

nabe

COMMUNICATORS talk

December 2010 • NABE Communications Section

A Note From the Chair

Kelley Jones King – *Deputy Executive Director, State Bar of Texas*

The Section Workshop in Portland was exceptional! Neil Cavanaugh deserves our kudos for ensuring that the program was meaningful, that we knew where we were supposed to be at all times, and that we were well fed and entertained! One of the great things about any Section project or program is that a lot of people from all over the country make the time to work together to ensure that when we are together the program is broad enough to reach all of us yet narrow enough to touch each of us with a new idea and a little inspiration.



King

Thanks to everybody who worked on the program and thanks to everybody who attended. I also want to publicly thank our sponsors. Their presentations and presence at the workshop are very valuable and benefit our conference and our members. All of them have become good friends and the programs they represent have made our bars and lawyers' practices stronger and more efficient! And, of course, we have to thank Leticia Spencer, who takes care of us, brings us together, and makes sure we are having fun even when we are stuck on a bus in a traffic jam! I hope to see everybody in Nashville next year. If you have an idea for a speaker or a breakout session or if you would really like to be on a panel, let me know!

This newsletter is a great example of the camaraderie that exists within the Section. Sharing knowledge is a great gift and it is amazing how Section members take the time to share their expertise, their time, and their knowledge. The listserv is an example and this newsletter is indicative of a lot of people sharing a little time to ensure that everybody

– including those who could not be in Maine – benefit from the program. Thanks to Sharon Nolan, who could not be at the workshop this year, for spearheading the effort and Anne Strickland for the design work!

A couple of other things worth noting: NABE now has a Facebook page. I encourage you to “like” the page and I encourage you to post information about projects or programs that your Bar is producing to help the legal profession and the public. We can all learn from each other and this is an easy way to get information about what you are doing out to bar executives across the country. A few photos and information from at least one of the breakouts from the Workshop are posted on the site. The page will only work if we use it. NABE Mid-year is in Atlanta. The Communications Section Breakfast will be on the Thursday morning of the meeting. If you are in Atlanta, please stop by. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and anywhere that Communications Section members gather is always one of the most fun places to be!

If you would like to serve on a committee, would consider serving on the council, or have other ideas for how the section could be more meaningful to bar communicators, please email me at kking@texasbar.com.

I hope each of you has a happy holiday season and that for at least a few minutes you have time to slow down, to reflect on what you do and why it is important. Relish the moment ... or two or three! Thanks for all you do for the legal profession, our justice system, and the Section. Yes ... I am that idealistic and I bet you are too! ❖

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COMMUNICATORS
December 2010 *talk*

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Creative Communications in a Changing Media World

Stacey Shrader – *Media Relations Coordinator, Tennessee Bar Association*

On Wednesday afternoon, Kevin Priestner – director of communications at the State Bar of Texas – led a breakout session on “Creative Communications in a Changing Media World.” He started the discussion by referencing two headlines in that week’s *New York Times*: “Howard Kurtz to Leave Washington Post for The Daily Beast” and “At Flaggging Tribune, Tales of a Bankrupt Culture.”



Shrader

Priestner used the first headline to reflect on the industry impact of a 30-year print veteran trading in his quill and ink for a news and commentary website with aims of “upending the old media hierarchy.”¹ According to *The Times*, Kurtz explained the move saying, “I want to be more of an entrepreneur online. And that can be hard to do within the confines of a major corporation.”² Tina Brown, creator and editor of *The Daily Beast*, describes the website as “a romping, vibrant...animal bursting with rude health.”³ Sounds like Kurtz should have plenty of latitude to be entrepreneurial. Amazingly, in just two years, *The Daily Beast* is producing original content from writers across the globe and boasts a readership of 4.6 million – 74 percent of whom say they use the site as their first or second source for news.⁴ That’s because it gives readers what they want: “sexy brain food” – something to make them smarter but won’t make them feel like its work, Brown explains.⁵

The second story Priestner used to spur discussion was a piece on the rise and fall of the Tribune Company’s new owner Sam Zell and the man he handpicked to run the company’s newspapers, which include the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Los Angeles Times*. Zell took over the company in January 2008 saying he was going to liberate its “stodgy thinking” and quash its “journalistic arrogance.”⁶ But Zell has been unable to turn the company around financially. Since taking the helm, the company has gone into bankruptcy and 4,200 have lost their jobs. But the new leadership has succeeded on one front: creating a new atmosphere at the company. It may have had the unintended consequence of alienating longtime employees and readers though. Internally, the “use of sexual innuendo, poisonous...banter and

profane invective” was so bad the workplace “came to resemble a frat house.”⁷ For readers, the company’s publicity stunts and mix of advertising and editorial material was just as distasteful.

So what do these two articles tell us about operating within an industry that is constantly changing and redefining itself? Priestner suggested the lesson might be this: to remain competitive in the marketplace, companies – or in our case, bar associations – must embrace new technologies and communication platforms, but in a way that does not destroy the organization’s culture and brand. Walking that line no doubt will involve missteps, but for those who like a challenge, the journey can be a rewarding one.

With a greater appreciation for the realities of our changing media world, the breakout group moved on to the topic of finding creative ways to engage it.

Priestner gave an example of an effort undertaken by his bar association to educate members and the public on a proposed court rule change requiring lawyers to disclose whether or not they carry malpractice insurance. The communications team overcame what could have been a dull exercise by bathing it in new media. First, the team created a webpage, which quickly became the definitive source for information on the proposed rule. The bar then invited members to blog about the issue directly on the website. Comments from public interest groups also were included. Town hall meetings held across the state were recorded and uploaded to the site so rural lawyers could access the sessions. And webcasts were held to help inform out-of state members about the issues at stake. Priestner reported that both lawyers and the court embraced the interactive features of the campaign and were pleased with the level of information dissemination and lively debate on the issue.

Other suggestions from attendees at the session included:

- Holding a Twitter novel contest;
- Holding a You Tube video contest;
- Posting as many event pictures as possible online to drive traffic to the organization’s website;
- Using creative Twitter headlines to drive traffic to the association’s blog and Face book pages;

- Scaling back on print products, opting instead for web-based materials, especially for younger lawyers; and
- Providing original content to drive traffic to the association's website (as another workshop speaker pointed out, content is still king, it just moved its throne from the print shop to the blogosphere).

Whatever "tool" ultimately is used to communicate the message, the ability to think creatively in a changing environment is essential for success in today's media world. No one knows that better than Tina Brown. When asked who she considered to be *The Daily Beast's* main competitor, Brown took a savvy and expansive view by saying the site "competes in the highly Darwinian media world filled with hyper-smart, highly adaptive, tool-using people with opposable thumbs."⁸ Our members, and the other stakeholders we seek to reach, certainly are among these "tool-using people." As leaders and communicators at our respective bar associations, we need to continually evaluate what these highly adaptive audiences want – and how they want it – while also protecting the reputation and traditions of our associations. That's not an easy job but it just might be essential for our future growth and success. ❖

Stacey Shrader is Media Relations Coordinator for the Tennessee Bar Association. She also contributes to the Tennessee Bar Journal and co-produces a daily electronic newsletter for association members.

Find NABE
on Facebook!
See Workshop 2010
pictures and connect
with other Bar Execs.

Facebook – Search "NABE" or visit
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/ABE/105800086143205>

Twitter – Search #NABECom10

Notes

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<http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2010-10-05/tina-brown-interview-the-daily-beast-turns-2/>
4. Advertise With Us, *The Daily Beast*
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Stealth Networking for Shy People

Leanna Dickstein – Program Coordinator / Office of Bar Relations Outreach, The State Bar of California

Whether you are actually shy, still wary of security on social networking sites, deeply committed to your antediluvian nature or just don't get it, "Stealth Networking for Shy People" at the recent Communications Section Workshop in Portland, Maine was the session for you. NABE's own social networking maven's Stephanie Abbott, Communications Coordinator at the Clark County Bar Association, and Elizabeth Derrico, Associate Director of the ABA's Division for Bar Services, provided practical advice on why you need to get started, how to use these tools to your advantage and how building your professional profile can benefit your organization.

How can social networking benefit you?

Both panelists provided examples of how social networking can aid in professional development. "Social networking allows you to develop and profile your expertise as a resource for others," Derrico remarked. Derrico follows an association discussion and her participation resulted in an interview by a woman who conducts podcasts on association management. In this same vein Slideshare.com allows you to post your presentations which can enhance your profile as an expert to a wider audience.

Social networking also affords opportunities to comment in your area of expertise. Reporters tweet out looking for sources often looking for legal experts to comment on developing stories. You may serve as an expert source on certain topics but if you aren't an expert you may know a bar member who is. Helping a reporter locate a source can enhance your profile and create a valuable connection as a communications or public relations professional.

Tweeting can also lead to direct connections with reporters both in the legal and main stream media. Abbott noted that as communications professionals, the news releases submitted on behalf of our associations are typically filtered through the City Editor's desk. Sala

cious or bad news stories are often the only stories that get picked-up. The good news story about busy members volunteering to provide free advice to hundreds of

people at a bar association public service event isn't likely to end up in any publication other than your own. Recently Abbott was able to by-pass the City Editor's desk by tweeting from a "good news" bar event. Her tweet was picked-up by a local reporter which put her directly on the reporter's radar as a source for future news stories.

Social networking doesn't have to remain digital. Opportunities for in-person professional networking are available through "tweet-ups" which allow you to meet people in your social network face-to-face.

Developing your professional profile can also benefit your association. Derrico was able to use her social networking connections as a virtual speaker's bureau. She found a speaker through a blog she follows who offered a fresh perspective on association management for the Bar Leadership Institute. Additionally, Derrico identified a future volunteer leader for her organization through a social networking connection who now serves on the ABA's Standing Committee on Technology. Abbott also uses Twitter to become an up-to-the minute resource for members of her bar association. She re-tweets Supreme Court decisions specific to Nevada which has been touted as a benefit by the members.

Derrico also noted that a professional social networking presence may now be important in landing a job. Future employers may go beyond checking references. Your social networking presence could be up for critique as well. How do you present yourself on-line? How many professional connections do you have? Can the professional network you've developed help their organization?

Jump in and get started.

Derrico remarked that when getting started, "a sense of strategy is important but with this medium you just need to jump in." She suggests that you learn about the platform, determine your goals, understand and implement the available security settings, then get started using common sense with postings.

Many late adapters also cite time constraints as a reason for not participating. Derrico noted that taking full advantage of all of the resources available through the various social networking sites does take time but after initial set-up, social networking isn't the type of thing you have to continually dedicate large blocks of time to. "You can jump in and out a few minutes at a time during the day to review or add posts between larger projects," said Derrico. TweetDeck and HootSuite are helpful with time management as both allow you to manage posts across several networking sites and allow scheduled posts for events you are aware of in advance. HootSuite also offers a team building feature that allows multiple staff members to have Twitter accounts but still tweet as an organization.

Derrico and Abbott offered the following tips:

- Set-up two accounts. If you still have trust issues with the security features offered by social networking providers Abbott suggests you start out the way she did by creating two profiles – one personal and one professional. You can easily manage both using TweetDeck or HootSuite.
- Draw lines between your personal and professional presence. Use common sense and restraint to moderate your views on your professional pages.
- Use privacy settings. Keep up with updates from providers regarding changes to their security settings.
- Use a personal voice in your posts. Derrico recommended using a personal voice citing Facebook and Twitter posts on North Carolina Bar Association and Indiana State Bar Associations as good examples.
- Follow other bar associations or colleagues in your profession. What are other bars tweeting about? How are they using Facebook? How are they combining both to increase visibility for their association?
- Set milestones. Track the dates when you hit a certain number of followers as your social networking presence grows, then review the other statistics relative to the goals (e.g., web hits, MCLE attendance).

If you are ready to get started but still want to fully educate yourself before taking the social networking plunge, Derrico recommended the book *Trust Agents: Using the Web to Build Influence, Improve Reputation, and Earn Trust* by Chris Brogan and Julien Smith.

Is it working?

After jumping in, individuals and associations should evaluate the effectiveness of their social networking efforts. Derrico suggests that using only the number of followers or friends as your sole source for defining success may only give you a quantitative, but not qualitative assessment. Followers could be anybody and may not correspond precisely to the audience you'd like to measure. Returning to the goals established when developing a social networking strategy may yield more meaningful data. For an individual, how many new connections have you made that resulted in some level of direct benefit to you professionally? As an organization, if you intended to drive people to your web site, have hits increased? If your intent was to increase attendance at events or MCLE sessions, has this happened? Compare the milestones you set for tracking the increase in followers or friends to other data and you'll get a more accurate picture of the success of your initial strategy.

Strategic use of Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn can build your professional profile and enhance the profile of your organization. It's not that scary. All of you social networking wallflowers should take the panelists advice and jump in. ❖

Leanna Dickstein is Program Court Systems Analyst in the Office Media and Information Services at The State Bar of California. She works with California's 260 voluntary bar associations in the Office of Bar Relations Outreach and with the IT and Media an Information Services staff maintaining the bar's web site.

Grip & Grimace: Photography Tips

Anna Hubbard – *Publications Director, Arkansas Bar Association*

Professional photojournalist and editor Fred J. Field educated and inspired NABEComm members with these simple tips for taking better photos:

Light

"Light is the essence of photography. You can either get used by light or use light."

Light is critical to every photo. The word photography comes from the Greek and literally means drawing with light. If you learn to use light you can change a photo from a 2-D to a 3-D image. You can give shape to a photo with light.

Tips for Good Light

- Window light is the best light. You do not need to use extra light from your flash. A window without direct light is the best option because it gives off soft light.
- If you are shooting outside on a sunny day, put the sun behind the subject so they are not squinting into the light. Use the flash to fill in the light on the subject's face.
- Sidelight makes a subject look better, i.e. no dark circles.

The Right Camera

"You are not doomed with a simple point and shoot camera, but you will have to work harder."

Field highly recommends using a dSLR (digital selective lens reduction) camera because you have more control and creative potential.

Camera Tips

- The camera should be at least 5 mega pixels.
- A good portrait lens should be 85-135 mm.
- Always look through the lens instead of the screen when it is available.

Field uses a Nikon and recommends the following cameras:
Compact simple digital cameras:

- Nikon Coolpix P100, 10.3 mega pixels, \$400
- Nikon Coolpix S8100, 12.1 mega pixels and Full HD Movie, \$300

Digital SLR's with interchangeable lenses:

- Nikon D 90 12.3 mega pixels, \$900
- Nikon D 3100 14 mega pixels with an 18-55 mm VR image stabilization lens, \$700
- Nikon D 3000 10.2 mega pixels with an 18-50mm image stabilization lens, \$550

Great basic zoom:

- Nikkor 24 -70 mm. f-2.8, \$1,900
- Nikkor 70 - 200 mm. f-2.8 VR II, \$2,400

Less expensive nice portrait lens:

- Nikkor 85 mm. f-1.8, \$490

Strobe for the cameras above:

- Nikon SB 700 speedlight, \$330 and SC-29 TTL coiled cord, \$90

Flash

"The solution to direct light pollution is dilution."

The single biggest necessity in a camera is the flash. Field recommends using a strobe and a cord that makes the flash work remotely so you can point the flash away from the subject's face. When you shoot straight on with a flash, the flash overpowers and creates harsh shadows. If you do not have the remote cord you can wrap a piece of paper around the flash with a rubber band or use a bounce card.

Grip & Grimace, continued from page 7

Placing the subject near a wall gives you the option of using the wall to bounce and diffuse the light, which creates a soft box of light and makes them look better.

Flash Tips

- Diffuse light from the flash.
- Light from the side to eliminate harsh shadows.

Shooting the Picture

"Put your subject at ease make them believe that you have the philosophy that if they don't look good, you don't look good!"

Photography is people intensive. You need to project confidence when taking photos of people so that they will feel at ease.

Shooting Tips

- Ask the subject to put their hands gently behind their backs. This helps loosen their shoulders.
- Ask the subject not to put their hands in front of their legs, which makes them appear tense.

- For portraits, ask them to cross their arms in front of them, slightly tilt their head and smile. You can then crop the photo without cropping their arms off.
- Be patient, especially when photographing children.
- Compose the photograph with the rule of thirds in mind. Try to place the subject off center to make the photo more interesting.
- Fill the frame with the subject, i.e. move closer.
- Keep the background simple if possible.

To view some of Field's award-winning photography, go to www.fredfield.com. ❖

Anna Hubbard is the Publications Director for the Arkansas Bar Association and editor of The Arkansas Lawyer magazine.

Join the us in Atlanta for the NABE MidYear Meeting

Register is now for the 2011 NABE Midyear Meeting in Atlanta, February 8-10, at www.abanet.org/midyear/2011. A comprehensive preview of the programming you can expect at the meeting is available in PDF format at www.abanet.org/nabe/events/midyears/2011/programpreview.pdf. Wondering where the legal profession is headed? There's a session for that. Trying to wean your members off of print publications in the digital age? There's a program for that. Looking for ways to develop staff during hard economic times? There's a session for that, and for so much more!

Register by December 17 to qualify for the early bird registration fee of \$395, which includes all programming, Tuesday welcome reception, two breakfasts, two lunches and a Wednesday evening networking event. After December 17, registration will increase by \$50. NABE meetings will take place at the Marriott Atlanta Marquis. Register now and obtain the best room availability by visiting www.abanet.org/midyear/2011.

Re-Designing the Legal Landscape: Making Public Law Public

Tom Ciuba – *Connecticut Bar Association*

L In another year, “Law.gov” will probably roll off our tongues just as easily as “pro bono” does. A low-key idea for the moment, Law.gov’s popularity can explode at any minute—leaving attorneys and bar executives across the country wondering how to adjust to such a drastic change in the legal world.

So, what is it? Despite how it sounds, Law.gov is neither a legal website nor a collection of legal websites, but a movement based upon the idea that government should provide to the public high-quality legal materials in bulk and without restrictions on re-use.

Need a moment to take in the exact implications of this?

The movement began in January of this year at a conference in California, and has gained traction within the past 10 months. Proponents are simply jaded by inconsistencies of laws and the presentation of laws from state to state. They envision, instead, a means to collect public law in agreeable standards and make it more downloadable for free.

Why? These advocates believe strongly that the public needs to understand the laws they ought to obey. Moreover, they also see a direct benefit from taxpayer dollars on judicial and legislative branch efforts, which create laws for our society. If our taxes are helping to make laws, then each of us owns law.

If this movement catches on—and legal publishers at the 2010 NABE Communication Section Workshop in Maine seemed more than confident it would—it will drastically change the legal landscape that we have come to know so well. Commercial publishers will need to adapt to a changed marketplace. Lawyers will have to understand how to work with “an informed client.” Law firms will need to reach out to new audiences. In addition, Law.gov will lead to a more sophisticated appreciation of law as an economic engine.

Perhaps most importantly, Law.gov would transform scarcity in the legal research field into abundance. Currently, a handful (or a few more) of legal research providers exist. However, making law public could enable more competitors to enter the legal market, which, in turn, would create the said abundance. Legal research providers will compete to offer the best research tools, the most affordable research tools, and the most efficient research tools to help Joe Citizen research law from his home office.

While Joe Citizens conduct their independent research, though, they may deem legal counsel less resourceful—not to mention undoubtedly cheaper. The biggest con of Law.gov is the idea that the non-lawyer public may misunderstand the law they read, much like many have begun to dismiss the need for doctors and have, consequently, misdiagnosed themselves since the advent of WebMD. For bar professionals, our biggest challenge will lie in making the public understand, more than ever, the value of attorneys.

What else does Law.gov mean for bar associations? Well, we don’t quite know yet. The idea is too new and hasn’t yet materialized. But, it’s time to start thinking about how we can respond... ❖

Tom Ciuba manages the public relations efforts for the Connecticut Bar Association, including its media relations and charity/public service initiatives. Tom has been with the bar association since 2008. Reach him at tciuba@ctbar.org.

Graphic Design on a Shoestring

Carolyn Seibert-Drager – *Franklin County*

Like many other organizations, bar associations of all sizes increasingly are faced with the mandate of “do more with less” – smaller budgets, fewer staff, less, time. But communications professionals have to balance that mandate with the need to maintain the quality of their publications.

Good publication design IS possible for not a lot of money if you follow some basic principles, Landry Butler and Steve Valdez told attendees at the “Graphic Design on a Shoestring: Ways to Make Your Publication Attractive with Little or No Budget” session at the NABE Communications Section 2010 Workshop. Landry is publications coordinator of the Tennessee Bar Association; Steve is communications director of the Louisville Bar Association.

The key to success is planning. “Begin with a strategy,” according to Landry and Steve, who used a bar newsletter as the focus of their presentation. Too often, they said, the basics can get overlooked.

Know what you want to say and what you want to accomplish. Know your audience and how they will use the publication. Will they read it on paper, online or on their smart phone? Will they read it once and toss it, or will they refer back to it? What do you want them to do as a result of reading it?

The design itself requires planning too. Good design is pleasing to look at, directs the reader into and through the publication, and effectively conveys a message to the audience. “Every element of the design needs to contribute to getting the message across,” Landry noted.

Fonts — Keep it simple, Landry advised. One serif font for text and one sans serif font for headlines works well in a newsletter. Establish a standard for your publication and stick to it.

Photography — Stock photos can be helpful and time saving, but also take and use your own photos; they will carry more meaning for your readers.

Alignment — Balancing the items on a page is crucial. Think about white space as a graphic element along with text and photos. Page margins, number of columns, column and gutter widths, text alignment, text wraps — all contribute to the publication’s look and ease of reading. Think through all these elements, and set up a grid for your publication in your design software to save time and ensure consistency from issue to issue.

Think about color ahead of time as well, for design as well as budgetary concerns, Steve said. Color creates visual appeal and conveys emotion, but the decision on using black and white, spot color or full color also will affect the cost of the publication.

The choice of paper also affects both the quality of the publication and the cost. Develop a relationship with a local printer, Landry and Steve encouraged; he or she can make recommendations on paper, and often can help save you money in the process.

Making sure the finished product looks good and gets where it needs to go is equally as important as the design, and requires the same attention in the planning stages.

For short runs, digital printing can save money; consider doing the job in house if you have the right equipment. High-volume and high-quality jobs should be printed offset.

Again, developing a good working relationship with a printer is essential. Get to know your local printers and what their capabilities and specialties are. Discuss the software you use for your publications and get their SWOP (specification for web offset publications) profile; that will help prevent such problems as missing fonts and mismatched colors.

Using a print broker or an online printing service has its benefits and concerns. If you do a lot of printing, a broker can save staff time by working on your behalf to secure the best prices, but be sure your needs are being addressed correctly. An online printing service can be less expensive, but you give up some control; it can be more difficult to catch mistakes and correct problems. Try to speak to someone and establish a relationship with that person, rather than relying solely on conversations by e-mail.

Like a good printer, a good mail house is a very valuable resource. The staff will know postal regulations, be able to verify addresses by postal standards, and can make recommendations on layout so your publications meet mailing standards and get the best possible postage rate. ❖

Carolyn Seibert-Drager is executive director of the 165-member Franklin County Bar Association in Chambersburg, Pa. She handles all the association’s communications and publications, including its print and electronic newsletters, Web site and Facebook page, and the weekly Franklin County Legal Journal. She is vice president of the Pennsylvania Association of Bar Executives.

60 Sites & Apps in 60 Minutes

Anne Roth Strickland – *Assistant Director of Communications/Publications, North Carolina Bar Association*

Elizabeth Derrico, Barry Kolar and John Sirman pulled together a handful of their favorite websites and apps in an engaging and fast-paced presentation that offered a little something for everyone. Whether you were seeking professional training, news summaries, time-saving tools, or virtual cocktails, the trio had plenty of great ideas.



Strickland

Here are, debatably, the top ten “must see” sites in no particular order:

Thinkmap’s Visual Thesaurus

www.visualthesaurus.com

Easily the best tool for locating the word that’s on the tip of your tongue, this site offers a visual representation of linked words, twisting and turning as the meanings shift and evolve. The site also offers a “word of the day,” and an interesting and informative blog known as Word Count.

Lynda.com

www.lynda.com

A handful of us who have dabbled in design are familiar with this professional training Mecca – for those of you who aren’t, I encourage you to carve out a few minutes every week. Even if you don’t use the software, knowing what your team is capable of is invaluable. Lynda.com’s mission is simple, and appropriately succinct: Helping you learn, master, and apply digital tools and techniques.

Sit or Squat

www.sitorsquat.com

An app as well as an interactive find-a-bathroom page, the site title really says it all. Never again will I fear a gas station bathroom while on the road – just don’t forget to leave your own reviews!

HootSuite or Sprout Social

<http://hootsuite.com>

www.sproutsocial.com

Hoot Suite and Sprout Social are social media dashboards with the ability to help you multi-task your posting efforts while measuring your marketing success. Both sites offer you best practices and other practical advice and a host of

other services. The two products are relatively interchangeable, so take a close look at each before you commit to one.

Doodle

www.doodle.com

Organize your meetings quickly and efficiently by letting Doodle narrow down the optimal meeting time for all parties involved by allowing users to select multiple availability options while declining other time slots.

Expense-A-Steak

www.expenseasteam.com

Just when you thought your accounting department was going to take away your spending rights, Maloney & Porcelli’s Expense-A-Steak Headquarters swoops in to save the day. Enter your total bill, and a PDF of receipts will be generated on your behalf. Just remember, you didn’t hear about it from me!

Poynter Online

www.poynter.org

From the Poynter Institute, whose goal is to make journalism better, comes a site that offers news and tips, training, and space for chats – putting you in touch with a whole other realm of journalistic professionals. A great place to catch some news, study a debate or just check in on the rest of the world, Poynter is a site to see.

Association Jam by Wild Apricot

<http://associationjam.org/>

Wild Apricot, an organization dedicated to helping nonprofits and associations negotiate web technologies, brings together ideas and suggestions from other associations. Submit your ideas, vote on other’s projects, and learn about successes and failures with the online Association Jam community.

Society for News Design

www.snd.org

As we strive to become more competitive in the digital realm while fighting to prove the value of our traditional printed publications, how we present ourselves becomes more and more important.

Get some new ideas, utilize the online toolkit, engage in competitions and more.

iBeer

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/ibeer-5-beers-coffee-milk/id283914070?mt=8>

Download a satisfying beer, cup of coffee, milk, champagne, etc. and “chug” your selection – just don’t forget to excuse yourself when your phone burps on your behalf. Available for iPhone and iPod Touch for a small fee, a virtual cocktail is in high demand.

If you missed the presentation, I would encourage you to take a look at the PowerPoint presentation, which will give you a quick look at this year’s chosen sixty. Access a PDF at <http://www.abanet.org/nabe/communications/csworkshop/2010/60tips60minutes.pdf>.

Longing for more? Check out the ABA Techshow 2011 website, which lists a similar “60 Sites in 60 Minutes” archive for lawyers and legal professionals dating back to 2001 at <http://new.abanet.org/calendar/TECHSHOW/Pages/60Sitesin60Minutes.aspx>. ❖

Anne Roth Strickland is the Assistant Director for Communications/Publications at the North Carolina Bar Association in Cary, NC. A recent graduate of the MS in Technical Communication program at N.C. State University, she became a part of the NCBA, and subsequently NABE, in 2007.

Duane Stanley Selected as Richter Award Winner



Stanley

When it comes to the highest of honors, football has the Super Bowl, the movie industry bestows the Oscar – and the NABE communications Section has the E.A. “Wally” Richter award! Duane Stanley, Hennepin County Bar Association Assistant Director, is this year’s Richter Leadership Award recipient. Unable to attend the award luncheon in person, Duane was surprised with the presentation of the honor via telephone during the NABE Communications Section workshop held October 8 in Portland, Maine.

The Richter Award is the section’s highest honor and is presented annually for outstanding achievement in the field of communications, extraordinary service to colleagues in NABE and distinguished leadership of the communications Section. Duane is the 28th recipient of this recognition.

He began working at the Hennepin County Bar 23 years ago as part-time director of public legal education. Over the years his responsibilities continued to grow. Twice he served as Interim Executive Director. Currently in his role of Assistant Executive Director, he directly manages the communication, technology and legal services efforts of the HCBA.

The county bar’s communications team, which he leads, has been honored with a number of NABE Luminary Awards. He chaired the NABE Communications Section in 2005-2006, during which time he helped with the formulation and implementation of the section’s strategic plan. He’s also served as section secretary and treasurer and chaired a section workshop in Minneapolis. He represented the section as part of a group of only four NABE members recruited by the ABA Division for Bar Services to assist the New Orleans Bar Association in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Currently, he serves on the NABE Board of Directors, where he helps represent the section’s interests, along with those of other constituencies.

Duane’s nominator said, “I’ve found him to be a business-like leader who is nonetheless quick to laugh, highly principled but not rigid or judgmental, a man of character who expects much from his colleagues but more of himself. In short, he is a leader of the highest order, the kind of leader so many of us aspire to be. And isn’t that what the Richter Award is all about?” ❖

A Few Takeaways from “Working with Editorial Boards and Other Volunteer Committees”

Laura Swendseid – *Communications Coordinator, Maricopa Bar Association*

Among the many excellent workshops offered at this year’s NABE communications conference in Portland, Maine was “Working with Editorial Boards and Other Volunteer Committees,” with discussion led by Mark Mathewson, from the Illinois State Bar Association; Stephanie Abbott, from the Clark County Bar Association in Las Vegas; and Sam Lipsman, from the Los Angeles County Bar Association. As a newcomer to the bar associations’ network of communicators, I was eager to attend this session and hear from those who’ve been on editorial boards for some time about best practices for working with volunteer board members.

Treat Editorial Board Members Like Staff

The speakers all made many good points—which I fervently jotted down—but I’ll mention just a few here. One point was to treat the board members like staff, although they are obviously not hired, fired or paid. That was helpful advice to me. I have learned that sometimes board members’ busy schedules can affect meeting attendance and article submission. Though I believe it’s important to be flexible, it’s also important to put out a quality publication. Therefore, communicating with board members on future content and production process obstacles is essential. Also, if a board member has not been contributing for some time, it was suggested that some action can and should be taken. It’s understandable that conflicts will arise, but we need to keep in mind that there are always others within our bar association’s membership who would be willing to lend their knowledge and expertise to the board.

Use the Board’s Knowledge and Expertise

Another nugget of information I took away was the importance of understanding the board’s value as a resource for practical, hot-button issues. As a former newspaper re-

porter, I served on an editorial board for several years and understand the process of creating a weekly budget of articles. However, I have no legal background. When a breaking story comes out of the state supreme court or the state bar association announces lawyer discipline system changes, it’s very helpful to have the perspective of an attorney to understand how important the issue is to our members. In the same vein, the speaker said that working with board members on how to approach an article is another way an editorial board can be helpful. I’ve already seen how this can work. Through insights provided by board members, we found that a more general article on a legal topic could be made more relevant to our members by focusing on how the state’s own legal system was approaching it. The other side of that coin is that staff needs to take the reins when some of the board’s ideas may not fit with the current scheme of the publication.

Online vs. Print

Finally, we discussed how to work with boards on online publications. Should they have any say on what is published on a bar association’s website? While some associations have switched from producing paper publications to solely publishing online, others have vowed not to let go of their print versions. (In determining whether to go online or add an online presence to their publication, some associations have used focus groups, which they found helpful.) One comment was that having editorial board members assist in determining online content may become too cumbersome a process. I’m sure that as time goes on, the online-versus-print debate will continue to be a hot topic of discussion. ❖

Laura Swendseid is the Communication & Advertising Coordinator for the Maricopa County Bar Association.

Having a Website Isn't Enough; You Have to Have a Web Strategy

Julie Kemble Borths – *Director of Communications, Cincinnati Bar Association*

Rich Brooks said there is more to increasing your Bar's online visibility than you might think.

Calling it a "holistic web marketing plan," Rich Brooks of Maine's Flyte New Media said that the Web must be integrated throughout marketing efforts. Breaking the overall strategy into four parts, he told NABE participants to consider:



Borths

1. Attracting visitors to the Web, using tools like Facebook and Twitter as well as search engine optimization and advertising.
2. Retaining visitors to your site by reaching out with e-newsletters and RSS feeds that invite participants to engage in a relationship with your organization.
3. Converting visitors, whether making a buying decision or linking to you from their own blogs or sites.
4. Measuring how people come to you and what they do when they are on your site, enabling you to tweak the above efforts to meet the needs of your audience.

The most important feature of any site is the content. Brooks said for bars, this task might be easier than for other sites. "You know your members. You know what matters to them," he said. "What you might not know is what channels they want to use" whether it is web, a social network, print and/or a combination of methods.

In driving traffic to your site, Brooks said content again is a priority. "What words are on the page really matter. And it matters where they are. Titles are the most important and each page should have a keyword tag," he said. By including text everywhere, even in pictures, you can increase your site's visibility. He urged the audience to maximize every word. For example, rather than "click here," use words that have real meaning for the referring link, like "Social Media Fall Conference."

Behind the scenes, Brooks suggested using meta-tags and making sure that your site has a full description – which can mean a free "ad" on Google even if your site is not a top result.

Brooks acknowledged that pay-to-play SEO is always an option, but emphasized that making "organic" or content changes to your site may be the most strategic way to generate hits. He emphasized the importance of using "white hat" rather than "black hat" techniques – since the latter can get your site "kicked off by the Google gods."

"You need to know what people are searching for and then change your content to reflect that," Brooks said. By brainstorming key phrases, testing your beliefs (put those phrases on a page and see what happens) and then using that knowledge to rewrite your site, you can boost your number of hits in a strategic and cost-effective way.

Use those words for intra-site links (which carry more weight than text), on your home page, in FAQs – which can most gracefully incorporate keywords – and in press releases and articles. It doesn't matter if your pdf's incorporate the keywords; they won't be seen by the search engines.

Finally, Brooks said, use your page titles. "They give you the biggest bang for your buck," he said. "Make sure they are specific to your content." He also suggested not "cramming" the titles with keywords and using title tags which are unique to each page.

When you've optimized your Web site, take a look at your social media tools and how you are using them. Brooks said blogs are the most important because they can house so much content, generate RSS and can be used in conjunction with Facebook and LinkedIn. He suggested blogging two to three times month for at least six months before deciding whether to keep the blog, but added that it generally becomes a good point of entry for site visitors and most bloggers keep blogging.

"You always want to be building your audience," Brooks said. "And the more you give away, the more you will get in return."

For tips on identifying key phrases to optimize search engine performance, see the sidebar on page 15. For more information, Brooks suggested his blog: www.flyteblog.com and his website: www.flyte.biz ❖

Julie Kemble Borths is the communications director at the Cincinnati Bar Association, a voluntary bar with about 4,000 members. She and her team are responsible for all communications efforts including the Web site and a monthly magazine, which was the 2010 Luminary Award winner for small bar publications.

Grammar is the New “Sex”

Francine Walker – *Director Public Information & Bar Services, The Florida Bar*

Professor Nancy Gish, of the University of Southern Maine, grabbed the attention of NABE COMMers in her workshop session *Syntax and Style: A Grammar Update* right away saying, “Grammar is the new sex.” Everybody knows about sex these days but nobody knows anything about grammar.”



Walker

From that moment on, Prof. Gish continued to captivate her audience of communicators by discussing such hot and steamy topics as using word order to be more persuasive and at the same time make sentences both graceful and powerful. Those who had spent their early years in school diagramming sentences were the lucky ones, she said. Today’s college students are largely unprepared in terms of grammar and syntax and have much to learn.

As a refresher for the writers present, however, she reviewed a parts of speech table (quick, name all 8!), discussed sentences as “codes and possibilities” and talked the group through various phrases, clauses, structures and patterns of sentences. She also provided Alberto Maguel’s essay on best punctuation and point of order to illustrate how the period is “the unsung legislator of our writing systems.” (<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/patten/periodessay.html>)

To brush up on syntax and grammar, Prof. Gish recommended “The Glamour of Grammar” by Roy Peter Clark and also self-testing your comprehension of sentences by reading the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and then reviewing some current opinions on the meanings contained within those documents (see especially “Court Decides Strict Gun Law Violates Rights” by Adam Liptak, NY Times, March 10, 2007).

She sent waves of chatter (“oh, my!”) among the audience when she advised that it is acceptable to use “they” and “their” as third-person singular references and that split infinitives may work better stylistically in some sentences and as such would not be a “grammar no-no.”

Email fwalker@flabar.org to get copies of the handouts (disclaimer: with my hand-written notes!). ❖

Francine A. Walker is Director of Public Information and Bar Services for The Florida Bar. She works closely with leadership on strategic communications and issues management, and oversees media relations, the voluntary bar liaison program, the website and consumer information programs. A fourth-generation Floridian, she joined the Bar in 2000 after 20 years in medical/healthcare communications management.

How to Identify Key Phrases for Your Site

Ask the following questions:

- What are your services?
- What do your customers need?
- What are the problems your customers need to solve?
- What benefits are they looking for?
- When they are ready to make a decision (a class, a product, a service), what features do they need to know about?
- What options exist among your competitors?
- Is your geography important? Will your customers prefer you because you are local?

Once you have your words, you can find out how likely it is that someone will search for you that way by using paid services such as Raven SEO, Keyword Discovery and WordTracker.

Remember: the days of searching by words is over. Now, most searches are done by phrases.