



Panelists:

Marguerite Durston
Janine Ting Jansen
Traci Feit Love

*Above the Fray: How Law Firms Can
Maintain a Positive Image Online*

Goals:

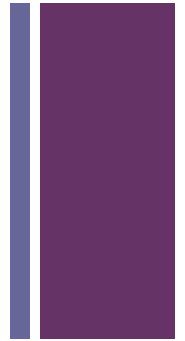
- Explore how students view the information available to them about legal employers;



- Discuss how law firms can best manage their online presence and reputation;

- Facilitate small group discussions on hypothetical challenges faced by law firms.

+ About the Surveys



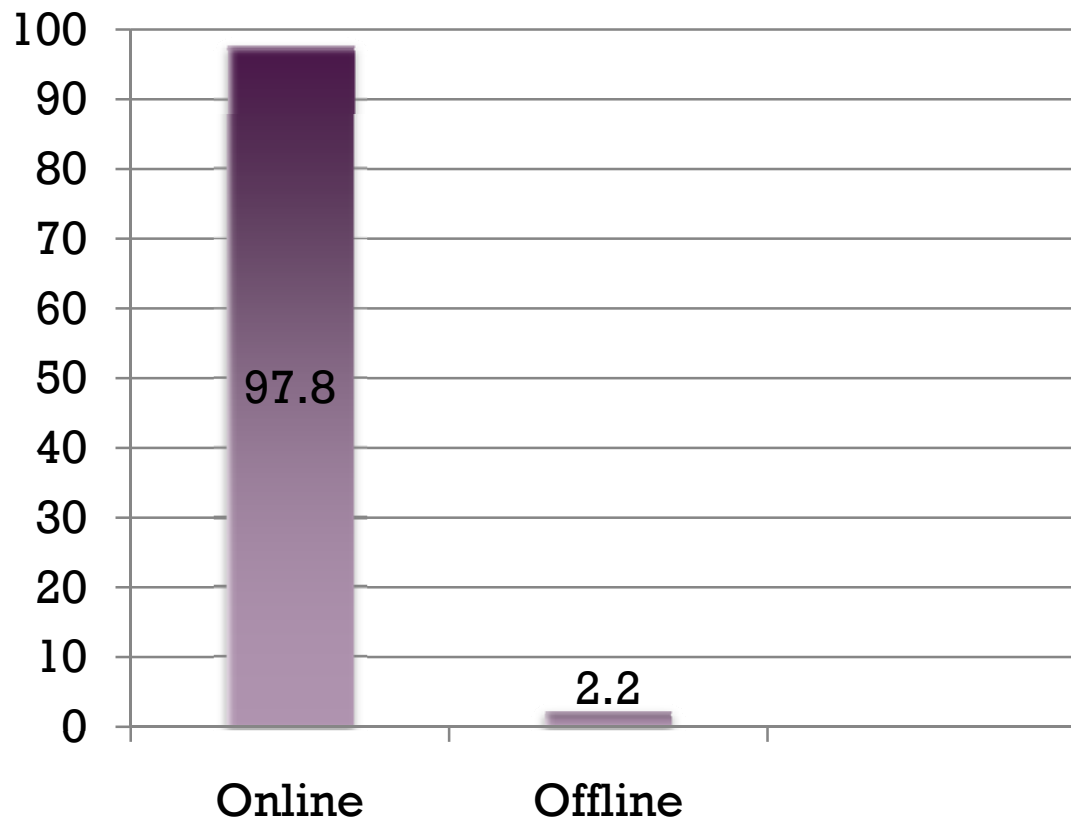
LAW STUDENT SURVEY

- 1000 students
- 75 law schools
- 33% 3Ls
- 33% 2Ls
- 30% 1Ls
- 3% LLMS

LAW FIRM SURVEY

- 34 law firms
- 65% have more than 500 attorneys
- 21% have between 250 and 500 attorneys
- 14% have less than 250 attorneys

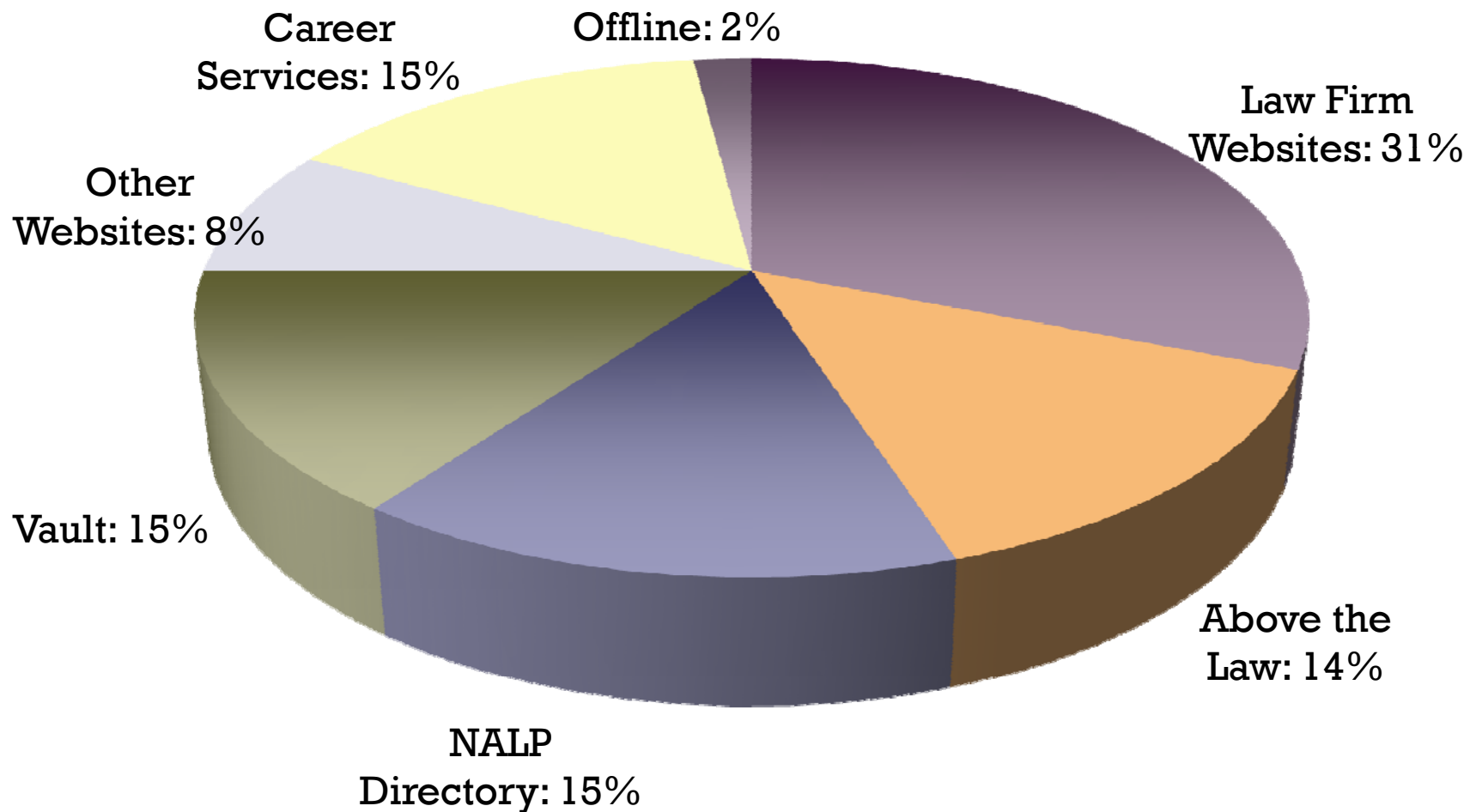
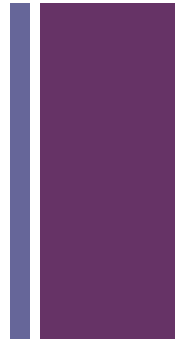
+ Where do students get most of their information about prospective law firm employers?





69% of students report that they
+ get most of their information
about your firm from sources
other than your website.

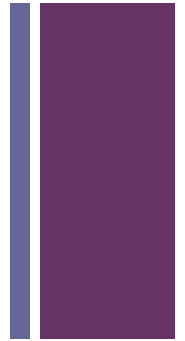
+ Where do students get most of their information about legal employers?



+ What online sources of law firm information do students visit?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Law firm websites	831	83.10%
Above the Law	702	70.20%
NALP Directory	585	58.50%
Vault	507	50.70%
FindLaw	96	9.60%
Greedy Associates	25	2.50%

+ But what sources do students find most trustworthy?



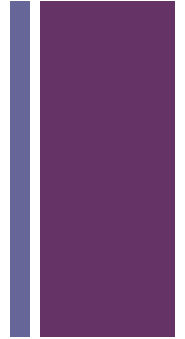
1. Fellow Students
2. Alumni
3. NALP
4. Career Services
5. Vault
6. Law Firm Websites
7. Above the Law
8. Print Materials
9. Other Websites
10. Social Media



90% of students said that a
negative rumor about a law firm
+ posted on Above the Law was
likely, very likely, or extremely
likely to be true.

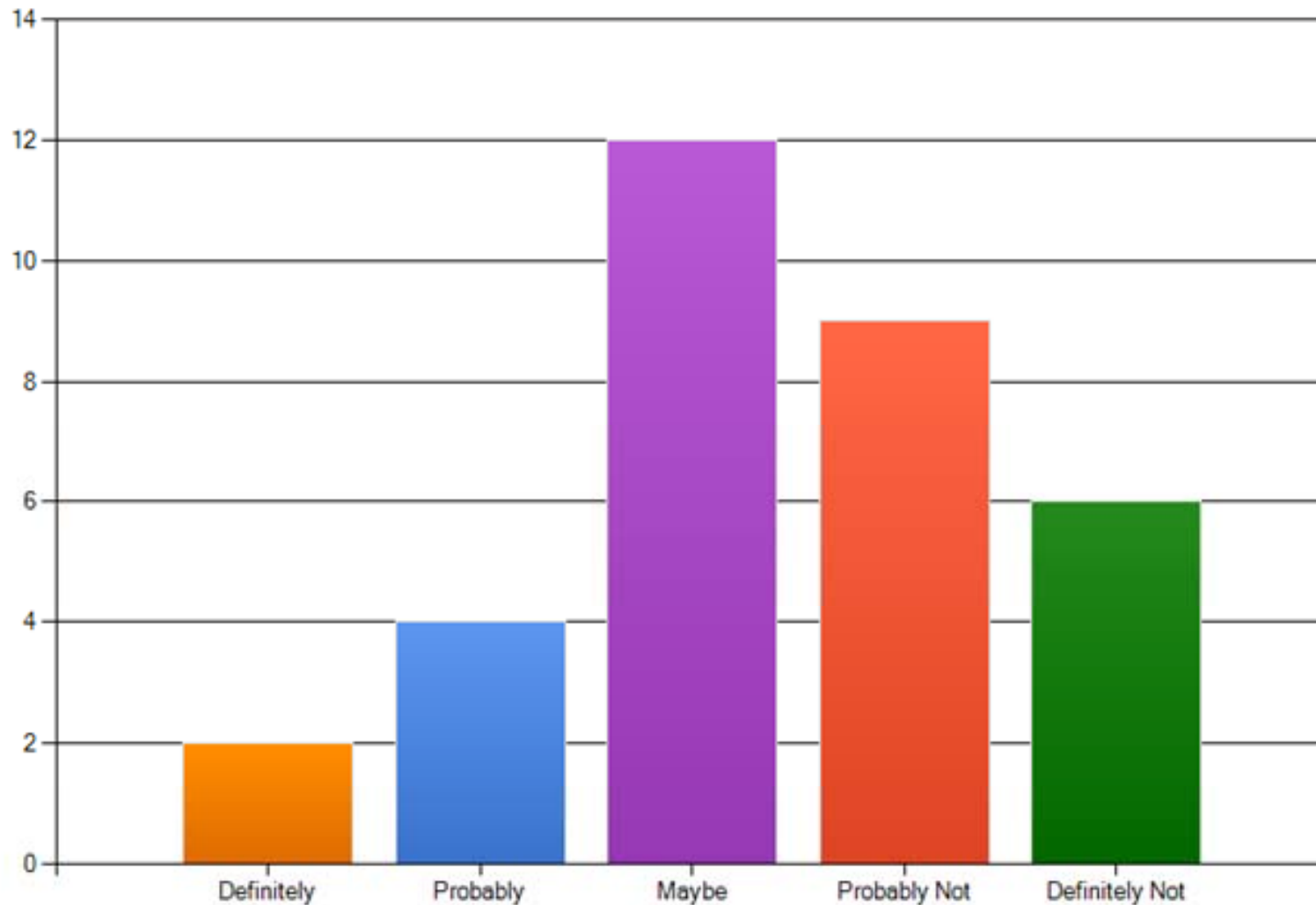
Only 9.8% said the negative rumor was unlikely to be true.

+ Should you respond to negative online rumors?



- 92% of students said they would attempt to verify a negative rumor before making an employment decision based on the rumor.
- 65% of students reported that the failure by a firm to respond to a negative rumor on Above the Law “makes me think that the story is probably true.”

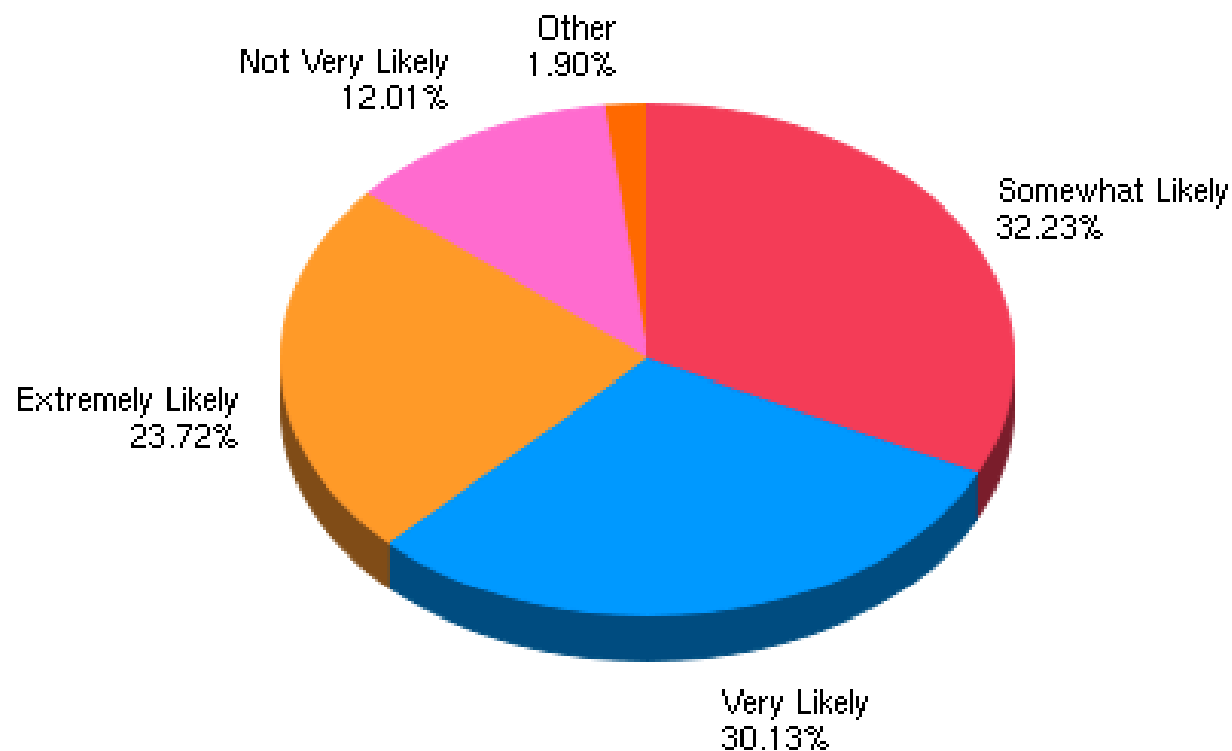
+ Do law firms respond to negative rumors online?





What if you don't respond?

+ How likely are students to share a rumor about your firm with others?





How should you respond to
online rumors about your firm?

- +
- It is reported online that BigLaw Firm Y is reducing salaries for incoming first year associates. Which of the following responses would most positively affect your impression of BigLaw Firm Y? Please rank in order from most positive (1) to most negative (4).

VALUE	1	2	3	4	AVERAGE RANK
"No comment."	88	73	134	705	3.5
"Yes, we are reducing salaries for incoming associates out of economic necessity."	425	310	206	59	1.9
"Yes, we are reducing salaries for incoming associates. Our clients are no longer willing to pay high rates for brand new attorneys."	216	303	332	149	2.4
"Yes, we are reducing salaries for incoming associates in order to remain competitive with other firms of our size."	269	316	330	85	2.2

- +
- A law firm fails to give several of its summer associates offers for permanent positions. Which of the following explanations from the firm would most positively impact your impression of the firm? Please rank in order from most positive (1) to most negative (4).

Value	1	2	3	4	Average Rank
"We regret that we were unable to offer permanent positions to everyone due to the economic situation."	339	292	286	83	1
"We gave offers to every summer associate whom we believed would be a good fit for our firm."	305	330	278	87	1
"This was a special situation. As a general rule, we give offers to over 95% of our summer associates."	288	298	293	121	2
"No explanation provided by the firm."	66	82	145	707	4



+ Where should you go to connect with students online?

(instead of waiting for them to find you)

+ Law Students & Social Media (2010)

	No Time	< 1 hour per week	1-2 hours per week	> 2 hours per week
Facebook	5.4%	26.8%	29.1%	38.8%
Blogs	31.4%	21.7%	19.4%	27.4%
Twitter	82.6%	12.4%	3.0%	2.0%
LinkedIn	80.6%	18.7%	.7%	-

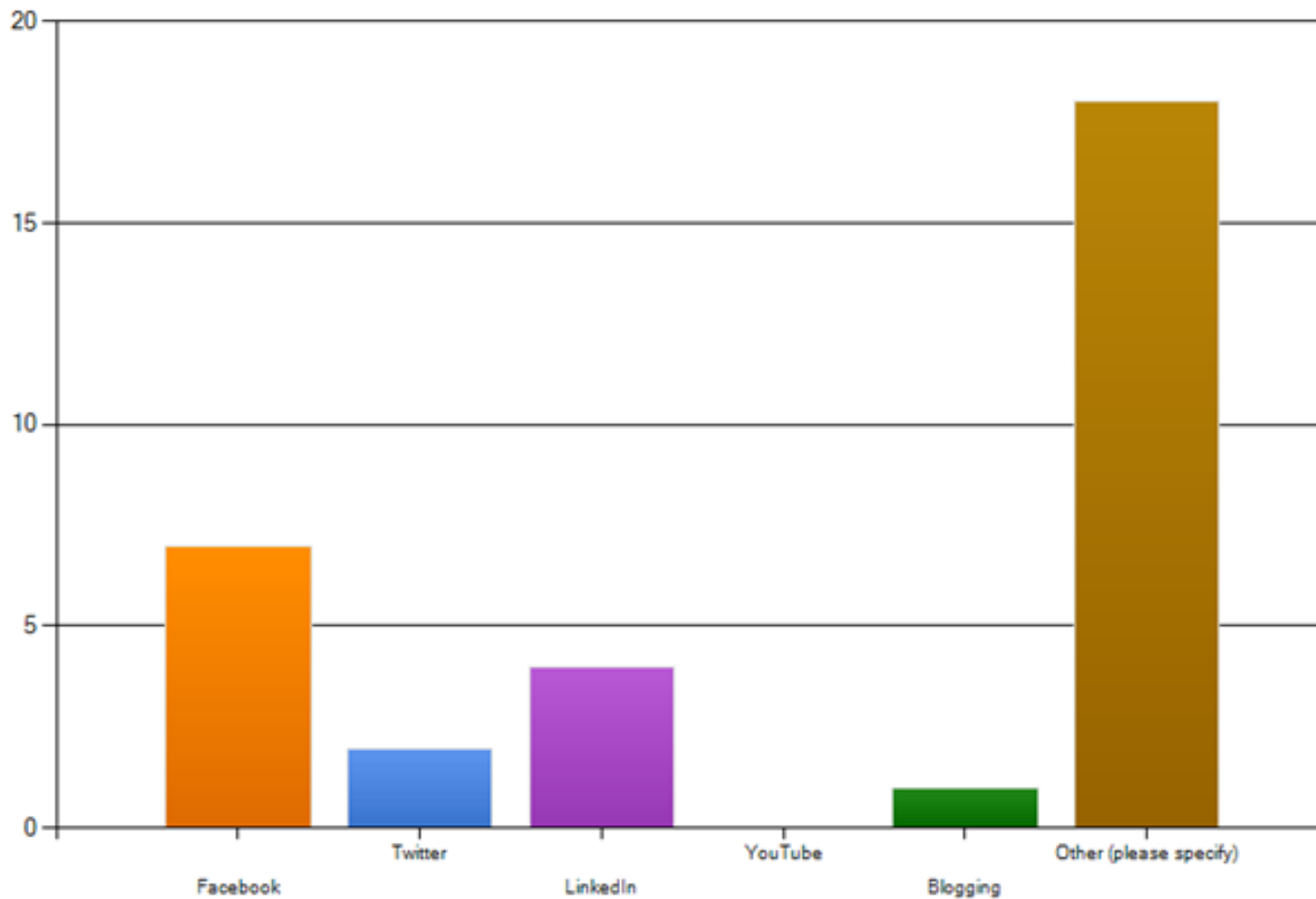
+ Law Students & Social Media (2011)

ITEM	No Time	less than 1hr	1-2hrs	more than 2 hrs
Facebook	6.1% 61	20.1% 201	23.7% 237	50.1% 501
Twitter	76.4% 764	13.8% 138	4.4% 44	5.4% 54
LinkedIn	57.4% 574	38.4% 384	3.5% 35	0.7% 7
YouTube	15.7% 157	57.0% 570	15.9% 159	11.4% 114
AboveTheLaw.com	36.5% 365	33.6% 336	18.7% 187	11.2% 112
Other Blogs	25.9% 259	24.2% 242	22.5% 225	27.4% 274
Average %:	36.3%	31.2%	14.8%	17.7%



+ Law Firms: Where should you go to connect with students online?

+ Law Firms & Social Media





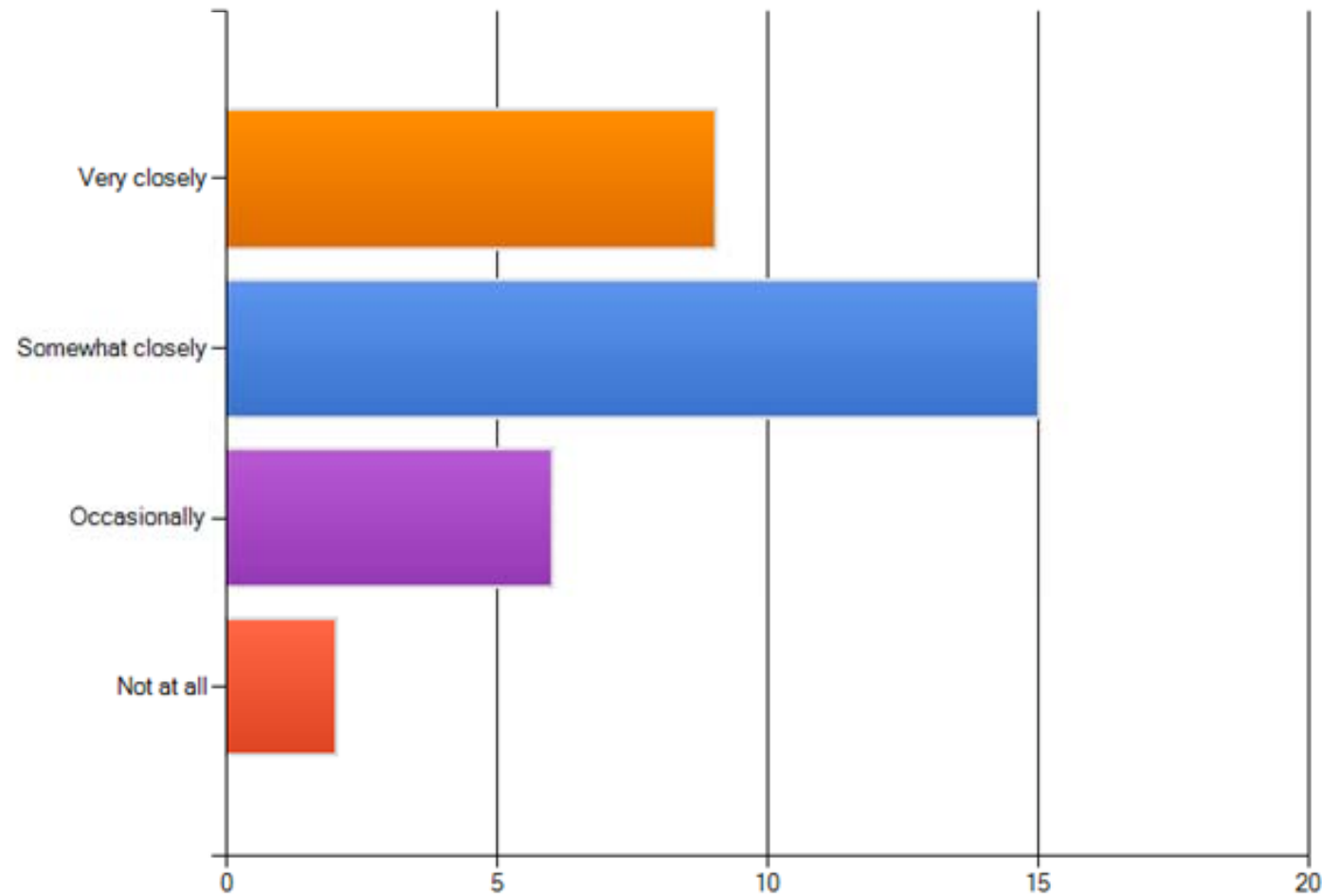
Who speaks
for your firm?

Law students value
transparency.

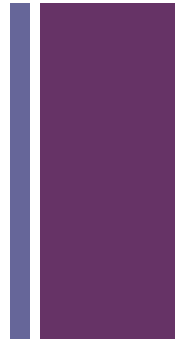


Keeping up with the ongoing
conversation about your firm...

+ How closely do firms monitor popular social media sites for mentions of their name?



+ Managing Your Online Presence



- Google Alerts

- Facebook

- Blogs

- Targeted Sites

+ Targeted Social Media Sites



The screenshot shows the HL Central website, which is a community platform for Harvard Law School. The header features the HL Central logo and a navigation menu. The main content area includes a welcome message, a featured events section, and an employer events section. A sidebar on the right contains a community search bar and a user profile section.

HL Central
Building Community at Harvard Law School

HOME REGISTER ABOUT US NEWS EVENTS OUTLINES HOUSING SPONSORS GROUPS WESTLAW BARBRI LINKS OCS

WELCOME

Welcome Back! The spring semester promises to be even better than the fall, and all of us on the HL Central Board are very excited. Upcoming events include an activity-packed back to school weekend, 1L firm receptions, Tacky Prom, the annual ski trip, and more!

[Read More](#)

Abhinav Gupta (email) and Taylor Ashley (email)
HL Central Executive Directors

COMMUNITY SEARCH

Enter search criteria...

Search »

MY PROFILE

Username

Password

☒ Remember Me

Sign In

Forgot your password?

Haven't registered yet?

FEATURED EVENTS

EMPLOYER EVENTS

FRIED FRANK

HL Central is a unique and invaluable tool that brings together members of the Harvard Law School community and our Firm. Fried Frank is proud to be a sponsor.

Hypothetical #1:

A firm's top-secret memo
+ regarding an increase in their
minimum billable hours
requirement is leaked to a well
known website. Discuss
potential responses to the leak.

Hypothetical #2:

A law firm is going to a
lockstep program for
+ partners. How should
information be disseminated,
both internally and
externally?

Hypothetical #3:

A firm's attempt to cover up a
+ decrease in bonuses by
calling it a performance
bonus is reported on a well
known website. Discuss
whether or not to respond to
the rumor.

Hypothetical #4:

A memo regarding delayed
+ start dates for incoming
associates is leaked. Discuss
possible responses to this
leak.



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