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BCLMA 2014 Conference: Law Firm Leadership All Hands on Deck

Bonnie Kirk, Co-chair, 2014 Conference Committee

Repeatedly, we are reminded of the exodus of people from the workforce over the next 5-10 years. This statement evokes different emotions depending on where a person is on the ladder of success. For those just starting their careers, it sparks elation at the prospect of advancement to higher levels. For those ending their careers, it incites fear as they can't imagine the younger generation is experienced enough to successfully lead businesses into the future.

Unfortunately, to some degree, the latter is truer than we think. And this is not because of inexperience, but rather the result of a lack of professional development. Leaders are not produced in the spur of the moment and are not only found at top-level positions.

They take years to develop and permeate all levels of an organization. The need to develop future leaders is of vital importance throughout the business world, including our own legal community.

In response to this need, the focus of the

2014 BCLMA Conference will be on leadership for law firms. We are excited to have secured a strong panel of guest speakers noted for their expertise in this area.

We also made some logistical changes to the conference program, based on the findings of the 2012 post-conference survey.

After each conference, the committee canvases the attendees to find out what was working and what could be improved upon. Having listened to the many worthwhile comments, the conference committee made big changes for the 2014 Conference:

- **New Month:** The conference has moved to March, 2014 in response to feedback that spring was preferable to the busy fall months.

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TOPICS in this issue

BCLMA 2014 Conference: Leadership P1

With only a few more months before the BCLMA conference, Bonnie Kirk gives us a sneak peek at the fantastic lineup of speakers and shares the results of the 2012 post-conference survey.

Managing the Law Firm Business P5

Many lawyers in solo and small firm practice insist that law is a “profession” and not a “business,” but, according to Ed Poll, this attitude can have negative consequences. In this article, he outlines two sets of tools to facilitate the business management of law firms. One is procedural, one is statistical, and both are essential for “The Business of Law.”

Moving Towards Paperless Trials in BC P9

In part II of this two part series on paperless trials, Tracy Ayling will cover a case study of a successful E-trial in Alberta, take a look at the emerging trends in new evidence management systems and will briefly outline the key benefits of E-trials.

Holiday Cards: Avoiding the Headache P11

The winter holiday season may seem like a long way off, but it's already time to start getting your holiday cards together. Heather Ritzer looks at some of the common things you need to consider and provides tips to help manage the process.

What is Managed Email Security P17

Email security is vital to almost every organization. However, small and medium businesses often do not have the resources for in-house IT. In this article, Rob Gjertsen of Silverpoint Systems looks at one solution: managed email security services.

A Special Presidents' Message P19

The Executive Leadership Teams for the ALA, BCLMA and TLOMA recently met at a summit where they discussed ways to rekindle relationships and develop new connections between the three organizations.

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Who We Are

The BCLMA, founded in 1972, is a non-profit organization with 135 Representatives and 270 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 monthly subsection meetings. We host an annual Managing Partners Event, and a large conference every other year.

Website

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

The Discussion Board helps people get questions answered and obtain advice.

Newsletter Services

Topics is a public newsletter. Contact the Editorial Committee to provide comments on articles, to offer suggestions for articles in future issues, or to augment the circulation list. We welcome your feedback! Please send comments to membership@bclma.org.

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BCLMA conference... continued from page 1

- **New Time Frame:** In the past, the conference was a full day Friday and half day Saturday. The 2014 Conference will kick off with lunch on Thursday, March 6 and finish Friday, March 7, giving participants their entire weekend back.
- **New Format:** Traditionally when guest speakers are invited, their presentations are independent of each other. For the upcoming conference, the presenters will attend each other's sessions and will have worked together to ensure that their subject matter does not overlap, and to develop a sense of overall continuity where each session builds on the previous one.

Judy Hissong will kick off the conference on Thursday with a presentation focused on developing personal empowerment, self-esteem and decision making with authority. Judy has written many articles on the importance of strategic planning in the success of business and is currently an instructor for the University of California San Diego. Judy's presentation will help you identify your own leadership qualities.

Peter J. Smyth, PhD from Vaughan, Ontario will open Friday's programming with a seminar

on communication and conflict resolution. Peter's background includes acting as a regular consultant to various ministries of the Ontario Government as well as a number of corporations. He has taught at three universities, including York, where he has been a faculty member for the past 20 years. Participants of this session will leave knowing how to become more empowered and respon-

of Science degree in Psychology, certifies in Conflict Resolution and Mediation from the Justice Institute, and is a certified Myers Briggs Type Indicator practitioner. The objective of this workshop is to identify key motivational and staff engagement strategies, clarify the skills of mentoring and coaching for front line leaders and learn how to give feedback effectively.


Leaders are not produced in the spur of the moment and are not only found at top-level positions. They take years to develop and permeate all levels of an organization. The need to develop future leaders is of vital importance throughout the business world, including our own legal community.

sive leaders, how to improve their approach to conflict resolution by using a behavioural model for improving communication.


Following Dr. Smyth, Sue Wazny, MSc, CRC will deliver a workshop on building employee capacity through empowerment. Sue has been a faculty member at the Justice Institute of BC in the Centre for Conflict Resolution for the past 12 years. Sue holds a Master's

The afternoon sessions will start with a workshop presented by Susan Beattie, B.A., LL.B., CPCC. With a background in economics, business administration, psychology and law, Susan thrives on sharing her knowledge of current innovations in organizational, employee relations and professional and personal leadership areas. This workshop will

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identify leadership styles and build awareness and understanding of what style is most effective professionally and personally to motivate, empower and develop within a law firm team.

And last but not least, we have secured the noteworthy Karen MacKay, MBA, CHRP. Karen has been consulting since 2002 after spending a decade as COO of a large Canadian law firm. As a consultant, coach, writer and facilitator, Karen developed the Leaders Boot Camp for new managing partners, which is hosted regularly by the CBA. In 2009, Karen was inducted as a fellow in the College of Law Practice Management. Karen's column "Taking the Lead" appears regularly in the ABA's Law Practice Magazine. Karen's session will focus on creating an individual action plan as a major takeaway from the conference.

As you can see, the conference promises to be a highly informative and empowering event that will provide attendees with a strong understanding of how to enhance their strengths as a leader and identify and reduce their weaknesses. Who should attend this conference? With many of us leaving the legal community over the next few years, it would be prudent to take a serious look at who you think has potential to advance within your organization and to offer them the opportunity to attend this invaluable conference.



Bonnie Kirk is the co-chair for the 2014 BCLMA Conference Committee. She can be reached at bkirk@lawsonlundell.com



Call for Submissions

Do you have an idea for an article that you think would benefit BCLMA members? Are you itching to put pen to paper (or more likely fingers to keyboard) or have an article that you have already written that you'd like to share? We are always looking for submissions in the following areas:

- Human Resources
- Financial Management
- Small Law Firm Administration and Management
- Systems & Technology
- Knowledge Management
- Facilities Management
- Training
- Litigation Support
- Marketing

If you have an article or story idea you would like to submit, please email Heather Ritzer at har@cwilson.com. Please note that our prescribed article length is 750 words. All submissions will be subject to review by the editorial board.

ON THE MOVE

New Member Firms and their Representative

Barb Barry, **Boyle & Co.**, Penticton

Facilities

Jessica Carreiro, **Legacy + Tax Lawyers**, Vancouver

Finance

Leanne Garrett, **Terra Law Corporation**, Vancouver
Lisa Martineau, **Davis LLP**, Vancouver

Litigation Support

MaryAnne MacKenzie, **Davis LLP**, Vancouver

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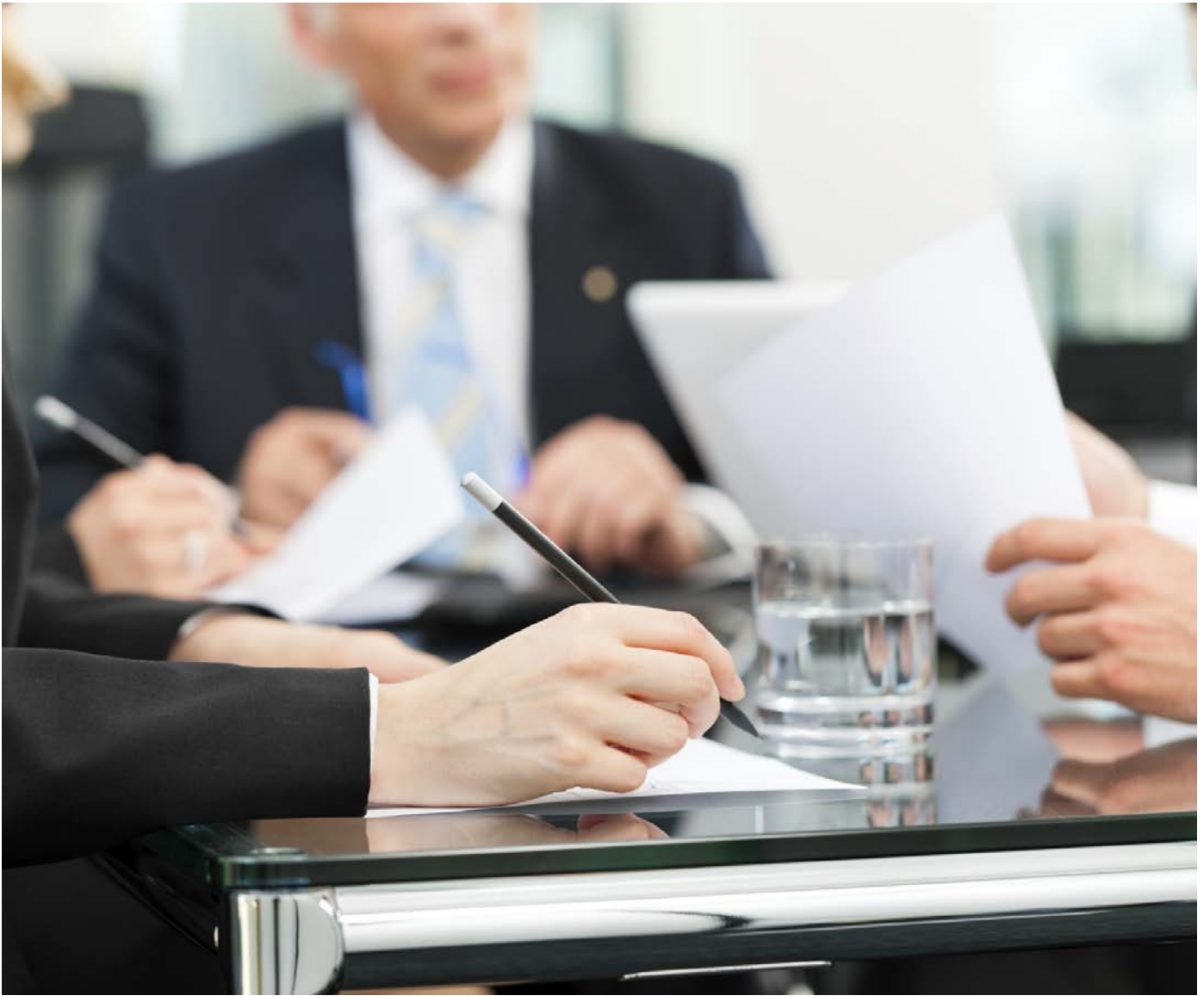
Heather Ritzer, **Clark Wilson LLP**, Vancouver



MaryAnne
MacKenzie



Heather Ritzer



Managing the Law Firm Business: By the Book, By the Numbers

Ed Poll, Principal of LawBiz Management

Many lawyers in solo and small firm practices insist that law is a “profession” and not a “business,” an attitude that is ingrained in legal training. Law school curricula have little business focus, and too many educators consider business training to be trade-oriented and therefore beneath them, a perspective that is often adopted by and perpetuated throughout a lawyer’s lifetime.

The result is that lawyers fail to understand the operation of the firm as a business, with a budget, collections, profit and loss. Not

surprisingly, this leads to the business failure of too many firms.

The issue here is one of running a law firm

in a businesslike way that not only means more money for the lawyer, but also benefits the client. Lawyers who understand business competency can better assess the value they provide, and better reflect that value in their bills. They begin to think in terms of anticipated technology purchases, staffing plans, and expense reductions that can be passed on to their clients. They develop an appreciation of where costs can be controlled and where costs are inherent. In short, they

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become cost-effective businesses, and value-added resources to their clients.

Two sets of tools facilitate business management of law firms. One is procedural, one is statistical, and both are essential for "The Business of Law."

BY THE BOOK: FIRM PROCEDURES

Documenting policies and procedures is a practical tool that helps any law firm assess its operation against objective standards and develop a rationale for its actions. A procedures manual should not be so detailed or cumbersome that it is hard to use. To create a useful document:

- Be as specific as possible, but write the procedures without using organizational jargon.
- Use short, direct sentences and keep them simple to avoid misinterpretation.
- Present guidelines as bullet points or numbered items, to convey a step-by-step process.

A few examples will show the kinds of challenging personnel situations that a procedures manual can help the firm manage effectively and with minimal problems.

Unplanned Absences

Define policies for weather-related absences — when and how often employees can be out, whether vacation days must be used, what kind of notice should be given, especially when employees must stay home to care for children if schools are closed. Include in the manual a call-in number or texting protocol for alerts on the firm's status in weather-related closings.

for termination and other considerations.

Job Descriptions

Develop a comprehensive job description for every position in the law office to promote consistent performance and objective review. Include the specific, significant tasks of each position and the standards used to judge performance. This avoids any perceived unfairness in evaluation, promotion or termination.

Lawyers who understand business competency can better assess the value they provide, and better reflect that value in their bills. ...they become cost-effective businesses, and value-added resources to their clients.

Employment Termination

Have a documented severance policy for non-partner lawyers with written guidelines describing the procedures for evaluating a lack of or deterioration in service or performance. The standard severance package should be based on length of service, reason

Lateral Hiring

Develop a checklist to include mutual agreement on the nature of the ready-made book of business that the firm expects will come with the lateral hire. Document the status of the new hire's receivables—what comes with the lateral and what stays with the prior firm.

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BY THE NUMBERS: FINANCIAL BENCHMARKS

Today's financial information systems and software can and do produce extremely detailed assessments of financial performance. However, many of these programs tend to provide far more data than can be assimilated intelligently. Firms need to establish financial benchmarks that measure business effectiveness by analyzing profitability, cash flow and collections:

1. Profitability. Profitability is determined by taking the total annual gross revenue by client and subtracting the costs associated with serving that client, including how long the firm has to wait for the payments. Track these items:

- Billing rates, whether hourly, blended (an average), fixed fee or other measure.
- Utilization, the percentage of an average workweek that a lawyer bills.
- Leverage, defined as the ratio of non-partners (associates, paralegals, staff) to partners.
- Expenses, related to both operations and compensation, as a percent of revenues.

2. Realization. Analyze realization on two levels: the billed-to-billable ratio (the percent of billable or booked hours billed), and the

collected-to-billed ratio (percent of billed work collected).

The turnover ratio: Billings divided by the total accounts receivable balance multiplied by 365.

The accounts receivable turnover is the billings for the month divided by the outstanding accounts receivable. This tells a lawyer to expect payment for a billing X number of days after a client receives a statement. The average for law firms can be as much as 120 to 150 days. Improving this ratio improves one's cash flow, which improves profitability.

3. Cash Flow. A rolling 12-month statement of cash receipts and payments is the second key element of financial benchmarking. Benchmark analysis is a process of identifying and deducting the expenses of the practice from monthly cash received. Fixed expenses involve staff salaries, occupancy and equipment costs, outside services and the like. The largest single variable expense should be the partner or shareholder's draw or salary. The most sensible practice is to increase it only as the firm's performance produces sufficient income to do so.

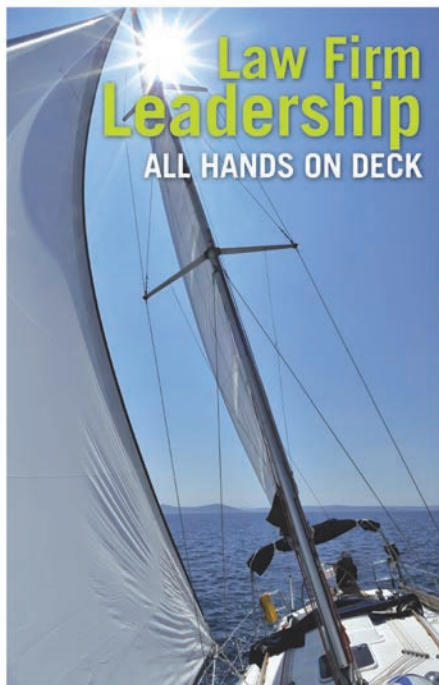
Be sure also to highlight collections,

particularly those accounts 60 days or more past due, so that the firm can take action to secure payment. More outstanding client invoices means more cash will be needed while waiting for payment. The issue is one of capital turnover. This defines how often the invested assets of the firm are being returned in revenues. The faster clients pay, the better the turnover ratio.

We have made the case here for procedures and benchmarks, but these should not replace evaluation of qualitative factors in the firm's performance. Decisions based only on rules and numbers do not always address the full picture of how satisfactorily a firm is performing for lawyers and clients. Every law firm is a business and every business should know where it's going. But we should never forget the quote attributed to Lincoln: "A lawyer's time and advice are his stock in trade." Without quality advice, and the value it provides, rulebooks and numbers printouts are poor measuring sticks.



Ed Poll is the principal of LawBiz Management, enabling lawyers to increase their revenues and profits with reduced stress. He can be reached at 1-800-837-5880 or edpoll@lawbiz.com.



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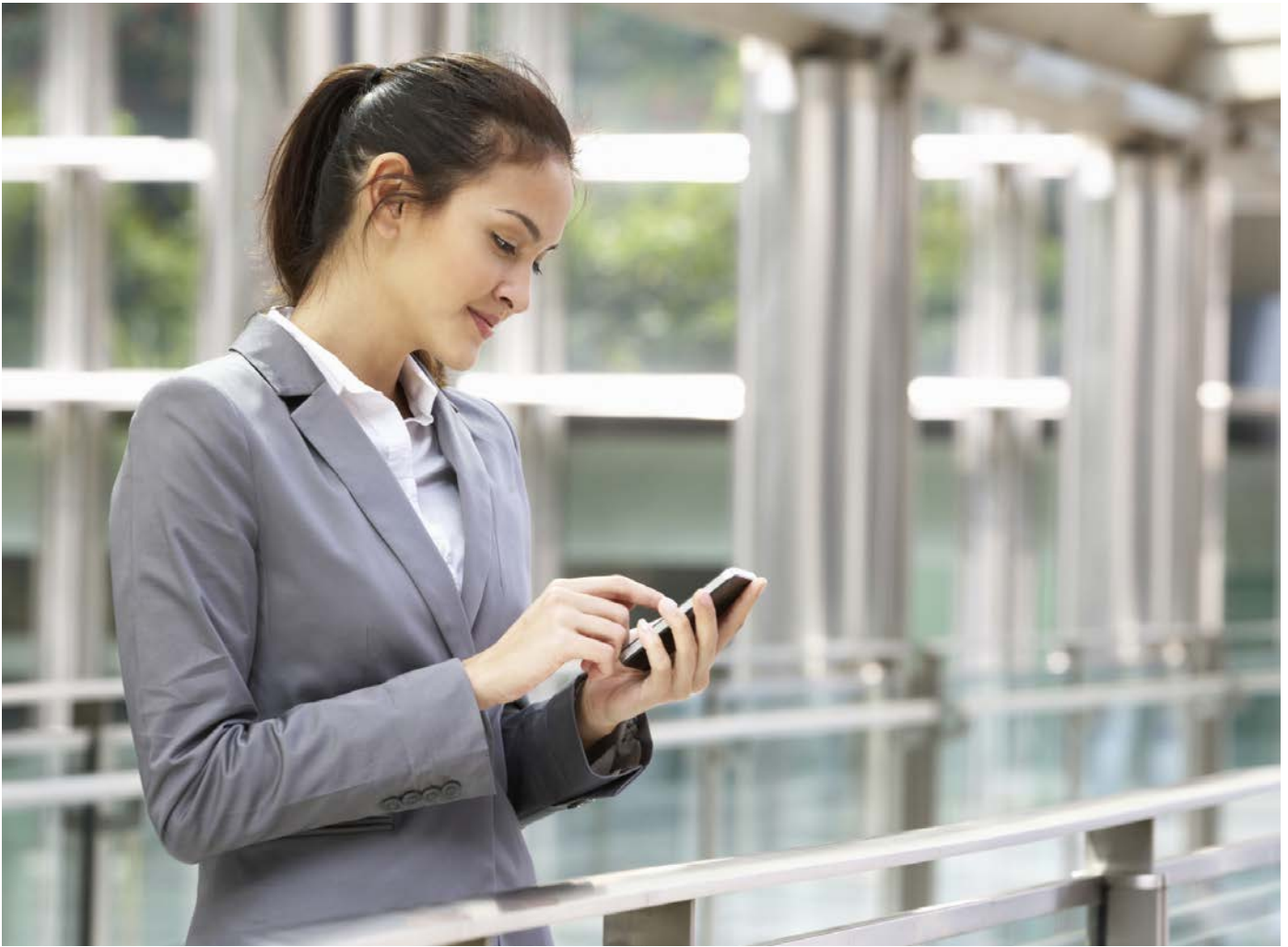
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Moving Towards Paperless Trials in BC Are You Ready? PART II

Tracy Ayling, Senior Litigation Support Specialist, Tracy Ayling Consulting

In the last newsletter I covered part I of this two-part series. To briefly recap, I looked at The Top Three Rules for a Successful E-trial – Having a Great Game Plan, Preparing for the Unexpected, and Keeping it as Technically Simple as Possible. Part II will cover a case study of a successful E-trial in Alberta, take a look at the emerging trends in new evidence management systems and will briefly outline the key benefits of E-trials.

CASE STUDY – AN E-TRIAL IN ALBERTA

As I mentioned in Part I, Alberta has been fully wired for a decade, making it the first province in Canada to take the leap forward technologically. The first E-trial was a case I helped to manage. It began in January 2007 and lasted

for a year and a half. The lessons learned and experience gained were invaluable.

To set the stage, it was a very large and complex case - there were seven parties, 70 witnesses, and 12 Experts. The paper document collection was estimated to be two

football stadiums full, thus a paper trial was out of the question.

The key factors for the success of this E-trial were: good planning and communication with the other parties early on. We used a Summation database to hold the common book of PDFs, which was given to the court before trial began. Realtime was run on another laptop. Synced monitors ensured everyone was on the same document. The dry run took one day for set-up and testing, and went smoothly as all equipment required was planned for and pre-ordered.

Exhibits entered were marked by the court in Adobe and returned to the parties, who then updated their own databases and

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E-materials. New documents were PDF'd on the fly on the presenting party's system, copied to a USB and given to the court. All in all, things went very well and there were minimal technical issues.

EMERGING TRENDS IN EVIDENCE MANAGEMENT PLATFORMS - E-TRIAL IMPACTS

The industry is shifting, and the varying software platforms between firms will impact future E-trials. Court reporters will likely have to run different transcript feeds to these platforms and, depending on the number of parties, that may require more than two feeds.

Good planning and communications between the parties and the court will be needed early on. Different platforms don't easily integrate, so decisions will need to be made on how the trial will be run. This may require some training for the court. A dry run will be critical, not just for the technology set-up, but also to consider how materials will be presented, and what format they will be presented in so that everything is consistent and as easily managed as possible.

Still not convinced that well-planned E-trials provide key benefits over paper trials?

Here are some benefits that you may already be aware of, and others that may surprise you.

KEY BENEFITS TO HAVING AN E-TRIAL

First, they reduce costs. Ontario Supreme Court Justice Thomas Granger estimated that for one of his trials, the document costs using paper would have been \$116,000, while the costs for the E-trial were only \$8,200 for a savings of \$107,800.

E-trials cut court time by at least 25%. Time is saved throughout the process, including if the Decision is appealed, in which case materials are sent electronically to the Appellate court.

You can present complex information more readily. No more large maps you have to print in sheets and tape together, and documents with hyperlinks that cannot be easily shown in paper form.

With case sizes growing as a result of the new discovery channels such as Emails, electronic documents, and social media, paper-based trials simply won't cut it in the future. Courtrooms were not designed for this growth, and E-trials are the only logical solution.

E-trials can be less stressful. Gone are the days of assistants running back and forth to the court for that missing document or page

of a document, or time wasted when the court realizes the last 20 minutes of testimony or argument was in reference to a document not everyone was viewing.

According to Justice Arthur Gans of Ontario's Superior Court of Justice - there is no longer a need for each person or party to spend time looking for the correct document - it is displayed on each monitor.¹

There are great advantages to E-trials, and the Alberta case study demonstrates that this can be done successfully. There are measurable benefits and savings when conducting E-trials vs. paper trials. Within the next few years it is anticipated that the courtrooms in BC and Ontario will be wired. The pressure to save costs and time will be even greater, so we must all prepare for this eventuality. So, the question remains, are you ready?

¹ Luigi Benetton, "E-trials save money and time, say proponents", *The Lawyers Weekly* April 16, 2010. [Benetton 2010]



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Holiday Cards: What You Need to Know to Avoid the Headache

Heather Ritzer, Communications Specialist, Clark Wilson LLP

Halloween may have just past, but it's already time to get your firm's holiday card in order. For those of us in marketing, the dreaded seasonal card presents a host of challenges ranging from the message, to the distribution format, to thinking about whether you should even send one out at all.

However, they also provide a key opportunity to make an impact on a wide audience. Almost no other communication is sent to virtually every client, as well as most contacts, referral sources and vendors, making this seemingly innocuous and often-predictable mailing one of the most important of the year.

Here are some key questions that you will have to consider when designing your holiday card and developing your distribution strategy.

WHICH HOLIDAY ARE YOU OBSERVING?

Consider the diversity of your audience. Most law firms go with the neutral "Happy Holidays"

or "Seasons Greeting" message to be able to send one card to clients and colleagues from different faiths and ethnic backgrounds.

WHAT KIND OF FIRM ARE WE ANYWAY? THE CREATIVE CONCEPT.

When putting together your holiday card concept, you first want to think about what you want the card to say about your firm. Not just literally what words should appear on the page, but how does the card reflect your firm's values and personality. Are you a boutique IP firm that's a little bit quirky, an environmental
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Christmas cards... continued from page 11
law firm whose cards need to reflect a commitment to the planet, or perhaps you're a firm that values diversity and work-life balance?

You will also want to think about whether you will use static images, video, music or animation. Bear in mind that additional creative components will cost more and will mean that you need to start putting your card together earlier.

SHOULD WE GO THE DIGITAL ROUTE OR SEND OUT PRINTED CARDS?

There are benefits and disadvantages to each approach. Digital cards typically cost less, are more environmental and less time consuming to distribute. On the other hand, some people see printed cards as more personalized and argue that it's worth the money and time spent addressing and signing the cards to ensure their clients receive a hard copy version. Whatever you decide, it's time to get working now on nailing down design concepts and updating mailing lists.

DO WE INCLUDE A DONATION OPTION TO A CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION?

Some law firms incorporate the spirit of giving by selecting several charitable organizations

to contribute to during the holidays and provide their clients with the option to choose. Others select one charity that will receive all of the contributions, while others don't include charitable donations in their holiday card. Several law firms incorporate their giving into the creative design itself by hosting a contest in support of a school's art program where the student with the best design or piece of art has their creation featured as the holiday card's image.

WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE CARD?

One of the biggest challenges is deciding who will receive the card. You want to make sure that all of the most important clients and contacts are on the list, that their names are spelled correctly and that their contact information is up to date. This can be a very time-consuming process, especially if your firm has hundreds of lawyers and managers who need to review their contacts. This should be started about six weeks before the mailing date.

WHO WILL SIGN AND/OR SEND THE CARD?

You will want to decide early on whether the card will be addressed from the firm as a whole, or whether different teams or

individual lawyers will be responsible for putting together a list and signing the card or sending the card. If you have a smaller boutique firm, you may choose to have each of the legal professionals sign all of the cards. Of course, these decisions will also depend on whether you choose to send a digital or print card. Whatever approach you choose, you will want to make sure that this is a coordinated effort and that you have a systemized approach to getting the cards signed and distributed.

If you have decided to send printed cards, you will want to make sure everything is in place before the end of November so that they can be mailed and distributed in early December.

These are just some of the most common considerations to bear in mind when putting together your firm's holiday card. A little advance planning can go a long way in alleviating stress and allowing you to put together a card that stands out.



Heather Ritzer, Communications Specialist at Clark Wilson LLP and Editor of Topics. She can be reached at har@cwilson.com

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SEO Basics: What you Need to Know When the SEO Consultant Comes Calling

Skunkworks Creative Group Inc.

Search engine optimization, or SEO, is one set of strategies and tactics aimed at positioning your organization or brand so that it appears at the top of search engine results and increasing traffic to your website. The world of online marketing is filled with consultants that will do their best to convince you that their services are the only thing that will get your business noticed by search engines.

However, many of these “experts”, while very good salespeople, are not involved in the actual implementation of campaigns and in that regard have little to offer in the way of actual skills. This is particularly true in the world of SEO, where individuals

often mask their lack of ability by invoking complex-sounding jargon and promising too-good-to-be-true results.

With this in mind, Skunkworks decided to put together this article, which describes the basics of search engine optimization, to help

you distinguish the wheat from the chaff the next time an SEO consultant comes calling.

TWO MAJOR COMPONENTS OF SEO

The two main focuses of search engine optimization are **Content Building** and **Link Building**.

That's it. Although *Google's algorithm takes over 200 factors* into account, the combined power of keyword-laden content and external links pointing to your website are really what determines where your page shows up on Google. If your SEO consultant fails to mention either of these topics and focuses instead on meta-tags, keyword stuffing, and gateway pages, you should see it as a red flag.

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SEO: Basic terms... continued from page 13

SEO OPTIMIZED CONTENT

There are several methods for attaining good "On-Page SEO", which is the term SEO specialists apply to any optimization method that is achieved through the manipulation of the site's content. The most common On-Page practices that SEO professionals will endorse include:

- Placing relevant keywords (e.g. Vancouver Insurance Lawyer) throughout your website.
- Including keyword variation (e.g. "Vancouver Insurance Lawyers" as well as "Insurance lawyers in Vancouver") throughout your website to ensure that your page appears in various *long-tail searches* (keyword phrases that are used when people are searching for something more specific).
- Maintaining a reasonable level of keyword density. Although some SEO consultants will recommend placing keywords wherever possible, this tends to negatively impact the quality of your writing and may end up being perceived by Google as keyword stuffing rather than providing relevant content. As a result, more people might find your site but few will be

swayed to actually retain your services. Place keywords in your site to catch the attention of Google's bots, but never forget that you're writing for human beings.

- Using proper *descriptive alt tags* for images.
- Using *descriptive anchor text* for internal links and, where possible, external links pointing back to your site.
- Backlinks and Off-Page SEO

While optimization methods that are achieved through the development of strong content are categorized as On-Page SEO, optimization techniques that depend upon link-building are often referred to as "Off-Page SEO".

In short, Off-Page SEO is achieved when a third-party website decides to link back to content that you post. Generally speaking, the more reputable the third-party website linking to your pages, the more your content will rise in Google's search results. For instance, a link from a major daily newspaper will do a lot more for your website's position in Google's search results than a link from a rarely updated personal blog. To further impact SEO, the best results for backlinks will occur when a highly reputable third-party site links back to your online content using keywords as anchor

text. For example: Great Resource on *changes to The BC Family Act* (good for SEO) vs. Click here for a Great Resource on changes to *The BC Family Act* (not as good).

NOTE: Some SEO consultants will advise you to take part in *link farms*. These practices are considered *Black Hat SEO* and can get you into a lot of trouble with Google. We advise against getting involved with any SEO consultant that endorses link farming.

MORE INFORMATION

These are just some of the key considerations you should bear in mind when looking to improve your firm's SEO. Other factors, including title tags, header tags, and meta descriptions, are also components that will help you develop an effective SEO strategy. If you are interested in reading more about these topics, please visit our blog at <http://blog.skunkworks.ca/> or read *Google's SEO Guidelines*.



Skunkworks Creative Group Inc. is a Vancouver marketing firm, ad agency, and website developer. For more information, email Doug Jasinski, LL.B., at doug@skunkworks.ca.



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VOLUNTEER HEROES



In this edition of Volunteer Heroes, we honour **Lorraine Burchynsky**, member of the Topics Newsletter Committee, past co-chair of the Facilities subsection and conference planning committee member. Lorraine has been a member of BCLMA for the past nine years and has donated a significant amount of her time to the organization.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF VALA/BCLMA?

I have been a member for almost 10 years. I had heard of VALA earlier in my legal career but did not have the opportunity to join BCLMA until I became the Human Resources & Administration Manager at Boughton Law Corporation in 2004.

LIST YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO VALA/BCLMA.

In July 2007, I became the Administration Manager at Boughton Law. This led me to be one of the Chairs of the BCLMA Facilities and Services Management Subsection in May of

2009, along with Janice McAuley of Lawson Lundell. Once Janice's tenure ended, I then co-chaired with Alicia Bond of Bull, Housser & Tupper. For the three years as co-chair, we worked together planning our meetings, arranging speakers, coordinating sessions on topics such as ergonomics, disbursement charges, off-site storage, shredding, equipment and even who supplies fruit for their staff and how often.

Around the same time, I joined the newsletter committee as the Advertising Coordinator. I am happy to be a part of this wonderful group of people (past and present). We

meet to discuss what articles are of interest to our members, prepare the right questions for our survey to determine what the readers want in their Association newsletter and assist our supporting vendors with advertising opportunities.

I was also a member of the 2008, 2010 and 2012 BCLMA Conference Committees. I helped with sponsorship, including coordinating booths at the Vendor Trade Show, gathering draw prizes, assisting at the registration table, and so forth.

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT BCLMA AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE ORGANIZATION?

I enjoy being able to discuss office and staff challenges with peers who understand the industry and who experience the same situations. I am like a sponge soaking up all the advice and valuable information.

When I first joined the Association, I attended the Human Resources subsection meetings. These meetings and the people I met were so helpful. I found the information presented at these meetings was directly

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related to what I dealt with every day, and found comfort in knowing I was not alone.

I also really like the fact that being part of the facilities and newsletter committees gave me the opportunity to be more involved with the BCLMA Association and to learn about its goals and plans for the future. Sharing and giving back is what makes being a member of BCLMA so rewarding.

WHAT HAVE YOU TAKEN AWAY FROM YOUR VOLUNTEER WORK WITH BCLMA?

I have appreciated the networking opportunities, the friendships and the great social and educational events.

Volunteering has also allowed me to become more comfortable with public speaking.

HOW DO MEMBERS MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR MEMBERSHIP?

Talk to as many people as you can, listen, ask questions. It's a very supportive and encouraging group. You get to hear different people's perspectives and approaches to various challenges, which often helps you find the best solutions.

LOOKING BACK THROUGH ALL YOUR EXPERIENCES, WHAT ARE 3 TIPS YOU CAN SHARE ABOUT WORKING IN LAW FIRMS?

1. In dealing with people and their problems, I always try to put myself in their position before I make judgments. I provide suggestions and positive reinforcement.
2. Internal communication is a vital part of working in a law firm. It's so important to keep people informed about what's going on and to invite feedback wherever possible.
3. The importance of utilizing detailed checklists and follow-up procedures. The CEO I first worked with as a manager was a huge advocate of checklists so they soon became part of my daily routine. I now realize how vital they are to keeping my sanity.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

My short term goal within the association would be taking on a role as director where I can continue to contribute to the organization. In my personal life, I want to spend more time with my family and two wonderful grandchildren. I also hope to travel more.



Volunteer Heroes is interviewed by Heather Ritzer. If you've got the spirit, contact any Board Member or subsection leader (back page) to learn about volunteer opportunities.

SAVE THE DATE

BCLMA & LMA Educational Event

How to Have your Valuable Ideas Heard
Tuesday, November 5, 11:45 am–1:30 pm
Four Seasons Hotel

Managing Partner's Lunch with guest speaker, Mark Beese

*The Legal World has Changed:
Essential Strategies Needed to Implement to Survive*
Wednesday, November 6, 12:00 pm–1:30 pm
Four Seasons Hotel (representatives & partners only)

Annual Winter Social

Thursday, December 5, 2013,
Reception & Buffet Dinner, 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm
Terminal City Club

Biennial Conference

Thursday afternoon March 6 & Friday, March 7th, 2014
Market Place, March 6, 4:00–6:00 pm
River Rock Casino Resort, Richmond

For more information visit www.bclma.org/events

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What is Managed Email Security?

Rob Gjertsen, Director of Operations, Silverpoint Systems

There are many benefits to email. So many in fact, that it has become one of the most essential forms of business communication. While it is certainly valuable, there can be issues regarding security of some systems. For most companies, security is essential; one way to achieve email security is by working with a managed email security provider.

WHAT ARE MANAGED EMAIL SECURITY SERVICES?

The key to understanding this type of service is to think of it as outsourcing. There is little doubt that companies need to secure their email, but many small to medium businesses lack the staff and expertise to actually accomplish this. One way to secure your email is to simply outsource it to your IT partner.

An IT partner can work with you to establish and secure your email, by intercepting all email destined for your email addresses or domain. Many IT specialists employ advanced scanning software that looks for malicious

software, images or even content that contains keywords deemed unsafe. The software then filters out these emails and sends the safe ones to your email servers or inbox.

These services typically allow you to establish and manage filters and black or white lists (black lists are a list of words or email addresses that you do not want to receive emails from). Because the companies that run these services are usually security oriented, they can work with you to ensure that emails coming in and going out of your organization are secure and free from malicious content.

WHY WOULD COMPANIES USE A MANAGED EMAIL SECURITY PROVIDER?

There are many reasons why companies would use a service like this. Here are four of the most common:

1. **They operate in an industry with strict email regulations.** Many industries, including the legal sector, have strict regulations regarding security of communication. They must meet security regulations or face heavy fines. A managed email security provider can help companies understand and meet these requirements.
2. **They lack an in-house IT department.** The vast majority of small to medium businesses have thinly stretched IT staff, if any at all, who don't have the time to constantly monitor email security. By working with an IT partner, you can free up existing resources and allow your IT staff to focus on other areas of your business.

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3. They can't afford regular solutions.

Small businesses run on razor-thin margins. Implementing an off-the-shelf solution takes time and money, both of which are likely non-existent. Because this is a managed service, you will likely pay a flat rate that is far more affordable than other solutions.

4. They need a reliable system. In order to operate at maximum efficiency, companies need to be sure that their email system is not only working but also will not suffer from downtime related to malicious software or other content in emails. Because these emails are filtered before they get to your system, companies will often see nearly 100% uptime of their email systems when they utilize an IT partner for email security.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD MANAGED EMAIL SECURITY PROVIDER?

If you are looking for a managed email security provider, there are a number of services that good providers should offer. Here are six:

1. They should offer both spam and malware or virus scanning.
2. They should have a Service Level Agreement with a guarantee stating how secure their systems are. Ideally, no malicious content should make it through.
3. They should offer the scanning and security of emails going both into and out of your systems.
4. The security system should be adjustable to meet your specific needs.
5. The system offered should be easily scalable to meet the growth of your company.
6. Ideally, the system provider should have experience with the industry that you work in. This will increase security, while also going further to ensure that systems are secure and meet regulatory standards where necessary.

These are some tips that will help you in your search for a better email security system. If you have further questions, please email us at rgjertsen@gosilverpoint.com.



Rob Gjertsen is the Director of Operations for Silverpoint Systems. He can be reached at rgjertsen@gosilverpoint.com.



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A special message from the presidents of the ALA, BCLMA, and TLOMA

An executive summit took place in mid-August and we wanted all of our members to hear about it through one single message.

The Executive Leadership Teams for our three Associations met in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia to rekindle relationships and forge new ones. Those attending included current and past Presidents as well as Directors of Administration and in the case of ALA, the Executive Director. A robust agenda promoted collaborative discussions resulting in agreed-upon action plans as to how our three Associations, through formalized channels, can share information, share precedents and generally communicate and assist one another as we all strive to provide best practices in supporting our members' needs in our industry and within our respective locations.

What did we discuss? Everything from getting to know how each of our Associations worked and gaining a clearer understanding of our structures and composition, to discussing and defining reciprocity, to sharing ideas on how to engage "new blood" to ensure all of our Associations' longevity and how to develop our leaders of tomorrow, to how we work with our business partners and build relationships, to the latest in web site technology and of course, how we run our conferences. We all agreed that each of our Associations, while retaining our autonomy, want to increase our leaders' opportunities for networking with one another on a regular basis.

What did we come away with? A solidified relationship amongst ourselves and a formal commitment to continue our discussions on an annual basis going forward and tracking our progress through minutes (thanks to Leslie Bowles for her assistance!). It goes without saying that friendships were both renewed and forged as the group created what we now can call the Legacy of Vancouver 2013! We all agreed as we departed that our meeting was a great "restart" to our relationship, which those who have gone before us commenced.

We hope you will "watch this space" for more information over the coming months.

On behalf of ALA President, Paul Farnsworth, BCLMA President, Anita Parke and TLOMA President, Janice Rooney, we wanted you all to know that we are honoured to be in our roles representing you, our valued Association members and we thank you sincerely for the opportunity to serve in 2013.



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