

# Technology

## How to Avoid Social Networking Blunders

Rules to follow when everyone is watching

BY DAN GIANCATERINO

It bears repeating that if you follow these simple rules, you won't get into trouble anywhere:

- Always tell the truth.
- Never speak ill of others.
- Don't say/wear/do anything that would embarrass your mother.

Sadly, many people don't follow this advice. The advent of social networking sites such as Facebook®, Flickr®, MySpace® and Twitter® have made it even easier for people — including professionals such as attorneys and paralegals — to get themselves into hot water. This article will look at ways to avoid embarrassing yourself (and your firm) on social networking sites.

### Rule #1: Think before you post

On Oct. 31, 2007 at 3:55 pm, an intern at the Anglo Irish Bank sent his boss the following e-mail:

"I just wanted to let you know that I will not be able to come into work tomorrow. Something came up at home and I had to go to New York this morning for the next couple of days. I apologize for the delayed notice."

His boss responded the next day:

"Thanks for letting us know — hope everything is ok in New York. (cool wand)"

He also attached the following picture from the intern's Facebook page:



One more thing — the boss BCC'd the entire bank on his reply so that they would all know that the intern skipped work to go to a Halloween party and lied about it.

Moral of the story:

Check your Facebook security settings by clicking on Settings - Privacy Settings - Profile. Are you allowing My Networks and Friends (or even Everyone or Friends of Friends) to view data — photos, videos, status updates, etc. — that should be accessible to Only Friends?



### Rule #2: Check your friends list

Ranting about your boss online can get you fired:



\*WARNING: strong language follows!\*

### Rule #3:

## Remember why they're called social n-e-t-w-o-r-k-i-n-g sites

Back in March 2009, a young woman was offered a job at Cisco Systems, the networking company. Using her Twitter account (@theconnor), she tweeted about it sarcastically, saying:

*"Now I have to weigh the utility of a fatty paycheck against the daily commute to San Jose and hating the work."*

About an hour later, a Cisco employee replied:



Moral of the story:

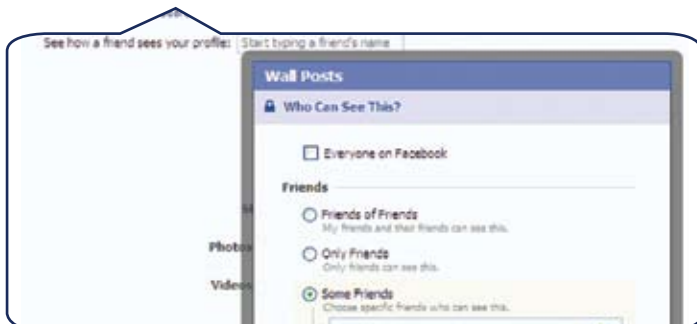
Periodically review your Facebook friends. If you don't want to browse the list, Facebook lets you search it. You can un-friend individuals you want to remove from your list. Don't worry – they won't get a notification when you un-friend them. However, they could possibly figure out what you've done if they fail to find you in their friends list.


Needless to say, @theconnor is not working at Cisco.

Moral of the story:

Twitter's account settings allow you to protect your tweets so that only people you approve can follow them. Click on Settings, scroll down to the bottom of the page, and click on the Protect my tweets checkbox. Click on the Save button and you're done. Please be aware that the tweets you made before you locked your account down may be accessible via search engines such as Google.

You can also create a list, which is a subset of your friends, by clicking on the [Create New List](#) button at the top of your Friends page. Name the list, select the friends you want to add to it, then click the [Create List](#) button. Now edit your profile's privacy controls so that only the people in the list can see your information such as photos, videos, status updates, etc. To do so, click on [Settings - Privacy Settings - Profile](#). For the desired item, highlight [Customize](#), then click on the [Some Friends](#) radio button and enter the name of the list you created.





If you don't activate this setting, anyone can search for and view your tweets, even if they don't follow you. Companies routinely practice "reputation management" by looking for comments about their products and services.

Now that we've gotten a handle on using security controls on Facebook and Twitter, it's time to look at how attorneys can use these types of sites to promote themselves.

#### It's not just about friends

By all means, get all the Friends (on Facebook) or Connections (on LinkedIn) that you can. This will make you visible to more people and will facilitate networking. But there's one more thing – you need to demonstrate your skills and expertise. The easiest way to do that is through a blog.

#### Blogs are the best way to get noticed

If you can regularly (at least two or three times per week) contribute articles to either your personal blog, or that of your firm, you'll be creating a pool of content that you can recycle on Facebook and LinkedIn.

For example, I post five to seven articles per week to the Jenkins Law Library blog. These articles also show up as notes on my Facebook page. (I used the RSS feed for my blog posts to set this up.) My friends can – and often do – leave Facebook comments on my notes. I've also included the URL of the Jenkins blog in the web site section of my Facebook contact information. On LinkedIn, the web sites section of my profile features both the URL of the Jenkins blog as well as the RSS feed for my posts. This way, I create the content once, but it shows up on three different web sites.

What if your firm doesn't allow you to blog and you don't have the time to create a personal blog. Is there another way to show what you know?

#### Consider micro-blogging

Twitter is a great alternative. Visit [twitter.com](http://twitter.com) and create a Twitter account. Select a professional-looking theme. Make your one-line bio (maximum 160 characters) punchy, yet informative – something like:

*"I'm a real estate attorney at a large Center City Philadelphia law firm with a passion for legal research, writing and technology."*

That's a lot of information about someone in only 131 characters. If you sound interesting, people will follow you.

Each day try to post at least one or two tweets about legal topics or issues. This may sound intimidating, but it is actually easier than trying to blog two or three times a week because Twitter limits you to posts of 140 characters or less. All you have to do is provide a brief summary of a relevant article you've read, plus a link to the full text. (The link will be converted by a link-shortening service such as TinyURL or Bit.ly in order to save characters.)

Here are some sample Tweets from our hypothetical real estate attorney:

August U.S. housing starts were the highest since November 2008. Is the recovery beginning? <http://tinyurl.com/yecsd85>

Wish I'd read this article before I bought my house: Eight Keys to Successful, Stress-Free Closing <http://bit.ly/PAA1W>

Unforeseen problems can arise during escrow, and closing dates are never set in stone! <http://is.gd/1CGRh>

If you have interesting comments and links, people will follow you.

Once you have your Twitter stream going, you can add it to the contact information sections of your Facebook and LinkedIn pages. You can even use the Twitter Facebook application or a desktop client such as TweetDeck to import your tweets into Facebook. ■

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## Internet TV?

Electronics manufacturers are rolling out Internet-ready televisions, making it easier for consumers to watch movies on demand.

LG, Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Samsung, Sharp, Sony and Vizio are among the companies offering these models. With Yahoo's widgets, movie fans can access films from Blockbuster On Demand or Amazon's Video On Demand for a nominal fee. Blockbuster customers can rent films for \$2.99 to \$3.99 and buy movies costing between \$7.99 and \$19.99.

Amazon claims to have more than 50,000 titles in its On Demand library (2,000 in high definition), and downloading from either service takes just seconds. Video-on-demand services are also offered by NetFlix and HuDu. Game players who use Microsoft's Xbox 360 and Sony's PlayStation 3 can also watch movies on demand from NetFlix, provided they're using an Internet connection. ■



## Ng Connect

Some are calling it a smartphone on wheels. A consortium of companies including Alcatel-Lucent, Atlantic Records, QNX Software Systems and Toyota have joined forces to build a Toyota Prius that spends almost as much time online as it does on the road.

Thanks to touchscreens, passengers will be able to stream and purchase all kinds of media through a mobile broadband connection and speeds of up to 100Mbps. Ng Connect's vision basically turns the car into a mobile Wi-Fi hotspot.

Designed for passengers but created with the driver in mind, you'll be able to play games, use social networks, shop or make use of other applications created for use while you're on the road. Drivers will get up-to-the minute traffic reports as well as information on fuel prices and available parking spaces. Passengers will be able to connect with people in nearby cars as well as people around the world. Anything you can do online can be done in the car.

Ng Connect is still a few years away from being commercially available. But it's just a matter of time until your car becomes the next way to get connected to the Internet. ■



## Google Scholar

Google's latest search addition, Scholar (scholar.google.com) provides an easy way to find scholarly works and state and federal court opinions. The search giant says you can search across many disciplines and sources including articles, theses, books and abstracts from academic publishers, professional societies, online repositories, universities and other web sites.

Google Scholar allows searches of many different sources from one place and helps you track down the complete document through your local library or the Internet.

Google says it aims to rank documents the same way researchers do, weighing the full text of each document, where it was published, who it was written by, as well as how often and how recently it has been cited in other scholarly literature. ■

Motorola Droid



BlackBerry Storm 2



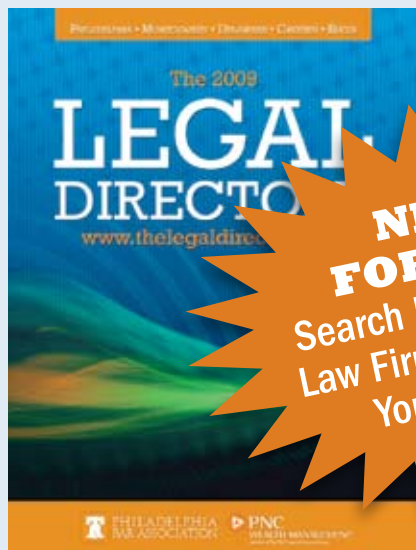
Verizon has unveiled the latest challengers in the battle of the smart phones – the BlackBerry Storm 2 and the Motorola Droid. Both have Wi-Fi connectivity so you can catch up on e-mail and browse the web. Both have still cameras, video cameras and access to third-party applications. Either one will keep you in touch while you're away from the office. ■

FEATURES	MOTOROLA DROID	BLACKBERRY STORM 2
DIMENSIONS	2.4" X 4.6" X 0.5"	2.45" X 4.43" X 0.55"
WEIGHT	6 OUNCES	5.64 OUNCES
DISPLAY	3.7" 480X854 WVGA, DISPLAY HOUSES 400,000 PIXELS	3.25" WVGA DISPLAY HOUSES 400,000 PIXELS
INTERFACE	CAPACITIVE TOUCH; FULL QWERTY SIDE SLIDER	TOUCH SCREEN
APPS	ANDROID MARKET	BLACKBERRY APP WORLD
MEMORY	16GB CARD INCLUDED IN PHONE, UP TO 32GB MICROSD EXPANDABLE	2 GB EMBEDDED MULTIMEDIA CARD, 256 MB FLASH MEMORY
AUDIO	AUDIO FORMAT SUPPORT: MP3, AAC, AAC+, EAAC+, WMA, WMA PROPLUS	AMR-NB/WB, MP3, WAV, AAC, AAC+, EAAC+, WMA
VIDEO	ADVANCED VIDEO RECORD/PLAYBACK AT D1 RESOLUTION (720X480) WITH UP TO 24FPS CAPTURE AND 30FPS PLAYBACK, MPEG-4, H.263, H.264H.264	VIDEO FORMAT SUPPORT: MPEG4 H.263, MPEG4 PART 2 SIMPLE PROFILE, H.264, WMV
GPS	AGPS, SGPS	INCLUDES BLACKBERRY® MAPS, INTEGRATED GPS WITH ASSISTED-GPS CAPABILITIES
CAMERA	5.0 MEGAPIXELS, AUTO FOCUS, DUAL LED FLASH AND IMAGE STABILIZATION	3.2 MEGAPIXELS, FLASH, AUTO FOCUS, 2X DIGITAL ZOOM
BATTERY LIFE	6.4 HOURS TALK TIME	5 HOURS TALK TIME
WIFI	YES	YES
OPERATING SYSTEM	GOOGLE ANDROID 2.0	BLACKBERRY OS 5.0
CARRIER	VERIZON	VERIZON
PRICE	\$199.99	\$179.99

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