

TWEET IT: #GCSOCIAL

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2010's landmark In-House Counsel New Media Engagement Survey, the first research project of its type in the legal field, affirmed that client-side lawyers were beginning to dip their toes into the social media pool by using new media technologies for both personal and professional reasons. There was a clear generational divide between younger and older counsel in their use of social media tools, but even a year ago both were taking significant advantage of new media resources, especially law firm blogs.

This year's follow-up to that research posed some of the same questions and asked new ones in order to measure how perceptions and behaviors have changed over time.

When distilled, the refreshed survey data fuels some interesting headlines:

- **Blogs, Executed Well, Influence Hiring of Outside Counsel:** *Seventy-six percent of respondents say they attribute some level of importance to a lawyer's blog when deciding which firms to retain. Additionally, the percentage of respondents who say a law firm's blog can influence hiring decisions went up slightly, from 50 percent in 2010 to 55 percent in 2012.*
- **Client-Side Counsel Prefer Firm-Branded Blogs:** *Survey respondents indicated they read blogs written by firms slightly more often than they read blogs penned by journalists. In-house counsel also perceive blogs as credible (84%). This perceived credibility, however, is not fueling an increase in daily blog readers, which we explore further in this report.*
- **LinkedIn: The 'Serious' Social Network for Lawyers:** *LinkedIn leads all other social networks in professional usage and perceived credibility (88%) but, as of now, domestic law firms aren't taking full advantage of its technological capabilities. In addition, significantly more in-house counsel are using LinkedIn for personal reasons than were doing so in 2010.*
- **New Media Usage (Steadily) Going Mainstream:** *The generational divide that fueled the 2010 findings is leveling off. This effect is driven by older counsel consuming more content rather than a significant drop in consumption among younger counsel. While the 2010 survey revealed that blogs were read more consistently across age groups than the "big three" social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter), the 2011 research shows a continuation of this trend plus older counsel reading blogs with even greater frequency.*
- **In-House Counsel Largely 'Invisible Users' of Social Media:** *This audience rarely contributes content on social channels, preferring instead to listen and consume. This approach makes their true level of engagement difficult to measure.*

- **Wikipedia Important, But Not to Research Law Firms:** *Very few in-house counsel (7%) are using Wikipedia to research outside firms, but they are using the online encyclopedia for issues-based research (51%).*
- **Firm-to-Client Communications Going Social:** *Whether initiated by inside counsel or by firms themselves, the legal industry is warming up to social media as a client services mechanism at an eight percent year-over-year increase.*

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# ANALYSIS



In 2010, the In-House Counsel New Media Engagement Survey revealed new media, particularly blogs, had been adopted by in-house counsel of all ages, but use of social media tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter skewed to younger in-house attorneys. The results in 2012, by contrast, indicate much wider adoption by in-house lawyers in their 40s, 50s, and 60s, while use by younger attorneys has leveled off. However, you wouldn't notice this change unless you surveyed the community, because they're largely consuming information without commenting or providing content themselves.

## In-House Usage Becoming Mainstream

In-house lawyers are using new forms of media more today than they were 18 months ago when the first survey was conducted. However, the earlier generational gap is tightening; younger counsel are consuming new media at about the same rate overall, while their older peers are engaging more often than before—a shift from the differences in penetration by age group that characterized our earlier study.

We believe in-house counsel had been comparatively slow to adopt social media because the buzz surrounding new forms of media outweighed their real-world utility. In other words, they appeared to think new media was a waste of time.

At a certain point, however, legal users began noting that web-based resources were changing for the better; the tools became more interconnected, and there was more content relevant to the in-house lawyer being produced and filtered. So, as new media technologies have become increasingly useful for business and professional reasons, in-house counsel slowly but steadily have changed their perceptions and continued to increase their use.

*The primary utility of social media—at least for this survey's audience—is as an intelligent filter of useful information.*

The primary utility of social media—at least for this survey's audience—is as an intelligent filter of useful information. Not surprisingly, few in-house lawyers are using new media to generate content; in their roles, they seek to receive content that helps them do their jobs, but many perceive that generating content for people outside their companies will not benefit them and, moreover, may be restricted by company policies that they or others have created. As a result, they generally don't *blog* (or Tweet or Facebook); they *read* blogs (or relevant Tweets or newsworthy Facebook updates). They are relatively invisible users who increasingly consume content via these channels, but give little public indication that they are doing so.

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New media is becoming more like mainstream, traditional media: not so new anymore. Aside from consistent demographic movement towards the middle—LinkedIn use for professional reasons among counsel aged 40 to 60 years, for instance, grew substantially, while usage among their peers aged 30 to 39 stabilized—respondents indicated they read law firm attorney-authored/branded blogs as often, if not slightly more, than they read blogs penned by actual reporters.

## Survey Background

The 2012 research, conducted in November and December of 2011, repeats some questions from the 2010 survey and introduces new questions as well. Thus, this report shows how behaviors have changed and uncovers new perceptions that inside counsel hold towards new media.

A total of 334 in-house counsel responded to the survey, more than double the 164 respondents in 2010.

## Defining the New Media Ecosystem

This research primarily studies the two primary components of new media: social networks and owned media. It is important for marketers to recognize the difference between the two.

Social networks are now ubiquitous. 53 percent of the United States's population uses Facebook, according to data from [ComScore](#). It states, "Facebook is still the undisputed leader in the U.S. social networking market with 166 million unique visitors in November [2011]. The average user spent 6.6 hours engaged on the site during the month, an increase of 37 percent in the past year." LinkedIn is popular among professionals in North America and among lawyers in particular, with 83 percent of social media-using attorneys maintaining a presence on the platform in 2010, according to the American Bar Association. Twitter has a large volume of content but is not associated with a specific niche.



Owned media is an emerging term that describes content over which companies can exercise a high degree of control. Distinct from advertising, which is paid media, and public relations, which is earned media, owned media describes tools that organizations use to push content to their target audiences, including websites, blogs, email lists, and other content streams. New media technologies allow organizations to create and control content and distribute it to an extensive, yet targeted audience, more efficiently.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The most noteworthy findings, summarized, include:

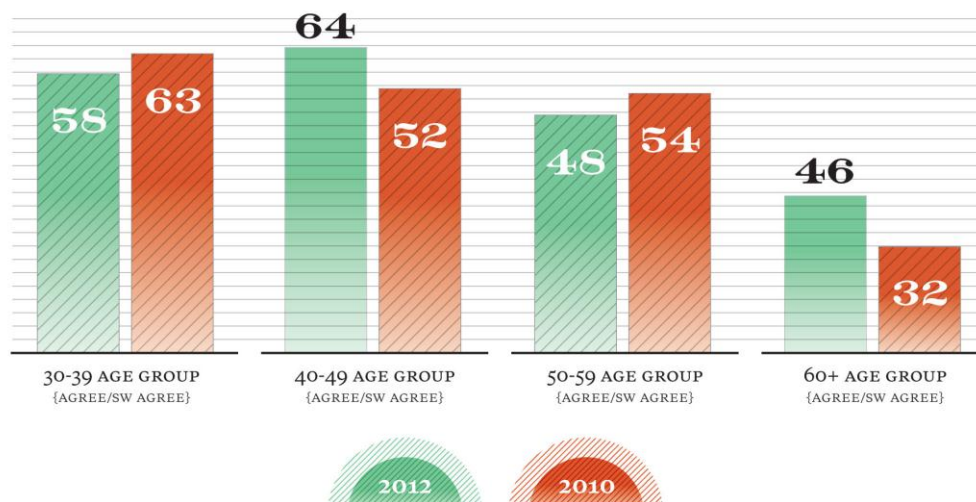
### Prominent blogs influence hiring of outside counsel

Seventy-six percent of respondents say they attribute at least some level of importance to a lawyer's blog when deciding which firms to retain.

Additionally, the percentage of respondents who say they expect a law firm's blog will exert influence on buyers in the future went up slightly, from 50 percent in 2010 to 55 percent in 2011. The increase was driven by those in their 40's and 60's, with two-thirds of those in their 40's now agreeing with the statement.

#### Future Influence of Law Firm Attorney-Authoried Blogs

I ENVISION A FUTURE IN WHICH A LAW FIRM'S PROMINENCE THROUGH A HIGH-PROFILE BLOG WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN INFLUENCING CLIENTS TO HIRE THAT LAW FIRM.



## Blogs decline in daily readers, increase in weekly and monthly readers

The percentage of respondents who indicated they were daily readers of blogs for professional reasons dropped from 27 percent in 2010 to 17 percent this year.

However, weekly and monthly readers increased from 20 percent to 26 percent and from 13 percent to 17 percent year over year, respectively. Daily exposure declined, but overall frequency made up for it. The daily decline may well be driven by a reality that legal-industry insiders know very well: lawyers are profoundly busy professionals. As the new becomes the familiar and they have more sources of content from which to choose—both inside and outside the legal market—in-house counsel are becoming much more discerning about the information they consume.

This data influences the ideal content strategy for a law firm's blog: deferring to quality instead of quantity. Since daily readership is less frequent, posts can be more intermittent and still have the same effect, as long as they are highly relevant to in-house lawyers.

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## Law firm blogs preferred by in-house counsel

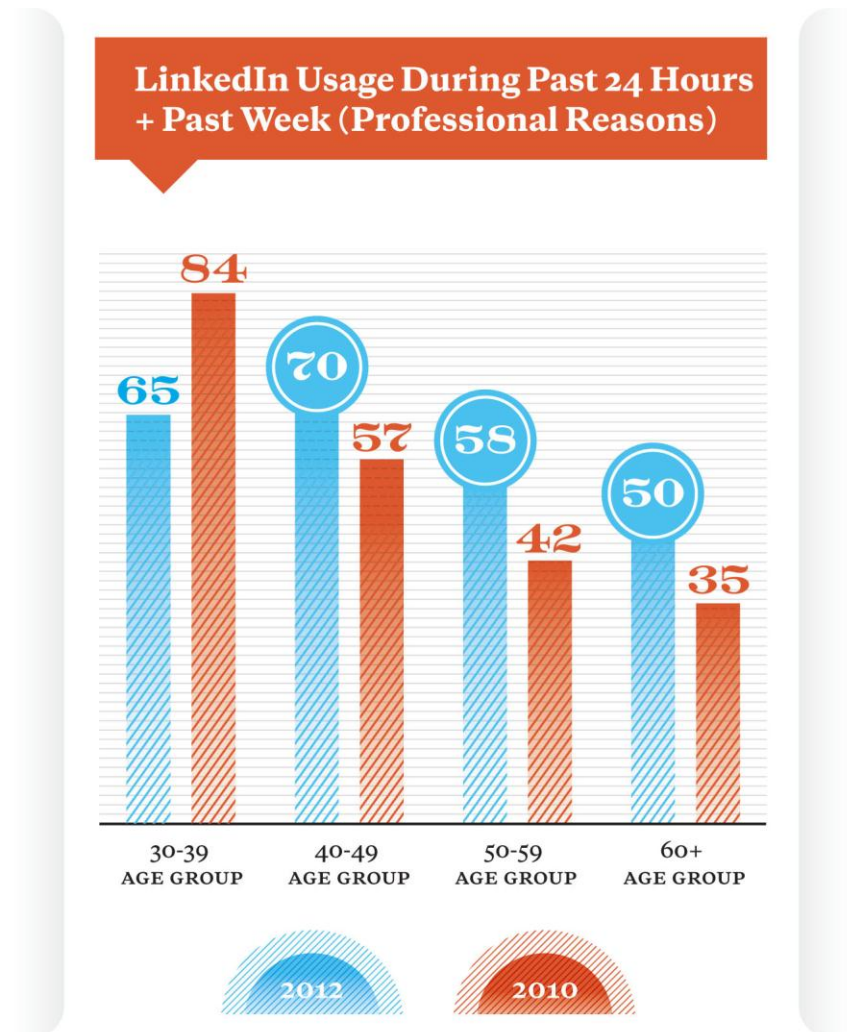
Building on the 2010 survey, respondents indicated that they read firm-branded or attorney-authored blogs slightly more than they read blogs written by professional journalists.

In-house respondents also overwhelmingly view blog content as credible, at a rate of 84 percent, which, given their high usage of blogs, apparently extends to law firm blog content.

In addition, in-house counsel use email alerts to access traditional business, legal, and industry-related (banking, real estate, etc.) media at a high rate. This suggests that a firm can maintain a blog with compelling content and offer email alerts of that content, and in-house counsel will subscribe to those alerts if they are relevant to their business. Firms have the opportunity to become, in the eyes of a majority of in-house attorneys, as relevant as a traditional media operation.

## LinkedIn perceived as the “serious” social network

LinkedIn continues to be the most commonly used social media platform for professional reasons. It perhaps is the most dynamic example of older counsel—those between 40 and 65 years of age—increasing their usage of social media, with the majority of counsel of all ages using LinkedIn at least weekly.



In addition, 88 percent of respondents perceive the content they obtain via their LinkedIn connections as credible, which further supports the efficacy of the platform for professional reasons.

However, according to a recent LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell-commissioned survey, [Global Social Media Check-Up](#), not one of the largest North American law firms is using social integration—the linking of two or more social media platforms—on LinkedIn. Blog posts, for instance, automatically can be syndicated on a LinkedIn page and a Facebook news feed to capture those divergent audiences.

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This integration, termed the “semantic web” by those with an affinity for buzzwords, places quality content ahead of all other web priorities, such as collecting connections on social media. Virtually every data point from the survey supports the notion that in-house counsel prefer to use new media to find and consume quality content, and the wide lack of content integration on LinkedIn presents an opportunity to reach in-house lawyers via a medium that they rapidly are embracing.

### **Behavior change: Use of LinkedIn for personal reasons**

There is a notable shift in how respondents are using LinkedIn. Respondents over 40 have increased their usage dramatically, with those over 50 doubling their usage.

This well may reflect a behavioral change because LinkedIn is reaching such critical mass that it is becoming useful for career mobility and generally for staying in touch with important contacts.

#### **LinkedIn Usage During Past 24 Hours + Past Week (Personal Reasons)**



## **Lawyers tiptoeing into the social media pool**

Communication between law firms and their clients that takes place on social media platforms is increasing slowly but steadily. In 2010, 26 percent of respondents said they use new media tools to “a small extent” to access content from their outside counsel. This year that measure leaped to 34 percent, while the rate of respondents who are not doing so dropped from 43 percent to 34 percent.

Clearly, more communication between the two is taking place on social media platforms.

## **Wikipedia effectively can credential attorneys, not brand firms**

The percentage of respondents who say they have visited the Wikipedia page of their outside counsel is very small (7%). However, the percentage of respondents who say they regularly use Wikipedia to research issues is much larger (87%).

For law firms, this suggests that investing significant time to exert a high degree of control over a firm's Wikipedia profile is not a good use of time, because in-house counsel are not reading that information.

However, the data supports that Wikipedia may provide law firms an increasingly effective tool by which to credential their lawyers as subject matter experts. By having articles, decisions, opinion columns, background on precedent-setting cases, and similar material featuring firm attorneys cited as references in a Wikipedia entry, firms can showcase the expertise of their attorneys in front of in-house counsel. It is important to note that Wikipedia has very specific rules on how entries are to be edited, and a very active community of editors who do not tolerate the use of Wikipedia as a promotional tool. This further supports the notion that law firms should use Wikipedia to enhance existing articles by adding to the fingerprint of reference material contained within those articles, rather than promoting themselves via firm-focused entries.



## Client-side engagement difficult to measure

Of the strong majority (86%) who say they use new media at all, 68 percent use it to listen exclusively, while just 32 percent say they both listen and engage with others. These ‘invisible users’ largely prefer to consume content without interacting on new media channels.

*These ‘invisible users’ largely prefer to consume content without interacting on new media channels.*

This approach is likely because in-house counsel have no particular incentive to generate content, not to mention that many corporate social media policies only allow for centrally-generated content and the broadcast of corporate talking points instead of online engagement.

This datapoint begs questions about measurement. Traditional methodologies for measuring the impact of new media rest largely on evaluating interactive engagement—so-called “social listening” programs that many digital marketing firms hype. Lacking significant interactive engagement in the use of new media tools by in-house lawyers, those programs are unreliable for determining impact. It may be more useful to measure in-house counsel consumption of new media vs. their involvement in two-way conversations.

## Think about the hardware

A high percentage of respondents indicate they use mobile devices—smartphones and tablets—to consume industry news content. Of note, 42 percent of respondents say they use a cell phone for general business media, and 49 percent say they use it for social media. Consumption on tablets for the two groups was 25 percent and 21 percent, respectively. This no doubt will grow as tablet use becomes more ubiquitous.

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# IMPLICATIONS

These findings hold noteworthy implications for legal marketers, including:

- Firms can reach and influence client-side counsel effectively by **self-publishing through firm-branded blogs**. Law firm blogs are well-trafficked and trusted, and the data shows that they affect the hiring decisions of in-house counsel. This finding suggests that “owned media” programs should become more aligned with an overall marketing strategy to drive brand and support business development.
- As the social media platform with the highest professional usage and credibility rating in the survey, **LinkedIn maintains the most captive audience of in-house counsel**. The research suggests that this audience will use it to consume content if the content is there. If a law firm is to make strategic use of one social network in 2012, it should be LinkedIn.
- Legal marketers who are not using new media actively to communicate with clients and prospects should take note that the survey data reveals that **counsel aged 40 to 60 years are adopting new media in growing numbers**. The new media power users are no longer limited to those in the early stages of their careers (30 to 39 years of age) with less budgetary influence. As it becomes more mainstream, firms should integrate new media into events, client alerts, and other traditional marketing efforts.
- Social listening—observing the engagement or interaction that takes place online—is not adequate for measuring new media ROI. According to the “invisible user” phenomenon that this research uncovers, engagement is not a viable objective. Rather, new media should be viewed as an aligned and complementary function to marketing for building and strengthening relationships. **The ROI for new media efforts should be measured in expanded visibility** (i.e., social media driving traditional media exposure; generating requests for speaking engagements; elevating reputation) for individual lawyers and the firm’s brand, with the caveat that, as with other communications, content needs to be concise, relevant, and timely to be useful to this audience.
- **Wikipedia is important but for credentialing attorneys, not for profiling firms**. The frequency with which in-house counsel use Wikipedia for issues research coupled with the near-absence of counsel who have so much as glimpsed at the Wikipedia page of their law firm is telling. The research suggests that proper credentialing of attorneys, within the strict rules of Wikipedia’s editing and reference guidelines, is more important than articles on the firm itself.

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# VERBATIM RESPONSES

We asked in-house respondents the following open-ended question: Please describe the extent to which you use and participate in social media. Below is a sampling of responses which capture the broader sentiments of the in-house community:

- *Primarily through getting updates via some of these channels—too busy to use them more actively.*
- *I mostly use social media for personal reasons, but I am interested in using it more professionally in the future. I believe it is critical for businesses to have some presence in social media.*
- *I use social media daily, mostly as an observer/consumer rather than a contributor. I need to become more aware of what is available to me in terms of professional resources. (For instance, it never occurred to me that law firms would have Wikipedia pages and so have never used that as an information source when considering choice of counsel.)*
- *I actively monitor and sometimes comment on LinkedIn for personal and professional reasons. (Same for review of videos on YouTube.) I expect to engage more in Facebook and Twitter in the next 1-2 years due to changing business and client demands.*
- *I use blogs extensively as sources of information and discussion about topics of interest. I do not use Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Youtube, or other equivalent services at all.*
- *I mostly use LinkedIn to keep up with colleagues and friends; use Facebook to keep up with friends, but not very often--once per month; would like to read more blogs but don't have the time. I have a blog myself (personal), but don't get to it as often as I'd like.*
- *I have accounts on most of the sites listed, but I am primarily a consumer of information. I also use them to maintain contacts, both personal and professional.*
- *Other than following certain blogs of personal interest, I do not participate in social media at all. I tried it for about a year and found that it consumed a lot of time without providing corresponding value, so I quit completely.*
- *I see value in social media, but I am not a big fan of it. I am skeptical of the content provided in social media outlets. I am also concerned by the potential problems created for employers by the use of social media by its employees.*

- *I use social media to monitor what is being said about the company and its products. I do not generally engage in social media due to concerns about virus and spam issues.*
- *While social media may be a coming trend, it lacks cohesion and reliability. Until it can be better sorted, focused, and trustworthy, it is nothing more than gossip.*
- *It is part of my professional responsibility to evaluate issues in engaging in social media as a company. I also participate personally.*
- *I use many forms of social media (see above) on a daily basis and expect my consumption to increase in the next year.*
- *My company highly endorses social media—Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube—and we have both global and local policies addressing use of social media with clear expectations of business vs. personal use.*
- *I am an early adopter. I use social media daily and extensively, not only for research but also posting daily on blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. I have established company pages on these platforms, as well as social media marketing policies, and I actively monitor activity.*

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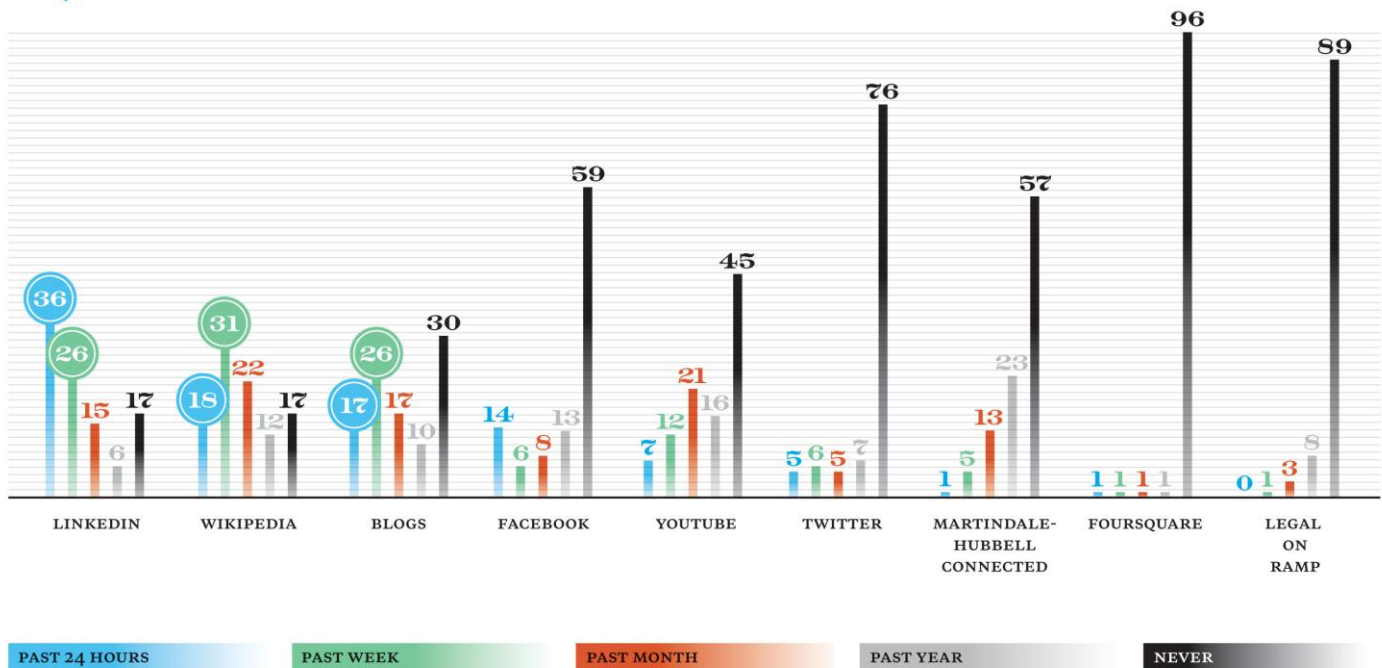
# COMPLETE SURVEY DATA

Respondents were asked to complete the following questionnaire designed to measure the degree to which they are engaging social networking and new media tools.

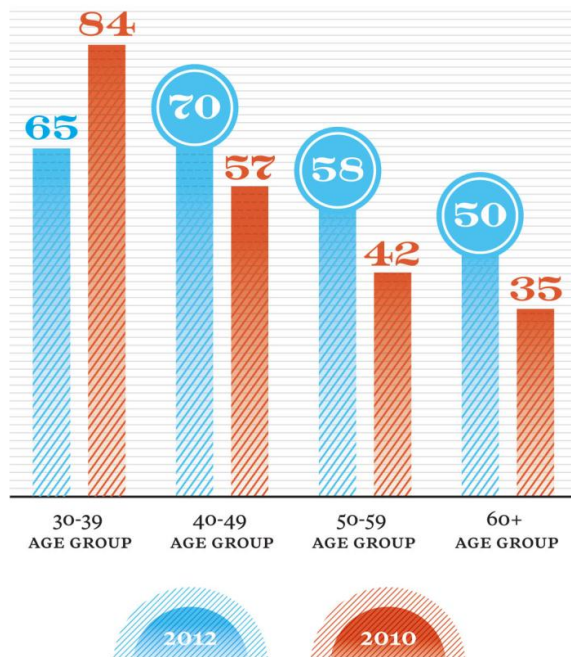
The following charts represent the collective input of 334 respondents to the survey. A full overview of the survey methodology can be found at the end of this report.

**Please indicate how recently you used the following social networking and new media tools for PROFESSIONAL reasons:**

**Use of Social Networking & New Media Tools for Professional Reasons**



### LinkedIn Usage During Past 24 Hours + Past Week (Professional Reasons)



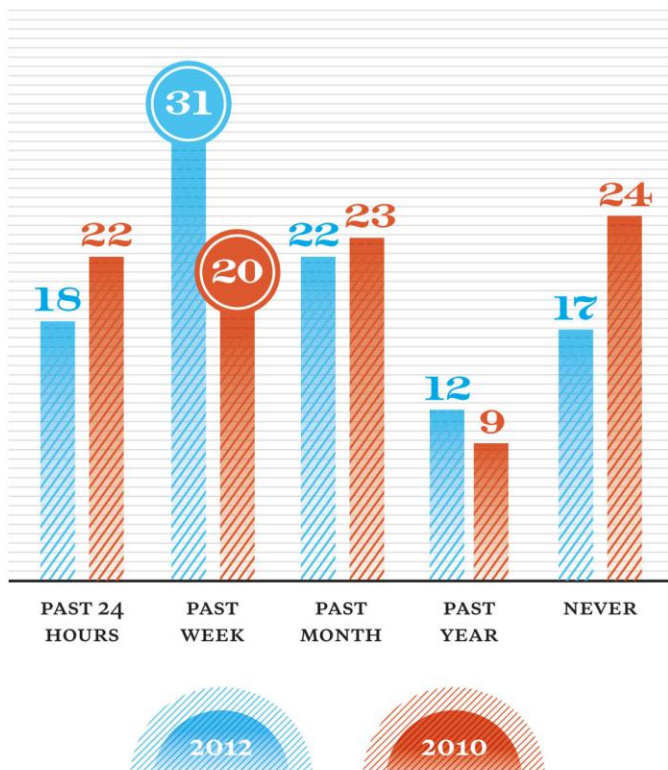
LinkedIn is perceived as the “serious” social network that most respondents are using for professional reasons. Also, the demographics of that usage have changed: whereas the 2010 survey revealed a stronger generational play with LinkedIn, the 2011 survey shows greater usage by older counsel.

The strong frequency of blog use for professional reasons gives context to the remainder of this research. Taken alone, it suggests blogs are a good use of law firms’ marketing dollars. Taken together with the other findings, it supports the notion that law firms, in essence, can become like media organizations—trusted sources of information—in the eyes of in-house counsel. This is the concept of “owned media.”

### Blog Usage By Frequency (Professional Reasons)



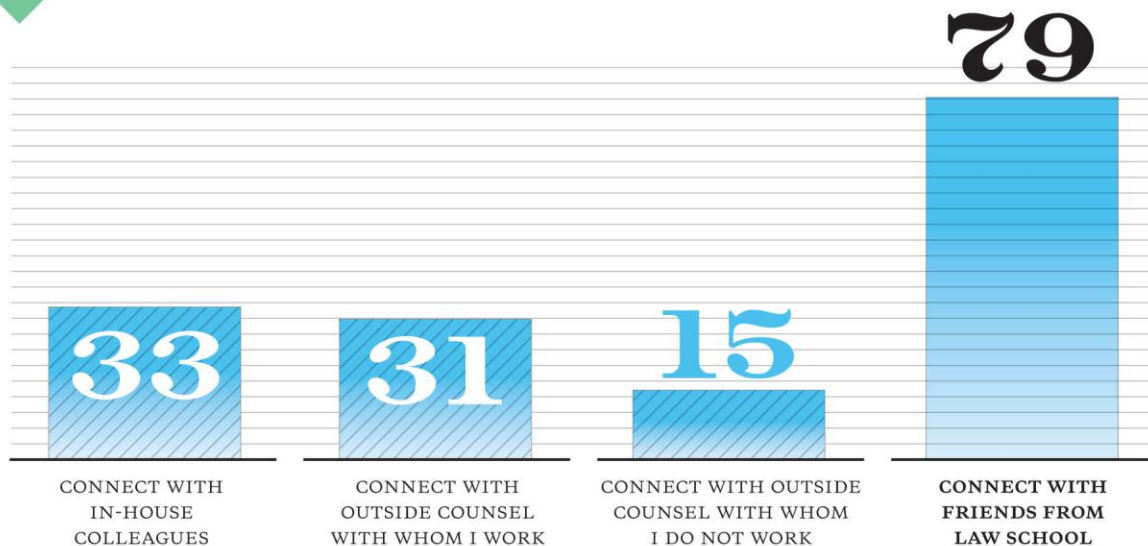
### Wikipedia Usage By Frequency (Professional Reasons)



Frequency of Wikipedia usage remains strong year over year with a noticeable spike in penetration during the “past week.”

**If you're using Facebook for PROFESSIONAL reasons, which of the following describes how you are using it?**

### Use of Facebook for Professional Reasons

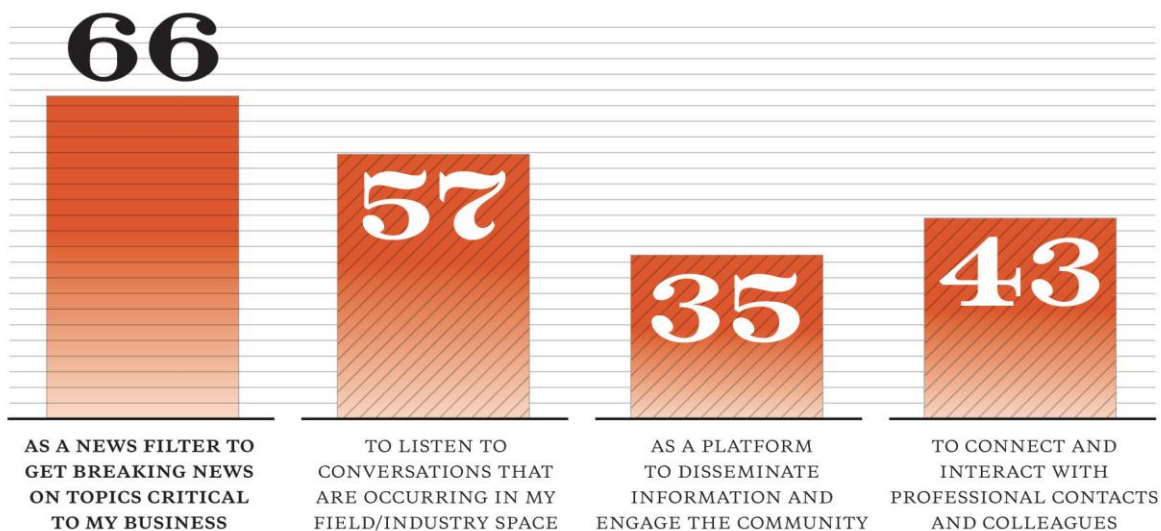


*Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.*

This data point suggests a “blurring of the lines” between personal and professional lives, a theme that was captured in the 2010 research.

**If you're using Twitter for PROFESSIONAL reasons, which of the following describes how you are using it?**

### Use of Twitter for Professional Reasons

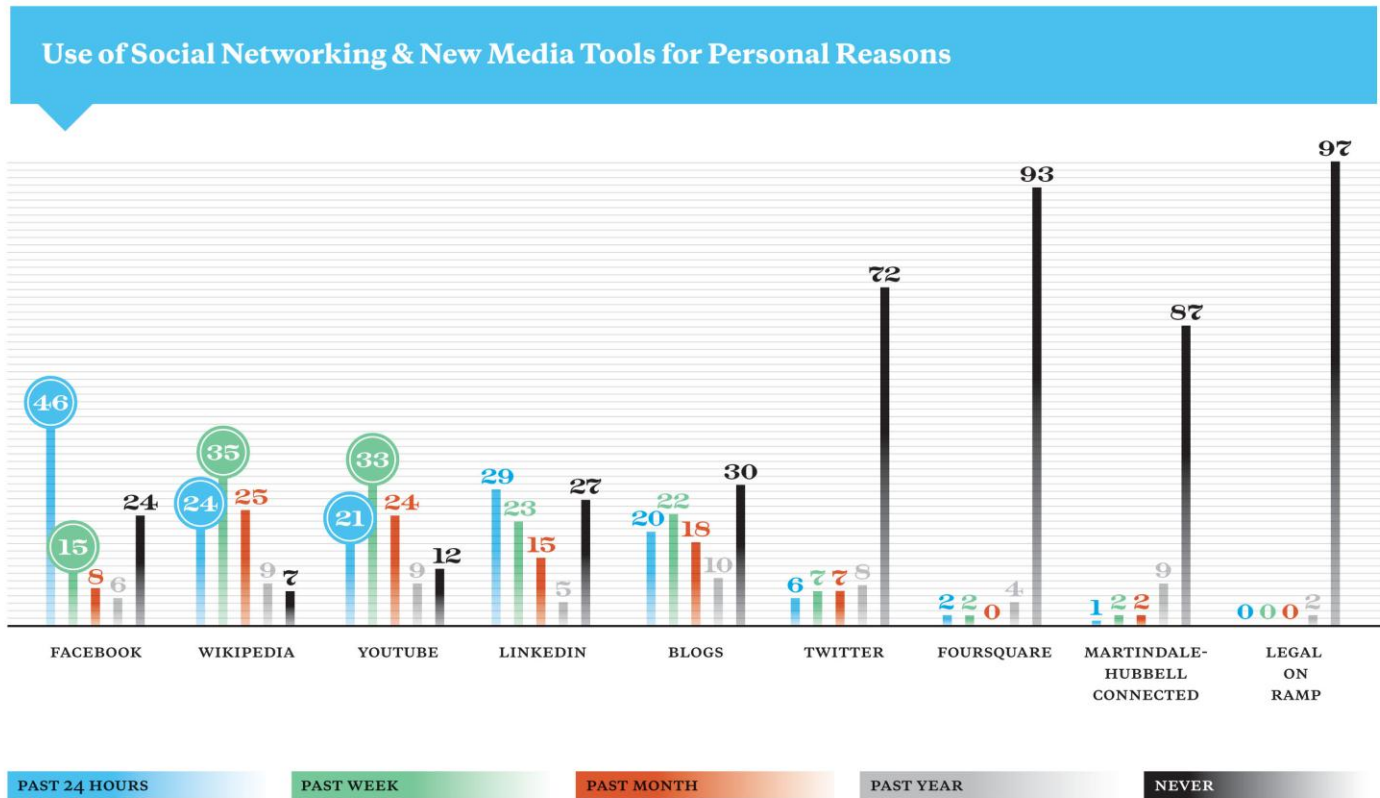


*Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.*

This data point shows that those who are using Twitter professionally—albeit a relatively small number—are using the platform primarily to “listen.”



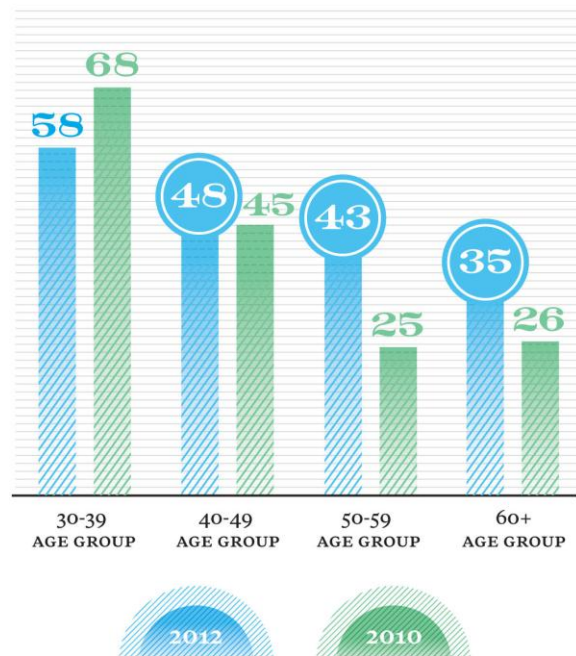
**Please indicate how recently you used the following social networking and new media tools for PERSONAL reasons:**



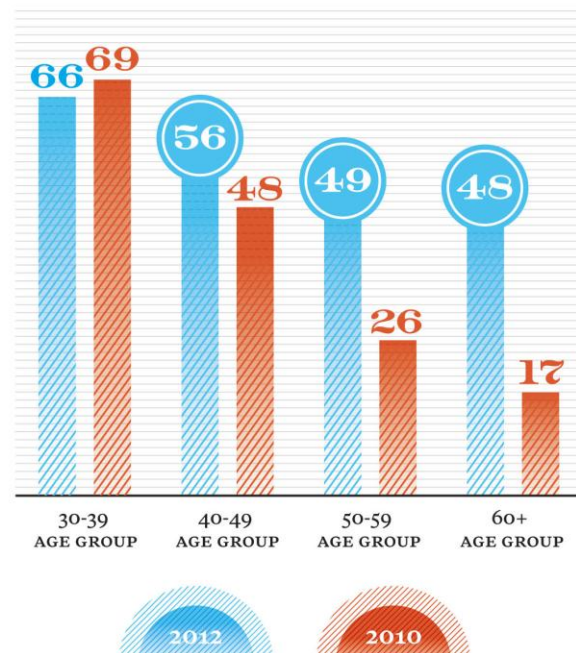
(1) Facebook, (2) Wikipedia and (3) YouTube emerged as the top three platforms for personal usage with LinkedIn closely trailing in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Wikipedia edged out Facebook for 1<sup>st</sup> place in 2010. As the year-over-year comparisons reveal, older lawyers are using these tools to a greater extent while frequent use among 30-39 year olds is leveling-off or even declining.

This data point shows that, clearly, in-house counsel are finding time for personal social networking and media consumption. Facebook and LinkedIn performed well. (And, just as notably, Twitter did not.)

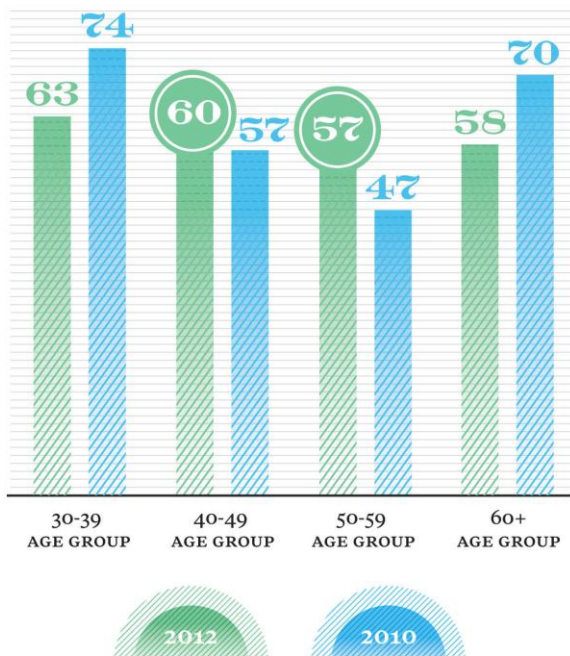
### Facebook Usage During Past 24 Hours (Personal Reasons)



### LinkedIn Usage During Past 24 Hours + Past Week (Personal Reasons)

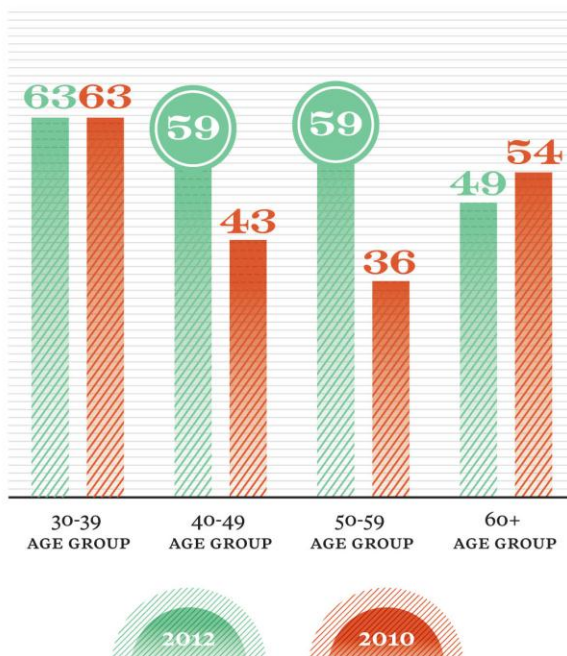


### Wikipedia Usage Past 24 Hours + Past Week (Personal Reasons)



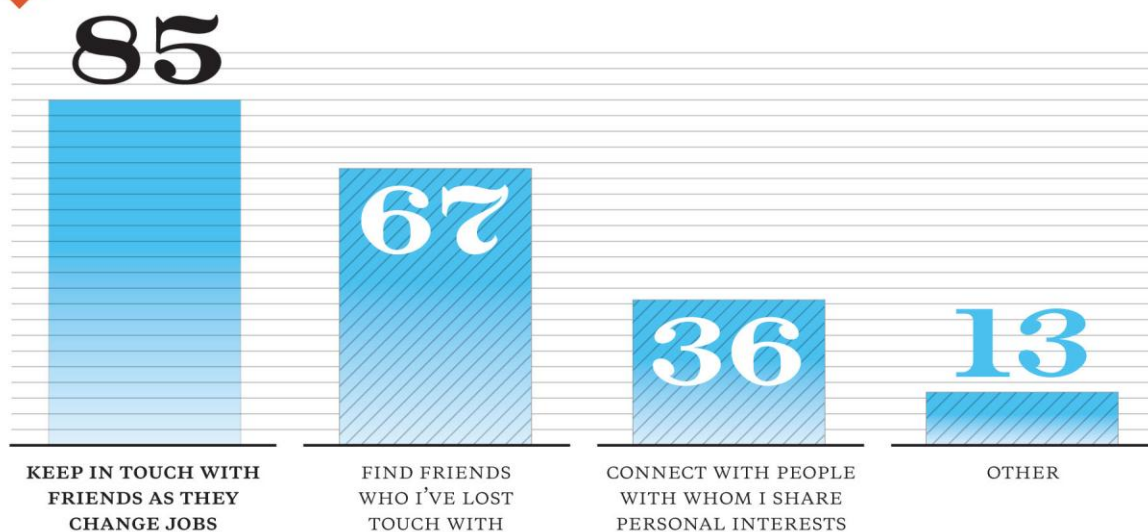
Consistent with the “mainstream usage” theme throughout this report, personal usage of Wikipedia and YouTube generated notable increases among counsel aged 40 to 60 years.

### YouTube Usage Past 24 Hours + Past Week (Personal Reasons)



## If you are using LinkedIn for PERSONAL reasons, how are you using it?

### Use of LinkedIn for Personal Reasons



*Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.*

This data point reinforces the “blurring of lines” trend among professional and personal contacts highlighted earlier with the professional usage of Facebook.

## How frequently do you access the following news and information sources, and through which delivery methods do you access them?

### Read Print Version:

#### Frequency of Access for Receiving Business-Related News & Information PRINT VERSION



Older respondents are more likely to read general business media daily in print:

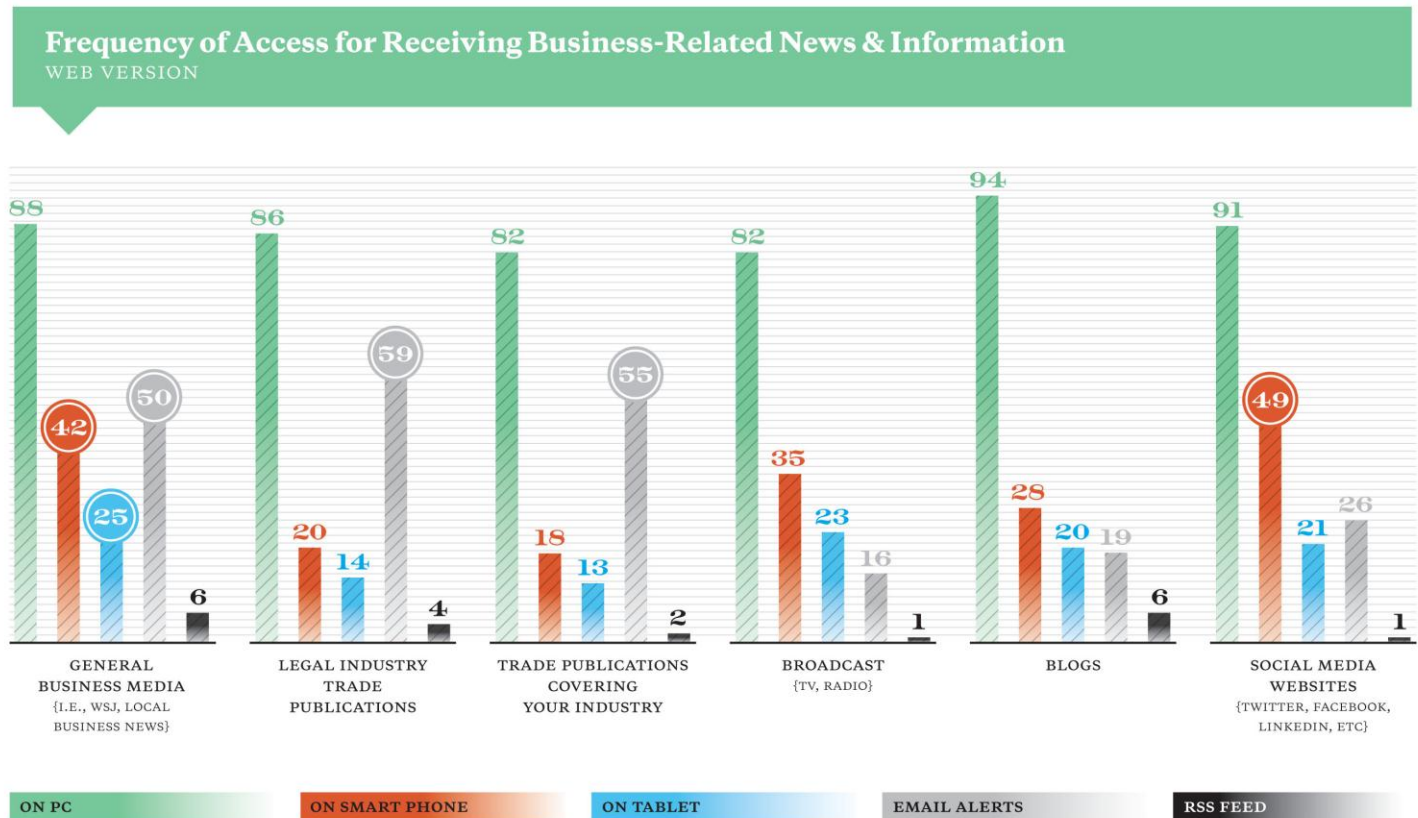
- 80 percent of counsel aged 60+ years
- 69 percent of counsel aged 50-59
- 54 percent of counsel aged 40-49
- 48 percent of counsel aged 30-39

Because the majority of trade publications do not publish daily, it would not make sense for many respondents to read them frequently in the print medium.



## How frequently do you access the following news and information sources, and through which delivery methods do you access them?

### Access via the Web:



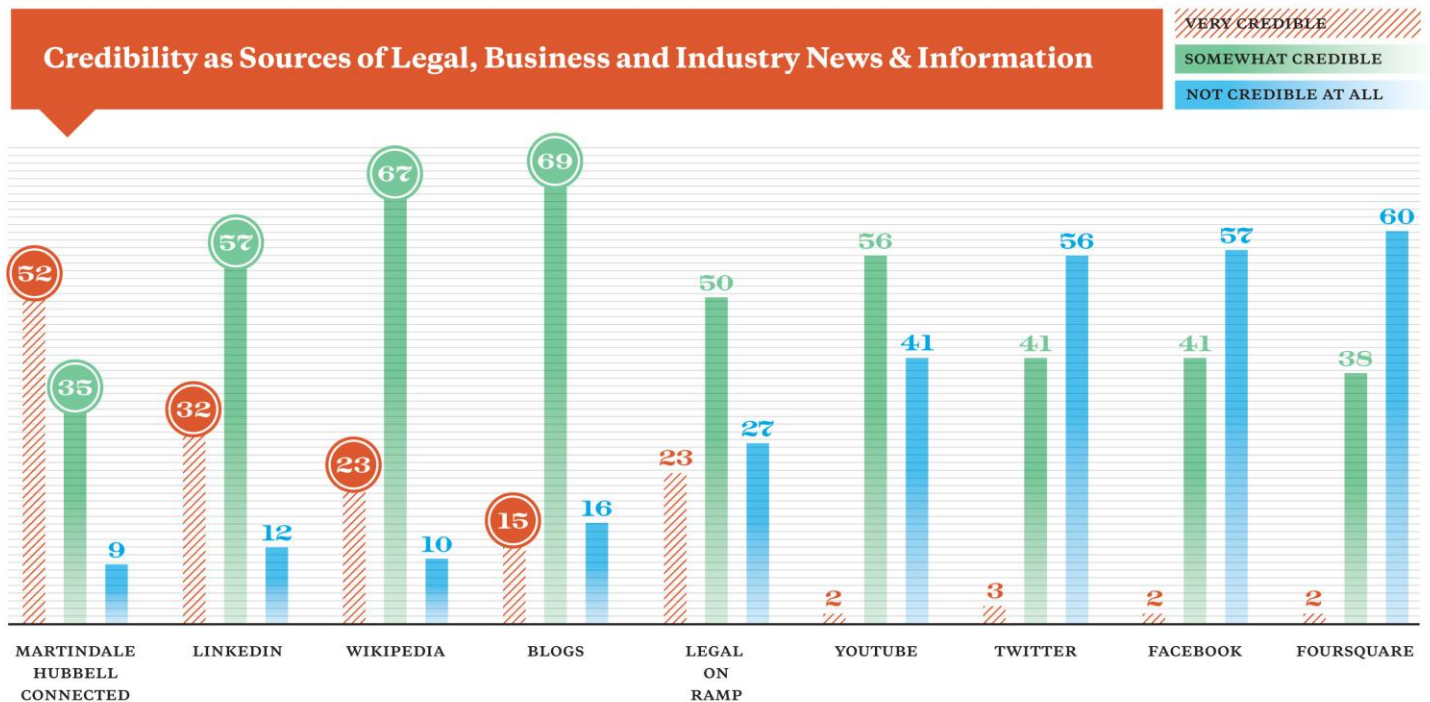
Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

A great deal of social networking is done on mobile devices, particularly during travel and commuting, which suggests in-house counsel are developing refined tastes not only for popular social networking sites and new media platforms, but also for the smartphones and tablet computers with which they access these media on the go.

Specifically, this insight suggests that there's a good opportunity for firms to explore application development and other new ways to reach in-house attorneys. While a number of Am Law 200 firms have launched mobile applications in recent months and years, we are likely to see an acceleration of app development in the months to come.



## Please rank the following in terms of their credibility as sources of legal, business and industry news and information

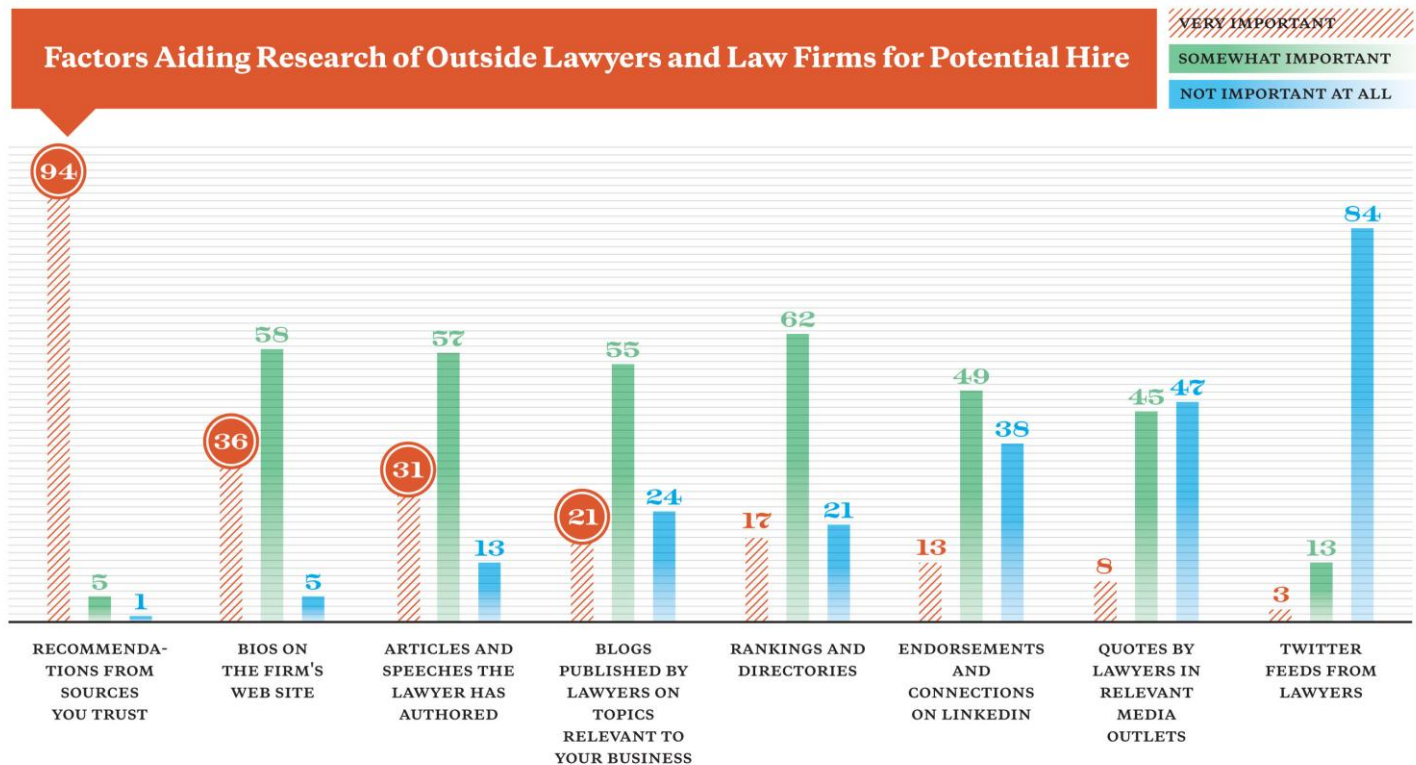


Martindale-Hubbell Connected again ranked as the most credible platform in 2011. As with the 2010 survey, we believe this is an interesting finding. While Martindale-Hubbell Connected is among the least-used platforms for professional and personal reasons, it ranks as the “most credible,” which is a testament to the durability of the Martindale-Hubbell brand.

Respondents ranked blogs, Wikipedia, and LinkedIn as “Not Credible at All” at a rate of 16 percent, 10 percent, and 12 percent, respectively. In 2010, respondents ranked blogs, Wikipedia, and LinkedIn as “Least Credible” at a rate of 34 percent, 32 percent, and 30 percent, respectively. The lowest credibility measure decreased from year to year.

Though this is not an apples-to-apples comparison, it's a rendering of a trend that we think is very real: fewer counsel actively are skeptical of content and information they get from blogs, Wikipedia, and LinkedIn.

## Please indicate the importance of the following in helping you to research outside lawyers and law firms for potential hire



In-house counsel ranked the following activities “Very Important” in helping them to vet and research outside counsel:

1. Recommendations from sources you trust (94%).
2. Bios on the firm’s Website (36%).
3. Articles and speeches the lawyer has authored (31%).
4. Blogs published by lawyers on topics relevant to your business (21%).

**Please rank the following legal industry ranking services in order of their importance to you as a tool for vetting outside counsel.**

### Importance of Legal Industry Ranking Services as a Tool for Vetting Outside Counsel



*Respondents were asked to rank each on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being Most Important and 5 being Not Important At All. Numbers represent a weighted score based on the overall rank that respondents applied to each source.*

By a fairly significant margin, rankings by legal industry publications are the most influential industry rating services, which affirms that the legal trade media is not only a powerful source of news, but also of industry data.

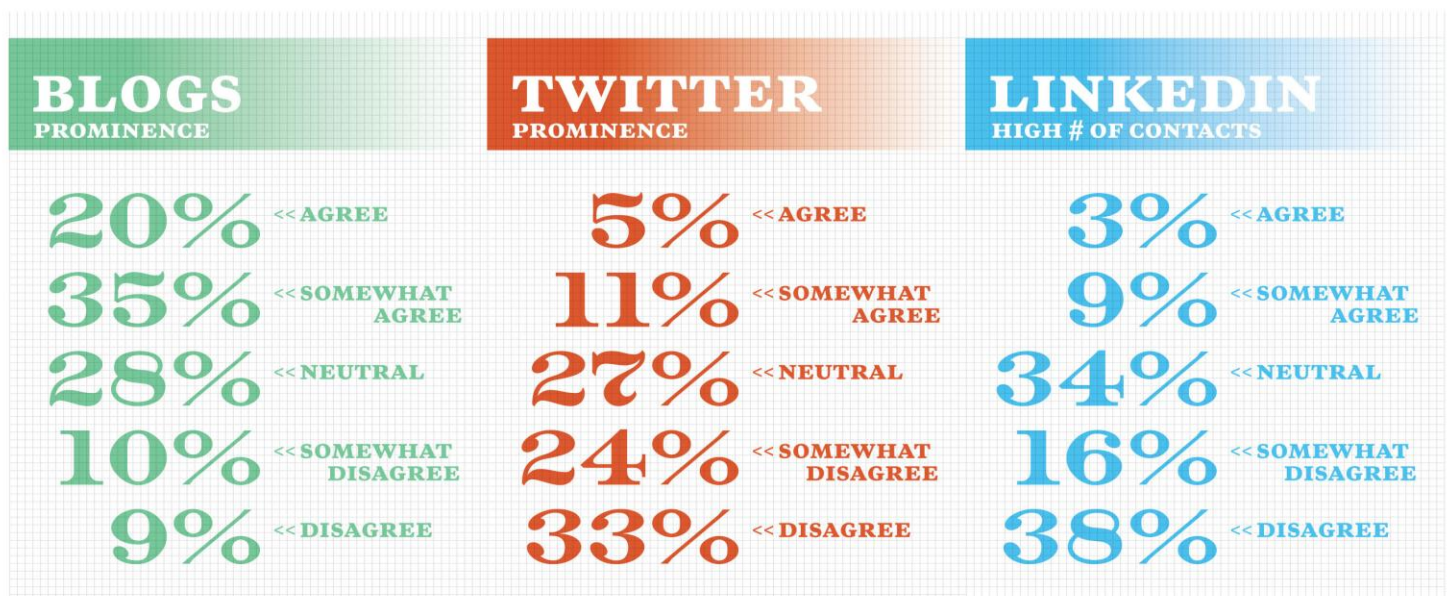
With regard to the peer-driven ranking services, respondents showed the greatest divide for Chambers, with most respondents either loving it or disliking it. It drew the second-most Rank 1 votes and the most Rank 5 votes.

Super Lawyers also generated a significant number of Rank 5 votes, thus reinforcing the substantial divide between media-branded industry rankings and those within the peer-review category.

## To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- I envision a future in which a law firm's prominence through a high-profile **blog** will play an important role in influencing clients to hire that law firm.
- I envision a future in which an individual lawyer's prominence on **Twitter** will play an important role in influencing clients to hire that lawyer.
- My perception of an attorney is positively influenced when he/she has a high number of contacts on **LinkedIn**.

### New Media Tools' Envisioned Influence on Potential Client Hires



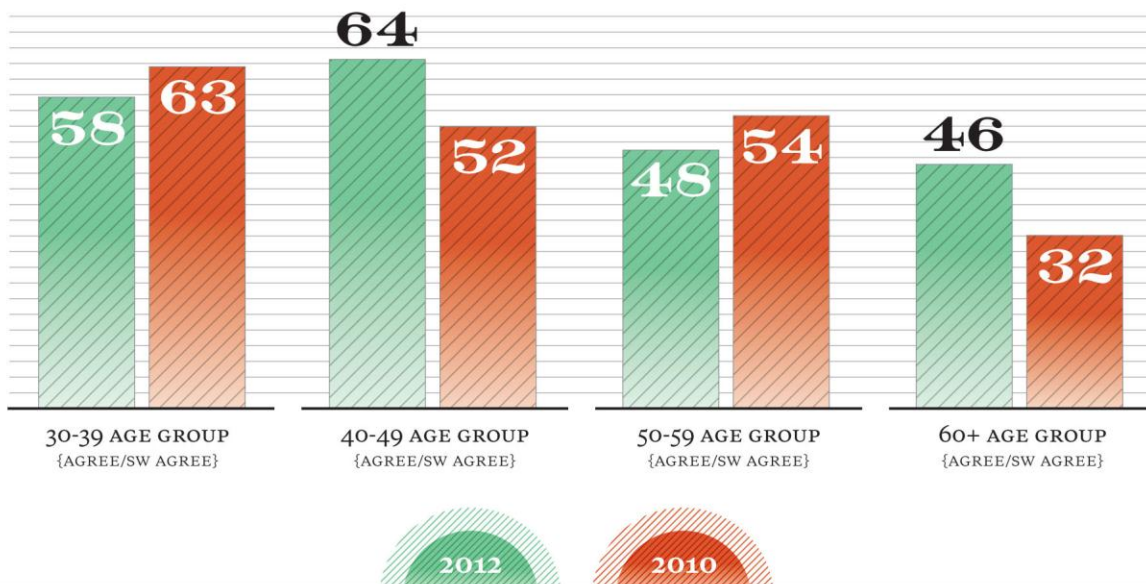
Fifty-five percent of in-house counsel “agree” or “somewhat agree” that a firm’s prominence via a high-profile blog will play an important role in influencing clients to hire that law firm—up slightly from 50 percent in 2010.



Year-over-year data on the above blog statement shows a leveling off when examined from a generational lens. While slightly fewer younger counsel concur with the statement, a greater number of counsel in their 40s and 60s “agree” or “somewhat agree” that a well-executed blog will affect hiring decisions.

## Future Influence of Law Firm Attorney-Authored Blogs

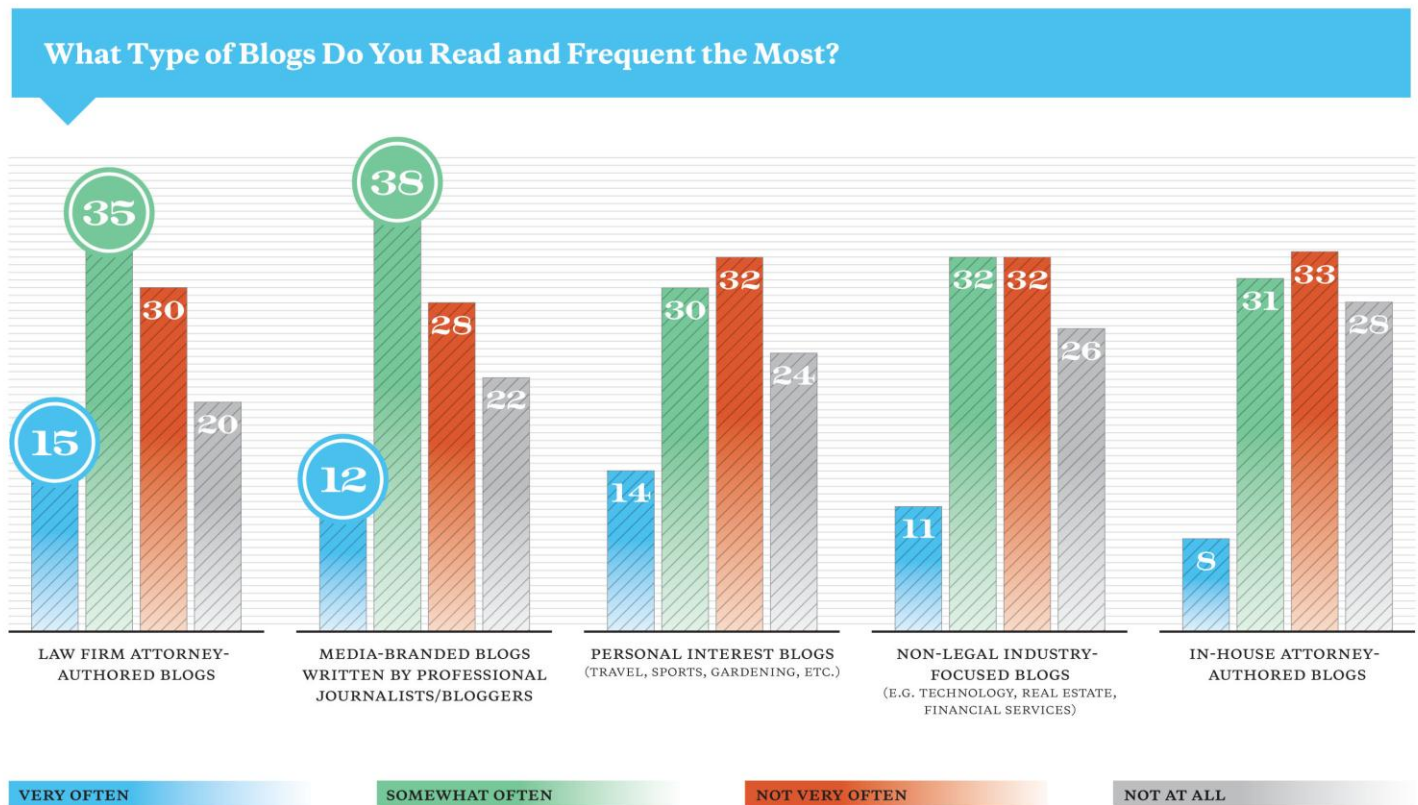
I ENVISION A FUTURE IN WHICH A LAW FIRM'S PROMINENCE THROUGH A HIGH-PROFILE BLOG WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN INFLUENCING CLIENTS TO HIRE THAT LAW FIRM.



In 2010, just 10 percent of respondents indicated they think Twitter will "Play an Important Role" in influencing clients to hire that firm. This year, that figure increased to 16 percent.

Moreover, just 12 percent of in-house respondents say they value having a large number of contacts on LinkedIn. This reinforces that they perceive the *quality* of their connections to be of greater value and utility than the *volume* of their contacts.

## What type of blogs do you read and frequent the most?



In-house respondents indicated they are reading attorney-authored blogs slightly more often than they read blogs written by professional journalists.

As such, in-house respondents are consuming “owned” media as much as “earned” media within the blogosphere. As with all social media channels, this finding underscores the importance of populating blogs with quality content.

**To what extent do you access content from your outside counsel firms provided through new media tools (i.e., Twitter feeds, blogs, Facebook pages, LinkedIn discussion groups, etc.)?**

**Use of New Media Tools to Access  
Outside Counsel Firm Content**

**YES**  
TO WHAT EXTENT?

**A GREAT EXTENT >> 5%**  
**SOME EXTENT >> 26%**  
**A SMALL EXTENT >> 34%**

**NO**

**35% << NOT AT ALL**

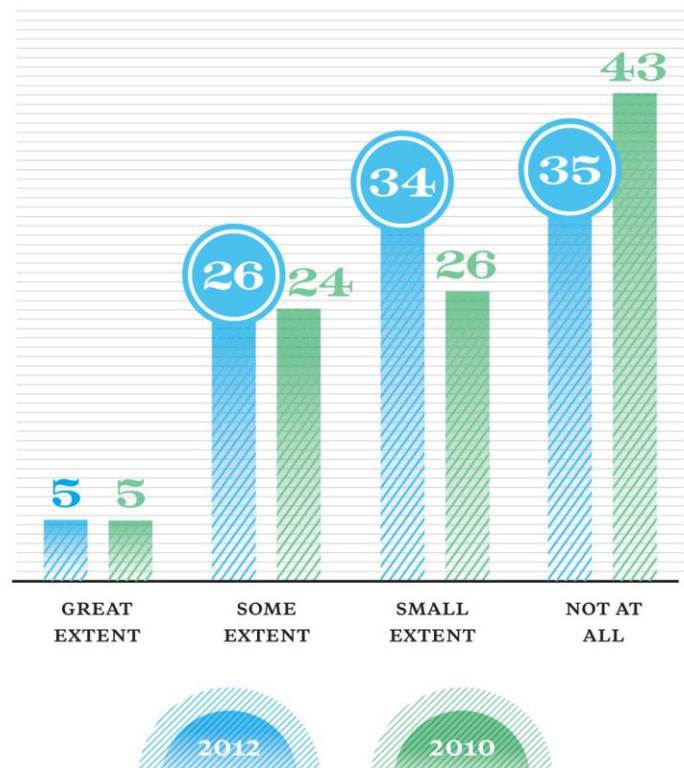
Communications between law firms and their clients taking place on social media platforms slowly but steadily is increasing.



In 2010, 26 percent of respondents said they use new media tools "to a small extent" to access content from their outside counsel. This year, that figure leaped to 34 percent, while the rate of respondents who were not doing so dropped from 43 percent to 35 percent.

The rate of client-side lawyers who were using new media tools for this purpose frequently remained consistent year-over-year at five percent.

### Law Firm-to-client Communication Via Social Media



## Which of the following describes how you are using Wikipedia?

### How Wikipedia Is Being Used

AS A PRIMARY SOURCE  
OF INFORMATION  
ON THE WEB

**30%**

TO CONDUCT COMPANY  
AND INDUSTRY RESEARCH

**51%**

TO CONDUCT RESEARCH  
ON TOPICS OF PERSONAL  
INTEREST

**87%**

TO CONDUCT RESEARCH  
ON PROMINENT BUSINESS  
PROFESSIONALS

**20%**

TO CONDUCT RESEARCH  
ON OUTSIDE COUNSEL

**7%**

*Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.*

In-house counsel are not using Wikipedia to perform diligence on outside counsel, but they are using it for company and industry research.

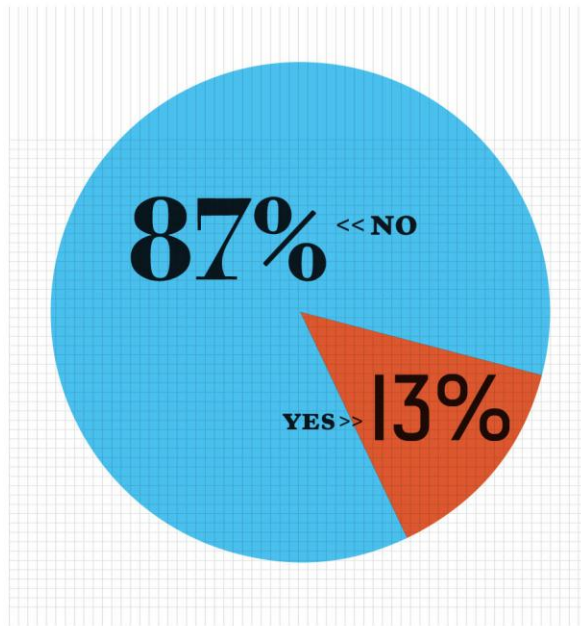
In some ways, this is welcome news for outside counsel because Wikipedia is not entirely controllable and a number of Am Law 200 firms are not satisfied with the current Wikipedia articles on their firms. However, this doesn't mean that reporters and editors are not using Wikipedia for information. They definitely are.

This data also suggests that firms should consider making greater use of Wikipedia to credential individual attorneys on various subject matters tied to their practices, instead of focusing on their firm's Wikipedia profile.

## Have you visited the Wikipedia pages of your current and/or prospective outside law firms?

### Have you visited Wikipedia?

FOR YOUR CURRENT AND/OR  
PROSPECTIVE OUTSIDE LAW FIRMS



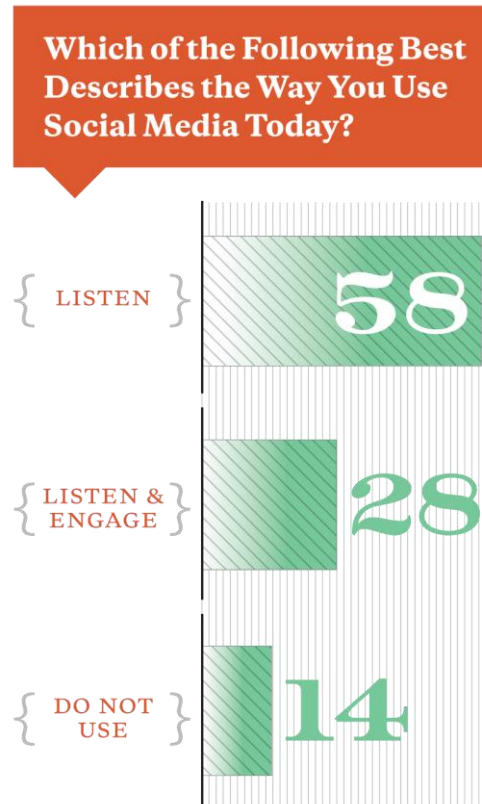
The results are almost exactly the same as those in the 2010 study.

Respondents from smaller companies (fewer than 500 employees) accessed their prospective law firm Wikipedia pages far more frequently than did respondents from larger companies (24% compared to 7%).

## Which of the following best describes the way you use social media today?

The “invisible user” trend—content consumption without interaction—is pervasive across all age categories.

*“I observe only; I do not participate or contribute to the conversations taking place.”*  
 – General Counsel,  
 Fortune 1000  
 company



This data point carries important implications for a law firm's approach to blogging. Traditionally, it has been viewed that generating commentary in connection with blog posts is an essential measure for gauging a blog's effectiveness. While engagement of this nature is the ultimate goal for consumer and corporate-oriented blogs, the data suggests that this type of interaction is not an important objective for reaching in-house counsel. Although the percentage of respondents who indicate they interact with online content is not insignificant (28%), the majority of respondents (58%) indicate they do not use the comment sections to add anything of value to the original posts. This is not a marketplace in which participants seek to be heard.

In a universe of legal marketplace consumers looking for specialized information and the insights of individuals well-versed on the issues at hand, blogging holds greater controlled potential for law firms interested in expanding the channels by which they demonstrate their thought leadership.

## Do you expect that your consumption of industry news and information via new media platforms (blogs, Twitter feeds, etc.) will increase in the future?

### Future Consumption of News via New Media {Blogs, Twitter, etc.}

PERCENTAGE OF COUNSEL WHO EXPECT THEIR CONSUMPTION OF INDUSTRY NEWS & INFORMATION VIA NEW MEDIA PLATFORMS TO INCREASE IN THE FUTURE

**YES**  
IN THE NEXT...

6 MONTHS >> **32%**  
YEAR >> **25%**  
1 TO 2 YEARS >> **23%**

**NO**

**20%** << NOT AT ALL

These findings represent a slight uptick over last year's results—57 percent expect their consumption to grow during the next six months to a year compared to 53 percent in 2010.

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# METHODOLOGY

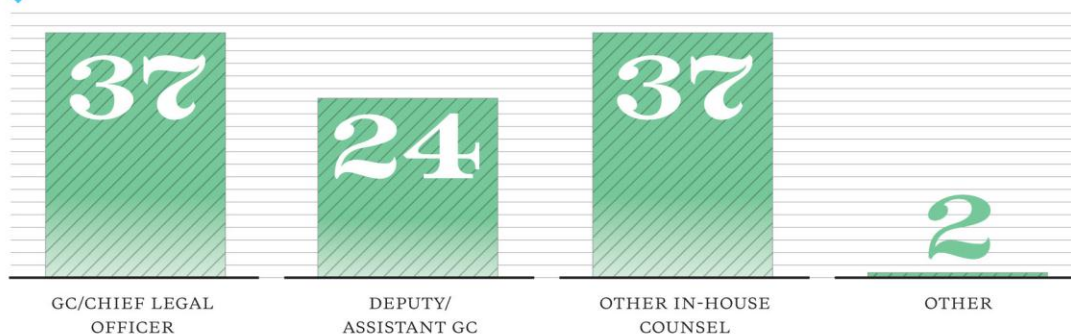
In November and December 2011, Greentarget Strategic Communications, *InsideCounsel*, and Zeughauser Group distributed the In-House Counsel New Media Engagement Survey via email to a group of corporate counsel across the nation. The results were tabulated, analyzed and released in early 2012.

Respondents identified themselves as GCs/Chief Legal Officers, Deputy/Assistant GCs, In-House Counsel, and related titles.

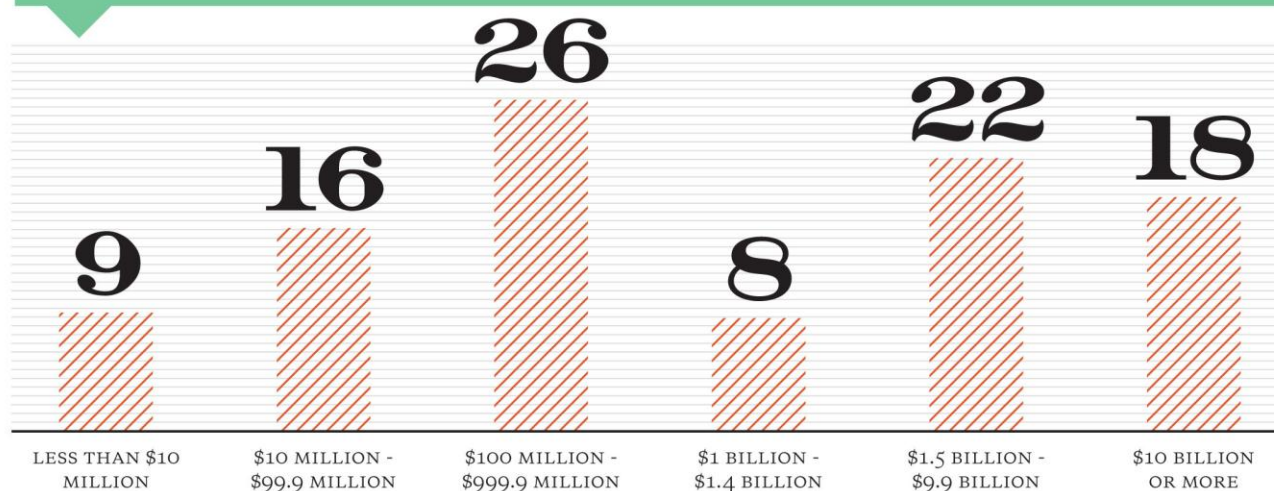
Percentages in certain questions exceed 100 percent because respondents were asked to check all that apply. Due to rounding, all percentages used in all questions may not add up to 100 percent. A few minor edits were made to verbatim responses to correct spelling and verb tense.



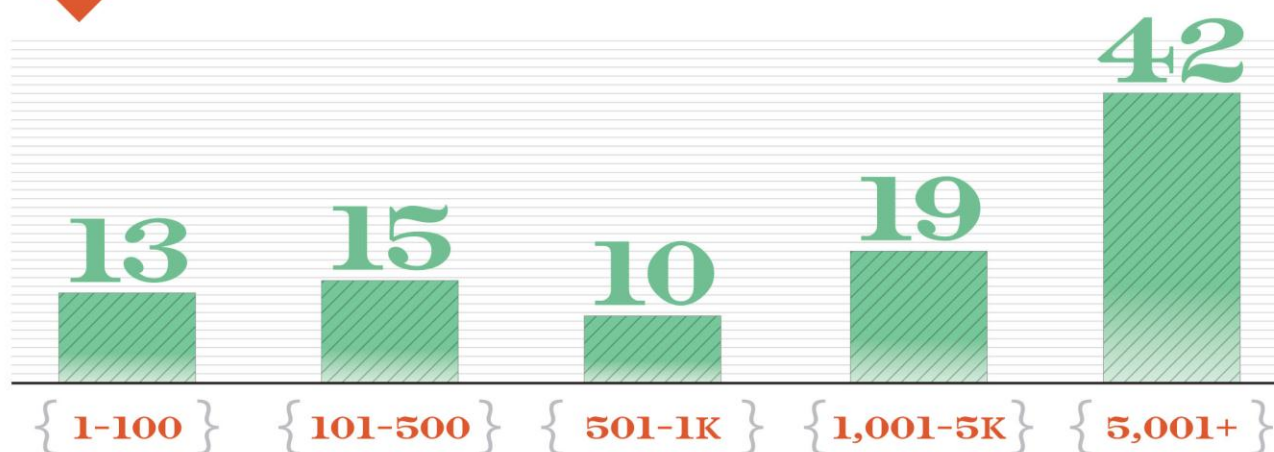
### What Is Your Job Title?



### What Were the FY 2011 Revenues of Your Company?

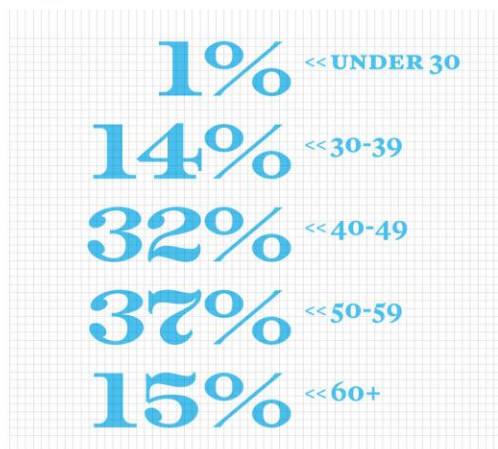


### How Many People Does Your Company Employ?

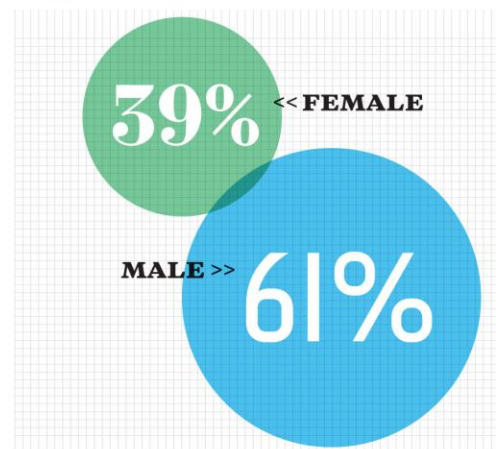




### What Is Your Age?



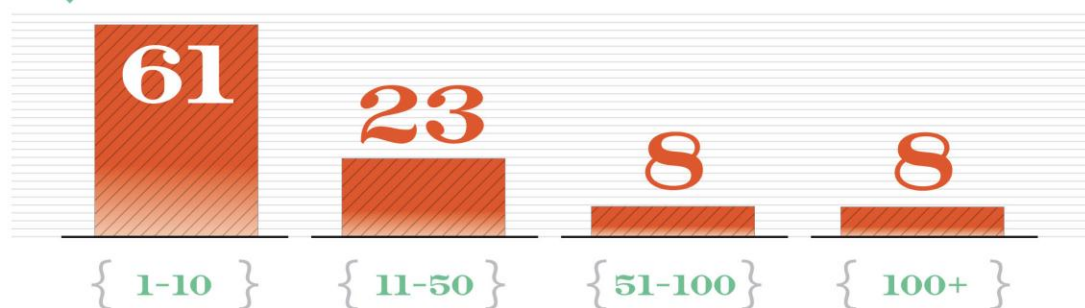
### What Is Your Gender?



### In Which Range Does Your Company's Annual Budget for Outside Law Firms Fall?



### How Many Lawyers Are In Your Company's Legal Department?



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ABOUT



## About Greentarget

Greentarget is a strategic communications firm focused exclusively on the communications needs of highly competitive business-to-business organizations. We counsel those who counsel the world's most sophisticated businesses and direct the conversation among their most important audiences to help deepen the relationships that impact the long-term value of their organizations.



## About InsideCounsel

*InsideCounsel* is the premier monthly magazine serving general counsel and other top in-house legal professionals. It is the oldest monthly magazine published exclusively for the in-house community with an editorial mission to provide the strategic tools that general counsel need to better manage their legal departments and fully understand the business risks companies face today.



## About Zeughauser Group

Zeughauser Group is the firm of choice for legal industry leaders seeking to increase competitive advantage and profitability, enhance market position, and strengthen organizational culture.

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