Mastering Facebook for CSOs

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**WHY SHOULD LAW SCHOOL CSOS BE ON FACEBOOK?**

Facebook is generally seen as the “social” place to be on the Internet. Unfortunately, many stories of poor judgment and lack of professionalism have stemmed from status updates and comments on the site. However, Facebook can be an important tool to help law school career professionals connect with their students to share information, news, and events.

As a marketing tool, Facebook is a classic example of “going where the audience is.” Today’s law students have been using Facebook since high school; it is a familiar and frequently visited place on the web. Facebook is also a powerful medium for connecting with alumni and it can help build and control your brand. Applications and plug-ins in the system can drive cross-traffic by allowing you to connect your blog, Twitter feed, calendar, and other tools to post right to your Facebook Wall and, in turn, the walls of “fans” who “like” your page.

**GETTING STARTED**

Considering several important factors can help you create a social media strategy that can apply to all your social media tools, including Facebook and Twitter. These include **Profile, People,** and **Presence,** some of the factors Amanda Ellis outlines in-depth in *The 6Ps of the BIG 3™ for Job-Seeking JDs* (Something Different Publishing, Inc., 2010).

- **Presence:** One of the first choices you will need to make is whether to have your Facebook presence in the form of a Page or a Group. The Facebook Page is the most popular and professional option, as it looks and works like a personal profile, including pushing published posts and links to the walls of those students, alumni, and faculty who “like” your Page. Two other advantages of creating a Page rather than a Group are that the names and profiles of Page administrators are not publicly viewable (they are in a Group) and Pages provide administrators greater authority over published content. Because Pages are the most common format used by law schools that already have accounts, this is the format that will be the focus of the rest of this guide.

Learn more about Pages and Groups at —
- [www.facebook.com/groups/create.php](http://www.facebook.com/groups/create.php)

Once you decide the format of your Facebook presence, it is time to create your **Profile.**

- **Profile:** A Page profile is fairly straight-forward. A Page’s profile is included in the “Info” section (accessible through a link in the left sidebar). It serves as a page where you can provide basic information about your office including hours, location, phone number, website address, links to other social media outlets (such as LinkedIn groups and Twitter accounts), and more. This is also a place where you can post an overview of your office services, office mission, or staff bios.

Once you have your Page established and your profile complete, it is time to create content and drive traffic to your Page. This brings us to the discussion of **Postings and People.**

- **Postings:** Because most CSOs choose to use Facebook as another method of communicating information to current students, posting regularly to your Facebook Page is important. Consistent and varied postings will keep your Page current on Facebook Walls of those people who “like” your Page. Use the “Notes” and “Events” applications in Facebook to advertise and promote your upcoming programs. Take pictures at your events and post them to your Facebook Page. Use an RSS aggregator like Google Reader to subscribe to blogs, news feeds, and other websites that can provide interesting and helpful links to post to your Facebook Page. For more advanced users, you can also import posts from your office blog into your Facebook Page or install applications that will allow you to embed videos, create polls, promote your Page and/or events with ads, and more.

- **People:** Once you have created your Page and profile and started adding some content, start promoting your presence and adding “friends.” There are several effective ways of spreading the word about your of-
office’s Facebook Page. Send an email blast to the student body with a link to the Page. Add a link to your email signature. (In Microsoft Outlook, click on Tools > Options > Mail format > Signatures.) Post a link or embed a badge on your website. (Generate and copy the code at http://www.facebook.com/badges/page.php.) Add links to emailed newsletters or other communication vehicles already in use.

**LEARN MORE**

Facebook itself does not provide extensive training or idea manuals for the creation and maintenance of Pages. However, other resources on the Internet do provide guidance on best practices and considerations regarding content, set-up, privacy settings, and adding friends. Two of the best are Mashable’s [Guidebook to Facebook](http://www.facebook.com) and the website devoted to all things Facebook, [www.allfacebook.com](http://www.allfacebook.com). An excellent book for learning more is *The 6Ps of the BIG 3™ for Job-Seeking JDs* (Something Different Publishing, Inc., 2010).

**GET IDEAS**

Several law schools are already using Facebook to share information, connect with students, and promote their programs and events. Find inspiration and generate ideas by checking out some of these Facebook Pages:

- [Boston College Law School Office of Career Services](http://www.facebook.com)
- [Case Western School of Law Career Services Office](http://www.facebook.com)
- [Elon Law Career Services](http://www.facebook.com)
- [Ohio State University Moritz College of Law](http://www.facebook.com)
- [Penn State Law Career Services](http://www.facebook.com)
- [Suffolk University Law School Career Development Office](http://www.facebook.com)