

## *Are Some Firms Too Big to Blog?*

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The legal blogosphere is expanding at a rapid pace. Just 10 months ago, AmLaw 100 firms produced 126 blogs, but now that number has more than doubled, to 270 and counting. Still, large firm blogging is growing in a highly disproportionate fashion. Take a look at the firms below that have experienced the biggest increase.

### **Biggest change in total number of blogs over the last year**

Ranking	Firm	2009	2010	Total
19	Reed Smith	13	17	4
32	Akin Gump	1	4	3
43	Hunton & Williams	20	23	3
52	Bryan Cave	1	4	3
54	McGuire Woods	1	6	5
56	Squire Sanders	1	5	4
59	Perkins Cole	1	4	3
62	Seyfarth Shaw	1	4	3
69	Baker & Hostletler	1	6	5
75	Sheppard Mullin	22	25	3
76	Troutman Sanders	1	8	7
83	Dorsey & Whitney	6	9	3
99	Cozen O'Connor	1	9	8

Troutman Sanders made the leap from one blog to eight, Cozen O'Connor from one to nine blogs, while Reed Smith, Hunton & Williams and Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton continued to lead the way with a combined 65 law blogs. Many firms jumped from 1 blog to more than a half dozen. The growth has been so huge that you could call this past year "The Year of the Law Blog."

[Click here for the full list of blogs of the AmLaw 100](#)

With all of this enthusiasm and growth in blogging, a few big questions loom large. First, why aren't the biggest firms blogging?

## Firms that don't blog

6	Kirkland & Ellis
7	Jones Day
8	Sidley Austin
9	White & Case
12	Mayer Brown
14	Sullivan & Cromwell
15	Gibson Dunn
17	Cleary Gottlieb
21	Simpson Thacher
24	Bingham McCutchen
26	Orrick
29	O'Melveny & Myers
30	Paul Weiss
33	King & Spalding
36	Debevoise & Plimpton
40	Fulbright & Jaworski
41	Milbank Tweed
42	Vinson & Elkins
44	Cravath
46	Wachtell
49	Baker Botts
51	Quinn Emanuel
53	Willkie Farr
60	Fried Frank
61	Sonnenschein
65	Kaye Scholer
74	Schulte Roth
79	Venable
82	Cahill Gordon
84	Finnegan Henderson
88	Chadbourne & Parke
89	Boies Schiller
90	Williams & Connolly

Consider that fact that the 26,000 lawyers in the 10 biggest firms in America produce a total of 12 law blogs. These are impressive organizations, so why aren't they jumping in and starting to blog? I believe this is a calculated firm strategy.

The biggest firms have decided to take a more aggressive approach when it comes to "controlling the message" rather than risk individual lawyers saying whatever they want. They have built a fence around their firm. This is the wrong approach.

How many different ways can I say that clients hire the lawyer, not the law firm? How about the fact that more than [50% of Web traffic goes directly to firm bios](#)? Or that [51.4% of corporate counsel](#) will stop and think a minute before hiring a lawyer who lacks a credible online presence? The [top two ways clients find lawyers](#) are peer-to-peer referrals and Web searches. Your online presence matters to buyers of legal services.

Social media and blogging aren't about making you famous; they are about making you a little bit famous, in your own sphere. It's about building an online reputation that benefits the individual lawyer, benefits the industry or practice group and in turn benefits the whole firm.

I predict that in the next three years we will see this change; firms will realize that they can have their cake and eat it, too. They can still have their big message, and they can also build the reputation of each individual lawyer within the firm. Building a lawyer's online presence is not expensive, but it does take time and effort. I've heard some joke that the biggest firms don't blog because they are making too much money. If they don't start taking the online presence of their attorneys seriously, that may be one challenge they no longer have to deal with.

Now for the second issue: Does blogging bring in more revenue?

This question is a difficult one, because it is harder to quantify. There are examples of bloggers landing nice pieces of business as a result of the blog but, unfortunately, buyers of legal services don't make purchasing decisions based on a blog alone; they look at a variety of things. Recent statistics from BTI Consulting (see above) revealed that corporate counsel don't care as much about what your law firm Web site says about you; they want to know what LinkedIn and Google have to say about you. (Have you "google'd" yourself lately? If you haven't, you should — I guarantee that your prospective customers are.) Blogs are one great way to build your online profile with posts and articles relevant to your industry. We are not seeing a direct correlation between total revenues of a firm and total number of blogs yet, but the fact that almost every firm that was blogging in 2009 has increased its total number of blogs since then shows that those firms at least believe their blogs are working.

If you're still on the fence about blogging, give it try. Many of the firms in 2009 that started out with a single blog are now creating many more. They are hooked. No need to bet the firm on your blogging strategy; start small, then build on the successes. Are there risks? Absolutely, but there are also risks to walking out your front door in the morning.

*Adrian Dayton is a speaker, group trainer and author of the book Social Media for Law Firms. His next book Social Media for Lawyers: LinkedIn & Blog Edition is scheduled to be published in September of 2011. To be the first to know when the book is available sign up at <http://adriandayton.com>.*