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## Social media for women lawyers

Social media can be a powerful rainmaking tool for women lawyers because social media plays to their professional strengths.

Studies have shown that women lawyers are reluctant to promote their accomplishments and for that reason, social media is a great fit for women attorneys. It allows them to demonstrate their substantive knowledge without having to brazenly promote themselves. Women also excel at communicating and collaborating, traits that social networking facilitates and rewards.

Likewise, social media provides women attorneys with much-needed flexibility, allowing them to network and showcase their expertise on their own time. Women lawyers can use social media platforms from the convenience of their own home or office, expand their immediate circle of contacts and initiate online mentoring and business relationships with lawyers at other firms and with successful professionals from all over the world.

Social media can also benefit women lawyers who are working part-time or seeking reentry to legal practice. For example, many job-seeking lawyers tend to overlook one of the most obvious ways to use social media to stand out from the crowd: Start a law blog.

Bloggng can be beneficial to women attorneys seeking to transition back into the legal field in many ways. Blogs allow lawyers to demonstrate their substantive knowledge, showcase their writing and analytical skills, and convince prospective employers that they are on top of changes in their field.

For women lawyers in search of a job, blogging is most effective when the blog focuses on the substantive area of law in which they hope to practice.

There are a number of different types of posts that a topical blog of this type can include: commentaries about recent news articles regarding the area of law the blog focuses on; discussions on issues raised by other law bloggers who write about similar issues; or summaries and analysis of recent case law or recent statutory changes.

Effective blogging can lead to many unexpected opportunities. For example, my first law blog, *Sui Generis*, was instrumental in

helping me ease back into the legal arena after a three-year, self-imposed hiatus. That blog proved to be invaluable to my subsequent career path and has resulted in countless professional, writing, speaking and networking opportunities.

Unfortunately, not many women lawyers are blogging or otherwise using social media to their benefit. There are a number of possible reasons for this: some women aren't convinced of the value of social media; some feel there's simply not enough time for them to balance social media, work and their family obligations; while others, including those seeking to return to the work force after an absence, lack confidence in their tech skills.

For that reason, I'll be holding a webinar at 3 p.m. on Dec. 2 with Carolyn Elefant, with whom I co-authored the book "Social Media for Lawyers: The Next Frontier." During the webinar we'll explain how social media can benefit women lawyers and how to ease into social media without feeling overwhelmed by technology or information overload. You can register for the webinar here: <http://myshingle.com/social-media-for-women-lawyers/>.

Women lawyers are uniquely positioned to reap the benefits of social media. It's simply a matter of understanding and taking advantage of this new, flexible platform that has the potential to level the playing field. Of course, social media isn't a "magic bullet," but it does provide women attorneys with one more powerful tool in their arsenal. Women lawyers should learn about it and use it to their advantage so that they can successfully differentiate themselves, expand their networks and compete in ways never before possible.

*Nicole Black is of counsel to Fiandach & Fiandach in Rochester. She co-authors the ABA book Social Media for Lawyers: the Next Frontier, co-authors Criminal Law in New York, a West-Thomson treatise, and is currently writing a book about cloud computing for lawyers that will be published by the ABA in early 2011. She is the founder of lawtechTalk.com and speaks regularly at conferences regarding the intersection of law and technology. She publishes four legal blogs and can be reached at [nblack@nicoleblackesq.com](mailto:nblack@nicoleblackesq.com).*



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