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# THE SHARPER LAWYER

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## *The Social Media Strategist: Using Video to Connect with Your Target Audience*

Cynthia Sharp, Esquire - The Sharper Lawyer

## **THE SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST: USING VIDEO TO CONNECT WITH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE**

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By Cynthia Sharp, The Sharper Lawyer

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Welcome to *The Social Media Strategist*, our new column addressing the ways that solos and small firms can make the most of social media. Please let us know what you think of our column, and tell us if there are any topics you'd like us to address. You can e-mail us c/o [Jeffrey Allen](#), Editor-in-Chief, or [Cynthia Sharp](#).

Since the advent of motion picture cameras in the late nineteenth century, people have been enamored with big and little screens alike. As we all know, YouTube and the introduction of “phone cameras” have been the ultimate game changers, with more than 400 hours of content being uploaded onto YouTube each minute.

My purpose in writing this inaugural column of *The Social Media Strategist* is to urge each reader to consider stepping more deeply into the worlds of video sharing, videoconferencing, and instant live streaming. Our focus will be on leveraging these platforms to attract more business to your law firm. After all, creating and deepening connections with clients and referral sources will result in more cases coming your way.

### **Video Sharing**

Because of the cataclysmic changes in the way that video content is now watched and the ease with which it is produced and distributed, most of us can produce, star in, and distribute a video that will appeal to the right audience. Although social media platforms are often used to share cute puppy and adorable baby videos, a strong commercial and marketing application has developed particularly in the legal field. Clients hire attorneys whom they know, like, and trust.

Being featured in a video is the perfect forum for demonstrating your expertise and for showing your human side.

Major video hosting platforms include YouTube ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)) and Vimeo ([vimeo.com](https://www.vimeo.com)).

Although Vimeo is popular among many, I chose YouTube to host my videos in part because it is the second-largest search engine on the Internet, after Google.

Videos produced for distribution should be only a facet of a cohesive and energetic content marketing program. Distributing any type of marketing content willy-nilly without a plan is not likely to produce optimum results.

After defining and then finding your target audience, devise your content strategy. In planning your content, consider what questions your primary audience is asking as well as the questions they *should* be asking. Enter the material words into the YouTube search bar, and the entries that auto-populate will help demonstrate what online information your potential clients seek. Display Planner in Google AdWords ([google.com/adwords](https://google.com/adwords)) is another resource for identifying keywords and content that will attract your target audience.

The format of the videos can vary from Frequently Asked Questions to short explanations or tips about various aspects of your area of practice. Before taping, be sure to write a script and to practice. Hiring a videographer for special events is advisable as some videos need the professional touch. However, if your objective is to offer a little education with the hope of expanding your practice, a well-done DIY video does the trick as it makes you seem more approachable. Because audio quality must be excellent, invest in an inexpensive external microphone. Australian-based company Røde ([en.rode.com](https://en.rode.com)) sells a wide variety of microphones online at a good value.

### **Practical Tips**

- Visual branding throughout all social media channels and your website should be consistent.

- Publishing short videos (from 1.5 to 3 minutes) frequently will help you gain followers and viewers.
- Create playlists based on content so that the potential client can find relevant information easily. For example, a matrimonial lawyer may have the following playlists (and more): Divorce Process, Alimony, Child Support, Custody, Post-Divorce Matters.
- Educate yourself about basic and advanced strategies and tactics. Resources that I recently stumbled upon and recommend are YouTube Creator Academy ([youtube.com/user/creatoracademy](https://youtube.com/user/creatoracademy)) and YouTube Creator Playbook ([thinkwithgoogle.com/playbooks/youtube.html](https://thinkwithgoogle.com/playbooks/youtube.html)).

### **Videoconferencing**

Decades ago, Baby Boomers (like me) watched in disbelief as cartoon character George Jetson spoke with his wife Jane or boss Mr. Spacely by videophone. Imagination has transformed into the current reality now that each of us has videophone capabilities embedded into our computers, tablets, and even smartphones. Leading platforms are Google Hangouts ([hangouts.google.com](https://hangouts.google.com)), Skype ([skype.com](https://skype.com)), and Zoom ([zoom.us](https://zoom.us)). The services are inexpensive or free and make both personal and business connections more personal than a mere phone call. I am a regular videoconferencing user, and it has changed the quality of my interactions with clients, virtual staff, and potential referral sources.

### **Practical Tips**

- Use videoconferencing to conduct witness preparation sessions as well as initial and follow-up consultations with clients who may have difficulty meeting with you in person each time. However, having at least one or more in-person, face-to-face meeting with a client can be preferable, depending on the circumstances. For example, in-person interaction can allow you to more accurately assess the truthfulness of an individual's statements.

- The next time you have a scheduled group teleconference, arrange to meet in a videoconferencing platform. Those who don't have access to a computer will have access to the meeting by phone.
- For those who have remote employees or more than one office, videoconferencing allows meeting participants to demonstrate visually and interact in real time, which can lead to stronger collaboration.

### **Instant Live Streaming**

If you want to be the first to broadcast information to your target audience about new legal developments, you're the perfect candidate to try live streaming. Anybody can now appear virtually and in real time, providing legal updates, commentary, or video blogs without the necessity of hiring a high-priced provider. Two major players, Meerkat ([meerkatapp.co](http://meerkatapp.co)) and Periscope ([periscope.tv](http://periscope.tv)), came on the scene at close to the same time in early 2015.

Successful "Scopers" (users of Periscope, the more popular of the two services) broadcast consistently on a regular, set schedule—often weekly. Their avid followers look forward to hearing pearls of wisdom at the appointed time. Interaction takes place when the viewers post comments, ask questions, or send "hearts" to the Scoper through a screen tap. The broadcaster receives immediate information regarding how many people viewed the stream as well as audience engagement (e.g., views and comments). The streams created can be played for 24 hours following the live broadcast and can be recorded using Katch.me.

### **Practical Tips**

- Use your social networks (such as Twitter and Facebook) to spread the word about your live broadcasts.
- At the next conference you attend, arrange to interview one of the attending experts for broadcast to your Periscope followers unable to attend the event.

- California attorney Mitch Jackson generously shares tips at [streaminglawyer.com](http://streaminglawyer.com) on improving your law practice through live video streaming apps.

## **Conclusion**

Until recent years, lawyers who wanted to get virtual “face time” in front of potential clients were relegated to the expensive world of television advertising. Establishing virtual and visual relationships with potential clients and deepening existing relationships with current clients are now easier than ever for those willing to step out of their comfort zones and follow some of the suggestions outlined above.

## **[Cynthia Sharp](#)**

*Business development leader and veteran attorney Cynthia Sharp, Esq., works with motivated lawyers seeking to generate additional revenue for their law firms. The business development strategies and skill sets that she shares were developed and tested over a period of 30 years in practice and are constantly refined to reflect modern marketing techniques. For additional information about business development issues, check out [thesharperlady.com](http://thesharperlady.com).*