

A NEWS SERVICE ON THE BUSINESS OF LAW FOR OUR MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES, AFFILIATES AND PARTNERS

TWO BCLMA PRESIDENTS: ONE SAYS HELLO, THE OTHER, GOODBYE 'THE YEAR OF EVOLUTION', SAYS PARKE; BCLMA'S SUCCESSFUL: HILDEBRANDT

Two BCLMA presidents offer their perspectives on the year to come, and the year past, in this joint summary. We start with the report from our incoming CEO, Anita Parke; Cindy Hildebrandt's comments follow, beginning on page 23.



BY ANITA PARKE, BCLMA PRESIDENT 2013-2014, AND DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES, THORSTEINSSONS LLP

ahead and working hard to continue to contribute to the

I am truly honoured to be writing to you as the new President of BCLMA, but I must admit it's also a bit intimidating.

As I write, I am thinking back many years ago to when I joined the Association in my first HR role in a law firm. I was green in the legal-management world, and therefore re-

in awe of their accomplishments.

From those early days, I vowed I would give back to the Association that helped me so much in my career; however I didn't have a clear vision of how I would best be able to reciprocate everything I had received from this organization.

It became clear two years ago when I joined the Board, and is now solidified as I serve as President. I am very much looking forward to the year

Association through my Presidency.

As President, I am fortunate to be supported by a fantastic Board with whom I have already had the pleasure of working. Ernie Gauvreau, Susan Spalding, Paula Keiss, Lori-Ann Birdsell, Leslie Morgan and our Past-President, Cindy Hildebrandt, bring a breadth and depth of knowledge, experience and ideas that will

YEAR OF EVOLUTION - CONTINUED ON PAGE 22



Change x 2: Last year's BCLMA's 'Change' conference underscores the year to come, says Parke: "This year, the Board will certainly be embracing change." The conference was "successful (and fun!)," says Hildebrandt, with 2014's meeting expected to be "spectacular and informative."

lied heavily on the Association's significant resources – and in particular the wealth of knowledge of its experienced members – to guide me through many challenges. I really looked up to those leaders and was

THE PROS (AND CONS) OF USING TABLET COMPUTERS IN YOUR FIRM

The market for tablets is projected to overtake PC sales in 2013, if they haven't already.

Whether we're talking about iPads, Android, Microsoft Surface or any others, tablets have made a rapid transition from nice-to-have tech gear to essential tech accessory. Now personal tablet users are exploring options for using them in the workplace. Law firms are responding to this demand by outfitting their partners and associates with tablets in an effort to boost productivity.

Which devices hold the most promise for law firms? What do firms need to know so they can achieve that goal of higher efficiency while avoiding getting sued by their own clients for data breaches? Lawyers have been using tablets since before most people heard of them. Almost 10 years ago, you could pick up a device that was essentially a PC laptop with a fold-over keyboard and a stylus. It

BY VACLAV VINCALEK, PRESIDENT, PACIFIC COAST INFORMATION SYSTEMS



TABLETS PRO AND CON - CONTINUES...

INSIGHT

Expert Opinion: Cost-efficient training

Three experts offer their best practices for efficiently training your staff.

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TOPICS

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Who we are

The BCLMA, founded in 1972, is a non-profit organization with 130 Representatives and 250 Affiliates across BC. It is the BCLMA's goal to provide educational and networking opportunities, to enhance skills as legal administrators and managers, and to provide professional and personal benefits to its registrants.

Member Services

The BCLMA provides opportunities to network with other law-firm administrators and managers at annual Spring and Winter socials, and at our monthly sub-section meetings. We host an annual Managing Partners Event, and a large conference every other year.

Our Website

The BCLMA Job Bank provides information on employment opportunities for all types of legal-related and lawyer positions. The Discussion Board helps

you to quickly ask questions and obtain answers.

Newsletter services

Topics is a public newsletter. Please contact the Editorial Committee on the back page, for comments on any of these articles, or to offer suggestions for articles in future issues. We welcome your feedback. Contact Member Services (address below) to adjust your delivery e-address, or to be added to, or removed from the circulation list.

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TABLET ROW: The choice of tablet computers continues to expand, each with their own proprietary operating system, strengths and weaknesses, but the market for them also continues to rise dramatically. Left to right: Microsoft Surface, Samsung Galaxy and the Apple iPad.

CON'T FROM PAGE 1 - TABLET PROS (AND CONS)

◀ was a decent alternative to taking notes on paper and tracking billable hours... but that was about all it could do.

WHEN POWERFUL MOBILE CAPABILITIES AND YOUR AVERAGE HUMAN COLLIDE

Tablets evolve. They have capabilities that we would not have dreamed of 10 years ago – they allow you to always be online, able to stream video or help you deliver presentations. You can sync your email, *Skype* or chat so your clients are never more than an IM away. By using a *Windows RT* device, you can view documents on the go, and even create and access MS

Office documents as easily as on your desktop. Tablets allow you to assist your client from your office, from the comfort of your own home or your neighborhood coffee shop.

Mobile is marvelous. We can do it all, from anywhere.

But the ease of mobile communications outside the office is where the problems can begin – big, multi-million-dollar liability problems.

Lawyer-client confidentiality is a must, which necessitates strict security standards attached to any device that a law firm uses. This is not necessarily a deal-killer for the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) crowd. With strict protocols, a virtual private-network to ensure that there is no actual data resid-

ing on the tablet and password protection, law firms can take some measures to ensure information remains under strict control.

The American Bar Association’s 2012 *Legal Technology Survey* shows about one tenth of all law firms have had some kind of security breach. Security breaches continue to happen, and tablets in law firms are one more point of entry for threats to your clients: tablets are stolen, and you



A fleet of tablets does take some planning

may need to wipe the data on a tablet remotely if that happens, but that’s a trickier proposition in a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) model.

Lawyers have been known to log into vulnerable public WiFi channels for the sake of whipping off a quick email. Sharing a password with one other person – even a fellow lawyer – can ultimately cripple the security of the whole network.

These aren’t reasons to avoid using tablets in your firm. Reasonable IT management and protocols can be implemented to protect your law firm and its clients, and ensure seamless integration with internal servers or other IT infrastructure.

But rolling out a fleet of tablets does take some planning ahead – and if the IT department has to support a dozen different types of hardware and operating systems, dealing with them can make it more costly.

Further, when firms don’t integrate across a single platform or go with a BYOD model, this eliminates lower-priced corporate plans for phone or Internet service.



THE FIRM



“THEY REALLY CUT DOWN OUR **PAPERWORK!!** THIS ONE’S FOR APPS THAT ONLY RUN ON **APPLE IOS**. THIS ONE’S FOR APPS THAT ONLY RUN ON **ANDROID** AND THIS ONLY RUNS **MICROSOFT OFFICE!!**”

GRAHAM MORGAN © CANADA, 2013

WE LOVE IT, WE LOVE IT NOT...

iPad, Android, Surface... Which tablet should your law firm get?

The tablet market has exploded, but not enough time has passed for natural selection of the marketplace to take its toll. You might just be intimidated

odds are, what your tablet-owning associates already use. It has a huge number of apps, including some lawyer-specific ones like *TrialPad* for organizing case presentations, or *PenUltimate*, a fine legal notepad. It's fast, with an intuitive interface and

OS come from a range of manufacturers, such as Samsung, Acer, LG and Motorola.

MICROSOFT SURFACE Want to use the full features of Microsoft *Word, Excel and PowerPoint*?

For now, this is the only game in town.

This could change, given the huge incentive of Microsoft to bring its popular *Office* software to over 100 million *iPad* owners. Its mini-keyboard is also a cover for the device.

Tablets can help your law firm be more mobile and effective on the go – but whichever choice you make, the decision needs to be informed by your firm's particular business needs and done in conjunction with a realistic appraisal of your IT infrastructure and support resources.

TOPICS

The research is still out on which tablet might be best for law firms in general – but you can narrow down the choices a bit for your law firm. We offer several choices.

by the sheer number of options.

The research is still out on which tablet might be best for law firms in general – but you can narrow down the choices a bit for your law firm. Here are just a few options:

IPAD The tablet that started it all, and

handsome design that has made Apple a world-beater.

ANDROID Many *Android* tablet users will swear by them for their slick interface and functionality that can go toe-to-toe with Apple products. Unlike the *iPad*, tablets that run the *Android*

Vaclav Vincalek, President and Founder of Pacific Coast Information Systems. PCIS helps organizations devise and implement their mobile strategies. (604) 844-7558; www.pcis.com



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TEMPEST IN THE TONER TUB

THE LOWLY PHOTOCOPY CAUSES A STORM IN BC'S LEGAL COMMUNITY

One small paragraph in the Law Society's *Code of Professional Conduct*, which took effect January 1, 2013, started a firestorm in the legal community. In the *Fees and Disbursements* section of the *Code*, Rule 3.6-3, entitled *Reasonable Fees and Disbursements*, reads:

In a statement of an account delivered to a client, a lawyer must clearly and separately detail the amounts charged as fees and disbursements.

What started this uproar was Part 1 of the *Commentary* that followed Rule 3.6-3, namely:

*A lawyer may charge as disbursements **only those** amounts that have been paid or are required to be paid to a third party by the lawyer on a client's behalf. However, a subcategory entitled "Other Charges" may be included under the fees heading if a lawyer wishes to separately itemize charges such as paralegal, word processing or computer costs that are not disbursements, provided that the client has agreed, in writing, to such costs.*

(The emboldened emphasis in the quotes of this article are mine.)

The significance of this *Commentary* was that only out-of-pocket disbursements could be included in the disbursements section of law firm bills.

This would mean that not only would costs for paralegal work, word processing and computer expenses have to be included in this new *Other Charges* section of the bill, but so would in-house photocopies, printing, scanning and faxes.

Computer research, where charges could not be directly linked to a particular client (i.e. if a law firm paid a flat monthly rate for a service), would also have to be included in this section.

Furthermore, law firms would not

be able to include these types of charges on their bills without prior written agreement from the client. This could entail rewriting retainer agree-



BY PELAR DAVIDSON,
FINANCIAL
CONTROLLER,
OYEN WIGGS GREEN
& MUTALA LLP

ments with respect to such charges, as proposed by the Law Society in 
TONER TUB TEMPEST - CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



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
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*CERTAIN CONDITIONS APPLY

DOZENS OF GRAPHICAL CHANGES THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE

THE STORY BEHIND THE NEW, STATE-OF-THE-ART LOOK OF 'TOPICS'

Change, the theme of last year's conference, is echoed throughout this edition of *Topics*.

Several of the articles reference the many exciting changes taking place within the BCLMA. And, in keeping with this theme, *Topics* is also going through some significant renovations of its own.

Based on the feedback provided by you, our readers, we are revamping the quarterly newsletter to make it even better, and to ensure that it continues to serve your needs.

It was clear from the outset that the new publication design would need to balance form and function. It would need to be visually interesting, easy to read and navigate, and the high-calibre content would need to be preserved.

So with this in mind, here is a summary of some of the changes that you

can expect to see in this and future editions of *Topics*.

FORM: THE LOOK AND FEEL OF THE NEW TOPICS

The first thing you may have noticed was the new nameplate and colour scheme.

The nameplate has an interesting story attached to it. According to our designer who worked with the committee on the redesign, "The use of the slanted **O**... represents the diverse opinions that are reflected by BCLMA's members. The **O** stands out because your opinions stand out; the **O** leans forward because BCLMA members' opinions are forward-thinking."

Each element of the redesign has been selected to demonstrate and represent BCLMA as a diverse and professional organization, driven by our members and your desire to remain in-



BY HEATHER RITZER, EDITOR, TOPICS; GOWLING LAFLEUR HENDERSON LLP

formed, current and adaptable.

Our new, fresh and modern colour palette reflects the

evolving nature of the Association, providing an updated look and feel. The colours are designed to be airy and light, clean and crisp while complementing the BCLMA logo.

Palatino, the font that we have selected is both aesthetically appealing and easy to read in print and online.

To ensure that this clean look is mirrored throughout the newsletter, several of the recurring departments have been simplified and revised, including *On the Move*, *You be The Judge* – now called *Paula's Perspective* – along with the *Save The Dates* items, the lists of board members and our own Topics Editorial Committee.

FUNCTION: THE PRACTICAL POINTS

The most common point that several of you raised had to do with the length of *Topics*.

We are incredibly lucky here at *Topics* to have the problem of such an engaged membership and contributors who are eager to share their ideas by submitting articles to the publication. We greatly value all of your contributions. However, we also realize that you are very busy and that a shorter newsletter can be easier to digest. With this in mind, we are working to limit the number of articles to a few key topics, and each article will be slightly reduced in length. We hope that this new, more-concise format will make the publication more manageable for our readers.

We have also worked to design the new *Topics* format so that it is easier to navigate. In order to address this concern, our new layout and shorter articles will reduce the number of pages on which each article falls, and will make the process of reading the newsletter much simpler.

In addition, if you are reading *Topics* on a tablet, we are keeping the feature of being able to skip to the

BC SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE URGES TRIAL LAWYERS TO 'EMBRACE THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE'

The Chief Justice of the BC Supreme Court told the BC Trial Lawyers Association in Vancouver April 5 that "it is time to shake up our attitudes towards lawyering."

Here is an excerpt from that speech, in the words of the Chief Justice:

This Association and its members really represent so much that is good in lawyering.

And, we as lawyers, as you well know, are facing significant challenges these days: access to justice issues are daunting and potentially fatal to our profession as we know it. Similarly, public confidence in our profession and in its institutions, especially the Courts, is a continuing challenge.

Richard Susskind famously asked in [the title of] his book: *The End of Lawyers?* It is today the very question we should ask ourselves.

The willingness of government and the public to abandon lawyers and the Courts as the dispute resolvers of choice is startling and disturbing. As a profession, if we are not accessible and accountable – and importantly, seen to be – we risk the possibility of losing all relevance.

Now is a time for all of us to pull together; to remind our neighbours and

our greater neighbourhoods that we are lawyers, members of a proud and caring profession. We are a critical profession in our respective communities. The CBA - BC Branch is doing its part. You know their initiatives.

I stress especially the *Envisioning Equal Justice Summit* taking place later this month.

The TLABC is, I believe, doing its share as well. The Law Society, through initiatives like the paralegal pilot project, the expansion of the scope of practice for articling students and the unbundling of legal services, is doing its part as well.

And the Courts of our province are doing their best to navigate these interesting times. Visit our websites and you will see that we have just signed a



BC Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert Bauman
"Now is the time, I suggest, for all of us to wake up, speak up and shake up."

Memorandum of Understanding with the Attorney General which seeks to define the responsibilities of the Executive and the Judiciary in managing the justice system in British Columbia.

It is an important document and we hope that it will form a strong foundation on which to build a better justice system; a justice system which will serve the public interest and earn the confidence of all British Columbians.

Now is the time, I suggest, for all of us to wake up, speak up, and shake-up.

- ✓ Wake-up to the realities of these challenges;
- ✓ Speak-up about our value and our critical relevance in the lives of ordinary Canadians; and
- ✓ Shake-up our attitudes towards lawyering.




Wake-up; speak-up; shake-up. How do we do it? I certainly don't have the answers but I have suggestions, and they begin with rekindling some of the passion all of us have had at one point in our careers as lawyers. Then how do we do it?

- ✓ By renewing our dedication to serving the public as a learned profession.
- ✓ By embracing the possibility of change, while preserving our important and relevant traditions.
- ✓ By participating in the developing critical mass that is blossoming around the "access to justice" initiative nationally.
- ✓ By, and you do this so well, mentoring our young lawyers in the ethics and best practices of our profession.
- ✓ By never letting an opportunity pass to explain ourselves and our profession to an unfortunately incredulous and misinformed public.
- ✓ By continuing our long tradition of community service and involvement in the political life of our province and our country.



Over the next year, let's monitor our progress on these issues; on developing these attitudes. I invite you all to hold me, at least, to account for my contributions in the year to come. **TOPICS**

CHANGE OF TOPICS - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

 next page of the article by clicking the hyperlink at the bottom of each section of the article. Over the next few issues you will continue to see these changes being implemented. The current issue represents the first step in our quest to ensuring that *Topics* keeps providing you with valuable information so that it maintains the high level of readership that it has garnered to date.

Keeping *Topics* current and relevant requires the time and attention of both the editorial committee, the Board and our readers. With that in mind, we would like to say *thank you* for all the feedback that you provided that was instrumental in planning the redesign, and to thank all of the past and present contributors who have given their time.

We hope that you enjoy the new *Topics*. If you have any comments, or have story ideas that you would like to submit for consideration, please email them to me at Heather.Ritzer@Gowlings.com. **TOPICS**

PAULA'S PERSPECTIVE

A RECAP + ADVICE FROM READERS AND PAULA ON LAST ISSUE'S CHALLENGE

THE CASE OF THE WICCAN CELEBRANT (AND TWO OTHER PUZZLES)

Here are the three true-or-false questions we listed last issue. Today, we'll provide the answers. We asked: You are the Office Manager. How would you answer?

QUESTION 1 - TEMPER, TEMPER

Susan, a senior lawyer at your firm, has a terrible temper and goes through support staff fast.

Her current legal assistant, Pauline, is going on stress leave after providing you, as HR chief, with a note from her psychiatrist stating that Pauline now suffers from an anxiety disorder as a result of Susan's workplace behaviour.

Pauline tells you that she can no longer put up with Susan's bullying, and that she will not return to work until something is done about Susan. Pauline also tells you that she has filed a claim with WorkSafeBC, and that it will call you to investigate her claim regarding Susan's bullying.

If WorkSafeBC finds that Susan has been bullying Pauline, Pauline is eligible for compensation through WorkSafeBC – True or False?

PAULA'S COMMENTS ON TEMPER, TEMPER

True. Hi, this is Paula. Bill 14 the Workers Compensation Amendment Act, 2011 came into force on July 1, 2012.

Bill 14 provides that a worker is entitled to compensation if they have a mental disorder which is a reaction to one or more traumatic events, including bullying and harassment, arising out of employment.

The disorder must be predominantly caused by a significant work-related stressor, or a cumulative series of significant work-related stressors. The disorder must be diagnosed by a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

As a result, Pauline may be entitled to compensation through WorkSafeBC if her anxiety disorder is predominantly caused by Susan's workplace bullying.

TRUE

QUESTION 2 - WICCAN CELEBRANT

Mary Ellen, your new receptionist, approaches you to ask for two days off this year.

As a follower of Wicca, the modern pagan religion, Mary Ellen explains that the two days are particularly important Sabbats in the group with which she worships, and that she needs the days off for celebration.

Under your firm's rules, she is not allowed to take any vacation until after the two days she's requested.

You do not have an obligation to try to accommodate these days off, even without pay – True or False?

PAULA'S COMMENTS ON WICCAN CELEBRANT

False. Religion is one of the protected grounds under the B.C. Human Rights Code, and time off for religious observances should be accommodated by employers to the point of undue hardship.

Religion includes groups that are not mainstream, as long as the employee is truly a practising member of the religion. In this case, if you are unfamiliar with Mary Ellen's religion, you can ask for a letter from her religious leader confirming that Mary Ellen is a member of a group, and that the two days she has asked to have off are in fact important days to the group.

Once you receive this confirmation, you

FALSE

can give Mary Ellen the two days off without pay.

QUESTION 3 - JURY PAY

John, a mail-room worker at your firm, was called for jury duty last March, which became leave for a murder trial that lasted nine months.

He returned to work last month, and the firm normally does performance evaluations and wage increases in January.

As a result of John's absence, you decide not to evaluate him because of the absence, and you also decide that you are not going to give him the 2% increase that you are giving other support employees for the same reason.

John is upset with you, but you know that your decision is the right one, and there is nothing he can do about not getting an increase – True or False?

PAULA'S COMMENTS ON JURY PAY

False. John can file an Employment Standards Act complaint if he does not receive the 2% increase that you are giving other support employees.

Section 56(3) of the Act sets out that an employee who is absent from work because of jury duty is entitled to all increases in wages and benefits that he would have been entitled to had the jury duty leave not been required.

As a result, John is entitled to the 2% and he can make a complaint if he does not get it.

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A POWERFUL WEBSITE NEEDS ATTENTION TO KEY DETAILS, ON AND OFF THE PAGES

In Part 1, we covered a number of guidelines for on-page optimization and content for law-firm websites. Part 2 wraps up our discussion about these factors, and provides an overview of off-page search optimization signals, including link-building, social-media engagement and considerations for local search and mobile usage.

Search-engine optimization (SEO) is important, of course, but it's equally important not to get so hung up on it that you abandon good writing.

Your website is your interface with the public. In appearance, theme and voice, it should convey who you are as a professional – not present you as a well-oiled marketing machine.

CONTEXTUAL (INTERNAL) LINKING

A SEO best practice is to develop a robust set of links between related pages within your website. This is often referred to as internal linking or link architecture.

The benefits of these contextual links are numerous. They help site visitors quickly navigate to relevant content, help evenly distribute the link value (or *PageRank*) across a website, and increase the depth (the number of pages indexed) of Google's crawl. Some easy ways to increase contextual linking include:

- ✓ Linking names of practice group members to their bio pages;
- ✓ Linking practice areas listed on a lawyer's bio page to the respective practice area pages;
- ✓ Linking publication authors to their profiles or service area pages;
- ✓ Linking between firm news-items and the lawyer bios or service areas to which the news pertains; and
- ✓ Linking between the firm's awards-listing page and the corresponding news announcements.

MOBILE CONSIDERATIONS

Do you know what your firm website looks like on an *iPad*, *iPhone*, or *Android* device?

Being mobile friendly has little to do with search-engine rankings, but if your site is unreadable on mobile devices (around 13% of visitors for most law-firm websites), talk to your developer about implementing a responsive web design – and soon.

The legal sector lags behind other industries when it comes to mobile. Food delivery, for example, frequently eclipses the 50% mark for mobile visitor traffic.

Hiring a lawyer, however, is a more considered decision. So it makes sense that the dominant portion of search traffic continues to originate from desktop and laptop environments.

Preparing for a mobile world remains a wise decision, as that usage percentage will continue to grow.

The first step for many firms is to get their location-based search signals in order. For example, *Google Plus Local* is a factor routinely behind many map-based applications on mobile phones. (*GPL* used to be called *Google Places*, and we'll have more details on it later in this article.) Firms should also consider search traffic originating from voice recognition programs, such as Apple's *Siri*.

The search engines have quietly become a critical link in the mobile information chain. *Don't let it break!*

OFF-PAGE OPTIMIZATION FACTORS

The off-page factor of incoming links is perhaps the single most differentiating factor for ranking well.

Trusted-domain status cannot be achieved without these links, which are measured in both quantity and quality, so we'll make this our initial focus.

Incoming links drive search rankings

Search engines value both the number of incoming links and the diversity of the sources of those links. This is otherwise known as link popularity.

As an example, a site with 10 links coming from 10 different locations is better off than a site with 10 links com-

BY STEVE MATTHEWS,
PRESIDENT,
STEM LEGAL



ing from a single domain.

Generally, the more links your site has, the better; but that's only part of the equation.

Link quality also counts, and the offline reputation of the organization linking into your website is often reflected in how much weight Google gives the recipient website.

Obtaining links from a few high-quality, authoritative sites can be worth far more than thousands of links from low-quality sites.

To achieve that result, however, it's imperative to consistently add fresh, high-quality content to your website – content that reflects the firm's expertise and explicitly uses the language targeted by the firm, both tactfully and naturally. Content from your firm must be inherently link-worthy, the content that other good sites will want to link.

Without this constant flow of new links, domain trust by the search engines is greatly reduced.

Gauging quality links

SEO professionals will often refer to 'quality links,' but few explain exactly what to look for. How do you gauge quality? And what type of links should firms target? The following guidelines will help support that decision process.

✓ *Sites with similar subjects.* One-way links or reciprocal links from sites with content that's topically related to yours are critical to visibility. For example, two blogs covering the same area and linking back and forth are considered more authentic and receive more weight than links between sites with no common subject.

✓ *Sites with high PageRank.* Google, *PageRank* (aka PR) is a percentile-based measure of link popularity. The scale runs from PR1 through PR10, with a PR1 representing the 10th, or bottom, percentile. Using *Google Toolbar*, you can activate the green bar display to see the PR of each page. Linking relationships with sites that have a PR0 or a PR1



should be carefully evaluated for potential merit if they can't be avoided. Otherwise, the higher the number, the better.

- ✓ *Sites without a linking history.* Links from trusted but previously unconnected networks receive substantial weight in rankings. That means a new link from a quality site—an industry magazine, for example—that has never linked to your site in the past can deliver a big search ranking improvement.
- ✓ *Sites ranked highly in similar target keyword searches.* These are the other websites listed in the top 10 or 20 results for searches that use the same keywords that your firm targets. Even ignoring direct competitors, the top 20 results often present some of the best new linking opportunities.
- ✓ *Sites geographically similar to yours.* Google knows where every website is located, and from where each search is conducted. As such, it tries to match sites and searchers geographically through a process called geo-targeting. One of the strongest link-building tactics for local rankings is to acquire local links. Think about your firm's community participation, and the potential to acquire new links: Suggestions include your local rotary club or chamber of commerce site, regional association directories or education institutions – especially if any of your lawyers work there as adjunct faculty.
- ✓ *Fresh links.* Links are most valuable when they are either new or old. Links coming into your site are given the most weight when they are less than a month old—or when they have aged for years. You can't create an aged link out of nowhere, of course; but you can influence the flow of new links by creating fresh link-worthy content.

LOCAL SEARCH: IMPORTANT. NOT ALWAYS EASY

Connecting with local markets via Google is one of the more difficult tasks law firms face these days. Google has begun to phase out its older local search product, Google Places, and move to a new service embedded

within its social network Google Plus. Google+ Local is Google's future for local-business searching. Things get confusing for two reasons:

1 Both services are still active, even though Google Places will eventually become defunct; and

2 Google directs us to use its Places dashboard to manage the information displayed on our Google+ Local listing.

Last November, we began advising those of our clients without a registered Places page to set up a business page within Google+ Local, and clients with existing Places pages to merge them with Google+ Local. This requires verification by snail mail, so be prepared to wait a few weeks.

The more detail you can add to your Google+ Local listing, the better it will fare in the search engines. Business details—including office hours and phone numbers, photos and videos—are critical; you should also make sure your map marker is in the right place.

Creating a Google+ Local page also

allows firms to write posts on their Google+ brand page, which can feature links to recent blog posts, law-firm news or events, or other external content.

At this time, it's not possible to auto-update Google+ pages (as it is with Twitter), so manually posting updates as part of an overall publishing schedule is a good idea.

GET SOCIAL

Twitter, Facebook, and Google+ are all SEO signals.

While a relatively new factor in Google's search rankings, social-media engagement matters. Google constantly looks for ways to reward content that engages readers online, so it stands to reason that people recommending your links on social networks are now factored into the search results.

What factors work? Here's a short list of signals to consider:

- ✓ A *ReTweet* on Twitter, or the "RT" in its short form, is usually followed by a link to online commentary. Don't be tempted to RT your own



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material, or build a network of accounts to do the same. Both *Bing* and *Google* are smart about this. They know what an authoritative user account at *Twitter* looks like.

- ✓ Facebook *Likes* on public-facing pages are indexed and factored by search engines. This means your firm must have a Facebook business page to participate (but note that lawyers with a private account aren't considered). Remember, *Facebook* is a closed network, and only certain pages are accessible for indexing by search engines.
- ✓ The +1 Button for *Google Plus* is the newest social network on the block is *Google+*, but because it's also the same company that sends most of your website traffic to you, *Google+* counts. It's no wonder +1 buttons are now showing up on most major web publications and newspapers. If your firm hasn't done so already, the time has come to add social media *Share* buttons to your blogs and the firm's website.

If your firm has not embraced social media as a form of business development, reconsider. Not only because it's a great form of finding new cases (social media is questionable for business development as a cause-effect business driver), but because content engagement is important for people *finding* your business online. Increased search rankings are simply an added bonus.

THE FINAL WORD

Fix your search-engine optimization concepts so that lawyers can focus on quality content.

Both *Google* and *SEO* have undergone massive changes in recent years. The days of search engines responding to code trickery are certainly long gone. But the goals for law firms—increased traffic or boosting brand exposure—remain the same.

Firms have a clear choice to make: They can manage their relationship with *Google*, or they can let *Google* manage it for them. Applying the tac-

tics discussed in this two-part series will give firms a foundation on which to build their web-publishing efforts. And that, I believe, is the goal of *SEO*: A foundation for publishing. Consider the hundreds of hours invested by lawyers, the so-called soft costs of marketing, writing content over the course of a given year in hopes that it will be consumed by the 'right' audience. Your vehicle for delivery shouldn't be working as a roadblock in that process.

Recommended reading:

- ✓ *MobileLaw Firm Websites vs. Responsive Design*
- ✓ *Linkable Content: The Backbone of Social Media Marketing*
- ✓ *How Law Firms #fail at Social Media*

TOPICS

Steve Matthews is President of Stem Legal, a company in Mission that helps lawyers and law firms maximize their online presence and attract new business: 604.826.8072, steve@stemlegal.com, www.stemlegal.com



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R. JOHNSON
LEGAL RECRUITMENT

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THAT LAWYER AGAIN?



EXPERT OPINIONS

What are some of the strategies you use to contain the cost of training within a law firm?

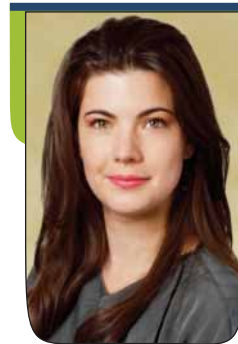
ENGAGING, RELEVANT TRAINING KEY TO POWERCONCEPT'S ROI

Training is all about increasing the efficiency of the staff and the organization. While we can easily see and measure the improvements in efficiency following the training, efficiency should begin at the start of the training process.

- Organizing training should begin with customizing the course content to the exact needs of the organization.
- Coordinating training should not be a burden to the training coordinators. Trying to get 70 staff into a series of sessions can be an organizational nightmare. We like to use a private on-line registration page so that the organizer only has to send out a link to the staff and/or managers with the available sessions. Staff register themselves for the session that best suits their schedule. The organizer has access to an administrative page where they can see all registrations, and even cancel or edit a registration themselves.
- Another option to improve efficiency – a green initiative – is to provide only a limited number of hard copies of training reference manuals for the organization, and provide PDF copies of the manuals on a shared drive or intranet site. These hard copies can be used in the actual training environment and then distributed as shared reference manuals in the office.
- Providing training on-site is the most obvious and dramatic way to improve the efficiency and limit the costs of training. Setting up a portable lab in a boardroom minimizes the time away from the office for training.
- Following the training, it is important that the staff have access to free, unlimited support from the trainers on content covered in the training for reinforcement, and troubleshoot any questions.
- The most important consideration is the actual training. To get the best ROI it is critical that the training is delivered in a way that is engaging, relevant and effectively empowers the users to better do their work. For this reason, PowerConcepts only uses Microsoft Certified Trainers for all training in Microsoft products.



Frank Byl, Microsoft Master Instructor, President of PowerConcepts



COMPILED BY HEATHER RITZLER, EDITOR, TOPICS, GOWLING LAFLEUR HENDERSON LLP

and enables more of our lawyers and staff to attend. We take advantage of the knowledge and expertise of

the lawyers and staff by having them deliver many of the training sessions. This supports knowledge sharing and keeps presenter fees at a minimum. Occasionally, a business colleague, vendor, or client will present a seminar, which they usually do at no cost.

- ★ Our Professional Development Training Coordinator distributes announcements regarding upcoming sessions. She also sends reminders to everyone enrolled which assists in minimizing costs associated with individuals not attending sessions they indicated they would.
- ★ Another helpful tip is that the Canadian and American Bar Associations provide an option to participate in continuing legal education sessions via webinar. We set these webinars up in one of our meeting rooms where multiple lawyers can view the session on a projection screen. We encourage a high turnout for these webinars because, in most cases, the firm receives a group discount.
- ★ As the firm's technology trainer, I will sometimes offer short, 15 to 20

minute, sessions in the morning and the afternoon. These mini sessions cost less than a lunch hour session as there is no food required. At Alexander Holburn, we research potential training opportunities while being mindful of our members' needs and budgetary requirements.



Christina Saremba, Technology Trainer, Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP

TRADEMARK OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM KEY TO AHBL'S STAFF TRAINING PLAN

Here are some of the strategies that Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP, a Vancouver regional law firm with about 70 lawyers, employs to ensure its training is cost-effective:

- ★ We have an inclusive, trademarked

training program called *Ascend*, which offers more than 100 opportunities annually for legal, technological, business development, office and personal skills training.

- ★ The majority of training is conducted in house. This reduces travel expenses



INFORMATION SHARED EFFICIENTLY AT GOWLINGS

At Gowlings, or at any large, national law firm, one of the most important ways to contain the cost of training is to ensure that all information is shared as efficiently as possible.

Here are some of the methods that we have implemented to maximize efficiencies:

- ✓ Trainers have regularly scheduled meetings via conference calls to discuss upcoming software changes and rollouts. We make sure to keep in close contact during all periods of rolling out a new program: the pre-training period, the deployment period, and the period after we have rolled out a new system and are ensuring that it operates smoothly.
- ✓ All documentation is prepared by trainers and shared across all of-

fices in our *KnowledgeDocs Library* in preparing for and delivering our training sessions. We use a range of training materials, from written tips and trick sheets to *PowerPoint* presentations; even videos. Surprisingly, videos can be cost effective to make, and they're becoming more and more popular.

- ✓ We always look for ways that our training materials will be most applicable to the audience that uses them, and that they are stored in ways that ensure they are completely accessible. We have materials that are geared for lawyers and legal professionals, for accounting staff, marketing staff



Indira Pal, Training Coordinator, Desktop-Support Specialist at Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP

and administrative staff. In addition, these materials are stored on our system in various categories such as type of document, level of user, etc.

Most recently, we implemented a new knowledge-management system. This provides a whole new way of dealing with information stored in our document management system: a quick and easy way to locate precedents and other practice knowledge, easy people finding, mini-libraries of useful

reference materials, and easy location of a myriad of policies, forms, etc.

- ✓ Having all of this information housed in one convenient location saves everyone time.

TOPICS



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CON'T FROM PAGE 5 - TONER TUB TEMPEST



the following *Other Charges* section of their sample retainer:

You will also be responsible for office charges allocated to your file. These include charges for paralegal time, word processing charges, computer costs, in-house photocopying and faxes. (If your firm charges a file opening fee or charges for in-house title searches, deliveries, flat rate Quicklaw searches and the like, which cannot be charged as a third party disbursement, add these here.)



The January 1 version of the BC Law Society's Code of Professional Conduct, weighing in at 113 pages, stirred up controversy in the wording of how to bill for some disbursements, like photocopying.

to the cost of the transmission, printing or copying of documents incurred by the person providing the legal services.

This means that if the costs of the transmission, printing or copying of documents are not reasonably related to the associated charges to the client, then the law firm will have to charge PST on these types of in-house charges. This will be a determination that will have to be made by each law firm.

The Law Society also came up with a sample bill that firms could use. However, as a result of the concerns raised by law firms, the question as to the binding nature of this *Commentary* was referred to the Ethics Committee.

The Law Society of BC's *E-Brief*, published last March 8, reported that during its February 28th meeting, the Committee decided to:

Recommend to the Benchers at their April 5, 2013 meeting that commentary [1] of rule 3.6-3 be rescinded pending further consultation with the profession.

Following the April 5th meeting the Society's *E-Brief*, published April 10, reported the Benchers rescinded commentary [1] of rule 3.6-3 of the *BC Code*, dealing with statements of account.

The Benchers ... requested that the Ethics Committee consult the profession further about the Commentary and then recommend either restoring the commentary in its current form, restoring it in a modified form or permanently eliminating the commentary. While commentary [1] has been rescinded, the rule itself and commentary [2] remain in place.

So, while it might seem that law firms can breathe a sigh of relief, the *Commentary* might be brought back in some form or another.

Further, that lowly photocopy has reared its ugly head in another venue,

the Provincial Sales Tax (PST). In discussing the original purchase price of legal services in Part 1, Division 2, Section 9, the new *PST Regulation*, states:

For the purposes of section 20(2)(a) of the Act, fees and charges for the transmission, printing or copying of documents are prescribed as excluded if the amount of the fees or charges is reasonably related

What started out as a storm on the horizon appears to be petering out. Or is it?

TOPICS

Pelar Davidson, the Financial Controller of Oyen Wiggs Green & Mutala LLP, is also a member of the BCLMA's Topics Editorial Committee, and Chair of the BCLMA's Finance subsection.



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SQUARE ONE IS THE FIRST RULE OF ORDER FOR THE NEW PST REGULATIONS

In the first part of our HST to PST report in the Winter issue of Topics, we outlined how the legislation was likely going to read, even though some of its clauses were still fluid. We also noted that its Regulation, which is often where the surprises lurk, was really late. The regs have finally been published. Here's how they work with law firms and the new PST Act.

As we publish this article, the Provincial Sales Tax Act (PST Act) and Provincial Sales Tax Regulation (Regulation) has been available for viewing for about a month and a half.

Law firms should have re-implemented the PST, which would have meant changes to the firm's accounting system, among other things.

For those who need a refresher, the new PST Act requires that law firms charge PST on legal services to their BC clients.

For non-BC clients, PST must be charged on certain legal services, namely legal services listed in PST Act,

s.126(2) with respect to:

- (a) real property situated in British Columbia;
- (b) tangible personal property... that is, or that is contemplated to be,
 - (i) ordinarily situated in British Columbia, or
 - (ii) delivered in British Columbia;
- (c) property, other than that referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b), that is, or is contemplated to be, owned, possessed or used in British Columbia;
- (d) a right to use property referred to in paragraph (c) that is, or is contemplated to be, used in British Columbia;



BY PELAR DAVIDSON, FINANCIAL CONTROLLER, OYEN WIGGS GREEN & MUTALA LLP

(e) a court or any other proceeding in

British Columbia or a possible such proceeding;

(f) the incorporation or contemplated incorporation of a corporation under the Business Corporations Act or the Society Act, or the registration or contemplated registration of a corporation as an extraprovincial company under the Business Corporations Act or as an extraprovincial society under the Society Act;

(g) any other matter that relates to British Columbia and is **prescribed** for the purposes of this section

(The emboldened emphasis in the quoted extracts of this article are mine.)



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In the Act, according to S. 1, legal services refers to:

- (a) services that come within the meaning of the practice of law under the Legal Profession Act,
- (b) services described in section 18 of the Notaries Act, and
- (c) legally related services **prescribed** as legal services, but does not include services provided by a person to the person's employer in the course of employment.

In Section 128 of the PST Act, there is an exemption from the tax for legal fees related to legal aid:

Legal services provided to an individual are exempt from tax under this Division

- (a) to the extent that the purchase price for the services is paid by the Legal Services Society, or by a funded agency within the meaning of the Legal Services Society Act, for the purposes of section 9 of that Act, and
- (b) to the extent that the purchase price for the services is paid by the individual, if the purchase price of the services is paid partly by that individual and partly by the Legal Services Society, or by a funded agency within the meaning of the

Legal Services Society Act, for the purposes of section 9 of that Act.

Finally, in s. 20(2) of the PST Act and with respect to tax on legal disbursements, it is chargeable on:

- (a) the fees and charges, other than those prescribed as excluded,
- (b) disbursements for legal research or secretarial and other support services, and
- (c) other prescribed disbursements that are billed or otherwise charged to a purchaser for or in relation to the legal services.



ON THE MOVE
WELCOME

Firms are the BCLMA's Members. Members authorize Representatives to vote and speak on their behalf. Affiliates are people from Member firms who take part in one or more of our Subsections. Subsection contact info is on the last page of each issue of Topics.

NEW MEMBER FIRMS & THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

- ✓ Romyne Payer, **Bronson Jones & Company**, Vancouver
- ✓ Daphane Nelson, **Epp Cates Oien**, Kamloops
- ✓ Heather Cathcart ①, **Jamal Law Group**, Vancouver
- ✓ Kelly Waterman, **Lesperance Mendes**, Vancouver
- ✓ Melissa Lieu, **Maryam Zargar Lawyers**, Vancouver
- ✓ Gabeba Slamang, **McLarty Wolf Litigation Lawyers**, Vancouver
- ✓ Beverley Clayton, **Morelli Chertkow LLP**, Kamloops
- ✓ Beth Dumais, **Parolin & Company**, Vancouver



- ✓ Olivia Carteri, **Hartshorne & Mehl**, Vancouver
- ✓ Joanne Gaska, **Mandell Pinder**, Vancouver
- ✓ Caren Cook ②, **MacLean Family Law Group**, Vancouver

NEW BCLMA SUBSECTION AFFILIATES

(And those who have moved to join the following member firms)

HUMAN RESOURCES:

- Susan Spalding, **Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP**
- Carmen MacKenzie, **Bronson Jones & Company**
- Judith Macfarlane, **McMillan LLP**
- Emily Sutcliffe, **Lawson Lundell LLP**
- Helen Lam, **Farris LLP**

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MEMBER FIRMS & THEIR NEW REPRESENTATIVES

- ✓ Ann Main ③, **Klein Lyons**, Vancouver



In Part 1, Division 2, Section 9, of the new *PST Regulation*, it states that:

For the purposes of section 20(2)(a) [original purchase price of legal services] of the Act, fees and charges for the transmission, printing or copying of documents are prescribed as excluded if the amount of the fees or charges is reasonably related to the cost of the transmission, printing or copying of documents incurred by the person providing the legal services.



For non-BC clients, the Act says PST must be charged only on certain specific legal services, and it's up to you to guess correctly.

What this means is that if the costs of transmitting, printing or copying documents are reasonably related to the amounts being charged to the clients, the law firm will not have to charge PST on these "disbursements." Otherwise, PST will be chargeable. Each firm will have to make that determination.

However, pages 3 and 4 of the government's *PST Bulletin 106*, revised on March 28, appears to treat the taxation of cost recoveries in an inconsistent manner.

While the cost recoveries associated with the transmission, printing or copying of documents are not subject to PST so long as the amounts charged to the client are "reasonably related"

to the actual costs to the law firm, this is not the case for other cost recoveries, such as mileage.

In the case of mileage, where the amount billed does not represent the "precise recovery of the actual cost," the cost recovery is subject to PST.

In the case of cost recoveries other than for transmitting, printing or copying documents, the test is more strin-

gent when determining taxability.

Although this new *PST Act* and *Regulation* might seem to be the same as the old *Social Services Tax Act*, any Rulings under the old SSTA are no longer valid.

We are not simply moving back to the future – we are moving back to square one.

TOPICS

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How long have you been a member of the BCLMA?

I joined the BCLMA in the mid-1990s after moving to Vancouver from Montreal. I had heard so much about the level of networking that was available through the association, and once I joined I found the people welcoming and warm. They are willing to mentor new people in the profession whether you are new to the industry or recently graduated from school and just beginning your first work experience.

What were your contributions to the BCLMA?

Like so many others, I first started working with BCLMA after someone talked me into helping out on the Board. At that point, it was a four-year commitment: in the first year, you were responsible for Membership Renewals; the second year, you become President-Elect; the third year, you moved into the role of President; and in the final and fourth year, you took on the role of Past President. It was a great way to learn about the association. The first couple of years allowed you to really focus on the issues and objectives without the pressure of leading the Board. As I moved from one role to the next, my resolve and my commitment to the members of BCLMA and to the other Board members strengthened.

What motivated you to contribute?

From the beginning, everyone was absolutely wonderful. Attending the first BCLMA meeting as a new member

cause of all of the support the members provide and the association's vision of truly making it an experience for all of their members, I wanted to be a part of the organization and to contribute to its success.



ANNIE RONEN

Human Resources
Professional at
Harper Grey LLP

What did you enjoy the most about contributing to the organization?

For me, it's all about the relationships I built and the connections I continue to make. It is about giving back to those who helped me when I first started in this industry and recognizing that the success of the association

lies in members taking turns to ensure that we support our members and enable the next generation of professionals to have the same level of support.

I have been fortunate to have volunteered with amazing people who believed in the same objectives.

We worked hard, put in the hours, but always found lots of humour doing it. I look back at my first year on the Board and how anxious I was to follow in the footsteps of all those successful past presidents, and how comfortable the other board members made me feel.

People in the BCLMA welcomed me, introduced themselves, offered their support

was quite stressful as I did not know anyone. But people welcomed me, introduced themselves, offered their support and it was a great experience. Later on, we created a new member breakfast event to introduce them to the Board and "old-timers" so that they could feel more comfortable attending meetings. BCLMA is really a unique association. Be-

What do you enjoy most about the BCLMA?

Other than the friendships and professional connections I have made (and let's not forget the great social events!), it is the fact that I can contact fellow members when I have questions and know that someone has experienced the same issues and is will-

THE HONOUR ROLL OF THE VOLUNTEER HEROES OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA LEGAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



This edition, we honour Annie Ronen, a past-president of the BCLMA (2003-2004) and a director of the organization for several years before and after. The BCLMA has the good fortune of attracting excellent volunteers who step up to dedicate their precious time, knowledge and energy to the success of the Association. Our Volunteer Heroes feature highlights the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, and also shares their advice and plans. If you've got the spirit, contact any Board Member or subsection leader (see back page) to learn more about volunteer opportunities. We'd love to work with you!

ing to share how they dealt with them. The generosity in sharing information is unlike any other industry I've worked in.

How do members make the most of their membership?

By attending Continuing Education events, subsection meetings and social events where you make those valuable connections. Active participation will provide you with all the benefits of a membership and allow you to better manage your firm or department and show your firm the value of belonging to BCLMA. Look for opportunities to volunteer. It doesn't have to be a long-term commitment; you can find small ways to help out.

Looking back through all your experiences, what are three tips you can share about working in law firms?

1 Working in a law firm is both



exciting and rewarding. I learned that as long as I am passionate about what I do, I can contribute to the wellbeing of the people I work with and to the economic success of the firm.

2 Take the time to build relationships and get involved in BCLMA, even if it starts with adopting a new member and inviting him/her to attend the first meeting together.

3 Embrace change, and enjoy learning and sharing your knowledge. The law firm of the future will inevitably bring changes and being ready for it is very exciting.

What's next for you?

It's been six months since I joined Harper Grey last September. I will continue to work on making a difference here, as well as supporting the BCLMA and its Board.

I will continue my quest of finding a better work-life balance and will focus on enjoying the simple things in life.

TOPICS

FEBRUARY'S VENDOR-RECEPTION EVENT

BCLMA VENDORS HAPPILY MIX WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM LAW FIRMS, ALL CHEERED BY NEW 'BOTTLE BOARD'

The BCLMA hosted its second Vendor Appreciation Reception on February 7 at the Uber Lounge at Steamworks.

The Board of Directors hosts this reception every two years as a way of personally thanking our generous and very involved vendors for their support and to express how much we value their assistance with the BCLMA's annual agenda.

Certainly, we thank our vendors at every event they help host, but this reception was 100% vendor-focused.

Approximately 40 BCLMA firm administrators and managers and 35 vendors representing companies who frequently support the BCLMA enjoyed cocktails and scrumptious hors d'oeuvres.

The room was abuzz with lively music by a jazz duo and the cocktail tables were adorned with flowers.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and association members, the BCLMA's then-President Cindy Hildebrandt thanked the vendors for their dedication to the organization. "We are very appreciative of all our supporters whether they help us offer an educational event or help host a social occasion, contribute to or advertise in our newsletter, or sponsored and attended our 2012 bi-annual conference," said Cindy.

"We couldn't offer our members this multitude of high-calibre events without their support and we are truly grateful," she added.



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Traditionally names are drawn for prizes but, this year, vendors were invited to write their name under a number of their choice on a *Bottle Board*. Eighteen numbers were called, and those who had one of the numbers then chose a “bottle bag” from the front table – without looking inside.

All 18 bottle bags were the same and contained a different kind of bottle such as wine, olive oil, barbecue sauce, maple syrup, champagne, bubble bath or beer. A good time was had by all and the BCLMA Board of Directors thanks everyone who attended our extraordinary reception. **TOPICS**



Anita Parke, of Thorsteinssons and the BCLMA's incoming president, talks with Bregje Kozak, a Principal of MHPM Project Managers, and MHPM's Business Development Manager, Krystal Smith at the BCLMA Vendor Reception.



ALL PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE BY DENNISON LEE



Shawn Farion, of BCLMA vendor Kranq Courier, signs the Bottle Board, in hopes of it helping him win a prize.



Leslie Morgan of Harper Gray and a BCLMA director, Jay Cathcart of Farris, Luke Pathyil of Lawson Lundell and Bob Waterman of Richards Buell Sutton and outgoing Chair of the BCLMA's Topics Editorial Committee.




Harmony Cornwell and Nancy Sartene both of Blakes and Annie Ronen of Harper Grey



Parm Ahuja-Robertson of Heenan Blaikie, Donna Kitagawa of MacKenzie Fuji-sawa and Robyn Laplante from Heenan Blaikie.

YEAR OF EVOLUTION - FROM PAGE 1

 continue to drive the success of the Association. I thank them for their incredible dedication and effort.

We will strive to implement positive changes that will benefit the membership.

In addition, I must mention our terrific Administrator, Jane Kennedy, who “makes it so” with apparent ease. And thank you to Angela Zarowney, our long-serving Treasurer who we won’t let retire!

Together I think we make an excellent team. Kudos also go out to the subsection Chairs who continue to work hard to share ideas within the subsections and provide value to our membership by hosting a variety of educational events.

Looking at the year ahead, the theme of our conference comes to mind: *Change*.

This year the Board will certainly be embracing change. It will be a year of evolution for the Association and we will strive to implement positive changes that will benefit the membership. For a start, as you can see, *Topics* has a new, fresh and updated look. And as you will read in a moment, there are several other projects and improvements you can expect in the coming year. The website committee will continue to work on revamping and modernizing our website and has a clear view to make it an excellent, user friendly resource.


One of the goals is to have all members’ pictures on their profile on the new site. Our membership is always growing and changing, so we would really appreciate it, if you haven’t already done so, that you please supply your photo to be included. I’m sure you will agree that it’s always nice to take a sneak peak and be able to put a face to a name, particularly before an event. The Board also would like to review and revise our current *By-laws* (parts of which are seemingly antiquated) to ensure the Association runs smoothly and that we are able to move forward and meet objectives with ease. We look forward to working on that project and will be presenting it to the membership for approval.

Building relationships has always been an important part of the BCLMA and this year we are looking to solidify relations with sister associations, The

Law Office Management Association (TLOMA) and Association of Legal Administrators (ALA).

We will be co-hosting a meeting with their Board members in August

in an effort to exchange information, share ideas, create best practices and ultimately be able to offer our membership shared benefits.

And finally, we listened to your feedback about the timing of the BCLMA conference! The next conference will include a half day of content during the afternoon of March 6th and a full day on March 7th, 2014. We look forward to welcoming you once again at the always exciting River Rock Casino. The conference committee has already  been working hard to ensure this



bclma

SUMMER SOCIAL RECEPTION

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2013
 5:15 - 7:15 pm
Bridges Restaurant
 2nd floor, 1696 Duranleau St, Vancouver

Representatives: No charge (non-transferable)
Affiliates: \$50 (includes tax & gratuity)
Non-Members: \$60 (includes tax & gratuity)

Casual Attire [PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY]

REGISTER BY JUNE 3 Jane Kennedy | 604.988.1221 | membership@bclma.org
 Mail cheque payable to:
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Cancellation Policy: Due to the financial commitments, the BCLMA must incur to the restaurant, we require 72 hours' cancellation notice or full ticket cost will be charged to your firm. Substitutions welcome. Thank you for your co-operation.

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YEAR'S SUCCESSES ACHIEVED DUE TO MEMBERS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF

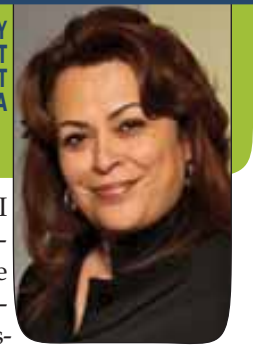
As the incoming President of the BCLMA, I said in my *Message from the President* that I was grateful for the opportunity to give back to an organization that has done so much for me over the years and helped develop me as a manager.

As the outgoing President of the BCLMA, I can add that this past year

has been a truly rewarding experience for me for which I am very grateful.

First off, I would like to thank the stellar group of Board members that I have had the pleasure of working with this past year, including Ernie Gauvreau, Paula Kiess, Anita Parke, Susan Spalding, Lori-ann Birdsall and Leslie Morgan.

BY CINDY HILDEBRANDT
OUTGOING PRESIDENT
OF THE BCLMA



As well, I would like to acknowledge the exceptional support of our Treasurer, Angela Zarowny and Administrator, Jane Kennedy, not to mention all of our wonderful Committee and Sub-section chairs!

I learned a long time ago as a manager to hire good people for measurable success and although I did not hire any of these individuals, any successes we achieved were due to them. And my, what a great year it has been!

Last June, we hosted our annual Summer Social at Brix Restaurant and Wine Bar in Yaletown and we had the highest-ever turnout.

We always encourage everyone to attend these socials to network with colleagues and to make connections with our vendors who continue to gen-



YEAR OF EVOLUTION - FROM PAGE 22

22 will be a terrific event focused on leadership.

Learning and following the advice of great leaders is a key step toward becoming a better leader yourself.

I have relied on the great leaders within BCLMA to help me grow in my legal management role and I think it's important that the Association contin-

ues to develop leaders who will share their knowledge. We must never lose our passion for educating to help produce the leaders of tomorrow. Thank you for your support. Your Board and I look forward to a successful and exciting year ahead.

TOPICS

Anita Parke



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erously support BCLMA. Our Christmas party was another measureable success at The Terminal City Club, again with very high attendance.

Our newsletter *Topics* continues to be a valuable resource to all our members, as proven by its high readership. You will notice a refresh of *Topics* over the next couple of issues, to stay current and remain a useful tool to help you manage at your respective firms.

Subsection groups continue to thrive and we even had a new subsection, Litigation Support, join us last year. Subsections continue to provide opportunities for individuals to develop or hone leadership skills as chairs, and meetings offer learning and networking opportunities for those in similar roles at their firms or to members at large.

Last year we also held a successful (and fun!) conference, with our biennial conference focusing on *Change*, and hosted at the wildly popular River Rock Casino in Richmond.

Our Conference Committee worked hard obtaining speakers, vendors and sessions that were of interest and benefit to our members. Next year's conference in 2014 is already shaping up to be another spectacular and informative event.

We are also refreshing our website to be your go-to place for law firm management. We want the BCLMA.org website to be top-of-mind whenever you need a resource pertaining to law-firm management and education.

The BCLMA held and supported various educational sessions this past year with increased use of webinars in order to spread information to those further out and even those locally who are unable to get out of the office.

As law firm administrators, we are currently in the midst of significant changes in law firm management, with an ever-changing and evolving world.

We are seeing legal staff roles changing and clients wanting more cost-effective and transparent legal services. We are seeing the Law Society of BC responding with increased roles for paralegals and changes in reporting fees and disbursements to



Part of the success of the Change Conference was due to the trade show that was part of it. Here, conference attendees mix and talk with vendors.

clients. Add to that ever-changing technology and dealing with the very different needs of Baby Boomers, Gen Y/X and lawyers wanting work/life balance, which means there are some interesting challenges to navigate in the future – both near and far.

However, in dealing with the evolving landscape of legal management, know that the BCLMA will be there for you to provide the network, resources, tools and information needed to navigate through these challenging and exciting times.

TOPICS

SAVE THE DATE

bclma

BCLMA Annual Summer Social Reception

Thursday, June 6, 2013
Bridges Restaurant, Granville Island
5: 15 - 7: 15 pm

BCLMA Managing Partners Speaker Lunch

Wednesday, November 6
Four Seasons Hotel
12:00 -1:30 pm

BCLMA Annual Winter Social

Thursday, December 5, 2013
The Terminal City Club
5:30 pm

BCLMA 2014 Conference (New Date)

Thursday Afternoon March 6 & Friday, March 7, 2014
Richmond, BC

More info:
WWW.BCLMA.ORG

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