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Everything Old is New Again

by Margaret Cividino, M.Ed, Learning Specialist, Miller Thomson LLP

As a law firm trainer, I'm often attempting to identify engaging teaching alternatives to provide the staff and lawyers I work with a variety of learning options. As the trainer for a national firm, I sometimes have the luxury of considering training tools which may require some investment, but not every firm has that option. Many small to medium-sized firms function without a dedicated trainer – often relying on various staff to provide required training. Even firms who do employ dedicated trainers are in the market for cost effective training alternatives, given the varied preferences for learning found across most firms.

How can we re-purpose tools we've set aside, or possibly still use in different ways, to provide direct or indirect training alternatives to our workforce?

TWITTER AS TOWN CRIER

Do you remember the idea of town criers? They were a mainstay of European and North

American towns right into the 20th century. As officers of the court, their jobs were to communicate news and information, as required by the local government. It was an effective way to quickly push out information to the masses before the advent of the phone or social media. In some ways, Twitter is the new town crier. Take the recent example of

the fires in Fort McMurray. During the evacuation process, local government Twitter accounts provided news and updates on evacuation procedures and conditions.

Twitter offers a great medium to push out educational information to your firm members. With more firms encouraging the use of Twitter for networking and business development, we've seen an increase in lawyers engaging with the social media platform. And with the active worldwide Twitter users numbering around 320 million, it's a good bet that a fair amount of your support staff are involved as well. Twitter is easy to use and sign up for, and best of all, it's free! Firms can use Twitter to provide quick and easy training tidbits. For example:

"DYK that you can change ribbon contrast by going to File | Options | General | Office Theme in any MS app"

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Who We Are

The BCLMA, founded in 1972, is a non-profit organization with 155 Representatives and 290 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.

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.

Submissions

If you have an article or story idea you would like to submit, please email Sunita March at smarch@cfmlawyers.ca. Please note that our prescribed article length is 1000 words. All submissions will be subject to review by the editorial board.

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This sentence is 105 characters, well under the Twitter maximum of 140. Of course, these training tidbits can be sent out as emails, but I continue to hear about email fatigue from lawyers and staff alike. Twitter allows senders to push out the information in a medium that learners can access when needed and outside of firm business hours, without the need for access to firm systems. That means your audience can engage with training information at their convenience, whether it be at the office or during their evening commute.

For firms worried about sending proprietary information into the wider world, Twitter offers the option for private accounts. The selected administrator of the training Twitter account can then personally determine which followers to accept or reject, to eliminate the chances of eyes outside of the firm accessing proprietary information.

GOT GAME?

Whenever I talk about *gamified* learning in corporate training, I tend to encounter some resistance. Many see the word 'gamified' and automatically wonder how a video game is going to teach firm members how to use their automatic numbering. Well frankly, it's not, because that's not really what gamification

is about. A better way to understand gamification in our context is to alter the language a bit. What we're really talking about is adding game mechanics to training. Game mechanics are the rules and methods designed into a process which allows those engaged with it to interact as they would with a game. On a practical level, game mechanics are things like timers, scoring or even the impression of competition. They are tools we are familiar with, from the first time we rolled the die for a game of Chutes and Ladders to the way we use our Fitbits to challenge our daily fitness. In fact, games were developed to work with our innate competitiveness as a species, which in combination with our innate sociability, provides a way to engage learners in the learning process. It need not be built into expensive electronic learning systems, but can be applied to even the most basic of training sessions. Who wouldn't want to be recognized for being the fastest and most accurate to complete a practice exercise in a refresher session? If attendees know about these game aspects at the beginning of training, they are likely to be more engaged with the session, knowing that they'll need to draw on their new knowledge immediately.

Recognition doesn't need to be extravagant either. It can be as simple as verbal acknowledgment or a small prize. I once had great luck with an offered prize of a sheet of dollar store glitter football stickers for a training session conducted during football season. I've never seen a more competitive bunch try and complete a document on Word styles in my life.

DIGITIZE PEER-TO-PEER TRAINING

A couple of years ago, Judie Boroovich wrote for Topics about some great learning alternatives including peer-to-peer training. With so much that can be learned from the vast knowledge base in our firms, the idea is practically a no-brainer. However, with many firms separated onto multiple floors or large floor plates, and little to no extra time in people's schedules, the logistics of connecting mentors to mentees to share their knowledge can be difficult. That is where digital options become a desired alternative. Does your firm have an internal instant messaging system? Encourage staff to use it to provide training assistance to each other (products like Cisco Jabber include the ability to share one's desktop for even further convenience). Does your firm have an intranet forum or collaboration

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tool, such as Yammer, available to them? If so, create internally accessible spaces where firm members can reach out to mentors for answers, with an eye to archiving those interactions for long term reference.

These are just a few ideas focused on keeping things easy to use and cost effective. What tools (communications or otherwise) are sitting in your firm's arsenal just waiting to be used to support firm training initiatives?



Margaret Cividino is the Learning Specialist at Miller Thomson LLP and has spent over a decade focusing on education in the legal industry. She holds an M.Ed in Educational Technology & Learning Design. You can contact Margaret at mcividino@millerthomson.com.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



President's Message for Summer TOPICS

by Lorraine Burchynsky, BCLMA President

I am truly honoured to be the President of an organization as wonderful as BCLMA for the upcoming 2016-2017 term. I've been on the Board of Directors for the past two years and experienced the overwhelming spirit of the members, the sub-section leaders, the committees and the volunteers behind the scenes. I've also been afforded the opportunity to work with such dedicated, intelligent and enthusiastic Board members and Jane Kennedy, our Administrator and Angela Zarowny, our Treasurer, who are both invaluable to the team. I'm looking forward to the year ahead.

On behalf of the Association, I'd like to thank our outgoing President, Leslie Morgan, and Director of Finance & Administration at Harper Grey, for aptly leading our Association these past two years. Leslie's knowledge and expertise in the legal industry has been instrumental to the Board. Thank you Leslie, it's been a pleasure. Leslie will remain on the Board for another year to complete her three year term. I know I will be looking to Leslie for her wisdom and to draw on her experiences on the Board and as President.

Farewell to Paula Keiss as a Director of BCLMA. Paula has fulfilled two terms, being six years, as a Director. A huge thanks to Paula for her dedication to our Association and donating many volunteer hours.

Leslie Green, Administrator of DuMoulin Black was elected by acclamation at the 2016 AGM as our newest Director of the Board. Leslie has worked in the legal industry for 36 years and has been a member of BCLMA for 15 years. Leslie is also the Co-Chair of the Small Firms subsection.

Our 2016 Conference theme, Synergy through Technology and Teamwork, held on March 2nd and 3rd at the River Rock Hotel and Casino, was well attended with a record year of 102 attendees, including almost all of our Okanagan and interior members. For the first time, we had a scholarship contest and the winner was Andrea Gutierrez of EcoJustice, who provided the Board with a very convincing 500 word synopsis of why and how this opportunity would benefit her in her legal career.

The value of the Conference is immeasurable, from the vast networking, absorbing the enlightening sessions with the speakers, to finding out the artistic flair of many who participated in the Wednesday evening's Cocktails, Conversation & Creativity. As for the Market Place, we extended the time this year and split the sessions in two which afforded the candidates more valuable time with our 27 vendors.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We recently compiled the results of the Conference Survey, providing some interesting feedback:

- 52% prefer an evening event on the Thursday, followed by the Conference all day Friday, with 65% comfortable with the 3 speaker sessions.
- An overwhelming 70% prefer to have the Conference held the first week of March, and biennial.
- 55% enjoyed the added component of the evening event the night before the Conference.
- Just over half preferred the Market Place set-up this year, being 2 sessions for a total of 3 hours with the vendors.

Thank you to all who took the time to complete the survey. We had a 65% response rate which is fantastic. This feedback allows us to review what worked and what didn't, so we can more accurately provide our members with what they're looking for in future Conferences.

We also recently amassed the results of the Member Value Survey. Again, a great result with 157 member's firms completing the survey. The Board is currently reviewing these results to see where we can provide added value to our members. A summary of the results together with some of the Board's ideas and recommendations, can be found on *The Sounding Board* on page 23.

At the AGM on April 8th, changes were made to our bylaws and passed through special resolution. Some minor changes were language standardization and modernization, fixing numeric references and numbering correction. Some of the more substantive changes were:

- change the type of vote to allow both show of hands and secret ballot voting.
- allow proxy voting.
- change the Director's term to begin and end at the conclusion of the AGM.
- change method of sending the Notice of AGM meeting by electronic means.

You can find and review the revised bylaws on our website under FAQ/Resources, titled "Governance Document". The Board will again be tasked with transitioning to the new Societies Act coming into effect November 28, 2016.

We've grown to 9 sub-sections, with the recent addition of the Marketing sub-section,

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New Member Firms and their Representative

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Stephanie Emmerson, **Bungay Law Office**, Vancouver
Rebecca Tinsley, **Cameron IP**, Vancouver
Ranka Mihic, **G.K. Thomas Law Corp**, New West
Andrew Gay, **Gundmundseth Mickelson LLP**, Vancouver
Mark Rowan, **Hira Rowan LLP**, Vancouver
Deidre Herbert, **McLellan Herbert**, Vancouver
Denise Afable, **Randhawa Law**, Surrey
Tim Janzen, **TNG Legal Services MDP**, Kelowna

New Representatives for Existing Member Firms

Lisa Geddert, **RDM Lawyers**, Abbotsford
Tracey Sacher, **Hammerberg Lawyers LLP**, Vancouver
Jo-Anne Pringle, **JFK Law Corporation**, Vancouver
Kelsea Craig, **Zargar Lawyers + Business Strategists**, Vancouver

Past Member Firms - Renewed and their Representative

Jessica Melson, **Hartshorne & Mehl**, Vancouver
Karen Tougas, **Rosborough & Company**, Abbotsford

Facilities

Rebecca Miller, **Randhawa Law**, Surrey
Shelley Schuster, **DLA Piper (Canada)**, Vancouver

Finance

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Human Resources

Rebecca Miller, **Randhawa Law**, Surrey
Linda Caisley, **TNG Legal Services MDP**, Kelowna

Knowledge Management

Rebecca Miller, **Randhawa Law**, Surrey

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

chaired by Gwen Pengally of Harper Grey. They've been very pro-active having already had two meetings, and we have 24 members enrolled in the Marketing subsection.

BCLMA has several Committees, namely the Board, Topics, Survey, and Conference Committees to name a few, and we've recently added a Social Media Committee, led by Margaret Cividino of Miller Thomson. The Committee is planning to:

- promote BCLMA special events to members and potential new members;
- promote BCLMA special events to our members and business partners; and
- provide education to our BCLMA members on the use of social media platforms for business and best practises.

We are also very fortunate to have an expansive number of volunteers helping behind the scenes as members of our various committees, Sub-section Chairs and Co-Chairs, our volunteers at the conference, and Gary Carter, past director, who continues to support BCLMA in preparing all of our fill-in registration forms and correlating survey results.

Our website is an ongoing project, as I'm certain many can relate to if you've ever been involved with changing and/or upgrading your website. We are looking for feedback on our website and invite members to email info@bclma.org with comments, whether it's adding a new feature or improving an existing one.

After another fabulous Social at Bridges on June 2, our summer has officially arrived. Thank you to all existing and new members for joining us at this fun event, and especially to our vendors for your support of BCLMA.



Lorraine Burchynsky is the Administration Manager at Boughton Law Corporation, a BCLMA Director and the Chair of the BCLMA 2016 Conference. She can be reached at lburchynsky@boughtonlaw.com



Heather Gray-Grant

is a law firm strategist who works with individual lawyers and law firms on:

- Strategic business plans;
- Annual marketing plans;
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Retired

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Carol Mitchell, **RDM Lawyers LLP**, Abbotsford



Why Traditional HR May Be Holding Your Firm Back

by Doris Bentley, CHRP, Principal of CENTREPOINT

If you've recently experienced a rash of crushing people issues – the resignation of a key person or two, high staff turnover in one or more areas, poorly handled terminations, debilitating interpersonal conflicts, disastrous onboarding of a new hire, or performance problems resulting from role confusion, for example - it may be that traditional HR practices are getting in the way.

Recent conversations with a number of firm leaders have shown a real difference between the success of those who are keeping pace with evolving people practices, and those who struggle to hire, retain, develop, and advance their teams. If a firm hasn't reviewed or refreshed at least some of its HR practices in the last few years, chances are traditional assumptions and well entrenched processes are holding it back. Here are a few of the areas where your firm's philosophies may need a realignment with today's workplace realities:

How jobs are defined. If job descriptions don't accurately reflect the work that needs to be done and the value that brings to the business, this very important tool may be a lost opportunity to help individuals with role clarity. It may also be a lost opportunity to help hiring decision makers understand their

target for identifying and selecting the right people. No longer rigid tasks lists, today's position descriptions should provide true role clarity and be reviewed regularly, especially when restructuring, growth, or technology changes redefine the way work gets done.

Recruitment and selection has experienced a sea change in the last few years. A fully developed employer brand strategy separates the winners from the strugglers in the recruitment game, especially in a marketplace where talented legal support staff are in short supply. An agile yet predictable sourcing, selection, and interviewing process is the only answer to delivering a consistent approach to all hiring activities, regardless of internal or external hire.

Employment policies and procedures, usually documented in an employee handbook and made available in print and/or

online, are often as boring as they are important. A certain amount of compliance is needed and traditional HR has been known for too much of it. Forward thinking firms communicate their policies in a way that conveys the kind of workplace culture they value and the standards for how people work and behave.

Fair pay and benefits remain the foundation of compensation, but today's employees are attracted to work cultures that improve their quality of life, as well as their bank balance. Flexibility, investment in training and professional development, support for health and wellness, and good corporate social responsibility are all part of the picture today.

While the costs of extended health, dental, and wellness benefits are real, they can be leveraged to become an affordable and sustainable strategy in employee retention. Emerging trends can drive up costs and warrant more customized solutions, yet many options are available through the guidance and expertise of benefits and pensions professionals. How long has it been since you've taken a fresh look at this important part of the employee experience?

Annual performance conversations have represented one of the most tortuous of workplace activities with their focus on rating scales and whether or not one meets or exceeds expectations. Elimination of the annual ritual frees up HR managers, lawyers, and staff to have shorter, more frequent conversations that offer real-time feedback and dynamic goal setting. When managers (HR and otherwise) and lawyers are trained in providing feedforward – what individuals should keep doing that they are doing well, and what they can be doing differently to enhance performance going forward – goal achievement can be realized and momentum sustained over the long term. In fact, the simple art of conversation – informal, frequent, supportive, and open – is what differentiates strong firm cultures where issues are discussed and debated in a more transparent and collaborative way than ever before.

Even **succession planning** has evolved. Most firms struggle mightily to future proof the ranks of their partnership and associate teams. The challenge is that traditional succession planning is viewed as a transitional approach to finding clones to fill retiree's shoes. Today, firms must look more

broadly than years of experience and hard skills, and consider promotion-readiness by the level and depth of an individual's engagement, their demonstration of firm "building" behaviors – not just "billing" behaviors – and their alignment with firm values. While cultivating firm leaders is always a long-term play, results can be realized through short-term, high impact methods and frequent, meaningful conversations that help individuals understand what the future may hold and how they can best prepare.

Traditional HR practice can put your human systems in a box. Templates that have been used for years or more recently downloaded off the internet, can't possibly reflect the uniqueness of your firm and the value you place on your people, their performance, and potential. Policies that are written to police a few can be unduly restrictive for the many. Rote performance management processes can take away the very lifeblood of your organization – people's energy, enthusiasm, and overall engagement. Onerous interview and selection practices can be a big turn-off for great candidates. Lock-step compensation that fails to reward exceptional performance is a decided demotivator. Restrictive practices around promotions and development

can lead to turnover of your best players.

Traditional HR practices don't always lead to a healthy workplace. Exceptional people practices today require leader involvement, clarity of firm purpose and values, allowing for complete alignment of every human system with the organization's strategic intent. Whether HR in your firm is the purview of all partners and administrative leaders, or whether you have a full HR department, or an army-of-one HR professional, it's time to put human back in human resources, and adapt HR to lead and meet the realities of today's workplace, next generation workers, and the profound pace of change. We are all HR; vibrant and dynamic human systems are needed more than ever today.



Doris Bentley, CHRP is the Principal of CENTREPOINT, a Vancouver-based consultancy that specializes in helping leaders align their organization, division, or department with the practices and approaches

needed to ensure their people and business will continue to grow and prosper. She offers the insights and edge leaders need to develop and grow leadership talent, find those perfect-fit new hires, and increase the value of their firm. For more information, visit www.centrepoincareer.com.



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BCLMA SUMMER SOCIAL



A



B



C



D

BCLMA's Annual Summer Social, June 2, 2016

Thank you, weather gods. Bridges Patio on Granville Island was a sunny place to be on June 2. The skies were clear, the temperature was perfect and the atmosphere a buzz.

125 Representatives, Affiliates, Alumni (including nine past presidents) and business partners enjoyed the view, connected with colleagues and enjoyed refreshing cold beverages while sampling delicious canapés on the outdoor patio.

Each person was given a “Piece of the Puzzle” and asked to help complete a 4ft x 3ft puzzle of the Bridges Building with all the surrounding water and boats. Those who participated were entered into a draw for 10 mystery gift card prizes such as Visa, Amazon, Sephora, BCLCB, Cineplex, Gourmet Warehouse, Winners and Café Artigiano, courtesy of BCLMA.

BCLMA is very grateful to our Business Partners who helped support and sponsor this fabulous event.

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Our generous sponsors donated draw prizes, too. Congratulations to all of our winners!

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Shaw Sabey - Keg gift certificate won by Carlos, BHT

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Worldox - Starbucks gift card, won by Caitlin, Boughton Law

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Corporate Couriers - Dom Pérignon Champagne, won by Cindy, Miller Thomson

RICOH - Theta Camera won by Ronda, Manthorpe

R.JOHNSON Consulting - Cadillac Fairview gift card, won by Sam Mann

Shout out to anyone that is willing to let us share pictures they've taken at past BCLMA events – please send them to info@bclma.org. Check us out on **Instagram @bclma**. Follow us on **Twitter @bclma**. Don't forget to tag us in your posts and pictures from our events using the hashtag **#bclma2016**

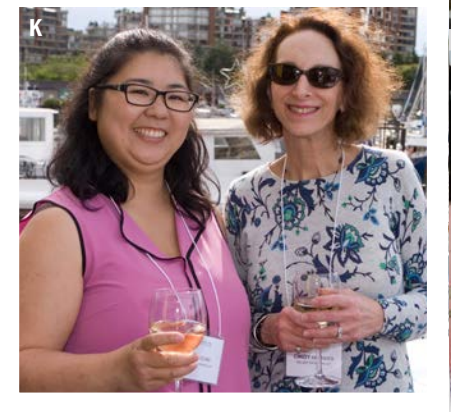
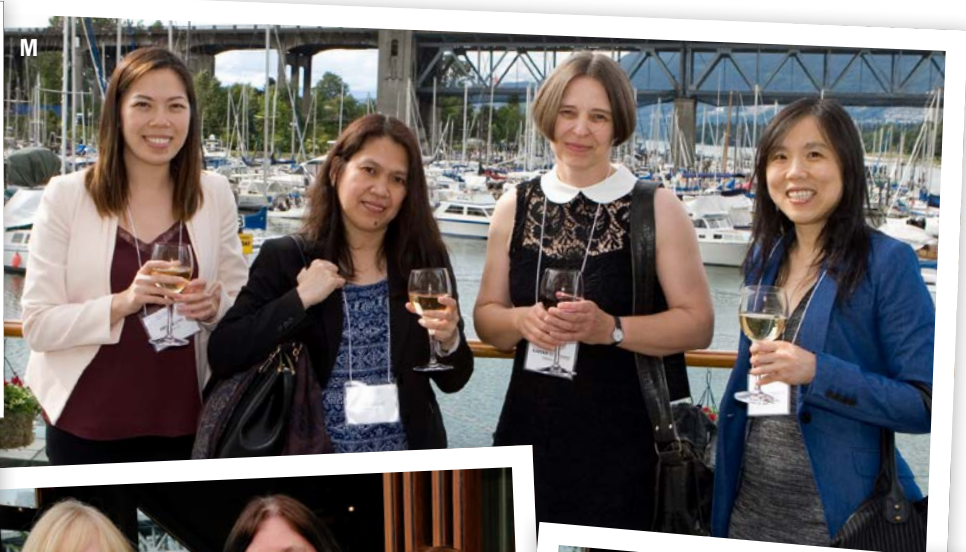
BCLMA SUMMER SOCIAL



Photos by Jesse Donaldson

- A. Katherine, Julie & Eva (Farris) enjoy the sunshine
- B. Stephen, (Arlyn Recruiting), BCLMA Premier Sponsor, makes Heather's day with a Coach Purse draw prize
- C. Avril (Boughton) & Erin (Fasken), BCLMA's HR Subsection Leaders touch base
- D. Members add their "piece of the puzzle"
- E. New Members Kristi (BLG) & Rebecca (Cameron IP)
- F. Dharam & Christian (Thorsteinssons) enjoy a beverage with Mario, (Shaw Sabey) BCLMA Premier Sponsor
- G. The group puzzle is coming together
- H. Connie (Dye Durham Corporation) BCLMA Premier Sponsor, present Dorothy (MOI) with a gift card to the Gourmet Warehouse
- I. Bria & Keith (BLG) relax with a glass of wine

BCLMA SUMMER SOCIAL



J. Josh & Mirko, Trainers Co-Chair (Harper Grey)
 K. Lisa & Cindy (Miller Thomson) enjoy the outdoor patio
 L. Marketing friends Lin (Clark Wilson) & Priscilla (RBS) catch up
 M. Helen, June & Sarah (Farris) chat with Chanel (Macdonald Tuskey)
 N. Debbie, Knowledge Mgmt Co-Chair, (Lawson) & Shauna, Litigation Support Co-Chairs, (Lawson) surround, Jenny Past Litigation Chair, (Singleton)
 O. Victoria & Barb represent Lindsay LLP

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Bring Your Own Device: Word from the OIPC

by Preston Parsons, Associate at Overholt Law

In my Autumn 2014 column, I touched on Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) arrangements that have proliferated in recent years. BYOD is a workplace arrangement where an organization authorizes its employees to use personal mobile devices including smartphones and tablets for both personal and business purposes.

In August 2015 the Privacy Commissioners of British Columbia, Alberta and Canada released joint guidelines for employers to consider when evaluating whether to introduce a BYOD policy. Those guidelines titled “Is a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Program the Right Choice for Your Organization? Privacy and Security Risks of a BYOD Program” can be found here: <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/guidance-documents/1827>. The document is a short, well-structured read and worth your time, especially if your firm does not have an internal information technology department.

The primary advantages for an employer to adopt a BYOD policy are simple. Employees are permitted to use the devices that they want in the ways that they know how to, often leading to increased satisfaction and

hopefully, increased productivity. They do not need to be trained on a new device that they may not know how to use – or may not want to use – and they avoid the inconvenience of carrying two phones with them wherever they go.

The benefits from the employer’s perspective are primarily financial. If employees absorb the cost of their own phones, the firm saves money on hardware costs. There may also be further savings for the firm if the employees are required to pay for their own phone plans. Finally, the firm saves training time and money as employees presumably already know how to use their own device.

Adopting a BYOD policy comes with a number of significant potential disadvantages however. Concerns over privacy law

breaches, data security issues, and document discovery issues in litigation are serious. It is important that all firms considering a BYOD policy put a plan in place to mitigate these risks. For example, if an associate lawyer with the firm forgets their cell phone on the bus during the commute to work, there is an acute and immediate risk of the loss of sensitive personal, firm and client data. A BYOD Policy review ensures that your firm considers what steps the employee must take in this scenario to ensure the safety of that sensitive material.

Many questions need to be asked and debated when considering the BYOD policy that works for your firm. Should employees be required to back up their devices daily and to set up a way to track and delete the contents of the phone remotely? Should employees be required to give the firm access to their account to delete the phone in extraordinary situations where the employee may be unable to do so? How can malware or ransomware attacks on personal devices be contained and remedied? What responsibility does the firm share?

Once established, the BYOD policy should be distributed to all employees of the firm and detailed training sessions should be held to give employees an opportunity to ask questions and understand the obligations that come with using their own devices for work purposes. Training sessions may be wise depending on how technologically savvy members of the firm are.

Having an open conversation about BYOD Policies in the context of the guideline is a great way to encourage mindfulness about the risks your organization may face and to instill a sense of responsibility into all users for the safeguarding of sensitive firm and client data. The risks of having a BYOD arrangement without formally considering the consequences should not be ignored.



Preston Parsons is an associate lawyer at Overholt Law, practicing in the areas of employment and labour relations, human rights and privacy law. Overholt Law is a boutique employment and labour relations firm

located in downtown Vancouver, British Columbia. For more information regarding Overholt Law, please visit www.overholtlawyers.com.

SAVE THE DATE

BCLMA Educational Event

Advantage Play: A Manager's Guide to Creative Problem Solving & Tricks

Guest Speaker: David Ben

Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 11:45 am - 2:00 pm

Terminal City Club, Vancouver

BCLMA Annual Managing Partners Lunch Event

Top 10 Trends in the Legal Industry

Guest Speaker: Stephen Mabey

Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 11:45 am - 2:00 pm

Terminal City Club, Vancouver

BCLMA Annual Winter Social

Thursday, November 24, 2016, 5:15 pm - 8:00 pm

Terminal City Club, Vancouver

For more information visit www.bclma.org

BCLMA Upcoming Survey Schedule

Support Staff Salary Survey

Distribution: September 1, 2016 - Publication: November 1, 2016

Billing Rates

Distribution: September 1, 2016 - Publication: November 1, 2016

Management Staff Salaries (firms over 30 lawyers)

Distribution: October 3, 2016 - Publication: November 1, 2016

For more information, visit www.bclma.org

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MEMBER SNAPSHOT



RHONDA ZEUNERT

How long have you been a BCLMA member? December 2015.

Where do you work? Callison Zeunert Law Corporation.

Last place you vacationed? Maui, Hawaii.

Where were you raised? Born in Summerside, PEI, grew up in Peachland (Okanagan).

Favourite wine under \$20? Volcanic Hills –Single Vineyard Gewürztraminer 2011 or Arrowleaf – First Crush 2014 White. Both are wonderful!

Favourite BC day trip location? Wine country in the Okanagan.

Favourite restaurant? Cactus Club.

One thing that not many people would know about you? I was Queen of Peachland in 1986.

Favourite movie? *The Sound Of Music*.

What are you reading? *An Invisible Thread* by Laura Schroff.

How do you spend spare time? Cross-stitch.

What do you enjoy most about working in the legal industry?

Finalizing legal documents for clients and having happy clients.

What movie title describes your life? *Soccer Mom* (lol).

MEMBER SNAPSHOT



KEITH CASSIDY

How long have you been a member of BCLMA? 9 months.

Where do you work? BLG LLP.

Last place you vacationed? Disneyland for a Disney Run weekend!

Where were you raised?

Born in Vancouver but lived in Edmonton for 5 years as a child.

Favourite wine under \$20? Quail's Gate.

Favourite BC day trip location? Whistler.

Favourite lunch spot? Freshii.

Favourite restaurant? Via Tevere.

One thing that not many people would know about you?

I love to play Scrabble.

Most recent movie you've seen? *The Revenant*.

What book would you recommend? *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls or *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein.

How do you spend spare time? Play hockey and basketball, enjoy the outdoors.

What do you enjoy most about working in the legal industry?

Working with a variety of people day-to-day in a large firm.

What movie title describes your life? *It's Kind of a Funny Story*.



Productivity Killer #1: The Not-Enough-Time Trap

By Allison Wolf, Lawyer Coach, Shift Works Strategic Inc.

Have you ever noticed how your thoughts can get you into trouble? The article that needs to be written next month has a deadline weeks away; there is lots of time to get to it. You think: I'll get to it next week. Then, you are hit with one busy day after another, and suddenly the deadline is looming and you arrive at the thought: I don't have time to get this done!

Beneath so many of life's challenges from clearing out the basement to improving productivity, lie the thinking traps that get us stuck in delay, procrastination, or simply do-it-later-itis.

Here are five versions of one simple *there's not enough time* thinking trap that has major implications for our productivity:

- I need a dedicated block of time for this task.
- There's not enough time for it now.
- I'll find time for it when I am not so busy.
- That's too big a project to start right now, and it's not due right away anyway.
- I just don't have the capacity to deal with that now.

Wouldn't it be nice if suddenly a huge block of time opened up in your calendar? But we all know that rarely happens.

Think instead: what is one small step I can take now?

Here's what is important to know. Big tasks, whether a complex project, or an administrative backlog, are best tackled with some small steps. Five minutes, ten minutes, on their own don't amount to much, but when put to good use these little segments of time add up to a whole lot of accomplishment.

To weave these threads of time into golden opportunities, activate a productivity habit I call "Run a Dash". Set a timer, or in a short break between large tasks, work on something on your to-do list for just 10 or 15 minutes. This works for everything from starting an article, to filing, or even the next step on a complex project.

To "Run a Dash" try the following:

- Have a handle on your to-do list. Do include on your list the administrative tasks you want to get to such as filing.
- Next time you find yourself feeling like you need a break, or when you have a few minutes open up in your day

between meetings, take a look at the list and decide what you want to tackle on it.

- Grab an item and take it as far as you can for ten or fifteen minutes. If you like, you can even set a timer, and challenge yourself to get as much done as possible within the time.

The result is you grab some dead time in the office and turn it into productivity time.

You might wonder, how can this work on complex projects that require a great deal of contemplation?

It turns out that starting early, with a quick draft of an outline, beginning to write, or simply drafting a few notes, can be hugely productive. Our brains need time to process information and cognate. When we begin work on a difficult project and then set it aside, our more powerful brain will continue to ponder it, silently, in the background.

As our brain ponders in the background it is being exposed to a variety of other stimuli from our environment and this can help inspire new thoughts and promote creativity. The result is that when we return to the task after a break of some minutes, hours, or days, we are likely to return with fresh ideas and insights.

RECESS

Don't take my word for it. Instead, give it a try yourself. Next time you are spinning your wheels, instead of surfing the web or doing more email, tackle one of your outstanding tasks and see how much you can get done. You will be surprised by how much farther ahead you can get by transforming small pockets of time into a productivity tool.

What is likely to get in the way? The oh so dangerous thought: I need to wait until I have more time for this. Don't be fooled. The best time you have is always now.



Allison Wolf, founder of Shift Works Strategic, is one of the most senior coaches to the legal profession in Canada. She has over twelve years of experience as a Certified Executive Coach and twenty years as a legal marketing and business development professional. Allison's coaching practice is entirely focused on lawyers. She is retained both by individuals and by law firms. Her clients range from sole practitioners to lawyers at large national firms. Allison is also a principal with the legal marketing agency Hogarth & Wolf. She is the publisher of a resource website for lawyers, attorneywithalife.com and has a bi-monthly column with the law blog Slaw.ca. She can be reached at allison@shiftworks.ca, or by visiting her website www.shiftworks.ca.



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How to Avoid Getting Stuck in a Technology Status Quo

by Rosemary Kupfert. Originally published in Law Practice Today, February 12, 2016

Every law firm has been there or is still there—the point where lawyers and staff find themselves stuck in a status quo with outdated paper processes and older technology solutions. It’s often marked with phrases like, “That’s how we’ve always done it,” or “There’s no need for change.” This attitude arises from lawyers and staff who aren’t well-versed in technology, who dislike change or have no desire to learn new technology.

This status quo mindset can impair a law firm’s ability to achieve all it can with its technology. If technology cannot improve productivity or isn’t integrated, customized or configured for optimal performance, the law firm risks losing billable hours to inefficiency.

Consider the steps involved when solutions aren’t used to their full potential. For each new client and matter, someone is required to manually input contact information into the case management and billing software—or any other solution that the law firm has implemented. Another inefficient example involves client correspondence that is manually populated with information cut and pasted from Word documents or a case information sheet. These processes take time that could be better spent on billable tasks with more substantial results or impact.

That’s why law firms need to resist the status quo, and periodically revisit technology to analyze drawbacks and the potential for increased productivity and profitability. A regular evaluation helps a law firm determine if it is truly using the technology to its fullest extent to benefit lawyers, staff and clients.

IDENTIFYING A STATUS QUO ATTITUDE

Here are situations that can identify the signs of status quo acceptance:

- Date of last technology implementation or update: If the law firm hasn’t made any significant changes in more than three years, it may be struggling to break out of its comfort zone.
- Resistance to new ideas: Picture a young associate brimming with ideas about how to improve technology and processes. If the law firm ignores the feedback, that could be another sign of being stuck in the status quo. This attitude can also emerge in discussions about user adoption. It’s a positive sign if lawyers and staff are interested in new ways of doing things. However, if new approaches lead to complaints, the law firm might need to re-evaluate its attitudes.
- Unwillingness to invest in technology: In some law firms, conversations about bringing in updated technology or updating existing technology end before they can seriously begin. If the law firm’s leadership typically responds with “no” to expenses related to technology, the law firm may be suffering from the status quo mindset.
- Loss of business: Many clients are looking for law firms that can enable more efficiencies through technology,

respond quickly and offer value-based pricing. Law firms with status quo mentalities may find themselves losing clients to more agile law firms because their systems are outdated and incompatible with what clients are using. Lawyers may not be able to respond as quickly or suffer lag time when delivering work product. Outdated systems may also have security vulnerabilities that leave the law firm or the client open to unauthorized access.

HOW TO SHAKE THE STATUS QUO

If lawyers and staff see themselves in any of these categories, it’s probably time to review technology as a way to identify and break free of old attitudes. This starts with creating a list of technology the law firm is using, and the strengths and weaknesses of each. This will be a living list that is revised as necessary and over the long term will help identify productivity killers and enable prioritization.

The law firm next needs to set goals for what it plans to accomplish, and assign key lawyers and staff members to help with technology evaluations. This will help confirm that the law firm has done its due diligence. The law firm will need to clarify whether the evaluation is simply to identify new features and functionality for existing software to improve efficiency, or if the review will reveal where updated, state-of-the-art technology can be adopted.

Once the law firm has compiled a list of current technology and set expected outcomes for the evaluation process, it

should consider several other things:

- Is current technology up-to-date in terms of security?
- Is the law firm using the most current version of software?
- How many people are using which programs and hardware? Should more employees have access to them? Or fewer?
- How many satisfied law firms/peers are using the technology solutions?
- Does the current hardware meet the software requirements?
- How much is the law firm paying for its technology, subscriptions, licenses, etc.?
- Are critical processes such as billing and case management supported adequately? For example: Does it take too long to create an accurate bill in the format the client requests? Can lawyers quickly access necessary case information? Do they receive automated reminders of important dates?
- Does the software offer the functionality needed to support a modern law firm? For example, is there an option to use solutions on mobile devices or from home offices?
- Does the technology integrate with other solutions and are new integrations available for existing technology?

A short survey about technology in general for everyone in the law firm can be valuable. This way, the law firm will uncover pain points, changes lawyers and staff would like to see implemented, and the key processes that take too long and are inefficient.

CONDUCTING AND EXECUTING THE TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION

How long the law firm spends evaluating its technology can depend on its tolerance level for inefficiency, the depth of overall law firm requirements and the level of sophistication required. The initial evaluation will take the longest, since the law firm may be starting from scratch in compiling all the relevant information. Once the list has been created, it will be easier to maintain and update. At a minimum, the law firm should start with the checklist and build from there.

To successfully conduct the technology evaluation, the law firm should position itself for success. That involves taking several steps – including finding a champion or creating a committee of champions who are enthusiastic about technology.

MEMBER SNAPSHOT



EUAN SINCLAIR

How long have you been a member of BCLMA? 5 years.

Where do you work? Lawson Lundell LLP.

Last place you vacationed? Placencia, Belize at Spring Break.

Where were you raised? Born and raised in Renfrewshire, Scotland, UK.

Have you ever lived abroad? In a funny way, I am living abroad now. We are waiting to be eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship.

Favourite wine under \$20? Burrowing Owl Pinot Gris 2015 (\$20). I think BC produces the best pinot gris wines in the world.

Favourite BC day trip location? Gambier Island on my sailboat.

Favourite lunch spot? I really enjoy the Vancouver Art Gallery, so long as the line-up is not too long.

Favourite restaurant? Vancouver Club.

One thing that not many people would know about you? I used to be trustee of a castle in the north of Scotland.

Favourite movie? I enjoy Ridley Scott movies. My favourite is the *The Kingdom of Heaven* and I just watched *Robin Hood* again last night.

What book would you recommend? *The Road to Little Dribbling* by Bill Bryson. As an American living in Britain, Bryson wryly observes the eccentricities of the British way of life.

How do you spend spare time? Putter about on my boat, spend time with my three kids (often on the boat), and go camping with our scout group.

What do you like most about working in the legal industry? I like the colleagues I work with, both at the firm and through collegial organizations like the BCLMA. I also enjoy solving problems and helping people to achieve what they want to do. I sense change, though. As stated in the question, I think the profession here is becoming an industry -- with all that entails.

What movie title describes your life? *Non, je ne regrette rien*. I like the sentiment and the song by Édith Piaf. I checked on IMDB for technical compliance-- it is a title of a movie, too, although I have not seen it.

The law firm should also create a regular schedule for the technology evaluation. Ideally, this should be done once a quarter to stay on top of technology needs and to control the number of “to do” items that arise from the evaluation. However, most law firms will resist a quarterly schedule, so the evaluation should be mandatory at least once a year. It should take place before the law firm’s annual budgeting process. This will allow the budget to accommodate any needed updates or new solutions. It also positions the law firm for a proactive stance on technology. Law firms aren’t waiting for something to fail but are identifying weaknesses before they can have a significant impact.

The law firm should set timelines for results related to the technology evaluation. For example, if the evaluation shows that the law firm would benefit from a time, billing and accounting solution with updated features, it needs to develop a plan for what is required. Over the years, patterns will emerge that will allow the law firm to identify results and anticipate issues.

Creating a technology evaluation represents the first step towards inspiring a culture open to technology change. However, other steps are needed to change the status quo. That includes getting lawyers and staff excited about new features and functionality of technology, and sharing stories about how other law firms have benefited from the technology.

Another key point involves developing solid numbers to track activities born from the technology evaluation to illustrate success. That involves taking measurements, measuring again and continuing the measurement process.

When things work well enough, or have worked well enough in the past, it can be difficult to implement the necessary technology changes. However, law firms that are only willing to continue doing things the way they have always done them will find themselves growing more inefficient and losing business. By challenging the status quo through regular technology evaluations and creating a culture open to technology, law firms will benefit themselves and clients alike.



Rosemary Kupfert is a legal technology consultant for BQE Software, with more than 25 years of experience in legal billing and case management. She can be reached at rosemary@bqe.com.

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BCLMA Salutes One of the Best Tribute to Bob Waterman

by friends and colleagues at BCLMA

Volunteers are essential for a thriving association, especially in our ever-changing legal profession. Today, the BCLMA wholeheartedly says “Thank You” to one of our long-standing members, Bob Waterman.

For those of you who know Bob, one or more of the following must surely come to mind when you think of him: Gentleman. Honest. Loyal. Fair. Runner. Smiling. Topics. Surveys. Administrator. Douglas Symes & Brissenden. Richards Buell Sutton. Confidante. Mentor. Social. Integrity. Friend.

We start with Gentleman, because Bob is the consummate gentleman. He's old school. He spoke with us, not at us. He listened and then he shared. He kept his word. Bob is just one of those guys you can count on.

Bob conducted himself, day-to-day, with low self-interest. He always saw opportunities for individuals to grow and excel, and supported them through their growth. A number of individuals in our legal community are where they are today because Bob saw their potential, encouraged them to take a leap, and then coached them along. Bob was

genuinely interested in others' success.

The success of this association was equally important to Bob, evident in his many years of service to VALA, the ALA and the BCLMA. Bob worked in Calgary for five years, but as soon as he returned in 2006, he got right back into volunteering for our association with enthusiasm and verve.

If you worked with Bob on any BCLMA project, you benefited from his measured problem-solving skills, his inclusive approach and his dignified style. Bob made eye contact with everyone at the table, thus making people feel heard and important. He appreciated all contributions and weighed them fairly.

If you attended any VALA/BCLMA socials, you saw Bob there. Bob truly enjoys connecting with his peers, colleagues and friends in the relaxed atmosphere of a False Creek

patio, a swanky ballroom or a fine pub. Bob has a ready laugh and can make anyone laugh. He has a great sense of humour.

So now we add more to the list: Retired. Relaxed. Golfing.

BCLMA Alumnus Russ Balcolme retired from McCarthy Tetrault nine years ago and notes that retirement has come easy, and that he and his wife have enjoyed every single day. He now wonders what could have been so important to once keep his phone and email on 24/7. Bob will surely ease into his next life chapter with the same wonderment and grace, although he will likely keep his phone on to make sure he doesn't miss a tee time.

Bob celebrated 39 years of law firm management on April 29. RBS recognized his many accomplishments and contributions, and we do the same now. Thank you, Bob, for everything: Your leadership, your energy, your ideas, your jokes and your warmth. You've set the bar high and given us many terrific memories. See you at the next Social, Friend.



When Was the Last Time You Had a Great Idea?

By Terry Small, Author of *Brain Bulletin*

John Cleese once said, "We don't know where we get our ideas from. What we do know is that we do not get them from our laptops." Indeed. And I'm pretty sure you don't get your great ideas staring into your smartphone. Electronic devices have become the great distraction. Moments of brilliance are hard to come by when your brain is distracted.

Smartphones are ubiquitous. Many people seem addicted. One study even found that 68% of people place their phones next to their beds when sleeping.

Smartphone addiction has a name - nomophobia. This term was created by British researchers in 2008 to identify people who experience anxiety when they have no access to mobile technology. Nomophobia has its first recovery centre in southern California. Needing "anything" in order to feel at ease or normal is technically a disability.

Remember, your brain wires to be good at what it does. If you spend a lot of time being distracted, your brain gets good at being distracted. Neuroplasticity cuts both ways.

WHAT PRICE IS PAID?

Your creativity and self-reflection suffer, and great ideas become scarce.

Here is a short video to watch. One of the

best I've seen: [Can We Auto-Correct Humanity?](#)

Studies show that down time, even boredom, is good for your brain. We all need more of it. When a momentary gap appears in your day, instead of mindlessly reaching for your phone, mindfully let your mind wander.

Eureka moments usually come during periods of inactivity. I wonder what would have happened if Isaac Newton had been on his smartphone sitting under the tree? He probably would have fired off an angry tweet about falling apples hitting his head. Instead he came up with a great idea.

Create some blank space in your day, and your brain will likely respond with a great idea or two.

Seth Godin recently had a great post on five steps to mental hygiene:

"Washing your hands helps you avoid getting sick. Putting fattening foods out of your reach helps you stay slim. And the provocations and

habits you encounter in the digital world keep you productive (or drive you crazy).

- Turn off mail and social media alerts on your phone.
- Don't read the comments. Not on your posts or on the posts of other people. Not the reviews and not the trolls.
- De-escalate the anger in every email exchange.
- Put your phone in the glove compartment while driving.
- Spend the most creative hour of your day creating, not responding.
- Each habit is hard to swallow and easy to maintain. Worth it."

Congratulations on learning something about your brain today. The Brain Bulletin is committed to help to do just that. If you missed any Brain Bulletins you can find them in the Brain Bulletin Archive.



Terry Small, B.Ed., M.A., is a master teacher and Canada's leading learning skills specialist. He is the author of the *Brain Bulletin* with over 34,000 subscribers worldwide.

THE SOUNDING BOARD

Your BCLMA. Your News.



The Sounding Board: Summer 2016

BCLMA conducted the Member Value survey in February of this year, with the most recent previous survey having taken place in 2009. A lot has happened since then: we've had 3 conferences, 12 social events, several educational events and a new website.

We've learned a great deal from this valuable resource; most importantly that our members are interested in hearing more from the Board. It is our pleasure to launch *The Sounding Board* - a regular feature in Topics where the BCLMA Board will report on the happenings in and around our 44 year old association.

In this month's column, we highlight some of the questions, responses, and comments from the 2016 Member Value Survey, broken down by category.

RESPONSE RATE:

We received 158 completed surveys of 440 members who were polled.

94% of those responses were from members from Metro Vancouver. The table demonstrates the response rate in respect to the corresponding firm size:

FIRM SIZE	RESPONDERS
Large firms (over 40 lawyers)	52%
Medium firms (16 - 39 lawyers)	18%
Small firms (15 lawyers or fewer)	30%

The majority of the members who replied were from the following age groups:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
19 - 29 years	3%
30 - 45 years	34%
46 - 60 years	53%
60 + years	10%

82.64% of responders were females, 17.36% were male:

82% F	17% M
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NEIL PASRICHA,
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THE SOUNDING BOARD

When asked whether members utilized their BCLMA memberships, 95% responded yes, indicating that they use it frequently or occasionally.

COMMUNICATION:

A satisfying 91% of responders believe BCLMA communicates well with its members. Some of the suggested improvements included:

- find new ways to allow remote participation at subsection events.
- create media libraries for events.
- have more regular focused updates on how various projects are progressing.
- assist new members with introductions at social events.
- members share their knowledge on the website on things affecting us all.
- help out of town members feel more included.

TOP 5 MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS MEMBERS UTILIZED INDICATED WERE:

1. Networking and professional development via subsection meetings
2. Social Events
3. Surveys
4. Networking & professional Development via educational events
5. Complimentary Career Posting Service

SUBSECTIONS:

SUBSECTION MEETINGS ATTENDANCE	
Regularly attend	39%
Usually attend	25%
Occasionally attend	24%
Do not attend	12%

For those 36% who never attend or occasionally attend, 49% report the reason is “lack of time (in general)”, 31% say “lack of relevant topics or speakers”.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS:

The members have spoken, and we’re listening! 68% reported two educational events per year is enough, 27% had no opinion and 5% don’t think two is enough.

SOCIAL EVENTS

- 65% often or occasionally attend the Winter Social

- 59% often or occasionally attend the Summer Social

THE TOP REASONS FOR ATTENDING BCLMA SOCIALS:

1. To network with other legal support professionals
2. To socialize
3. To develop & or maintain relationships with business partners

FEEDBACK FROM THE SUMMER AND WINTER SOCIALS:

REASONS MEMBERS DON'T ATTEND THE SOCIALS	
Too busy	59%
Location is inconvenient	42%
The cost	16%

Surprisingly, the results for the preferred type of social events demonstrated a majority vote for a stand-up reception only:

PREFERENCE OF SOCIAL EVENT	
Stand-up reception only	39%
Reception + dinner	28%
Dinner with speaker/entertainer	32%
No opinion	25%

CONFERENCE

BCLMA offers a conference every two years. When asked how often members would like to see the BCLMA conference offered, 74% of responders said every two years is good, and 16% suggested having a conference annually.

WEBSITE

BCLMA launched a new website over two years ago using a Wordpress platform with the aim of promoting, and encouraging professional interaction amongst our members.

The board has learned that 17% those who responded use the website often (1x per week), 46% reported only using the website sometimes (1x per month) and 37% rarely or never use it.

The events calendar is the most often accessed section of the website, with 75% accessing this area (often or sometimes), and 30% (rarely or never).

- 70% access the forums (often + sometimes) 30% (rarely or never).
- 55 % access the member directory (often + sometimes) 45% (rarely or never).

The primary age group for responders was between 46-60 years of age; a group that generally has years’ worth of knowledge to share. We’re hopeful that this survey and the initiatives that come as a result will generate discussion around how to better share that knowledge.

Comments and suggestions for website improvements included:

- website is time consuming to navigate
- forum participation needs improving
- more educational information available, knowledge banks, media libraries
- easier navigation from messages & notifications received.

The functionality of the website and increasing member participation is rated high on the Boards list of items to focus on for the website.

TOPICS

85% responded that they always (49%) or sometimes (36%) read it. These statistics are within 5 points of what was reported in the 2009 Member Value Survey.

The number one reason for not reading topics was 42% reported “I simply forget’ and interestingly 85% read Topics at work versus at home or on a mobile device.

IN CLOSING:

The BCLMA Board of Directors wish to thank those who took the time to fill out the survey. We appreciate your feedback and look forward to implementing changes you’ve told us you would like to see.

THE BCLMA TEAM

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