefer to access their business and industry news online via publication web sites compared to 42 percent who prefer the print vehicle. While at first surprising data, a glance at a roomful of lawyers accessing Blackberries, iPhones, Kindles, and iPads helps put this shift from print to online in perspective.
- **Wikipedia** maintains strong credibility with this audience as well, consistent with its high scores in familiarity, professional and personal use among in-house counsel. This is significant given that its open, uncontrolled platform often is criticized for its inaccuracy. This finding may suggest that respondents appreciate them as a “community generated” offerings, willingly trading off questions about the validity of their data for the “open” process by which they receive their content.

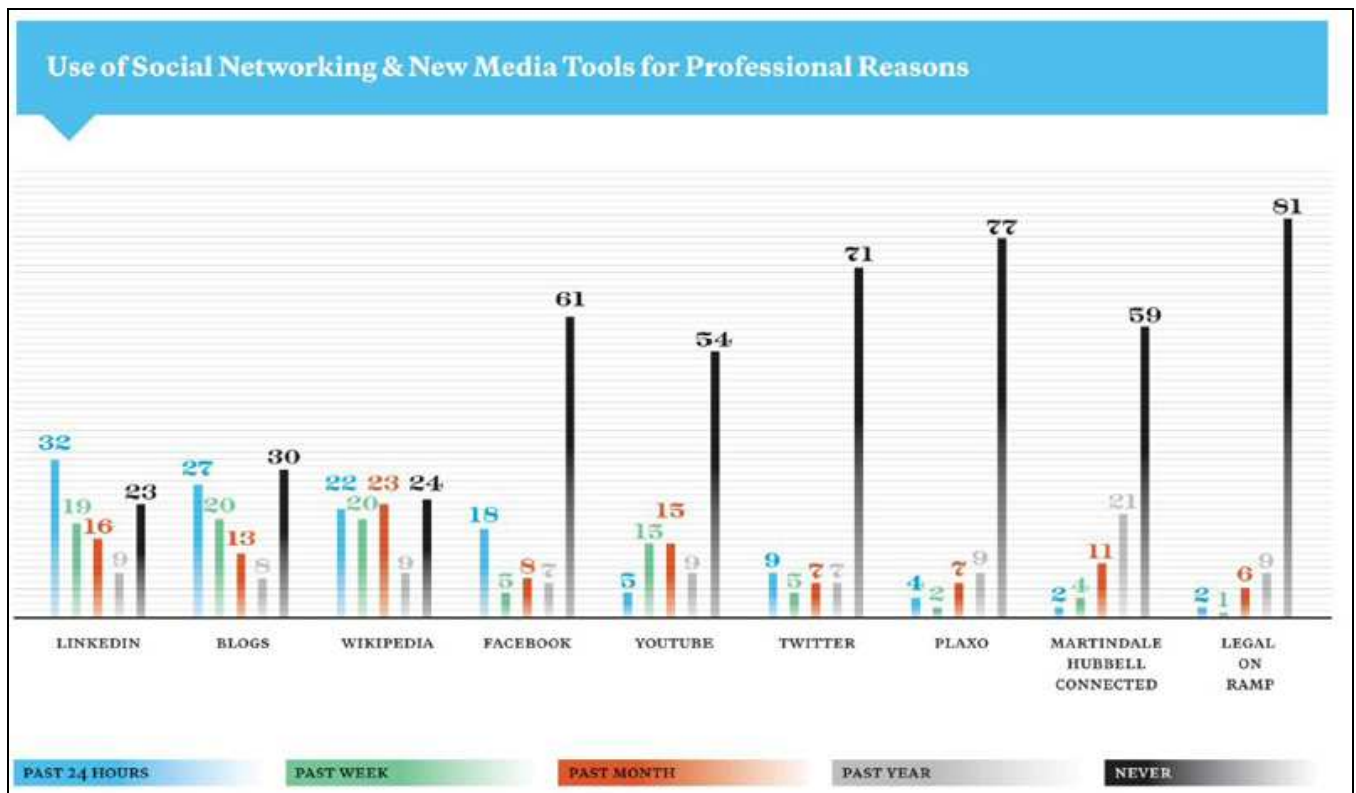
### Influence on business development

- In-house counsel ranked the following activities as “most important” for helping them to research outside counsel for potential hire:
  1. Recommendations from sources you trust -- 73 percent
  2. Articles and speeches the lawyer has authored -- 38 percent
  3. Bios on the firm’s Web site -- 30 percent
  4. Blogs published by lawyers on relevant topics -- 27 percent
- Half of in-house counsel agree or somewhat agree that in the future, high-profile blogs authored by law firm lawyers will influence the process by which clients hire law firms.

- In contrast, only 10 percent of in-house counsel believe that a firm's prominence on Twitter will drive business development.
- While Martindale-Hubbell Connected is not used as widely as a more commonly used platform, such as LinkedIn, it is regarded as highly credible.

At a macro level, AmLaw-ranked firms have jumped on the new media bandwagon and are participating in the followings ways:

- **Blogs:** As of March 2010, 96 of the AmLaw 200 are blogging with 297 blogs among them, 245 of which are firm-branded.
- **LinkedIn:** Every AmLaw 200 firm has a Company Profile on LinkedIn, by default. Most firms have Group Pages as well, mainly for alumni and recruiting, but also around specialized areas of law. Of the 50 million users currently on LinkedIn, nearly 1.5 million are lawyers. Approximately 5,000 firms have business profiles on the platform, and there are 4,000 Groups with "law" as part of the title. (Source: [Apollo Business Development](#))



As the chart above shows, a majority of in-house counsel *never* use Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Plaxo, M-H Connected and Legal OnRamp. This exposes a mismatch between the sites where law firms devote their new media marketing and the sites that clients use to find information about lawyers.

- **Facebook:** 31 of the AmLaw 100 have “Fan Pages” related to their firm on Facebook. Most have a basic placeholder page with little content, and only a few are posting content via regular status updates. To date, law firm efforts have been too tentative to deliver any real value. But with 400 million users, the business potential of Facebook is hard to ignore. (Sources: statistics— TheByrneBlog; Stem Legal blog)
- **Twitter:** 76 of the AmLaw 100 have a presence on Twitter, and just under half of those firms haven’t posted a single “tweet.” 39 firms are using the platform somewhat regularly, but not meaningfully in terms of aggregating and delivering targeted content to like-minded pools of followers at the practice group and industry level. (Source: statistics—TheByrneBlog; Stem Legal blog) Only 10 percent of in-house counsel believe that a firm’s prominence on Twitter will drive business development.

Slightly more than half (51 percent) of in-house counsel said they would use new media tools to receive relevant information from their law firms. Younger counsel are very open to receiving relevant information from their law firms via new media tools.

100 percent of counsel aged 30-39 said they would use new media tools to access this information compared to:

- 48 percent of counsel aged 40-49
- 47 percent of counsel aged 50-59
- 50 percent of counsel aged 60+ years.

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For more on this topic, call:

Larry Bodine, Esq.

Business Development Advisor

Tel: 630.942.0977

E-mail: [Lbodine@LawMarketing.com](mailto:Lbodine@LawMarketing.com)

Web: <http://www.LarryBodine.com>

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