ALA Association of Legal Administrators | Greater Cincinnati Chapter

Gold Level Chapter 2010

May 11, 2010 Meeting

By Erin Miller & Beverly Hutchinson

LinkedIn is a FREE tool to market your law firm, you know you should join, but where do you start without spending a lot of time on it?

Marketing Your Law Firm Using LinkedIn
Join us for a discussion featuring Julia Pile, The Drew Law Firm Co. LPA

Learn How To:

- Build your profile
- Update your status
- Make connections
- Join and participate in groups
- Monitor the results of your activity

Our May 11, 2010 meeting will be at the Netherland Plaza in Salons F/G on the 4th floor at 12:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Lisa Kunz by **5/5/2010** at lkunz@bakerlaw.com with your choice of entree. The cost is $25 for members and $30 for non-members.

Menu Selection

Salad
Traditional Caesar Salad with Creamy Caesar Dressing, Parmesan and Foccocia Croutons

Entrée (Select One)
Sliced Pork Loin with Herbed Risotto, Asparagus and Rosemary Shiitake Mushroom Sauce

Penne Pasta Pomadoro with Seasonal Vegetables

Dessert
New York Cheesecake with Fresh Berries

Thank You to our May meeting sponsor!

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Thank you to our April Luncheon Sponsors!!!!

Association of Legal Administrators
Greater Cincinnati Chapter
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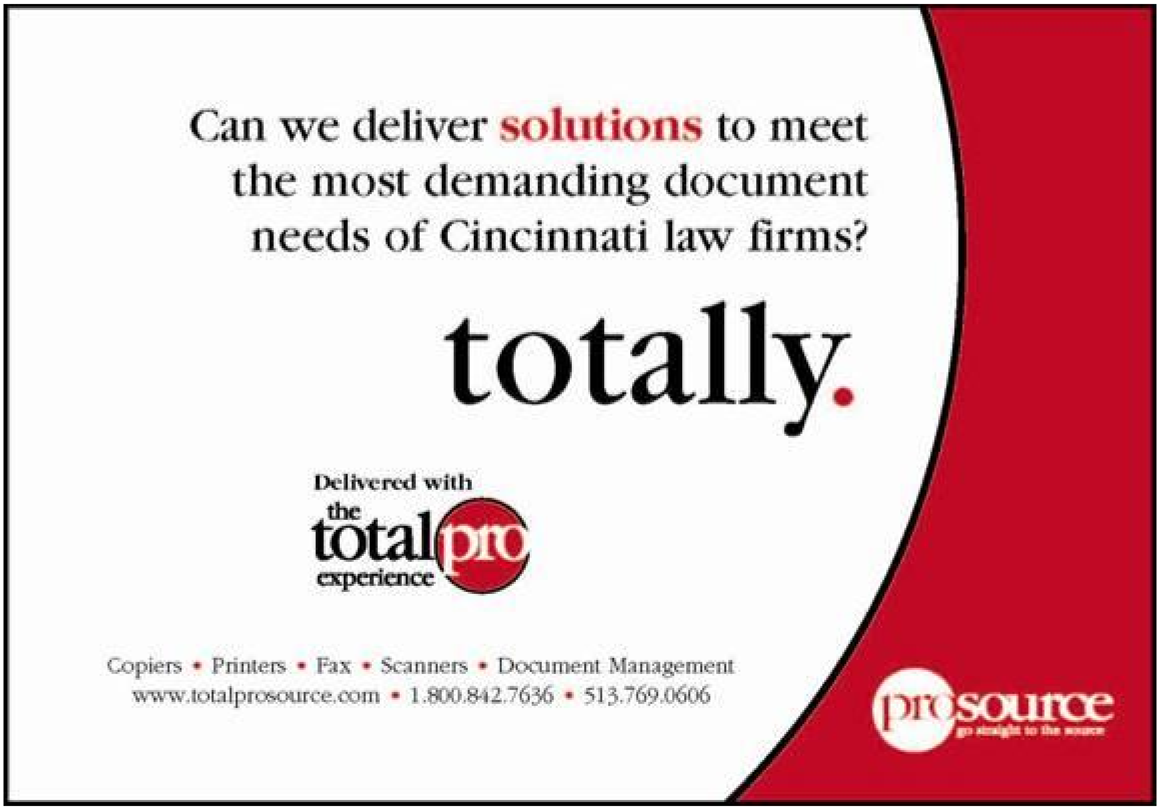
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April 13, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Minutes By: Tom Freeman

- The April 13th meeting was held at The Cincinnati Netherland Hilton and commenced at approximately noon.

- Kim Nickolas, Chapter President, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- Kim reminded attendees of the upcoming ALA Conference noting the value of participating. 4 members are scheduled to attend the Conference.

- Kim introduced our guest speaker: Ms. Kerry Loeffler of Talent Trust.

- Kerry provided a insightful presentation entitled, “Retaining Employees – Helping Everyone get an A.” She noted that it is our responsibility, as leaders, to help all our employees to succeed. We should set SMART Goals:
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Acheivable
  - Realistically High
  - Time Bound

- Kerry suggested that consideration be given to the following while setting goals
  - Rewards
  - Consequences
  - Obstacles
  - Solutions

- Kim thanked Kerry for her presentation reminded all attendees of the next chapter meeting – May11th.

- The meeting concluded at approximately 1:30 pm.

March 9, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Minutes By: Tom Freeman

Kim Nickolas introduced 3 new members: Perry Owen from Graydon Head & Ritchey, Kathy Wilson, Aldrich Bonnefin & Moore, and Kim Proffitt from the City of Cincinnati Legal Department. The other ALA members and guests then introduced themselves.

Kim asked for a motion to approve the January and February meeting minutes that were published in the March newsletter. Jeff Middendorf made the motion, and Bev Hutchinson seconded it. The minutes were approved.

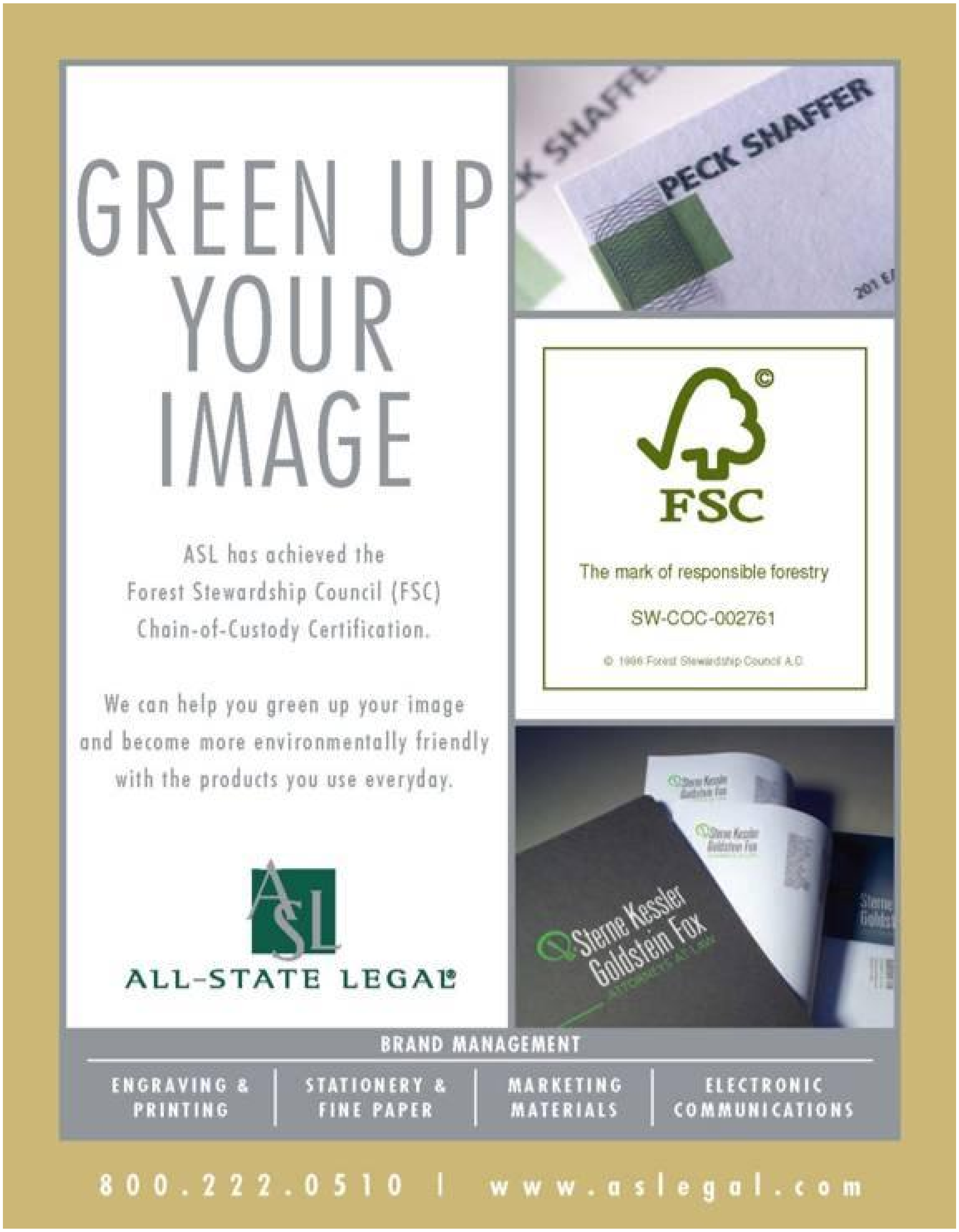
Kim announced the transition meeting between current committee chair and incoming committee chairs would be held at the end of the month so new chairs could start their term on April 1st. She also thanked the exiting chairs for their hard work and dedication over the last year.

Kim reminded members that if any committee looked appealing, to please volunteer to assist the chair. Two events were mentioned that may need volunteers and/or ideas: July social outing and the Chapter's 30th Anniversary party to be held in December. The Chapter will reach out to past presidents and invite them to the anniversary party.

If you have not already paid your dues, please send to Julie as soon as possible. She thanked those who have already paid.

Reminder: the ALA National Conference will be held in Boston from May 3rd-6th.

Peggy Gruenke mentioned the lunch sponsors: Pro Source and All State Legal. She also mentioned the February breakfast sponsor, Precision Staffing. Peggy then introduced the speaker for today's meeting, Peggy Friedhoff from BEC. Peggy's presentation was an informational session on Office 2010 upgrade including changes, additions, pros and cons.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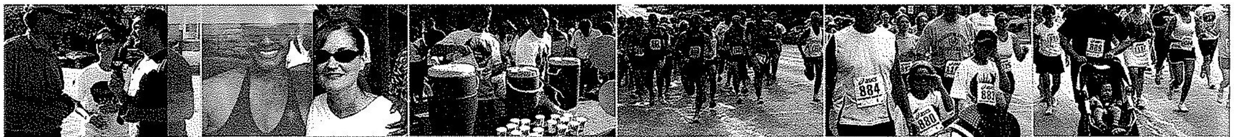
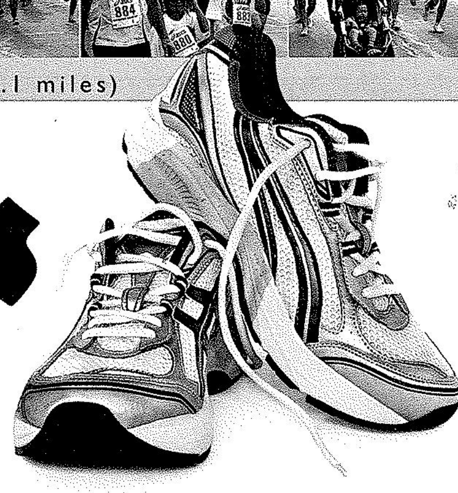


Run & Fitness Walk to Benefit ProKids — 5K (3.1 miles)



Cincinnati Bar Association-Young Lawyers Section

14th Annual Run FOR Kids

Friday, June 18 • 7 p.m.

Registration 5:30 p.m. • Race 7 p.m.

St. Mary's Catholic Church • Erie Avenue • Hyde Park

Course:
Course begins on Erie close to St. Mary's Catholic Church. Head east on Erie, south on Delta, west on Observatory, north on Shaw, east on Erie, repeat and finish on Erie in front of St. Mary's Church. Course is USATF certified.

Divisions:
Men and Women runners; law firm/other team competition. Teams run three to five, score three. Walkers welcome.

Kids Fun Run (all ages):
Immediately following race in parking lot. No need to register. Prize to all participants.

Party:
Party following race with live music by Kelly Red and The Hammerheads, food, beverages and a clown to entertain the kids.

Awards:
Awards will go to the top 15 men and women runners. Results on-line at www.racedmc.com. Additional awards for law firm teams.

Registration/Packet Pick-Up:
Registration is $25 per person (includes t-shirt). Pre-registration deadline is **Friday, June 11.** Registration price after June 11, including race day, is $30 per person (includes t-shirt).
Packet Pick-up for pre-registration is:
Thursday June 17, 4 –7 p.m.
Bob Roncker's Running Spot - O'Bryonville
1993 Madison Road, Cincinnati, OH 45208

Directions:
From I-71 going south: Take the Dana Avenue exit, left on Dana, left on Madison, right on Erie to Shady Lane just past Shaw.

From I-71 going north: Take exit #5, Dana Road, Montgomery Road, turn left on Duck Creek, right on Dana, left on Madison, right on Erie to Shady Lane just past Shaw.

Parking:
Park on adjacent streets close to Hyde Park Square.

ProKids:
Since 1981, ProKids CASAs (Court Appointed Special Advocates) have made a difference in the lives of our community's abused and neglected children. Your help can ensure that this vulnerable population doesn't fall through the cracks of our justice system. Just call ProKids at (513) 281-2000.

Cincinnati Bar
Young Lawyers Section

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Register on-line at www.racedmc.com by June 11

This article was published in the April issue of the CBA Report by our own Peggy Gruenke.

Too Busy to Get New Clients?
Keep the Ones You Have

By Peggy Gruenke

Why focus on client retention?

- 80 - 95% of your revenue comes from your top clients — as a client's relationship with the firm lengthens, profits rise;
- They are competitors' targets;
- They are a great source for referrals;
- They probably are paying on time and your most profitable work;
- Lower marketing cost — acquiring new clients entails certain costs that retaining existing clients does not.

The following will help you think about how well you are building the foundation for a solid practice, focused on retaining clients and building long-lasting, profitable relationships.

First, get to know your clients better. The more you know about your clients the more you will be able to help them and gain more business. Identify your five favorite clients, past and present, take them to lunch or dinner, and invite your law firm administrator along. Let them know that the firm is interested in learning more about them — challenges they are facing in their business, hobbies and family, what charities they support and what professional organizations they belong to.

Now support the causes your clients do — whether it is for a community organization, charity or volunteer event. Supporting the causes your clients do will deepen your relationship with them. After finding out what kinds of charitable groups or causes they support, here is what you can try, enlisting help from your support staff or law firm administrator:

- Get on the group's mailing list;
- Donate money or goods to the cause in your client's name;
- Instead of spending time entertaining your clients, spend that time volunteering with them. In addition to getting some one-on-one time, you'll probably get introduced to several of your client's peers and potential clients;
- Find out what is the most pressing legal issue facing the organization and offer to give a seminar to help them understand it better; and
- My favorite idea — donate a percentage of that client's fees to their charity as your holiday gift to the client.

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Second, don't be afraid to ask clients the ultimate question — "How am I doing?" and ask often. I am a firm believer in the value of asking or surveying. How do you know how well you are doing if you don't ask? Your clients may provide you with some valuable feedback to improve your business. The sooner you find out there is a problem the sooner you can make adjustments and address the problem head on. Asking demonstrates you value their opinion — acting upon the knowledge you gained demonstrates you are willing to listen. Here lies the real value of conducting that client survey.

Third, learn to become a great listener and be willing to keep your promises. Being a good listener lets you get more information and enables you to ask better questions. So turn off your Blackberry and don't reply to e-mails or type a document while on the phone with your client. Allow yourself to learn more about the problems they are grappling with and suggest solutions. When ending all client conversations, ask two questions:

- What have I agreed to do and when do you expect me to do it?
- What have I promised (or predicted) will happen and when do you expect it to happen?

Asking these two questions will help you know if they are hearing what you think you are saying. Setting clear expectations — so simple and so important for all aspects of your life. Also, this keeps you from making unintentional promises you can't keep.

And lastly, add that personal touch (another opportunity to engage your support staff or law firm administrator). At the close of each matter, include a hand-written note of appreciation. This is a great marketing opportunity. You have a great target audience — an existing client who may need additional services or become a source for referrals. So don't miss this opportunity.

In summary, clients are the most important people in your practice. Clients are not dependent on you, rather you are dependent on them. Clients are an integral part of your business, the lifeblood of your practice. And, lastly, they are deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment you can give them.

My objective here is to provide you with simple, applicable ideas which you can implement with the help of your support staff and law firm administrator. Keep in mind that your law firm administrator may be a good tool for you to have in your "winning and keeping clients" tool bucket. Don't let it sit there getting rusty — use it.

Gruenke is the chief operating officer with the law firm Finney Stagnaro Saba & Patterson handling financial operations, human resources, firm marketing and client development, information and telecommunications technology and physical facilities maintenance. She is on the board of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of Association of Legal Administrators. She is a prior director of membership for the CBA.

Transitioning Discussions to GCCALA LinkedIn Group
Julia D. Pile, CPA, MBA
Operations Manager – The Drew Law Firm Co., LPA

The Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators has formed a group on LinkedIn for members to hold discussions, post interesting news articles, distribute event information and post job openings. The premise of forming this group is that it would replace the number of e-mails in our member's inboxes and allow for the following of threads of discussions. This group is closed to only members of our local chapter and discussions cannot be viewed by those outside of our group.

To join our group on LinkedIn, you must first join this on-line professional community. Go to the internet and go to the site www.linkedin.com. If you do not see Join LinkedIn Today box on the right hand side of your screen, click on Join Today at the top. All you need to get started is your first name, last name, e-mail and a password. You DO NOT need to fully complete the profile to join our LinkedIn group, but I will explain why at our May monthly lunch meeting why and how you would do so.

There are two ways you can become of a member of the Group.

1. Search for me, Julia D. Pile and ask to add me to your network. When prompted for how you know me, click on Other and enter my e-mail address of jpile@drewlaw.com Once we have connected, I will then send you a group invitation.

2. You may also search for the group by using the search box in the upper right hand corner of the screen. The search box defaults to a People search. Click on the down arrow and change this to Group. Enter: Cincinnati and Legal and press enter. Three groups should appear, one of which being ours. Click on the group link. Click on the Join Group box. A notification will then be sent to the managers of the group and we will accept your request to join.

There will be default settings saved for this (and most any) group, but you can change these at anytime by going to the group, clicking on More and My Settings. The two important settings are the display of our group logo on your profile and the frequency which you receive the group digests. Group digests are a listing of the activities in our group with hyperlinks to the conversations. These digests can either be received daily or weekly.

The discussion area of the group is where most of our activity will take place. Rather than someone sending an e-mail message to our group and everyone sending responses, a person can start or post to a discussion on LinkedIn. Other members can then reply to the posting. By using this technology, we can cut down on the number of e-mail messages we receive and have an organized storage area for our questions and responses. We will also be posting meeting announcements in the Discussion area.

If you have trouble getting started on LinkedIn or would like me to walk through getting you set-up over the phone, please feel free to contact me at 513-619-1637 or jpile@drewlaw.com
Now let's all get Linked!

Association of Legal Administrators
Master Calendar

MAY 2010	
May 19	* ALA Webinar – The Social Networking Revolution
May 31	Memorial Day, ALA Headquarters Closed
JUNE 2010	
June 16	* ALA Webinar – The Keys to Develop and Implement the Firm's Dreaded Strategic Plan
June 14 – 16	ALA– Essential Competencies for Legal Administrators, Grand Hyatt, Denver, CO
June 25 – 27	ALA– Chapter Leadership Institute, Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, NV
JULY 2010	
July 5	Independence Day, ALA Headquarters Closed
July 10 – 13	American Association of Law Libraries Annual Conference, Colorado Convention Center, Denver, CO. ALA will be exhibiting.
July 21	* ALA Webinar – Legal Risks to Assessing Candidates by Social Networking Sites
July 22	National Association for Court Management Annual Conference, Sheraton Hotel, New Orleans, LA. ALA will be exhibiting.
AUGUST 2010	
August 13 – 14	ALA– Board of Directors Meeting, Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront, Portland, OR
August 18	* ALA Webinar – Law Firm Profitability Enhancement
August 22 –26	International Legal Technology Association Annual Conference, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, Nashville, TN. ALA will be exhibiting.

Reprinted with permission from *Class Action*, the newsletter published by the Wisconsin Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators, Winter 2010

Getting Your HR Department in Order for the New Year

By Jenny Tarantino, PHR

Human resource audits are important for preventing legal and/or regulatory liability that may arise from a company's HR policies and practices. In addition, it is an opportunity to assess what an organization is doing right, as well as how things might be done differently, more efficiently or at a reduced cost. An audit can also provide a company with information about the competitiveness of its HR strategies by looking at the best practices of other companies in its industry.

There are several types of HR audits. Some of the more common types are:

- Compliance: How well is the company complying with laws and regulations?
- Best Practices: Can the organization improve its competitive advantage?
- Strategic: Do systems and processes align with the company's strategic plan or the HR department's strategic plan?
- Function-Specific: Focusing on a specific area in the HR function (i.e. payroll, performance management, records retention, etc.)

Deciding what to audit will depend largely on the perceived weaknesses in the company's HR environment. Keeping a list of issues that have arisen, but are not covered in the company's procedures or policies, will help identify areas of potential exposure that can be addressed during the annual review process (if they don't need to be addressed immediately).

There are, however, certain areas in which companies are particularly vulnerable. Most lawsuits can be traced to issues relating to hiring, performance management, discipline or termination. Some additional risk areas that should be carefully reviewed include:

- Misclassification of exempt and nonexempt jobs exposes the company to liability for past overtime.
- Inadequate personnel files equals unemployment compensation and wrongful termination claims.
- Prohibited attendance policies – Absences affect workers' compensation, family and medical leave, disability accommodations and pregnancy laws. Companies often have attendance policies that either do not comply with relevant laws and regulations or grant employees more protections than required.

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- Inaccurate time records – Time records are the employer's primary means of defense against wage and hour claims, so it is essential that timekeeping policies and practices be clearly communicated and consistently administered.
- Insufficient documentation – i.e. missing or incomplete I-9 forms. Employers can be fined between $100 and $1,000 for each failure to accurately complete an I-9 form. Fines for these violations can easily add up, with reported cases of repayment totaling over $100,000.

The general process of conducting an audit includes seven key steps:

1. Determine the scope and type of the audit: comprehensive or limited to one area.
2. Develop the audit questionnaire: It is important to invest sufficient time in developing a comprehensive document that elicits information on all the subjects of the inquiry. For example, if you are auditing Recordkeeping, you would ask if all personnel files are current, are all appropriate labor posters displayed in a conspicuous place, are documents regarding employees kept for their required duration?
3. Collect the data.
4. Benchmark the findings: This will offer insight into how the audit results compare against other similarly sized firms, national standards or internal company data. Typical information that might be internally benchmarked includes the company's ratio of total employees to HR professionals, ratio of dollars spent on HR function relative to total profit, cost per new employee hired, etc. National standard benchmarking might include the number of days to fill a position, average cost of annual employee benefits, absenteeism rates, etc.
5. Provide feedback about the results: Summarize the data and record findings and recommendations. Recommendations should be prioritized based on risk level (high, medium, low).
6. Create action plan based on risk level of items: It is critical to actually DO something with the information identified as a result of the audit. It actually increases legal risk to conduct an audit and then fail to act on the results.
7. Foster a climate of continuous improvement: Designate someone to monitor legal developments, keep track of the audit findings/changes made, turnover, complaints filed, hotline issues, employee survey results, etc. to identify trends in the company's employment-related issues. This can help in the decision of where to allocate time, money and preventative training resources in the future.

Chapter Event Dates

Meetings are normally held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

Tuesday, May 11, 2010 @ 12:00
"Marketing your Law Firm using LinkedIn
Presenter – Julia Pile, The Drew Law Firm
Luncheon – Netherland Plaza Hotel

Tuesday, June 8, 2010 @ 12:00 noon
"Work Smarter, Not Harder"
Presenter – Kim Jehn
Luncheon – Netherland Plaza Hotel

July 2010 – Social Outing – Details to follow

ALA Association of Legal Administrators

Webinars

05/19/2010
The Social Networking Revolution

06/16/2010
The Keys to Develop and Implement the Firm's Dreaded Strategic Plan

07/21/2010
Legal Risks to Assessing Candidates by Social Network Sites

08/18/2010
Law Firm Profitability Enhancement

09/15/2010
Electronic Records Management: How to Manage your ESI in the 21st Century