Using

for Your
Lawyer Referral Service

What is Twitter?

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Twitter is an online social network that allows users to share Tweets—composed of 140-character-max text messages, images, and links—either privately (with select Followers) or publicly (anyone with Internet access).

With Tweets ranging from Justin Bieber’s latest escapades to news from the Department of Justice, Twitter is rich in diverse searchable content. The ABA’s Twitter Visibility Pilot Program focuses on transforming this vast source of information into a pool of leads for your LRIS.

**Section One: Setting Up a Twitter Account for your LRIS**

Create your Twitter account in 10 easy steps!

1. Open up your Internet browser (Internet Explorer, Safari, Google Chrome, or Firefox) and go to www.twitter.com
2. On the Twitter homepage, go to the “New to Twitter?” area and type in your Full Name, E-mail, and Password (for your Twitter account). Hit the “Sign Up” button.

3. The next page confirms the information you have entered. Make sure there are only green check marks (no red X’s) to the right of the information.

Twitter will let you know if you need to create a new username if the one that has been created for you is already taken (“x This username is already taken!”). You may choose from Twitter’s suggestions or create a unique one.

**Choosing a Username**

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Your username will identify you to the Tweeting public. The “@” symbol is automatically added by Twitter and does not need to be included when typing in your chosen username. Here are two factors to consider when creating your Twitter username:

Recognizability:
Since you’ll be Replying to users who don’t yet know who you are, it’s a good idea to choose a username that allows them to identify you easily and as a legitimate source of lawyer referrals. For example, a Tweeter from the LA County Bar Association LRIS might choose “la_Iris” or “LABarAssoc” (Twitter does recognize capitalization).

Length:
In addition, due to Twitter’s 140-character limit, your username should be short enough to leave enough characters for your message. When Replying to a Tweet, Twitter automatically inserts the recipient’s username in front of your message and may add your username at the end if it is part of a Conversation, and all characters are included in the 140 characters you are allotted.

You may or may not leave the “Keep me logged-in on this computer” box checked, depending on the security of your computer.

You may scroll through the Terms of Service and hit the “Create My Account” button below. A confirmation of your sign-up will be sent to the e-mail address you provided.
"Suggestions" and "Interests" to Follow

4. Twitter will then take you through a “Suggestions” page, where you can click on the “Follow” button next to each suggested account if you wish to follow that account.

5. Twitter will then take you through an “Interests” page, where you can click on a

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topic (such as Business or Government) and choose from the accounts listed under that topic to "Follow." Again, click the “Follow" button on an account if you wish to follow that account.

You may also search for a specific name or topic (for example, Law or Legal) in the Search box at the top of the screen to find accounts related to that topic.

6. When you select an account to “Follow,” the button will be highlighted in green

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and change to “Following.”

In the upper right-hand side of the screen, you will see that your account states that you are now following that account (“You follow _”).

7. At the bottom of your screen, you may hit “Back to: Suggestions” to find more suggested accounts to follow, or hit “Finish.”
8. Check your e-mail inbox for the Twitter confirmation e-mail. You will be reminded to do this at the next screen. *You MUST confirm your Twitter account by clicking the link in your confirmation e-mail. Once you confirm, you will have full access to Twitter.*

9. Upon clicking the link, you will be taken to your Twitter account's homepage. Note that there is no longer a message at the top of the screen. You are now ready to Tweet!

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You may type in the Tweet box and hit the “Tweet” button when you are ready to share your message publicly. Remember that there is a 140-character limit.

You may also scan the right-hand side of your Twitter page to keep track of who you are following, next steps to take (writing a tweet, setting up your profile, getting Twitter on your phone), and suggested accounts to follow.

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Filling out Your Twitter Profile

10. Don’t forget to fill out your Twitter Profile. On the right-hand side of the page, look under the “What’s Next?” section and click the links “Upload a profile picture” and “Write a short bio.”

Signing In, Signing Out

When you are ready to sign out of your account, click on your username in the right-hand corner of the screen and choose “Sign Out” from the drop-down menu.

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To access your Twitter account in the future, go to www.twitter.com and enter your Username and Password in the boxes in the upper right-hand corner and hit the “Sign In” button.

Twitter on Your Mobile Device

You can also download the Twitter Application to start using Twitter on your iPhone, Android, iPad, Blackberry, or Windows Phone 7.

Go to

http://twitter.com/#!/download

to download the app.

Section Two: Tweeting for your LRIS

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Congratulations on setting up your Twitter account for your LRS program! You have taken the first step towards enhancing your program's visibility in Twitter and on the Internet generally, as well as the visibility of all other LRIS programs on Twitter who you are following or who are following you.

Here is a quick guide to making your Twitter Account work best for your LRIS.

What to Tweet about (your "Twitter Duties") fall into three general categories

- Responsive Tweeting: Using Twitter's handy search box to find Tweeters in need of legal services and saving these searches.
- Independent Tweeting: Tweeting stand-alone messages (not in response to someone else's Tweet) that will appear in your Twitter Feed (and thus broadcasted to the entire network).
- Retweets of other LRIS Tweets so that your followers can see what your connected LRIS programs are tweeting about.

**Twitter Duty #1: Responsive Tweeting**

1. **Searching Tweets for people who need help**

It's good to do searches a couple times a week (or more often if you'd like) for people on Twitter who are Tweeting about how to find a lawyer. This is easy to do and if you save your searches, will be very fast the next time you do it.

Go to the Twitter search box in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. You may type in a word or phrase, such as “need a lawyer,” in order to search for Twitter members who have Tweeted something related to these keywords.

Here are some suggested searches:
Need (looking for) a lawyer (s) / Need (looking for) an attorney (s)
Lawyer(s) LA (or insert your own location) / Attorney(s) LA (or insert your own location)
Need legal help / advice
How to find a lawyer
Know a lawyer

Try singular and plural versions and other variations of lawyer, attorney, legal, help, advice, etc.

Also try searching specific subjects such as:

Bankruptcy
Divorce
Custody
(stay away from “legalese” that the average Twitter user wouldn’t use, such as ”litigation” or “FMLA”)

As you’ll see, Twitter will deliver results of recent Tweets matching your search. Results include a list of Tweets that include your keywords, as well as suggestions for accounts to follow.

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You may “Save this Search” by hitting this button and also “Refine results” by clicking that link. Later, you’ll be able to simply select the search in the Searches dropdown menu on your homepage.

2. Replying to the Tweets of people looking for legal help: What to Include in Your Message

Once you’ve found a user looking for a lawyer, hit the Reply button and insert your message.

As you can see, Twitter automatically inserts your recipient’s username at the

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beginning of your message. Here are some suggested “template messages” that include a link to the American Bar Association’s map of lawyer locations:

We can help if you’re in our County ([LINK]). Otherwise go to the ABA’s directory of referral services: http://tinyurl.com/3hqddx5

or:

If you need legal help, contact your local bar association. We’re in [State] and our website is [LINK]. Here’s the ABA’s map: http://tinyurl.com/3hqddx5

WARNING:

Do not simply copy and paste the same Tweet content over and over again in response to twitter users or seeking legal help. Keep your message friendly and colloquial or twitter may perceive you as spam and suspend your account.

Creating your program’s little URL:

Because Twitter only allows 140 characters for your Tweet, you should have a compact version of your lawyer referral programs URL to make every character in your Tweet count.

To generate a short URL for your lawyer referral website, go here:

* bit.ly (go to www.bit.ly) and tinyurl.com (go to www.tinyurl.com) are placeholder URLs that allow you to condense a long URL, helping you stay within Twitter’s character limit

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3. "Following" people you've responded to.

Make sure you add the user you have messaged to your list of people you are following by clicking on their Tweet or Picture and hitting the “Follow” button.

You’ll notice that you can also review their Recent Tweets (above).

Twitter also provides you with suggestions of who to follow.
Remember that you can verify that you have added them by checking your Following and Followers tracker on your homepage.

**Twitter Duty #2: Independent Tweeting**

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Keeping your Twitter account fresh and current also involves Tweeting even when you’re not replying to specific search results. Try to intersperse informational Tweets such as:


*#Colorado #California*

Note the “hash tags”: #lawyer, #Colorado, #California. These tags help ensure that users actively searching for these keywords will be exposed to your Tweets corresponding to these subjects.

**IMPORTANT:**

A really important part of your independent Tweeting is taking a minute to Tweet about something that is happening at another LRS program that you’re aware of. For example, in your Twitter feed you may notice that another LRIS program has Tweeted about something significant, like an award they’ve received.

To help increase that LRIS program’s visibility to your followers, you have two choices: (1) re-Tweet their Tweet (see Twitter Duty #3, below), or even better, (2) you can create your own independent Tweet on the topic, being sure (absolutely sure) to include that LRIS program’s URL in your Tweet.

**Twitter Duty #3: Re-Tweeting the Tweets of LRIS programs you’re following**

Re-Tweeting the Tweets of other lawyer referral programs that you are following is a terrific way to easily give lots of exposure for other programs to your followers. Please try to do this as often as you find something in your feed that seems appropriate (of course in the alternative, you can repackage their Tweet as we described in the previous section on independent tweets, linking back to their LR I program).

Here’s how to Re-Tweet:

1. When you come across a “tweet” that you want to share with your followers, such as this post from the LA County Bar Association:

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2. Click in the white space of the tweet (not the name, link, or picture), or hover your mouse over the post. This will open up options to reply, “retweet”, or add to favorites.

3. Click “Retweet” to share this tweet with your own followers. This will bring up a confirmation message. Click “Retweet” to confirm.

4. The post has now been “retweeted” on your own page, exactly as it appeared on your own twitter feed. Now, instead of only being seen by LACBA’s followers, it is now seen by your followers as well!

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Original tweet will also show how many times, and by whom, it has been retweeted.

Great work and keep Tweeting! As a network, we’ll be able to increase our online visibility in the Twittersphere and in Google, which will follow all of those little URLs to our lawyer referral service websites.