

The Key to a Good Law Blog? Try Listening.

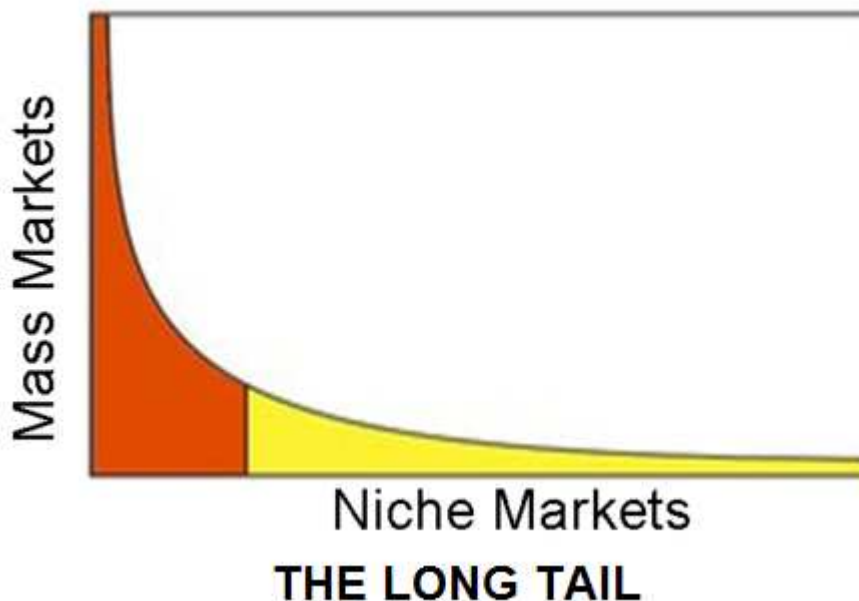


This past week, bestselling author Seth Godin [pointed out](#) that most bloggers and users of social media are failing miserably:

There are millions of songs on iTunes that have sold zero copies. Millions of blog posts that get zero visitors each day.

The [long tail](#) is real... given the ability, people create more variety. Given the choice, people seek out what's just right for them to consume. But, and there's a big but, there's no guarantee that the ends of the long tail start producing revenue or traffic. And a million times zero is still zero.

So what are attorneys with little or no traffic to their blogs doing wrong? Let's discuss....



Here are two mistakes often made by lawyers with poorly-trafficked blogs:

(1) They are too highly specialized (trying to blog for recognition as the best wind-turbine lawyer in northern Iowa).

(2) They aren't listening to their clients, which results in them creating content that nobody cares about. Basically, they aren't using effective strategy in deciding what to blog about.



How can listening make your blog better?

When a lawyer tells me he or she wants to start a blog, I ask them to make the case for their blog. What is the purpose of the blog? What are five topics you would like to blog about? That second question often stops lawyers in their track. “What am I supposed to write about?”

Start with the most frequently asked questions in your field, write down these four or five questions — and blog about them. Each question and answer can be a separate 400 to 500 word blog post. This is a simple way to start blogging. And if you can't think of four or five questions asked by your clients, then you aren't listening.

What keeps your clients up at night? Have you asked them?

Start reading the news as if you were in their shoes. If there is a development you suspect is worrisome to your clients, blog about it.

How do you know if it's working?

Another way to “listen” is by looking at the numbers:

(1) Install Google Analytics on your blog and monitor how many visits you are getting to your posts — and, of course, what [types of searches](#) are bringing readers to your posts.

(2) Shrink your URLs using <http://bit.ly>, to monitor how many visitors are clicking through from Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to read your writing.

(3) Check <http://search.twitter.com> to see if anybody is passing your article on.

If nobody is reading your content or clicking on your links, you're doing it wrong. Time to change course.