

# Chicago Daily Law Bulletin®

Volume 159, No. 89

## Lots to keep in mind when giving a presentation

Over the next two weeks, I am giving presentations to large groups on social media issues and employment law.

As a litigator, I know the importance of a persuasive and cohesive presentation to a judge or jury. But a marketing presentation to a large group poses its own challenges.

How do I convey to the group important issues in the law and the potential value of my legal services in that particular area?

1. Make sure that your audience understands why your topic is important. For my presentation, this is an easy explanation — now that sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter are such a prevalent part of the lives of the American workforce, employers need to understand the potential liability and issues involved in those online communications.

Employers also need to know how to control these online communications to the extent legally possible for the benefit of their businesses.

2. Make sure that you cover recent developments in the law. Even though every employer now faces issues relating to social media and employees, my presentation will address some recent developments in the law that are especially important to know now.

For example, I will cover issues relating to the fact that Illinois and other states have recently passed laws that prohibit employers from requesting passwords or account information for social media sites or personal e-mail

for employees or prospective employees.

Additionally, the Federal Trade Commission recently issued new guidelines for online marketing and blogging that employers should know about in case their employees are making online statements regarding the goods or services of their companies. All companies should understand that even positive online statements regarding their business could result in a government investigation and/or potential liability.

3. Make sure that your presentation is simple and direct and geared toward the knowledge and interest of the audience. A discussion of the law of social media could be technical and dry, but I will endeavor to make my presentation understandable even to those who are not practicing attorneys.

Although I will cite statutes and law, I will endeavor to explain and interpret their

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### MARGO'S MASTER PLAN



**MARGO WOLF O'DONNELL**

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meaning in a way the audience can understand. The attendees at my seminar can ask me follow-up questions after the presentation regarding the application of the laws that I reference to their particular business. At that point, after the presentation, I can dive into the actual provisions of the applicable laws to those who are interested.

4. Include real life examples of how the law can affect the business of those in your audience. To the extent possible, include examples of cases that enable the audience to better understand the legal implications of the issues you are addressing.

For example, in 2010, the Federal Trade Commission investigated a series of online blogs on behalf of Ann Taylor stores' Loft division and one of their clothing collections. The

Federal Trade Commission conducted an investigation based upon a concern that the bloggers who were making positive online statements regarding the clothing collection had failed to identify their connection to Ann Taylor and the fact that they had received gifts from Ann Taylor.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, the failure to disclose those gifts could be considered a violation of Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

5. Include real life examples of how the solutions you propose can protect companies from liability. One of the solutions I will propose is that companies should adopt social media and online blogging policies.

The Federal Trade Commission indicated that they decided not to pursue enforcement action against Ann Taylor in part because Ann Taylor had a written policy regarding online blogging, and that policy was in compliance with the applicable law.

6. Make sure that you can deliver your presentation without reading your slides or your speech. All of your good work in putting together a presentation can be undermined by failure to properly prepare.

An audience that sees you merely reading about what is on the screen promptly becomes bored or disengaged with the important messages you are trying to communicate. In order to make sure that your presentation has the maximum impact, be sure to practice, so you can be as comfortable as possible during your presentation.