

Equal Justice Works

Social Media 101

Social media is the best (and cheapest) way to build a large network and engage with specific groups. Once you get started, you'll have the ability to interact with like-minded people that can support you or your cause – including potential employers and other community partners.

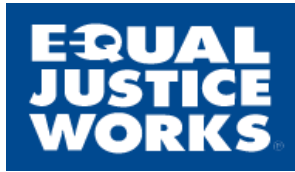
In addition to direct communication with other social media users, you will be able to build a personal brand that will help back up the traditional cover letter and resume during your job search. By demonstrating your interest and passion online, you can set yourself up as a knowledgeable resource. You may even find that organizations and partners use your content to stay up to date within their field!



Choosing a Network

It may take some time to figure out the best platform to focus your social media energy. There are always new networks popping up, but it's easy to narrow them down after some careful thought about your audience, goals, and messaging. To help you select a network, here are some preliminary steps:

1. **Find yourself (professionally).** This can be tough, but you'll need to figure out where you want your social media platform to take you. This means narrowing down your passion. Do you want to be a public defender or prosecutor? A children's rights advocate? An



For three decades Equal Justice Works has created opportunities for public interest lawyers committed to building a more just society. We believe that the poorest and most vulnerable among us deserve the same access to justice and quality legal representation as the privileged. To achieve this, we offer a continuum of opportunities for law students and lawyers that provide the training and skills that enable them to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes.

attorney for veterans? There's a vast array of public interest law professions, and it will help to find your niche before you jump on social media. PSJD.org has helpful [practice area guides](#) that can help you out while you narrow down your field.

2. **Find your audience.** After you figure out your interests, you'll need to search for these people online. What platforms are the people currently engaged in your chosen field using? You'll want to be where they are. To find them, simply go to the different platforms mentioned in the next section and search for the individuals or organizations you want to interact with the most.
3. **Start building content.** The heart of social media is communication, so you'll want to have an idea of what you want to say! This can be hard starting out, but here are some tricks to help you hit the ground running:
 - Set up [Google alerts](#) to receive news articles related to your professional interests. When you read something that strikes your interest, share it!
 - Walk the talk – be a part of the community! The more you get out there and volunteer, the more opportunities you will have to make real-life connections that can translate to social media. Spent a Saturday morning cleaning up a neighborhood park? Take a pic and share it online! Heard about a pro bono clinic sponsored by your law school? Share the information with your community on social media! Check with your law school counselors and search on PSJD.org, ProBono.net, or VolunteerMatch to find opportunities.

Best Practices

Twitter

To many, Twitter is the best way to interact with potential employers, community partners, and other like-minded individuals. This business-friendly micro-blogging platform offers instant engagement with followers and non-followers alike, depending on how you use it.

1. **Keep your page public.** If you make it private, only your followers will be able to see your content. This can hinder your growth if you're just getting started and want to get the attention of larger organizations.
2. **Use hashtags.** Twitter is all about discovery. Find out which hashtags are popular within your community and use them in your tweets to plug yourself in!
3. **Shorten your links.** Use [bit.ly](#) to quickly shorten long links you'd like to share. Twitter only allows 140 characters or less in one tweet, so this handy tool is helpful when you need more room to speak.
4. **Retweet and Favorite!** If there's a particular Twitter account you like, (say, for instance, a potential employer you'd like to work with one day) get their attention by retweeting and favoriting their content! They will more than likely notice and appreciate the engagement, especially if they're a smaller organization.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn may not be the most fun social networking site, but it is definitely the most popular for professional networking.

1. **Keep your profile up to date.** Your LinkedIn profile is pretty much an online resume. Make sure it includes the most current information and accomplishments, and a well-lit and professional headshot. You never know who's looking! Speaking of...

2. **Check out who's viewing your profile.** Even the most basic LinkedIn accounts carry a feature that lets you see a sampling of who's been viewing your page. You can always upgrade to the paid subscriptions to view everyone who's looking at your profile.
3. **Don't be shy.** LinkedIn now comes with the ability to share news articles, updates, and photos. You can also publish lengthier posts. This is a great opportunity to share customized content, so take advantage!
4. **Join a LinkedIn group.** LinkedIn groups can be useful resources and a great place to exchange information with other professionals. Benefits include increased visibility and the opportunity to send other group members direct messages. You can also stand out by starting relevant discussions or commenting on existing discussions!

Facebook

Most people know Facebook as a giant in the world of social networking, but it's quickly becoming a major contender in the professional networking arena as well. If you're careful and use your connections wisely, Facebook can be a great tool to connect with other professionals online.

1. **Keep your personal page private.** This is basically up to you, but if you have personal content on your page such as controversial political opinions or entertainment articles, it may be best to keep that information locked away from the eyes of potential employers.
2. **Create a separate professional Facebook page.** If you decide your personal page should be absolutely private, it may be helpful to create a completely different profile just for your professional contacts. This page can be devoted to sharing content with a specific professional audience in mind.
3. **Share and tag!** Similar to Twitter, Facebook comes with the ability to instantly share content that you find useful or interesting. The original poster will see your share, so this is also a great way to indirectly communicate with your chosen audience. You can also tag them in your posts.
4. **Join professional groups.** Facebook has a ton of groups representing almost every interest you can think of. Use the search tool to find groups relevant to your chosen interests or passion, and then use those groups to curate information and content that you can then share on your own page. You can also network within these groups!

Beyond the Basics: Other Social Media Platforms

There are other social media platforms that are widely-used and could be incredibly helpful in building your brand online.

- **Instagram** – This visual platform allows users to post photos and quick videos to their followers.
- **YouTube** – Users are able to “vlog” (video blog) or look at content relevant to any interest. Many organizations host their videos on YouTube.
- **GooglePlus** – GooglePlus is similar to Facebook, but it allows you to organize who sees your content by grouping them into “circles”.
- **SnapChat** – With SnapChat, users create bite-sized microblogging videos that disappear after a certain amount of time. Bonus: fun filters!
- **Pinterest** – Pinterest is a digital vision board that helps organize content you're interested in.