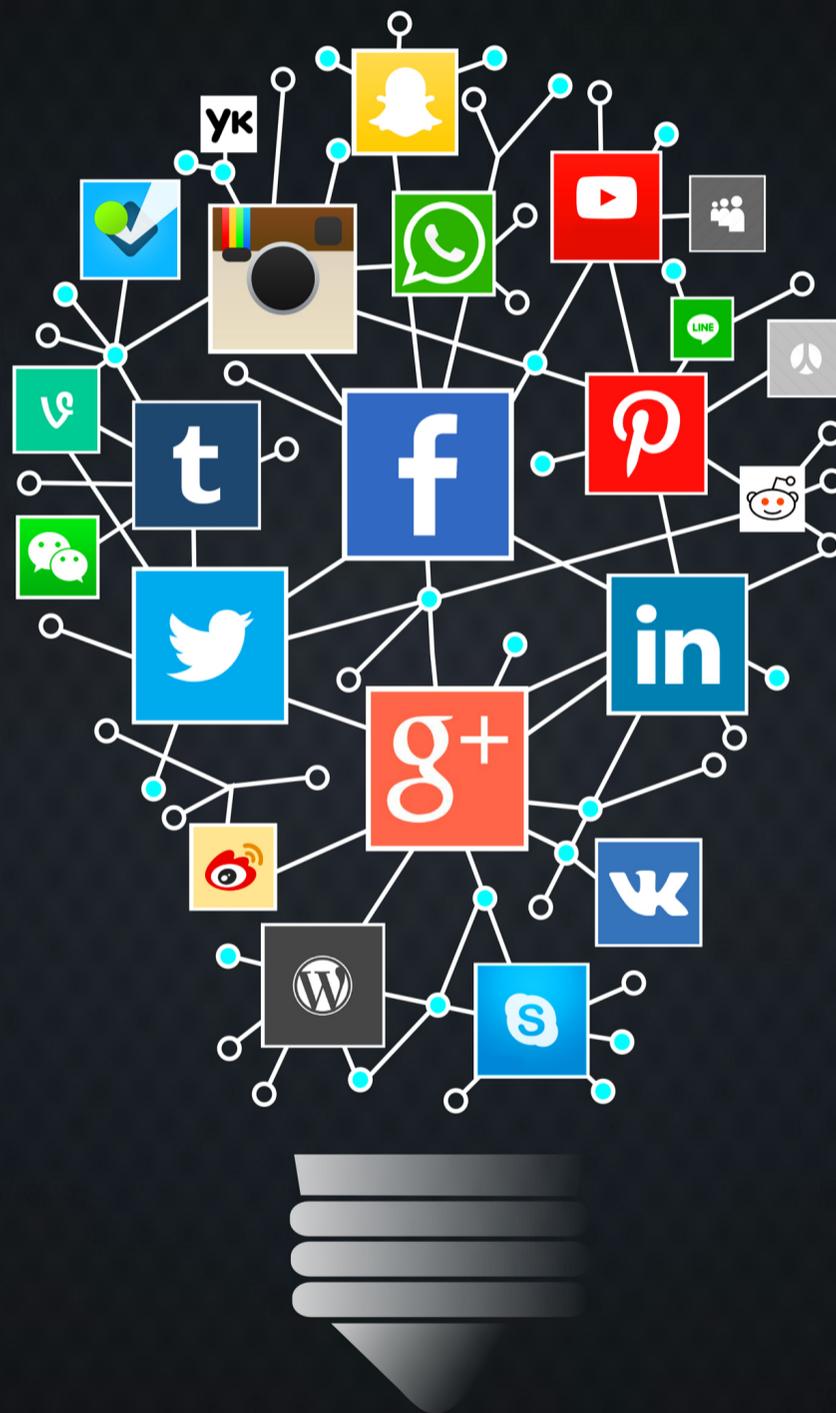


PARALEGAL MATTERS

The More You Know - THE SOCIAL MEDIA EDITION



Atlanta Paralegal Association, Inc.

An Affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., The Paralegal Association

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**CELEBRATING A GOOD YEAR &
PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR**

MESSAGE FROM APA PRESIDENT

I am honored and humbled to have served as President of APA for the term 2017-2018. I follow a strong legacy of leaders who have laid the foundation for furthering APA's mission to advance the paralegal profession by promoting quality education, competence, professionalism and service.

APA has its eyes set on, among other things, strengthening its membership involvement, establishing a signature program/event and continuing to partner with like-minded organizations with an emphasis on advancing our mission and goals.

As I approach the end of my term, I am proud of the way we faced perceived challenges by working together. Throughout it all, the commitment of APA's leadership and members has lead the way for a promising future.

Special thanks to the following members:

Lina Locke Watson. As a member of the Membership Committee, Ms. Watson filled a huge void to help us stay on top of our membership requirements by sending and tracking membership renewals, responding to web inquiries from members and/or the public and any other related tasks.

Angela Skeete. Ms. Skeete is always reliable. She volunteers whenever she is asked to help. Her dedication helped the Paralegal Week 2018 Committee to balance the tremendous amount of work involved in planning such an important event. She was an active participant during the Serving Seniors Community Service Day and she was the Nominations and Elections Chair for the 2018-2019 elections of officers.

Angela Lizer. During Paralegal Week 2018, Ms. Lizer's commitment was critical in bridging our Association with the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF) for a noble cause. Ms. Lizer organized, collected and delivered donations to give to an AVLF client in need.

Donna Chisolm. Whenever I see Ms. Chisolm during our Learn-At-Lunch events, I am reassured that everything is running smoothly. She makes sure attendees receive copies of the presentation materials and volunteers at all times.

Denise Scott. Ms. Scott recently joined in August. The first time we met, she told me she wanted to know what she can do to get involved. In a short period of time, Ms. Scott has devoted her time to bring creative ideas on ways to promote APA and expand our reach further into the professional community.

Alvin Yarborough and Karen George. Mr. Yarborough and Ms. George recently joined, and declared to be officers of APA during the upcoming elections. Mr. Yarborough took the reins to publish this amazing newsletter edition. I look forward to their leadership in the years to come.

May you all enjoy the upcoming holiday season with your loved ones and succeed at whatever you desire to do in life.

Cordially yours,
Alicia D. Levenberry, CP



Atlanta Paralegal Association

Where Paralegals Thrive

Established on March 29, 2014, the Atlanta Paralegal Association, Inc. (APA) is a professional, non-profit association committed to assisting its members in attaining professional and personal success.

APA provides quality educational and networking opportunities for the professional development of paralegals and students pursuing a paralegal career.

Members also have access to:

- Free Monthly Learn-At-Lunch Seminars
- Continuing Legal Education
- Networking Opportunities
- Career/Job Postings
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Leadership Development
- Mentoring/Volunteering
- Professional Recognition
- NALA CP/ACP Exam Assistance

Join today!



For membership and other information, please visit
www.atlantaparalegal.org

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WELCOME

NEW

MEMBERS!

2017-2018

Alvin Yarborough

Angela Lizer

Annie Gibson

Audrey Stewart

Chelsey Narreau

Denise Scott

Janeen James

Karen George

Maryna Tumska

Shana Shell

Andrea Horan

Angela Skeete

Ashten Waring

Chandler McNabb

Christa Scott

Elizabeth Berry

Jessica Morgan

Kenyana Spruill

Rashida Forbes

Shannon Harris

Wanda McMullen

The Synergy of Ethics & Technology

Written by Noelia Vecchio

In a utopian world, lawyers and paralegals would easily use technology to run their law office, and they would all work in perfect harmony, but that is not the case in the real world. In the real world, the latest technologies can be daunting to learn yet they have the power to change the way most paralegals accomplish tasks. New technologies have revolutionized legal processes, functions, and the way many law firms operate.

Due to the nature of their work, paralegals have a lot of contact with the latest technological discoveries. Still, they are limited by several ethics and should pay attention to them while working with various programs. The collision between the continuous development of new technologies and ethics rules has given birth to all sorts of challenges for paralegals. It is important for paralegals to follow the ethics rules and be aware when it comes to online discussions and private client information.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

E-mails have become common in our everyday lives. While they do not seem so threatening, they should be used cautiously. All the states that have embraced the American Bar Association's opinion on the use of emails, are required to follow restrictive procedures before sending electronic messages that contain private client data. Paralegals should take supplementary actions to ensure they preserve the integrity of information they send via online by using various software that allows documents to be encrypted and thus secure. This also includes removing the metadata that usually contains information about the author, as well as the date and time or other confidential data. This will prevent the emails from ending up in the hands of ill intended parties.

USING MOBILE PHONES

Cell phones present many risks as a lot of individuals use them in public places, even though their conversations might be overheard. Mobile devices depend on radio waves to broadcast signals, so the risk of malicious interception is a lot higher than with e-mails. The best approach would be to discuss these risks with the client, and the paralegal should make sure that the consent regarding mobile phones is secured through an agreement.

SENDING FILES BY MISTAKE

Besides the dangers represented by the exposure of electronic mail or the interception of cell phone »

conversations, technology has made it a lot easier for legal professionals to make mistakes when referring to client confidentiality. Sadly, the opportunity for revealing private information is real, so paralegals must do whatever is necessary to avoid disclosure. Inadvertent disclosure can occur in many ways at work – from sending a fax or e-mail to the wrong number/address to negligent talk in elevators or restaurants to sharing work information with family members. Those working in the legal field should not share information with anyone other than their department.

ACCESSING VARIOUS FILES THROUGH OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Access to electronically kept documents by third parties is also an important matter that raises a problem with ethics. It's not at all strange for law firms to use the services of outside operators to assist with office administration. During the 90's, the American Bar Association's ethics committee stated that a law firm could allow a computer maintenance operator to access confidential documents, but with the recommendation that the law firm should as well secure the service provider's assurance of confidentiality by requesting a written statement.

ACCIDENTAL CREATION OF ATTORNEY-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

The Internet gives many occasions for casual conversation with potential clients and equally as many opportunities for misinterpreting the intentions of attorneys or paralegals. So, a relatively frequent cause of concern regarding chat rooms or other types of electronic communication remains the possibility to create a lawyer-client relationship by accident. In order to prevent such a relationship, both attorneys and paralegals should hold back from obtaining private details from other conversation participants and avoid offering legal advice suited to particular situations.

Some states require disclaimers to be published in order to explain that articles posted on online discussion or responses to e-mail questions should not be considered as legal recommendations and are not meant to generate lawyer-client relationships.

Paralegals who search for clients on behalf of an attorney risk violating the unauthorized practice of law regulations, and independent paralegals who work on the internet should research the types of activities that are considered to be the unauthorized practice of law in their states.

READY. STEADY. GO.

Being completely aware of the confidentiality rules, searching for the opinions of other legal professionals, and

keeping up with the latest trends in technology can be really useful for paralegals, helping them avoid all types of ethical risks related to electronic communication. Paralegals must at all times refrain from discussing delicate matters or using doubtful devices or procedures, especially wireless networks.

Special care must be taken to avoid soliciting clients or giving a wrong impression that a lawyer-client relationship was formed as a result of faulty communications.

Considering all these aspects and coping with the most modern electronic advantages, paralegals can successfully manage all issues that can occur and turn what should have been a clash between ethics and technology into a genuine cooperation.



Noelia Vecchio is a litigation paralegal with experience in medical malpractice, debt collections, foreclosure, insurance defense and personal injury. She joined The Law Offices of Sean M. Cleary in 2002, where she provides office support for attorneys in all that concerns civil litigation, personal injury and document preparation. She loves the challenge of investigating, gathering the necessary documentation to build a case, talking to clients and witnesses and preparing files for court.

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HOW PARALEGALS CAN ESTABLISH THEMSELVES ON



Written by Shawn Denise Andrews

As a paralegal, no matter if your area of expertise is personal injury, employment law, or corporate law, how you represent, project, and market your brand is critically important.

Paralegals should always be working to be professional, express excellent work ethic, provide quality work, maintain a professional appearance, and most importantly, always project a great attitude. Additionally, customer service should always be at the forefront of how paralegals interact with supervisors, peers, and clients. Clients are the number one reason why legal professionals exist. Our clients are both the individuals our firm serves, as well as the attorneys we support. But, how do you express these traits using social media? Particularly, LinkedIn.

Nicole Black of *My Case Blog* asserted that: *Of all social media platforms, LinkedIn, the “professional” social media network, is by far the most popular with lawyers. Because of its more serious and professional tone, lawyers have always been more comfortable participating on LinkedIn. That’s why, according to the 2016 ABA Legal Technology Survey report, more than 93% of lawyers surveyed now use LinkedIn, with large firm attorneys relying on it the most* (Black, ND, para. 1)

It is important that paralegals not only express professionalism at work, but to also use professionalism and good judgment when using social media. If you ever doubt or question if you should post something then a good rule of thumb is to not post it. Like anything valuable, there are always benefits and liabilities. When using social media sites like LinkedIn, always consider the pros and cons.

Some of the benefits for paralegals using LinkedIn include the following:

- **Networking.** This is an excellent platform to place your resume to be viewed by recruiters, fellow paralegals, and legal professionals who may have direct insight on who is hiring.
- **Locating people.** This is an inexpensive way to try and locate witnesses, experts, or even a former colleague.

- **Articles & podcasts.** LinkedIn is a great way to post articles and podcasts to your specific LinkedIn groups based on your legal subject matter.

Some of the things we need to be careful about when using LinkedIn include the following:

- Always review the profile of someone who has sent you a connection request. Some people may try to connect with you to sell you something unrelated to your objectives. Also, you may have others who want to connect with you, but absolutely have no related background or commonality to the legal profession. You then have to ask yourself if you see the value in the connection.
- LinkedIn should be used as a purely professional site, and not as Facebook, where you post personal interests and insights unrelated to professional connections.
- Never provide too much personal information that identifies your every move and/or location, as you never know who may be following you on LinkedIn.

Three things paralegals should do immediately when they create a LinkedIn profile:

1. Have a compelling headline and clear headshot. It is true that headlines sell! Often, we judge a book by its cover and a title that captivates. A headline should convey a benefit to your LinkedIn connections. An example would be, “I Help Personal Injury Attorneys Manage Cases for Optimal Results.” Also, you should showcase a headshot of yourself that reflects your best features.
2. Complete the summary, education, and experience sections to provide a comprehensive snapshot of your past achievements.
3. View your LinkedIn profile regularly and connect with other paralegals, legal assistants, and attorneys in your area of expertise.

Finally, it is important to become a thought leader on LinkedIn in challenging yourself to

become a premier paralegal. Thought leadership expert Denise Brosseau defines thought leaders as *“...informed opinion leaders and the go-to people in their field of expertise. They are trusted sources who move and inspire people with innovative ideas; turn ideas into reality, and know and show how to replicate their success. Over time, they create a dedicated group of friends, fans and followers to help them replicate and scale their ideas into sustainable change not just in one company but in an industry, niche or across an entire ecosystem.”* Extraordinary paralegals set themselves apart in their ability to distribute valuable information, as well as develop innovative insights.

LinkedIn allows you to create intellectual property and a body of work. Providing articles or videos about the day in the life of a paralegal, to include the good, bad, and challenges, can be an entry into establishing rapport within the legal community. This forum showcases your ability to use critical thinking skills to solve problems, as well as provide resources legal professionals may not think about regularly.

Additionally, LinkedIn also gives you endless opportunities such as:

- Attorneys contacting you to assist with contract work for short or long-term projects;
- Attorneys and/or recruiters may reach out to you for possible job opportunities or referrals for paralegal positions they are trying to fill;

- Paralegals who may not have as much experience as yourself, may want you to mentor them, and or review their resume for tips to help them gain a position that will provide them with more experience; and

- A legal professional may want to interview you for a podcast to post online to share your story of how you became a paralegal and to give insight to other paralegals as to what are the essential and critical skills needed to be an excellent paralegal, to include continuing to enhance those skills as a career professional paralegal.

Paralegals helping individuals become better professionals enhances the legal community as paralegals help themselves become recognized experts. In a global economy, it is essential that paralegals become more sensitive to the market forces that drive the economy in a knowledge-based environment. This makes you more marketable, valuable, and sought-after.

As you think about the impact you want to make on the world generally, and the legal community, specifically, consider LinkedIn as the platform where legal professionals look for resources to become better and more proficient in their careers. Keep creating, curating, and sharing new information that favorably impacts the legal community. In the end, you will become the change in the world that you are looking for.



Shawn Denise Andrews is a Senior Paralegal with a national law firm located in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the founder of the American Paralegal Network and the host for the podcast *Andrew Legal Matters*. Additionally, Shawn creates and curates articles focusing on the professional development of litigation paralegals and personal injury attorneys.
[linkedin.com/in/shawndandrews](https://www.linkedin.com/in/shawndandrews)

Endnotes:

Black, N. (N.D.). LinkedIn for Lawyers: 5 Tips for Success. *My Case*. - Retrieved from: <https://www.mycase.com/blog/2016/11/linkedin-101-lawyers>.

Brosseau, D. (N.D.). What is a Thought Leader? *Thought Leadership Lab*. - Retrieved from: <https://www.thoughtleadershiplab.com/Resources/WhatIsaThoughtLeader>.



ATLANTA PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

SAVE - THE - DATE

October 18, 2018
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

LEARN-AT-LUNCH

THE SATURDAY LAWYER EXPERIENCE: REPRESENTING ATLANTA'S POOR

PRESENTED BY

Erica Taylor, Attorney/SLP Director
Matilde Davis, Volunteer Engagement Manager



LOCATION

Burr & Forman, LLP
Wells Fargo Building | Atlantic Station
171 17th Street, NW | Suite 1100, Atlanta, GA 30363
Parking is available in parking deck - first 2 hours are free

COST

FREE MEMBERS
\$10 NON-MEMBERS
lunch is provided

Register at www.atlantaparalegal.org

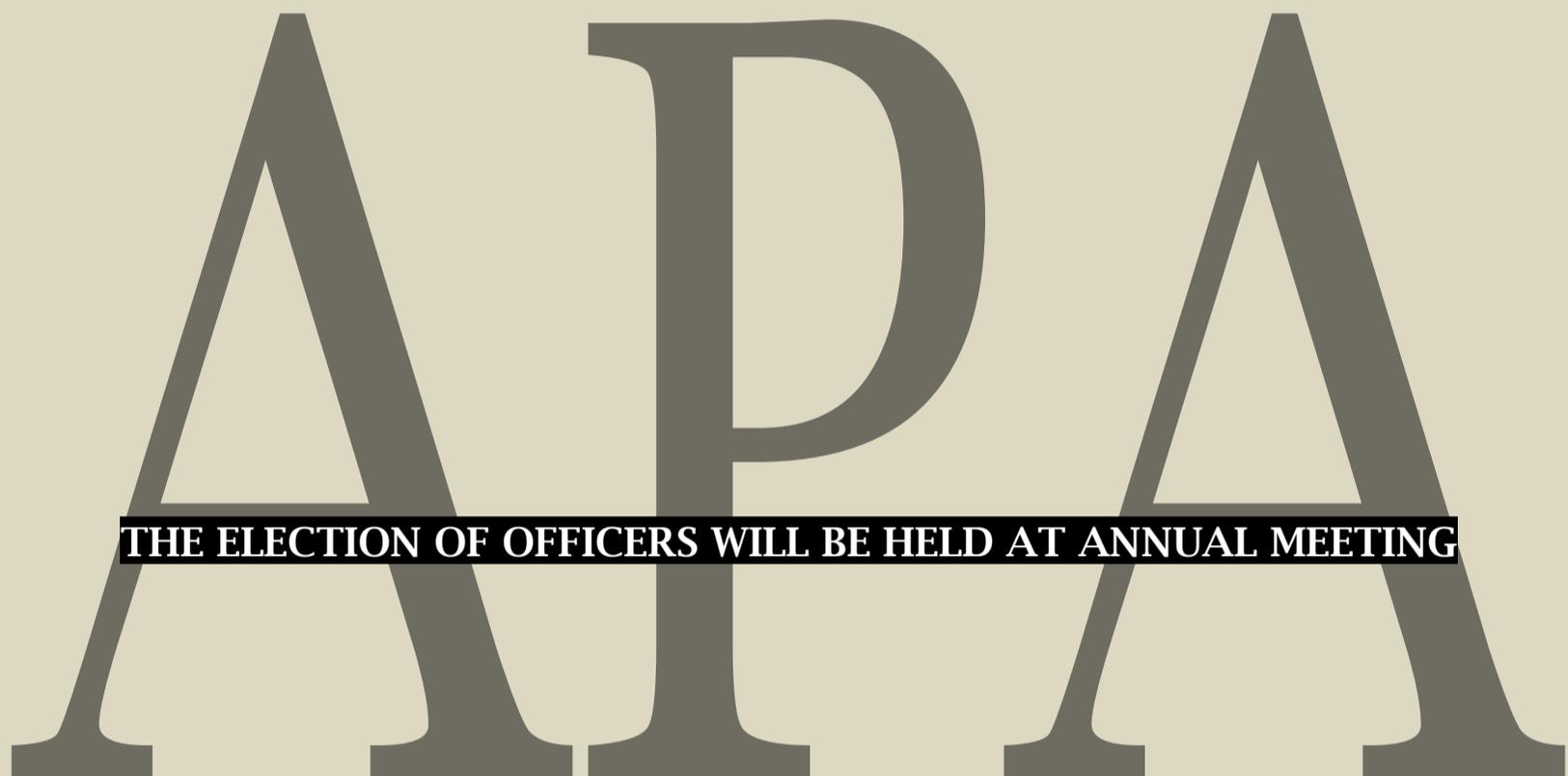
A N N U A L M E E T I N G

Saturday, October 20, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Burr & Forman, LLP

Wells Fargo Tower, Atlantic Station
171 17th Street, NE, Suite 1100
Atlanta, GA 30363



The following declared candidates were deemed qualified and approved by the Nominations and Elections Committee:

Vice President, Membership

Alvin Yarborough

Secretary

Karen George

NALA Liaison

Tina D'Agostino, ACP

Nominations for the following vacant positions will be taken from the floor:

President | First Vice President | Vice President, Education | Treasurer

If you are considering being nominated for a vacant position and would like a description of the duties and responsibilities for the position, please email Angela Skeete, Nominations and Elections Committee Chair at avskeete@gmail.com or electionschair@atlantaparalegal.org.



IDENTIFYING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Written by Heather Riggs

The social media marketing landscape continues to evolve, creating even bigger challenges for law firms looking to grow their client base and achieve greater brand visibility. Law firms face many challenges when marketing their services on social media, and these challenges can result from the specialized nature of their legal services as well as the lack of experience communicating about those services to the right online audience. Knowing whether or not you're speaking to the right audience requires that you understand the difference between a Business-to-Business (B2B) practice and a Business-to-Client (B2C) practice.

B2B MARKETING FUNDAMENTALS

Law firms working in the B2B space need a different approach when targeting and reaching their ideal clients. In most cases, law firms need to engage with prospective clients over a longer period of time. Many clients work with multiple vendors, and as a result, their decision to purchase legal services may not happen right away. Nurturing prospects is critical to this process and lets your team develop the trust and credibility needed to succeed in B2B marketing.

Law firms can lack the online marketing expertise to sell their services. In addition, the changing landscape of the marketplace forces paralegals and their teams to stay up-to-date with the latest social media trends, which seem to be ever-changing. Many law firms see marketing as a necessary expense while overlooking the returns it can provide to their practices. B2B marketing requires law firms to take a different perspective that provides

them with more success in their marketing campaigns, and to consider the lifetime value of each client.

By measuring the revenue that's generated over the lifetime of the client, law firms can improve the ways in which they establish their marketing budgets and the returns that they should expect to see. B2B relationships typically last longer than other professional relationships, and some clients may offer your firm a higher potential for growth over the long term. Determining who your high-growth and profitable clients are allows you to get the greatest return on your B2B marketing campaigns.

NURTURING B2B CLIENTS

The process of nurturing leads is critical to your B2B social media marketing success. It considers the different stages of your sales process, where prospects are at any given time, and the marketing message that achieves the best results at each stage. Lead nurturing helps prospective clients learn more about your services, legal team, and past successes. It makes your brand familiar and keeps your law firm "top of mind".

Prospective clients are more likely to call on your services when you've taken the time to nurture them over time. This is especially important when selling complex legal services. Prospects must understand the benefits that your services provide, and your marketing messages must address the questions they have. Lead nurturing creates a dialogue between your law firm and its target audience. In the B2B marketplace, this supports the short- and long-term goals of clients while ensuring that your business objectives are met.

Law firms need to understand how to implement the right B2B marketing strategies in order to achieve measurable and lasting results. Recognizing the marketing challenges of law firms, determining the lifetime value of your clients, and taking the time to nurture them further into your sales process are the keys to lasting success in the B2B space.

B2C MARKETING FUNDAMENTALS

Reaching and engaging with prospective clients on social media is the first step in the B2C marketing process, but there are distinct differences between B2C and B2B marketing that law firms must consider. Choosing the right strategies for your needs leads to better marketing results and more efficient marketing spending. B2C marketing requires law firms to consider the unique needs of their clients. The B2C sales process often moves more quickly, as buying decisions don't need to go through a chain of command before they're finally approved. B2C marketing can be less expensive when compared to B2B marketing, usually because B2B sales involve more people in the decision-making process.

NURTURING B2C CLIENTS

As I've mentioned, knowing your target audience requires an understanding of the needs, behaviors, and interests of those individuals who are most likely to purchase your legal services. A B2C audience has common challenges that can be solved by your legal skills and expertise. You easily can identify these challenges through social media and a potential clients engagement there. The better your understanding of your target audience, the more likely you are to deliver social media marketing messages that resonate with them and lead to increased revenue.

Whether it's using familiar language, addressing users by name, or honing in on their biggest pain points, knowing how to create a personalized social media message leads to better response rates. Personalization should be applied to every area of marketing, and social media content in particular. It's a critical part of B2C marketing in today's online marketplace.

Building trust and credibility are essential in B2C marketing, and they're a direct result of your ability to demonstrate a professionally-appropriate level of transparency within your marketing. Transparency comes from honest communication with your prospects. In addition to the benefits of your services, you should also acknowledge its limitations or any issues that can arise for clients. This gives clients peace of mind in knowing that you have their best interests at heart. More importantly, it allows you to provide the best legal services while directing clients to other resources that might meet the needs your services are unable to address. Law firms can, for example, give prospects a behind-the-scenes look at their practice by highlighting team members, new services, and events that prospects may be interested in learning more about.

This further establishes transparency in your B2C marketing while humanizing your brand and giving clients a clear idea of its mission and vision.

IMPLEMENTING B2B AND B2C STRATEGIES

The elements of both B2B and B2C social media marketing all require creating a consistent brand experience across each of your platforms. Building an online community around your brand is an incredibly effective way to reach and engage with prospective clients. B2B and B2C marketing requires a unique approach for law firms who want to reach new clients. The right social media marketing strategy improves your results, enhances your branding, and establishes a path for long-term growth for your law firm.



Heather Riggs *founded Atlanta Legal Marketing. Heather is also an Officer in the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia. Prior to becoming an Officer, she was appointed as a Director in the Division. Heather has held professional leadership positions in the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, the Georgia Association for Women Lawyers, the Atlanta Bar Association, her PowerCore Referral Networking Team, and the City Club of Buckhead's Board of Governors and Young Executive Society.*

THE WESTIN KIERLAND

RESORT & SPA

PHOENIX-SCOTTSDALE



2019 NALA CONFERENCE & EXPO

Join us in Arizona on July 11-13 and be a part of our 3-day education event. We hope to see you at the nation's largest paralegal conference!



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