



Google Juice is a slang term for the way Google determines the relevancy of a website.

# Google Juice: Refreshment for Your Career

Omar Ha-Redeye



*Canada's online legal community is small, but overwhelmingly welcoming. Students who get involved now have an obvious advantage as the Internet provides endless opportunities. Here are a few tips on how to make it happen.*

## The Importance of Networking

Gary Kalaci, a 2009 LLB/MBA Windsor University graduate, started a successful legal translation business while still in school. "Law students will have to do more than just study hard and do well on exams to distinguish themselves," says Kalaci, a lawyer at McTavish Yen LLP. "Networking is an essential part to being successful."

Kalaci developed the client base for his company, Alexa Translations, primarily through networking. Alexa has grown to 1,200 translators and interpreters, with offices in Toronto, Windsor, Chicago and Johannesburg.

Social media and e-mails make staying in touch far easier than before, and sites like LinkedIn make keeping track of your professional contacts easy.

## The Internet—A Complete Game Changer

Nobody goes to the phonebook these days to find a lawyer; people turn to Google. With enough work and focus, you can be the answer that everyone is looking for.

“Networking is more than a conversation or an introduction,” says Kalaci. “The most important part is relationship development.” Engage practitioners directly by commenting on their blogs or “retweeting” their comments on Twitter. Genuine interest is always appreciated by those who dedicate so much of their time to law.

Simon Borys, a second-year law student at Queen’s, has found this method to be very effective: “I have been able to stand out by creating and maintaining a strong Internet presence through blogging and involvement in online legal forums.”

There are plenty of law student sites that talk about law school, which is probably of more interest to pre-law students than it is to law students or lawyers themselves. Focus on the law instead. Says Borys, “The Internet can give any law student the opportunity to get their name out there and show the profession (and the world) what they have to offer.”

Entry-level positions in the legal profession are heavily research-based. You can demonstrate your own aptitude by researching discrete areas of law or posting legal

updates, free to all lawyers. It’s a great way to get noticed, and a better way for you to give back to the field. Setting up your own website is quick, easy, and really cheap (sometimes free).

“Blogging has assisted me in my future career as a lawyer even before I get called to the bar. Law students, potential employers, and even the associate dean of the law school have commented positively on my web presence,” said Ryan Venables, a 2011 law graduate of the University of Western Ontario.

“I hope to use social media, blogging, and web participation as a way to establish myself as a legitimate contender in my chosen field of law where reputation is just as, or more important than, performance.”

## Creating Communities and Engagement

The key to a successful blog is to gaining readership loyalty and eventually building a community centered around your site.

In addition to academic legal information, online readers are also looking for entertaining and witty commentary around the law. Adding some levity to the profession can help alleviate stress and pressure.

Beware. Some readers engage in “trolling,” deliberately picking fights with others using anonymous pseudonyms. Anonymity may encourage participation, but moderation may be required to ensure the safety and comfort of readers. If the nature of the comments become bullying, web masters have a responsibility to step in.

Respond to inquiries from readers in a timely fashion and create regular content.

Loyalty is built through predictability of both quality and quantity. Achieving both usually requires a greater time commitment than any one law student can provide, which is why team-based sites usually fare better.

### Exploring a Niche

Participation in interest-based topics and organizations can also help you expand your networking in a specific area of law. Focus-



ing on a niche area of law can assist with job searches by demonstrating to employers an in-depth understanding and genuine interest in their practice area. Too many law students apply to every job claiming to be interested in everything, and employers can see right through it.

Developing a niche early helps position you to become an area expert. The Google juice you build now will create actual business down the road.

“My experience as a police officer before law school gives me a unique perspective on criminal law, and I share this perspective online,” says Borys. “The Internet has brought me work and contacts, which will be invaluable in helping me find an articling position and secure clients.”

### Nice Lawyers Finish First

Those of us already online have been waiting to hear from you. All you need to do is take the first step.

Helping others really does help you, and the profession as a whole. So remember— nice guys and girls do finish first online.

*Omar Ha-Redeye is a 2010 graduate of the University of Western Ontario. He founded LawlsCool.com just before law school, and it quickly grew to the largest law school website in Canada.*

*Within a year of graduation he was invited to speak at legal conferences, received a teaching position at Ryerson University, became a columnist with The Lawyers Weekly, and acted as an executive on the Student Division of the Ontario Bar Association.*

*He attributes much of his rapid success to social media and networking within the profession.*