Committee Newsletter | Fall 2017

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ARTICLES

Networking as a Young Lawyer: Is It Possible?
By: Amanda R. Singh*

As a young attorney, it may seem difficult to find the time to network and attend legal social events with billable hours looming over your head. However, there are many opportunities for young lawyers who are interested in networking and marketing themselves and their law practice.

Join a Local Bar Association

An excellent way to network and meet other attorneys is to join a local bar association, such as a local county bar association. These smaller bar associations provide young lawyers with a unique opportunity to meet older, more established attorneys and judges as well as other young lawyers. Most local bar associations require yearly dues to cover the various costs associated with membership. Many law firms will cover these costs, if asked.

Local bar associations often put on luncheons, conferences, golf tournaments, CLEs and other events. These all provide casual, social environments to not only learn, but also meet judges and attorneys in an open environment. These events may seem intimidating at first, especially if you do not know anyone, but you are often placed at a specific table or seat and attorneys love to talk. You can use these opportunities to meet judges and attorneys who practice in your area who may be hiring, looking for referrals and other legal opportunities. CLEs and conferences are also great to educate yourself on the law while having the option to focus on specific legal fields. This provides an opportunity to network with legal professionals in the same legal practice as yourself or a legal practice that you have an interest in pursuing.

Most local bar associations also have their own YLD sections that put on their own events geared towards young lawyers, such as happy hours, CLEs and committees. These events allow young lawyers to meet other young lawyers who have only been practicing for a few years. The YLD events tend to be more laid back and may serve as a great starting point for those who are too nervous to attend larger events.

Committees are also great opportunities to network and show your passion for the legal profession. You can meet other like-minded individuals while beefing up your resume. The committees have meetings, and, depending on the committee, law-specific CLEs which serve to educate and introduce attorneys.

Join an Inn of Court

The American Inn of Court and other smaller Inns provide an excellent opportunity to network. While there are yearly dues, the fees for younger lawyers, or "associates" as the Inn refers to them, tend to be lesser in price. Many law firms will also pay these fees, if asked. The Inns provide CLE credits for each meeting you attend and many meetings include a dinner. You are seated with the same group of attorneys and judges each meeting and are allowed to mingle with other groups prior to the start and after the conclusion of each meeting. You also work with these attorneys and judges outside of the meetings to prepare and present your own
CLE program for one of the meetings. This is an especially great opportunity to take on as a young lawyer. Most of the attorneys and judges you will work with are keen to keep an eye out for an eager young lawyer who is willing to either help in preparation for or put on their own portion of the CLE. In law school, I had the opportunity to present a closing argument during our CLE presentation. Proving yourself to be a competent and intelligent individual in these situations can prove to be beneficial not only for networking but also for future employment opportunities. These same lawyers and judges that you sit and eat dinner with can be a reference or put in a good word for you in the future.

**Find a Mentor**

Many young lawyers overlook the importance of having a mentor to help them as they navigate through the legal profession. A mentor is an amazing resource to have. Mentors have helpful information regarding the legal practice and can be a great sounding board for your own legal cases. But most importantly, a mentor is a great networking resource. Your mentor can bring you to specific events, if you have not joined a specific association or group, and can serve as a sponsor for more inclusive and private groups. Mentors can help to put you in touch with attorneys in a specific field and can also help with referrals.

Finding a mentor might seem like a scary endeavor, but it is not as intimidating as it seems. Most law schools have services which can help link attorneys with mentors. Some chapters of the American Inn of Court also provide this opportunity, as well as some local bar associations. Some law firms establish their own mentorship programs by connecting younger associates with older associates and partners. If your firm does this, take the opportunity to get to know your mentor. Ask them questions and see if they would be interested in allowing you to accompany them to court and any social functions. If your firm does not have a mentorship program, you can always reach out to attorneys in your area utilizing your state bar database or asking attorneys in your firm if they know anyone who would be interested in mentoring a young lawyer. Keep in mind, many attorneys are busy, so do not be discouraged if you are turned down. It would also be best to ask the attorney to grab a cup of coffee instead of asking them to be your mentor out of the gate.

Whether you’re hoping to find a mentor, find a new legal practice, or simply looking to find new attorney friends, networking is a great opportunity for young attorneys. While you may be busy helping clients and trying to reach your billable time requirements, it is easy to find network opportunities and expand your legal horizons. These relationships can help mold a young lawyer’s legal career.

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There was a Data Breach…Now What?
By: D. Chris Esquire*

Data breaches occur all the time, though many are not published. Some of the biggest data breaches from this year have been with Equifax and Deloitte. But how many are aware that Whole Foods Market, Arby’s, the Security Exchange Commission, Verizon, Blue Cross Blue Shield/Anthem, and even Gmail all suffered data breaches this year. Some of these should be very alarming; if they aren’t, then what is considered Personally Identifiable Information (PII) should be revisited.

PII is any information in combination that can be used to identify an individual. For example, your home address is not considered to be PII in the United States, that is public information. Your business address, email address, telephone number (both personal and business) are all not considered to be PII. However, your personal email address, in conjunction with your name is considered to be PII. Also, your Social Security number, birthday, and driver's license number irrefutably are considered to be PII. This also extends to medical information as well. The threat of harm is even greater when multiples of sensitive PII are exposed together.

The protection of client and customer information should be a large priority for any one conducting business. The benefit of securing the confidentiality of customer and client data far exceeds the costs to do so. A lot of lawyers and businesses are turning more to the cloud to manage their data storage needs. The ease of access and availability brings inherent risks as well. By allowing someone else to maintain your data you are exposing your clients and customers to whatever fate the provider suffers.

I have worked in Information Technology (IT) for over 21 years and have seen the progression of technology and the impact it has had to both hinder and enrich society and our lives. There are steps that can be taken to help mitigate some of the pitfalls of using online providers. First, any data that you are storing electronically needs to have the least number of middlemen involved. Using a company such as DocuSign to process documents (which by the way suffered a data breach this year) should be avoided at all cost. Transmitting emails with your client’s files via a webmail provider such as Gmail (which also suffered a data breach this year where over 1 million users were affected) should be avoided as well. If for no other reasons than the potential of having the clients or customer’s PII residing on several different servers, across several countries, exposed to all laws controlling data and warrants in those countries, you should avoid using them because if your account is compromised then that data is free to the hacker from your side.

If you must use a middleman then redact the information prior to any form of electronic transmission. Create a key where the sensitive information can be referenced to associate one part of the data to another part of the data and encrypt that key using at least 128-bit encryption with a complex password that contains upper & lower-case letters, numbers and special characters at least 8 characters long. Preferably, this key will be stored locally so that it won’t get compromised as well.
As both a lawyer and an IT security professional, I say embrace the advances in technology. Soon the rest of the antiquated systems, such as the legal system, will fully embrace it as well. Just proceed with caution, as no system or process is perfect.

*D. Chris Esquire is an IT Security Analyst and solo practitioner focused on Cyber Security/Technology, Veterans Benefits and Business areas of law. He has over 21 years working in various roles in technology. He has a BS in Information Systems focused in IT and Accounting fraud and forensics, a MS in Information Systems Management focused on Project Management, and Juris Doctor. He is currently completing a PhD in Management Information Systems and a PhD in Business Administration focused on Computer and Information Security. He possesses numerous IT certifications and certificates such as Certified Ethical Hacker, Cloud Security Knowledge, Cloud Computing and Information Systems Security Professional. He is a Co-Vice Chair of the ABA YLD Law Practice Committee. Contact D. Chris by phone at (205) 701-2992 or via email at cesquire@esquiregroup.net.
NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

2017 Solo & Small Firm Summit

The Solo & Small Firm Summit engages and informs attorneys at all levels of practice while also bringing together members of the ABA Solo, Small Firm and General Practice Division (GPSolo). The Summit will take place at the Saint Paul Hotel, 350 Market St, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102 on October 18-22, 2017. The CLE will cover a spectrum of legal topics that address issues of law practice management. This unique event provides an all-in-one environment for education, networking, exhibiting and idea sharing.

If you are interested in attending, please visit: https://shop.americanbar.org/ebus/ABAEventsCalendar/EventDetails.aspx?productId=278898637

Upcoming Events:

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<td>The Path to Lawyer Well-being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change</td>
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<td>1/31/2018-2/6/2018</td>
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<td>YLD Spring Conference!</td>
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