

CHAPTER 1

Finding Your Way in a More Informal, Instant World

The new formula for prosperity among most professionals is to become a visible enthusiastic expert. This chapter will discuss how increasing his or her visibility can help a professional realize business-development potential, why modern hustlers are known for their enthusiasm, and the relative ease with which one can showcase expertise in a digital marketplace.



Important changes in marketing are already taking place. In fact, we are in a new era that values momentum over perfection.

For decades, personal marketing was time consuming and challenging because nothing could be released into the public domain until it was perfect. There was no tolerance for mistakes or inconsistencies.

Today, we are in the environment of perpetual beta, where technology has created a climate of perfect imperfection. The culture is more accepting of shortcomings. In fact, there is a certain authenticity in being almost cool. It is more relatable. It conveys sincerity. It builds trust.

There is also a certain freedom in not worrying about flawlessness and instead concentrating on commencement. Professionals are now liberated to start more initiatives just like the entrepreneurs they admire. They simply need to look to themselves for ideas.

“I think personal responsibility and accountability is the answer,” says Nancy Fox. “We are our own mirrors for everything else.”

When that mirror is unclear, there are so many more voices available today to provide another perspective. The conversation is taking place. There is a choice of when, how, and even if you will participate.

Mark Britton and his team are pushing professionals to progress whether they like it or not. He once took his four- and six-year-old sons skiing down the backside of the 11,166-foot Lone Peak, purportedly some of the most difficult terrain in Big Sky, Montana. It was a challenge (for all three of them), but the sons, now a few years older, are virtual experts. Soon after their trip, Britton founded Avvo, an online service for finding and rating doctors and lawyers. Avvo has become one of the most popular ratings services and is proverbially taking both professions on a similar adventure down the digital slope of Web 2.0 interactivity.

No stranger to industry transformations, Britton was the first general counsel of Internet-based travel reservation web site Expedia.com, and helped take the company public in 1999. In the spring of 2004, he moved to Italy to serve as an adjunct professor of finance for Gonzaga University in Florence, where he conceived of a service to replace the phone book. He notes that lawyers and doctors spend more than \$1 billion and more than \$500 million, respectively, per year on advertising in the telephone directory. “Anytime the Yellow Pages is a primary resource for consumers, something is broken,” he says.

Avvo represents the rise of community interaction between consumers and professionals. In addition, “There is a broader understanding and acceptance of ratings systems if you are a professional interested in transparency,” he says. People have been rating books, movies, food, and other items for years. Their opinions have helped shape future generations of those items and producers continue to pay close attention to the feedback of their customers.

Today, most service providers, from dry cleaners to doctors, realize that customers/patients/clients will offer feedback. Professionals want them to share that feedback responsibly and based on honest data. “Word of mouth is valuable, but when choosing a doctor or lawyer, it is also helpful to have someone increase your comfort level that the professional can handle the matter well,” Britton says.

Despite the availability of free information to answer complicated questions, consumers still need professional advice. One might be able to draft a contract or design minor architectural changes to a small room at home, but once there are variables to that initial effort, an individual will want a trusted resource. Specialization of those resources has resulted in an unchallenged reverence, but not all professionals are created equal. Modern transparency tells a more detailed story, to which each professional is permitted to contribute.

Restaurants, for example, operate in volumes that are much greater than doctors or lawyers. As a result, there are fewer overall people with experience, coupled with the notion that they are less likely to discuss their ophthalmologist than their local baker. "People are interested in offering commentary, and in that way Avvo has stoked the conversation," says Britton. In addition, Google is fostering a culture of professional open awareness. Most public records include at least minimal details about the backgrounds of one practitioner over another.

The increased digitization of documents is leading to one universal truth: your background will be publicly available. Choose to shape that public impression because once it is out there, prospective clients will judge your achievements. "Anything that we find value in will be rated," predicts Britton. "In fact, the more money and emotion that are involved, the greater the likelihood that if it is not being rated today, it will be rated shortly," he adds.

As a culture, investment in the Internet continues, and it is, therefore, becoming more valuable. As a consequence, the Internet is becoming a greater part of life. "It is not your choice not to participate anymore," cautions Britton. "Your life is on parade in the ether and it is only going to increase."

There is a dramatic convergence occurring where the public and private aspects of an individual are developing into a single personality. There is no longer an easy distinction between one's professional profile and his or her personal background. People who started tweeting for business inevitably use it for personal use (even if just to wish a professional contact a happy birthday). And, that is, of course, the point.

The goal is to develop relationships over contacts. To produce substance, as well as exude style. My United States Supreme Court gift shop tie reminds me of this balance every time I look at it.

On December 5, 2007, I had the privilege of covering the oral arguments in the consolidated Guantanamo Bay detainee cases of *Boumediene v. Bush* and *Al Odah v. United States* at the Supreme Court as part of the official press corps. I arrived at the steps of the grand courthouse at 2 A.M. on a 20-degree almost-winter morning to experience the pre-rock concert-like atmosphere with more than 50 other people in the line hoping to secure a seat in the public gallery. Although my editor assured me that I would receive a press pass, I did not want to take any chances. I also wanted to really appreciate the magnitude of the case at issue.

To collect footage in advance of the event for a documentary project on which I was working, I brought my tripod and video camera in a backpack. I started interviewing people waiting in line who were kind enough to leave the comfort of their sleeping bags to share their reasons for risking frostbite at the foot of the famous steps to listen to a court case. It was inspiring. I was a hardcore investigative journalist—in my own mind, at least. Ari Kaplan, Supreme Court reporter. I envisioned the Academy Award for the footage, the Pulitzer Prize for the commentary. It would be a professional milestone.

There was just one tiny miscalculation.

Before I left for the trip, my wife, the smartest person I know, suggested I wear a suit. I vehemently resisted, noting that I was a one-man camera crew and needed the freedom to practice my craft. I did not need a suit, I was a journalist! She wisely persuaded me to at least take a pair of slacks and a collared shirt.

At about 6 A.M., it started snowing. By 8 A.M., I was the first in line outside the public affairs office to obtain my press pass. A few minutes later, standing before the public affairs officer in my slacks, hardtop Adidas sneakers (I did not bring shoes either), and layers of frostbite-fighting thermal wear, I realized that there was a problem. I was not wearing a tie—an apparent prerequisite for a male journalist to sit in the press gallery (I ignored the hardtop sneakers, correctly figuring that no one would notice).

One of the reporters joked that former Chief Justice Warren Burger used to personally ask reporters improperly dressed to leave their seats after the justices took the bench. So I ran to the gift shop and bought a \$40 blue striped silk tie adorned with the scales of justice. I could almost hear my wife laughing as I was running.

The press officer approved of my outfit and assigned me to seat E-1, next to Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Charlie Savage of the *New York Times*, then covering the event for the *Boston Globe*. One of the court's massive interior columns blocked part of my view, which was lucky because Chief Justice Roberts did not have a good line of sight to my souvenir tie, which now hangs proudly in my closet (though sadly gets little use).

The tie reminds me of the balance between style, substance, and tradition. It highlights that professional services do differ from other consumer-oriented industries in certain ways. There are protocols and practices that were once unique to lawyers or doctors or accountants. Today, however, the universal benefit of raising your visibility, even in a limited fashion, is more compelling than certain nuances that may or may not exist.

Create Opportunity by Becoming a Visible Enthusiastic Expert

I was attending an annual industry conference and a person with whom I was not familiar waved at me from a distance as we approached one another. He smiled as our paths crossed and we made momentary small talk. He thanked me for my recent advice and asked me to continue sending him my newsletter. I really did not know him, but he was well aware of my work and passion for sharing practical guidance with my audience.

It is easier to learn about that audience and tailor information for its members than it has ever been. As people select experts, they are no longer looking only for those who are well-educated and capable—that much is assumed. They want to see public validation of their work in the professional community. As a result, professionals who can showcase their talent directly to their target audience are perceived as more visible and, therefore, become more marketable.

The success strategy for licensed professionals has always involved hard work, long hours, extensive resumes and long-term client relationships. The nature of those relationships, however, has changed as the pool of potential opportunities has shifted. Technology now permits access to more people in diverse areas who have traditionally been difficult to reach.

The increased number of choices and the prevalence of tools that enable potential clients and customers to do some of the work

themselves is causing commoditization. Taxes can be filed online, simple illnesses can be diagnosed via medical web sites, basic room additions can be designed with self-service CAAD (computer-aided architectural design) programs, and, of course, a variety of legal documents can be drafted for free. People are now much freer to eliminate or reduce the need for licensed resources that once held a monopoly on trusted information. This shift requires those experts to convey basic knowledge, but in a way that tailors their understanding to the issues with which their existing or future clients are struggling. They are required to routinely engage in conversation on issues about which their clients or patients have acquired some knowledge and may have preexisting ideas.

Increase Your Visibility and Realize Your Potential

As a child, Chris Reimer worked for his grandfather, an entrepreneur who started a company manufacturing windows in 1949. “Being around that type of environment gave me the first taste of entrepreneurial work,” he says. After graduating from Marquette University in Milwaukee with an accounting degree, he became a certified public accountant (CPA) and held a variety of finance-related roles, including one as the chief financial officer of a small business in St. Louis. Like many professionals, “I always made a good living, but can’t say that I identified with what I was doing,” he recalls.

After eliminating the idea of starting a mobile shredding business because of its prohibitive start-up costs, he considered developing a line of humorous t-shirts, similar to the popular items sold on SnorgTees.com or BustedTees.com. He thought that he would enjoy the exercise of designing the shirts and that he could run the business out of his home as it would be completely online. “For a year, I dreamed about ways that it would explode on impact,” recalls Reimer of his new company, Rizzo Tees LLC.

Of course, as is common with start ups, by the time the site—RizzoTees.com—went live on October 30, 2008, he had no money left for marketing or advertising. So, five days later, Reimer registered for an account on Twitter and began telling people about his shirts.

“I was not an early Twitter adopter, but Twitter was a perfect fit for me,” he says. Although he started growing t-shirt revenues from his Twitter audience, his presence as a social media authority was rising even more quickly. “As my personal brand grew, it started

pulling me away from accounting,” he recalls. “I was increasingly disenchanted with my day job because I was enjoying Rizzo Tees so much,” he adds.

As the shirts continued selling through Twitter and later Facebook, Reimer began discussing social media more publicly, but he was still trying to maintain a separate existence from his traditional job. “The idea of making funny t-shirts and being a social media devotee did not mix with the role of a chief financial officer,” he notes. “I wanted to keep that job and did not want anyone to ask any questions.”

By 2010, his audience members encouraged him to engage in social media consulting full time. He even considered creating Rizzo Media Works to perform advertising and digital marketing. “That business plan was not pleasing to my wife because there was no guarantee of income,” he jokes, but the CEO of Scorch Agency soon offered him the opportunity to become the company’s Chief Marketing Officer. “That was my dream fulfilled and Rizzo Tees ended up being the springboard.” In early 2011, he accepted a new position as Vice President of Social Media with Falk Harrison, a St. Louis-based brand communications agency.

Some professionals are comfortable experimenting with public forms of social media, but many fear the potential consequences of engagement. As a result, they pay no attention to the conversation and fail to participate in any meaningful way. Reimer decided to simply begin by listening, which is often how natural discussions occur. The individual, who is unfamiliar with a particular topic or those speaking, simply stands by to learn more about the context of the discussion before providing additional commentary. In Twitter parlance, Reimer began by “following” the “tweets” of certain individuals and organizations.

“When you meet people in person, typically someone has to make the first move,” he says. “There is no such thing on Twitter.” You simply click “follow” on their Twitter page and you are now privy to everything they say—voila! People actually appreciate when you follow them. “You are spending a little bit of your social currency when you follow and you get some in return,” adds Reimer, who started following more people and they began following him in return. Of course, he made some mistakes along the way; he admits that his auto-response thanking people for following him turned out to be a nuisance, which he quickly removed.

In a technological environment, people tend to be more forgiving in marketing. They are used to hiccups. Cell phones drop calls often enough that people understand when you lose the signal. Everyone with a computer has rebooted at some point in his or her life. And, of course, there are countless examples of viruses invading someone's phone book and spamming everyone he or she knows. Minor mistakes are part of progress.

I launched a webinar series called 30-Minute Thursdays in October of 2009. The webinars have offered creative ideas to hundreds of professionals nationwide. My first presentation, *Five Easy Ways to Create Opportunities in a Down Market*, was a great success both in terms of the high rate of attendance and the number of people who followed up with my sponsor. So, when planning for the second date, *Five Ways to Use the Holiday Season to Raise Your Profile*, I felt confident that I had mastered the webinar model.

Unfortunately, I had essentially double-booked myself during the second program. I was scheduled to speak live in Philadelphia at 2:30 P.M. ET and my webinar was scheduled for 1 P.M. No problem. I secured wireless Internet access and found an empty ballroom in the basement of the hotel where I was presenting. Subscribers started logging into the session before 1 P.M. and I began promptly. It was about 20 minutes after I started delivering my presentation that I noticed the "START WEBINAR" button at the top of the page.

Your life is on parade in the ether and it is only going to increase.

Mark Britton, founder, CEO, and president of Seattle-based Avvo

I pushed the button, heard the announcement that "the webinar is now beginning," and faced the reality that I had been talking to myself for quite some time. It was a dramatic public error. I immediately ended the webinar and within minutes, I sent an e-mail acknowledging the mistake. The number of kind responses from the attendees assured me that all was not lost and they indeed returned for the make-up session. I have a feeling they called in just for the adventure. Some even sent humorous reminders to press the "start" button.

Anyone who tries to leave his or her comfort zone falters at some point in a marketing or networking endeavor. That does not mean, however, that the effort is wasted. When you ask someone to meet and they decline, you have still set the foundation for a follow-up request. When you engage in social media and do not feel like you are reaching a substantial audience or efficiently utilizing your time, you are, at a minimum, listening to a conversation that will help you direct your efforts in the future. It is about communicating your message and letting that message reflect your character.

Reimer started to contribute to the conversation by sharing news links. Period. Only after his listeners began to reciprocate did he start mentioning his passion for t-shirts, red wine, and the National Basketball Association (NBA). “You are letting people get to know you,” he advises. But he set boundaries because as tens of thousands of people started following him, he realized that they were not all friends. As such, he has chosen not to reveal any family-related information.

That said, “What I did with Twitter is to be an open book of transparency and let people know who I am,” he recalls. And, of course, that simple act of engagement produced results. “I realized that it helped sell t-shirts because people are more apt to buy products from those they know, like, and trust.”

As one of the most traditional principles in business, there is nothing exciting about the “know, like, and trust” formula. When you combine it with the “visible enthusiastic expert” concept, you begin to realize that you can empower yourself and your practice to build professional relationships that are more likely to yield the outcome toward which you are working.

As the Vice President of Social Media with Falk Harrison, Reimer encourages professionals to blog, but goes beyond that traditional advice. Understanding that many experts support personal charitable endeavors, he suggests, for example, recording participation in such efforts using a Flip video recorder and sharing clips online to reflect the character of the organization. A blog is just one potential distribution source. The video can be uploaded to a YouTube account (which can be created upon simple registration at the site) or sharing the link to the video with followers on Twitter.

Google will also index any keywords associated with the video and enrich its search results to reflect your dynamic use of content.

“Most people have the same web site with the same outbound message, headshots, and contact page,” highlights Reimer. “There is generally no compelling message that entices people to spend more time on their site,” he adds. Those who veer ever so slightly from this mold can distinguish themselves from their peers.

For generations, licensed professionals grew business by demonstrating their knowledge and cultivating referrals. Today, they must use their basic knowledge to establish relationships and, therefore, need to consider giving it away for free. It is unnatural, but increasingly effective. “Even if you share a little bit for free, when you do it in a more authentic way, people will trust you and see your value,” says Reimer, who offers the example of a friend who is a health insurance broker in St. Louis.

Reimer advised him to generate inbound marketing leads by demonstrating his expertise instead of making routine cold calls. He suggested that he create a portal to showcase his expertise in various ways, including on a blog. He compared it to a printed newsletter that his audience can share more easily. That said, “Even an e-mail is not quite as sharable as a re-tweet or pressing a Facebook ‘like’ button.”

He never started the blog.

Coincidentally, another contact of his mentioned that she had found her health insurance broker by entering a variety of search terms into Google. Her efforts led her to an individual’s blog hosted by Blogger, Google’s completely free tool that offers basic features to enable writers to begin experimenting with the medium. Reimer visited the site and noted that despite his opinion that the blog contained basic information and was not well designed, it was better than anything else his colleague found online. It gave that broker a visibility advantage. The broker did not cold call this particular prospect, but she felt as if she knew him anyway. “The bullhorn was turned around,” says Reimer.

Reimer himself once had a trademark problem with one of his Rizzo Tees T-shirts. After receiving a cease-and-desist letter, he noted his concern on Twitter. A random attorney in Indiana was “listening” and contacted him. He offered to assist on a flat-fee basis and very quickly retained a new client. Instead of a giant bullhorn, the lawyer in Indiana used a similarly sized eavesdropping tool to successfully raise his visibility.

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*Chris Reimer, Vice President of Social Media with Falk Harrison,
a St. Louis brand communications agency*

Enthusiasm Is the Hallmark of the Modern Hustler

In the same way that Chris Reimer was able to find a career, or in many ways create a career that showcased his passion, professionals today must do the very same thing. They must find what it is about their work that captures the essence of that excitement.

Only the renowned experts in a particular field can engage clients and attract referral sources merely by being the singular expert on that topic. The market is so competitive that people often view their counselors in one area or another as fungible. They believe that there are likely to be multiple individuals or organizations that can successfully navigate a particular issue.

For example, there are first-rate hospitals around the world that can often handle a complex health matter, even one that has a significant idiosyncrasy. There are now hospital advertisements on television, the Internet, and even highway billboards. From fertility clinics to cancer centers, medical institutions are vying for patients.

Law firms are increasingly trying to figure out the formula for not only attracting a premium corporate client, but maintaining that relationship over the long term. They are willing to bill differently, change staffing patterns, and cede control to their clients or a client's outside advisors in an effort to demonstrate their commitment to efficiency.

All of these initiatives spotlight the level of interest an individual or an organization has in collaborating with a potential client, but what highlights the necessary level of enthusiasm is the individual story. That provides the essence of why a customer would choose one practitioner over another practitioner with similar skills.

It is often said in veterinary circles "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care," reports Graham Milligan, the Director of Clinical Services Division at the Royal Veterinary College at the University of London, in Hatfield,

England. He notes that while pet owners rarely question the technical ability of a veterinarian, they are very sensitive to the professional's demeanor.

Traditional veterinary instruction focused on rote memorization of factual information. Yet the client often determines the nature of the treatment. "The emphasis on preventive measures is becoming more important on small animal work," Milligan says, highlighting that weight management, older pet clinics, and puppy training, among others factors, are increasingly popular.

In addition, he advises that pet owners most often select their vet based on location, unless they receive a personal recommendation from another pet owner (even a stranger they might meet in the park). As such, it is even more critical for animal doctors to demonstrate their caring nature to clients than it is for most other professionals. "Vets who care more differentiate themselves, but they generally make pretty poor marketers," says Milligan. "That is not what motivates them and it is not why they went to veterinary school," he adds. While that fact is probably true of most professionals, the new reality is that professional services firms are like many other businesses.

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Ultimately, it is not just because a medical facility cured a patient or that a law firm won a case, it is that its human talent is so excited about the success of the patient or client that the facility or firm wants to tell as many people about the journey, rather than solely the destination.

Today, in order to convey the level of enthusiasm that potential business associates require to consider a professional's work, there needs to be a unique level of interaction. And that interaction must convey the human aspect of the relationship. It must provide insight into who you are, as much as what you can do. If traditional business is transacted between parties that know, like, and trust one

another, there is a remarkable opportunity to develop that familiarity and sincerity in a richer way. A great personal story doesn't hurt.

Tejas Kapadia is a New Jersey lawyer. He was always interested in charitable giving and believed that businesses should give directly to the communities in which they generate their revenues. His brother, Hemish Kapadia, a New Jersey accountant and a bone marrow donor, agreed.

Raised by parents who grew up in India, the duo hoped to open a small business in Mumbai and then donate a percentage of their profits to support local charitable endeavors. Recognizing the increased interest in fast food there (Pizza Hut and Subway are among a number of restaurants with a presence throughout the city), they focused on the donut market. They moved across the world in October of 2006 and self-funded the opening of the American Donut Shoppe in the food court of an urban shopping mall in March, 2007. After more than four years, the business has five locations throughout Mumbai.

"It has been an adventure since doing business in India has almost nothing to do with legal practice in New Jersey," says Tejas Kapadia.

Neither brother is particularly passionate about donuts, yet both are excited about their charitable goals—to support local education and bone marrow programs—that the donut business can help them achieve. "Donuts are simply a product that I felt that we could make with some degree of quality without using chefs," he said.

Ironically, the Kapadia brothers originally anticipated training employees to make the donuts, but to improve efficiency they ultimately imported a donut-making machine from the United States. Even in an endeavor where contributing to the local economy is a primary concern of the business, efficiency remains paramount.

To continue to grow, the duo expects to add India-based partners and eventually franchise the business throughout the country. Once they confirm those plans, Tejas Kapadia will return to a general legal practice back in New Jersey, though he likely will spend a lot of time counseling start-ups, particularly since he has lived the experience his future clients will face.

Kapadia not only built a franchise, but actually created a market for something that did not exist. In fact, many people confused his donuts for an Indian look-alike called a Medu Vada, which is a deep-fried and spicy treat. At about \$1 each, the donuts are increasing in

popularity, and their mini-donuts, at about 50 cents each, are also gaining market share. The American Donut Shoppe has grown from a retail outfit into an office and wedding catering business as well.

Kapadia highlights that “In the last 5 years, the entire culture of India seems like it is going through a transition.” He cites the rising number of shopping malls and western influences. The American Donut Shoppe is experimenting in a client-centered shift in taste the same way that professionals throughout the United States are adapting their businesses to a client-focused method of communicating. They too are reversing the bullhorn, but not without learning a few lessons along the way. “To pull something like this off, you need a large degree of patience and willingness to sacrifice your time,” says Kapadia.

Expertise Is Easier to Convey Than Ever Before

In addition to visibility and enthusiasm, one needs demonstrable expertise. Reimer figured out how to raise his visibility in a genuine way, while Kapadia has leveraged his enthusiasm to bring about positive change in a shifting cultural landscape.

In the modern technological environment, however, demonstrating expertise is often the easiest of the three factors. Reimer took time to raise his visibility and Kapadia has sacrificed a great deal to showcase his enthusiasm (though there are easier ways to do so).

Expertise is often considered elusive. It evokes images of a wall filled with framed certificates and plaques interspersed with shelves featuring medals and gifts of gratitude. Experts themselves are bespectacled, with salt-and-pepper hair standing in front of a bookcase lined with scholarly material. That, in many ways, is traditional, long-form expertise. In a nontraditional era, however, expertise is not just experiential but referential.

One is able to easily convey expertise by associating with other experts and by demonstrating an understanding of key issues. It worked for the health insurance broker, and continues to be an effective technique.

I once wrote a guest blog post for the local section of the *New York Times* and mentioned Fashion’s Night Out, an event created to promote excitement for fashion during the recession. The international event encourages various stores to hold shopping celebrations. The article was not necessarily about the occasion, it simply

used the occasion as a lead-in to the story about a local business. The very next day, I received an e-mail from the public relations firm representing an area department store asking if I would be interested in other fashion-related resources. The person who contacted me perceived me as an expert in fashion after reading my blog post.

If an accountant, doctor, or lawyer wanted to convey his or her expertise in a particular subject, but did not have the time to write a detailed article with 300 footnotes and teams of research assistants, or even publish a shorter article in a newspaper, there is an alternative.

He or she could draft a short, two-to-three-paragraph description of an issue and interview one or two experts on the matter. He or she could then share that content as a guest contributor for an influential blog or online publication. That effort will enable one to spotlight expertise as well as provide an opportunity to meet other experts in the field.

Hayes Hunt is a Philadelphia-based partner with Cozen O'Connor, a law firm with 550 attorneys in 24 offices. He represents individuals, corporations, and executives in criminal and civil litigation, ranging from health care and tax fraud to professional licensing and federal investigations. Hunt is a former public defender and is the director for the firm's Prisoner Civil Rights Panel Program for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. He also created the Cozen O'Connor Trial Academy and the Cozen O'Connor Deposition Program.

Add to that background his recognition as a "Pennsylvania Super Lawyer" in 2010, a *Legal Intelligencer* "Lawyer on the Fast Track," in 2007, and a Pennsylvania "Rising Star" by *Law & Politics* in 2005 and 2006. Hayes is a bona fide expert, yet he still struggles with how to most effectively convey that expertise.

He once spent a lot of his marketing efforts presenting continuing legal education programs to other lawyers and business professionals about white-collar criminal defense and trial advocacy. "But I got zero work from it because people were not picking up the phone to call me for work related to that," Hunt recalls. He was also told to write long articles in his areas of practice; that was similarly unsuccessful.

After a law firm coach suggested that the partners begin to carefully experiment with LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, he was still

suspicious, but knew that he needed to market more aggressively. “I always viewed that type of brief communication as non-professional speak using emoticons and abbreviations,” he says. “I saw it as a social mechanism for dating or communication as opposed to a professional way of marketing to clients and referral sources,” he adds.

Then he started to share links to articles that he had read with contacts and began to change his attitude about what he considered unconventional forms of marketing. He created a LinkedIn account and reached out to a few contacts. Within a few months, he accumulated almost 500. He shares the posts he writes for his blog, From the Sidebar, with those LinkedIn connections, among others. They combine his personality with his practical perspectives on the law. He described the online journal as a collection of practical tips about trials and litigation.

Hunt questions whether professionals tend to rely too much on their firm’s name and less on their own promotional prowess. “How we market ourselves tends to get lost,” he says. Admitting that his first blog post was very intimidating and a mental hurdle, he enjoys the interaction with his readers. “I view the practice of law as problem solving, which is why I love it,” he notes. “The dialogue helps me learn and become a better lawyer.”

RECAP

- Raising your visibility allows your audience to get to know you. As they do so, they will come to appreciate your perspective. Make it easier for them by reversing the bullhorn so that your audience members can address you in the same way that you speak to them. Twitter is an interesting example of this practice.
- Enthusiasm requires a unique level of interaction, as well as a compelling personal story. Proficiency and demeanor are often influenced by a professional’s overall level of excitement.
- Practically demonstrate your expertise by blogging or guest blogging.