

# BUSINESS & CAREERS

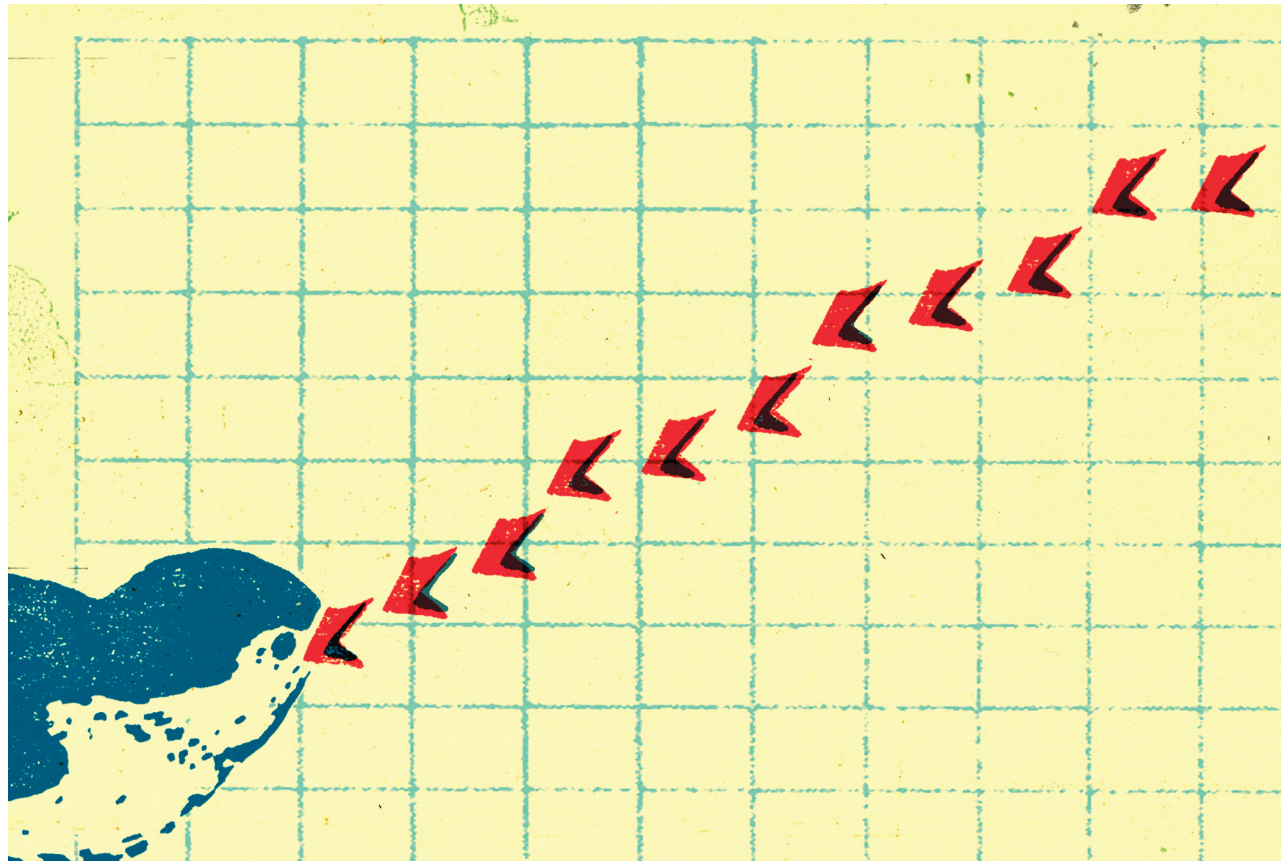
## THE 24

### Canada's top legal social media influencers

**IN CASE** there's anyone out there who still believes that social media in the law was a fad, it's time to put that myth to rest. Today, the Canadian legal profession features more than 300 blogs (check them out at [www.lawblogs.ca](http://www.lawblogs.ca)), hundreds if not thousands of Twitter users, and probably well over 10,000 LinkedIn users, virtually all of them using these vehicles for business. Almost every large law firm in Canada (and scores of smaller ones) have their own Twitter accounts. And this doesn't even scratch the surface of what's happening on Facebook or Google+.

With so many participants in this now-emergent field, it's natural to ask: who are the leaders? Where should we turn to find the most important and influential social media users in the profession, the trailblazers who aren't just on social media, but who are using it to make an impact on lawyers and the legal profession worldwide? As two regular columnists here at *The Lawyer Weekly*, we found ourselves curious about that too.

So we decided to find out who were the most influential users of social media in the Canadian legal



**WARREN SMITH**



**JORDAN FURLONG**

profession. To do this, we started with a very large group of bloggers, tweeters and other social media users well known to the online legal community. (Although we're both very active in social media ourselves, we decided it would be appropriate to exclude ourselves from the list.)

From there, we applied a series of criteria, some based on metrics and others not:

- Whether the person blogs, and if so, for how long s/he has been blogging, how widely read the blog is and how well it scores on measures such as Google's PageRank.

- Whether the person is on Twitter, and if so, how much they've tweeted, how often they tweet and what their followers-to-follows ratio is (the higher, the better).

- What the person's Klout score is, a measure based on a Twitter account's frequency, reach and influence.

- Our own sense of the impact the person has had and continues to have through social media on the Canadian legal profession.

Applying those criteria, we came up with two lists of 12 influencers each, for a total of 24. We divided the group into lawyers in private practice with law firms and, well, everyone else. We've listed their names alphabetically, although there are a few outliers whose

impact is so huge they require special mention.

Here are a few observations about the finalists.

- Among law firm influencers, we were happy to see such a wide range of firms, from international giants like McCarthy Tétrault LLP and Miller Thomson LLP to regional firms like Harrison Pensa and McInnes Cooper, to smaller firms like MacIsaac & Co. and the Wise Law Group. This finding reinforced our belief that you can be a social media leader no matter what size of firm you practice in.

- In the other chart, we were struck by the heavy concentration (five of 12 finalists) from British Columbia; if you add Shauna Mireau in Edmonton, fully half the list hails from the west. Again, we saw a diverse mix of backgrounds, from law professors to consultants to know-

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# Canada's top legal Tweeters revealed

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ledge managers to law society personnel, underlining the wide range of social media participation across the country.

■ All these influencers operate a popular blog or a widely read Twitter stream, or both. Although there are many social media vehicles available to lawyers (including standbys like Facebook and LinkedIn and newer entries like Quora and Google+), at this point it's very difficult to earn the title of influencer without a publishing engine (a blog) and a circulation system (a Twitter feed).

■ Three people in particular stood out in our survey and deserve special mention:

1. Rob Hyndman of Hyndman Law in Toronto is the undisputed king of Twitter among Canadian lawyers: at time of writing he had issued 35,065 tweets; the next closest total was Barry Sookman of McCarthy Tétrault, with nearly 13,000.

2. Michael Geist's influence spreads far beyond the Canadian legal community: more than 16,000 people follow his Twitter stream of news and links to copyright law reform worldwide. Next closest is KPMG's Dominic Jaar, with almost 5,000.

3. Arguably, no one has had a greater impact on the development of a Canadian online legal world than Simon Fodden, founder of slaw.ca. To put it in perspective: since its debut in 2005, Slaw has featured more than 7,500 posts, from dozens of columnists and contributors from Canada and around the world, and has received more than 10,000 comments.

What can we learn from all this? That anyone with a mes-

## Lawyers in private practice:

Influencer	Employer	City	Twitter
John Boscariol	McCarthy Tétrault LLP	Toronto	@tradelawyer
David Canton	Harrison Pensa LLP	London, Ont.	@davidcanton
Caroline Clapham	Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP	Vancouver	@carolineclapham
Michael Fitzgibbon	Watershed LLP	Oakville, Ont.	@managementlaw
David Fraser	McInnes Cooper	Halifax	@privacylawyer
Nicole Garton-Jones	Heritage Law Group	Vancouver	@ngartonjones
Omar Ha-Redeye	Barrister & Solicitor	Toronto	@omarharedeye
Rob Hyndman	Hyndman Law	Toronto	@rhh
Erik Magraken	MacIsaac & Co.	Victoria	@erikmagraken
Stuart Rudner	Miller Thomson	Toronto	@CanadianHRLaw
Barry Sookman	McCarthy Tétrault	Toronto	@bsookman
Garry Wise	Wise Law Group	Toronto	@wiselaw

## Lawyers not in private practice:

Influencer	Employer	City	Twitter
David Bilinsky	Law Society of B.C.	Vancouver	@David_Bilinsky
Colin Cameron	Profits for Partners Management Consulting	Vancouver	@colincameron
Samantha Collier	MBM Intellectual Property Law	Vancouver	@samtaracollier
Connie Crosby	Crosby Group Consulting	Oakville, Ont.	@crosbygroup
David Eby	B.C. Civil Liberties Association	Vancouver	@Dave_Eby
Simon Fodden	Slaw.ca	Toronto	@fodden
Michael Geist	University of Ottawa Faculty of Law	Ottawa	@mgeist
Dominic Jaar	KPMG	Montreal	@dominicjaar
Steve Matthews	Stem Legal Web Enterprises	Vancouver	@stevematthews
Shaunna Mireau	Field LLP	Edmonton	@smireau
Dan Pinnington	LawPRO	Toronto	@danpinnington
David Whelan	Law Society of Upper Canada	Toronto	@davidpwhelan

sage to send and the willingness to engage with a readership can take advantage of the self-publishing opportunities presented by social media and become an opinion leader within the profession. Visit the blogs and read

the Twitter streams of these 24 influencers today and let them open you up to a vast library of knowledge, perspectives and connections—and think about what you'd need to do to join their ranks. ■

Warren Smith is a managing director of lawyer recruitment and career consulting firm, The Counsel Network. You can follow him on Twitter @lawheadhunter. Jordan Furlong is a senior consultant with Stem Legal, where he

advises lawyers and law firms on social media and communications strategy. You can follow him on Twitter @jordan\_law21.

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# Joe Groia incivility case causes debate

## Has 'civility movement' gone too far this time?

THOMAS CLARIDGE

In an ideal world, all litigators would be civil, addressing one another as "my honourable friend" or at least as "my worthy adversary." But is civility sufficiently important to trump all other considerations?

Opinions clearly differ, and some critics of what they term the "civility movement" suggest Canadian law societies are sometimes going overboard in concluding that forceful, intemper-

ate language has no place in a courtroom and should lead to at least a reprimand and maybe even disbarment.

In Ontario, it may be no coincidence that the most high-profile case of alleged incivility deserving of punishment came about after Attorney General Chris Bentley ordered an inquiry into the problem of long and complex criminal case procedures.

His appointment of former Superior Court Justice Patrick LeSage and law professor Michael Code in February 2008 came after the Ontario Court of Appeal described as "improper" the conduct of Joe Groia during a 70-day hearing into alleged

insider trading charges the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) laid against his client, geologist John Felderhof. Felderhof had sold \$84 million worth of Bre-X stock in 1996, shortly before the company's supposedly rich gold project in Indonesia was exposed as a fraud and investors lost billions.

Code, now a Superior Court judge, had represented the OSC in the proceedings that ultimately led to Felderhof being acquitted of all eight charges he had faced. In their report, released in November 2008, LeSage and Code identified the role of counsel as adding to the length and complexity of some

cases and called for the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC) to treat cases of courtroom misconduct as serious professional misconduct and address them as such in disciplinary proceedings.

Three months after the report's release, LSUC announced that it was proceeding against Groia, and LSUC CEO Malcolm Heins said the action "sends a message to the community at large that we take these matters seriously."

The Groia case is unusual on many counts. The LeSage/Code report identified the problem as typically involving junior lawyers who needed mentoring, and unlike many other cases, Groia's

did not stem from a complaint to the law society by the trial judge.

Equally unusual is the long passage of time, since the alleged misconduct took place more than 10 years ago.

Groia's defence, led by Toronto lawyer Earl Cherniak of Lerner LLP, is that the conduct was in the context of the client's belief that the prosecutors were determined to "win at all costs" by securing a conviction, rather than simply bring out all the relevant facts.

Among the critics of the LSUC prosecution are Toronto lawyers (and brothers) Brian and Edward Greenspan.

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