

Report and Recommendations
of the Subcommittee on Association Publications
of the Executive Committee
of the New York State Bar Association



Modernizing and Maximizing
New York State Bar Association
Editorial Content Distribution Methods

January 25, 2018

Table of Contents

Subcommittee Members

Introduction

NYSBA Publications

2017 Member Publications Survey

Competitive Analysis

Expenses/Revenue and Net Performance

Challenges

Solutions

Transition Planning and Timing

Conclusion and Future Work

Appendices

Subcommittee Members

Chair - Prof. Michael L. Fox, Mount Saint Mary College (9th District Vice President)
Alyssa M. Barreiro, Esq., Wilmington Trust (6th District Vice President)
Earamichia Brown, Esq., N.Y.S. Office of the State Inspector General (E.C. Member at Large)
Michael W. Galligan, Esq., Phillips Nizer LLP (E.C. Member at Large)
Sarah E. Gold, Esq., Gold Law Firm (E.C. Member at Large)
Elena DeFio Kean, Esq., DeFio Kean PLLC (E.C. Member at Large)
Peter H. Levy, Esq., Law Office of Peter H. Levy (10th District Vice President)
David H. Tennant, Esq., Nixon Peabody LLP (7th District Vice President)
Pamela McDevitt, Esq., Executive Director, NYSBA (*ex officio*)
Elizabeth Derrico, Associate Executive Director, NYSBA (*retired*) (*ex officio*)
David Weinstein, Convergency Consulting (outside consultant)
Daniel Weiller, NYSBA Staff

Introduction

Since 1876, the New York State Bar Association, as a steward of the legal profession, has helped shape the development of the law, educated and informed attorneys and the public, and championed the rights of New Yorkers and all peoples through advocacy and active involvement in our courts, legislative and executive chambers, and communities. The New York State Bar

Association has a long history of providing quality editorial and informational content to its members through publications and other communications. In 1928, as a primary value of membership, NYSBA launched its original editorial magazine. Today, NYSBA continues to create premium editorial, legislative and legal content for members. Traditionally, this content has been distributed through conventional print media such as the New York State Bar *Journal* magazine and the *State Bar News* newspaper. Additionally, NYSBA currently produces three other publications: *Sidebar*, *New York Law Digest* and *CasePrepPlus*. NYSBA's publications are disseminated to members in both digital and print formats, as well as distributed through e-mail marketing efforts.

In the summer of 2017, NYSBA President Sharon Stern Gerstman created a subcommittee of the NYSBA Executive Committee – the Subcommittee on Association Publications. The Subcommittee, chaired by Prof. Michael L. Fox, was tasked with reviewing and evaluating all Association publications, and other methods by which the Association communicates with members, and recommending any revisions, updates and changes believed necessary to redesign, reshape or redirect Association publication, communication and outreach efforts. This Report is the result of the efforts of the Subcommittee. It addresses only Association-wide

publications, and Association departments, at this time. The hope, however, is that ultimately Sections and Committees will utilize the same strategies in a coordinated, concerted effort.

The ever-increasing use of technology as a business tool, specifically computer and smartphone adoption, has created an entirely new way for people to absorb informational content.¹ Many professionals report reading less printed material, and instead rely on their electronic devices to bring them specific, practice-related and relevant content. This creates challenges for NYSBA to change methodologies and modify distribution channels to increase the value of editorial content and build a stronger brand within the legal community. When utilized effectively, content marketing strategies would simultaneously build significant value and drive additional revenue for NYSBA. This would have profound effects on brand building, search engine optimization, and social sharing opportunities.

After in-depth study, it has been determined that NYSBA currently fails to effectively maximize and market the value of this premium content.

Recent membership survey results, as outlined in this Report, confirm that change is needed in the way content is distributed and marketed. The creation of content should not change. Survey respondents indicate they are interested in the content, but they are confused by the inconsistency and lack of differentiation in editorial product. Members want articles that are relevant to their area of practice. The sheer volume of correspondence, and difficulty of differentiating among print and electronic publications confuses them, which also creates negative perceptions of NYSBA.

Therefore, the Subcommittee's Report and Recommendations review the Association's publications and communications, with an eye toward increasing revenue, reimagining content and delivery, creating the most engaging formats for e-reading, redesigning to create more attractive and functional publications, and maximizing value for NYSBA members while reducing cost. The main idea is to focus on efficiency, cost reduction and member benefits. Timeliness is a critical feature for maximizing relevance and value.

This Report utilizes language that is critical to online, electronic advertising, marketing and communication. For those unfamiliar with this language, a Glossary is provided for reference in **Appendix A**.

¹ Key trends in social and digital news media, Pew Research Center, October 4, 2017, *available at* <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/10/04/key-trends-in-social-and-digital-news-media/>.

NYSBA Publications

The NYSBA *Journal*, a magazine-style publication sent to all members, is released nine (9) times a year. This magazine has significant awareness among members and is well-received. It is supplemented by the *State Bar News*, a six (6) times-a-year publication, which publishes articles and news of NYSBA events in a newspaper format. Lack of coordination in content delivery of both publications creates gaps in distribution and member confusion. Member recognition of the *State Bar News* is very low, and its content is not repurposed effectively in other channels. It is outsourced for production and publication, making it an expensive channel that is both underutilized and lacking in membership value.

Furthermore, NYSBA issues the *Sidebar*, a bi-weekly publication, communicated solely in electronic format. *Sidebar* is created by NYSBA Staff. When the *Sidebar* began in 2015 it was intended to reduce the number of e-mails; however, it did not accomplish that goal. NYSBA has consolidated the marketing and communications staff, and intends to implement further practices that include having departments submit their information to be included in an e-mail that consolidates information from a variety of areas. There currently is no editorial calendar on what content is included in *Sidebar*.

CasePrepPlus is a publication that is distributed to members weekly, and is only communicated electronically. *CasePrepPlus* summarizes significant appellate court decisions. The format includes a concise one-paragraph summary allowing the reader to decide quickly if the case is of interest, and the summary links to the full case. Summaries are written by attorney Bruce Freeman (Rochester, NY), an independent contractor working with NYSBA.

The *New York Law Digest* is a once-a-month publication, communicated in electronic and print/mailed format. *New York State Law Digest* features articles covering significant procedural developments. This publication is edited by David L. Ferstendig, an independent contractor working with NYSBA (he speaks at two events per year in addition to the editing).

Sidebar, *CasePrepPlus* and *New York Law Digest* are not distributed to law students unless requested.

2017 Member Publications Survey

Declining NYSBA membership and budget shortfalls have created an opportunity to utilize editorial content to be more impactful, reach more people, and help define NYSBA as a thought leader in the editorial and publications areas of law. Currently NYSBA relies largely on a traditional form of content distribution through printing and mailing “hard copies” of its editorial

content. This is costly, and does not address the need for timeliness or relevance of content delivery for the member. Following the traditional editorial distribution model, content is created and distributed on NYSBA's timeline and terms. Content is being delivered with little consideration of relevance or timeliness. Content is not searchable, and the current model negates many positive marketing aspects of effective inbound marketing strategies, which are proven to organically increase brand recognition and sales.

More concerning is the sheer volume of communications being sent, causing members to complain about bombardment with multiple e-mail messages. This has a damaging effect on NYSBA's brand, as it does not position NYSBA as meeting individual member needs.

Therefore, in October of 2017, a publications survey was sent to approximately 49,273 NYSBA members (law student members were not included) to better understand their specific needs and assess areas of member interest. Of those who received the survey, 913 responded (a 1.8% response rate). Thereafter, the survey was redistributed specifically to the members of the Young Lawyers Section (as the future of NYSBA), as well as on the NYSBA Facebook page. Sixteen additional members responded. *The Survey is included herewith as a link to **Appendix F***. Results from the survey initially sent to members in October show the following, with a 3.2% margin of error:

General Observations – Demographics

- Respondents to the survey skew older than the Association's membership profile.
- Judges are slightly overrepresented among respondents.
- Solo firms are overrepresented by 10%, while large firms (more than 100 attorneys) are underrepresented by nearly 10%.

General Observations – Content

- Members want articles that are relevant to their area of practice.
- The sheer volume of correspondence confuses members. Further, as a symptom of the confusion, responses to the Survey included perceptions that the Association is too focused on large firms, New York City, solo firms, or upstate firms. There is no consensus – members in one group believe the focus of the Association is on other membership groups.
- Members find it difficult to differentiate among print and electronic publications.
- Members lack awareness about:
 - *Sidebar* bi-weekly e-newsletter.
 - Opting-in to digital-only formats.
 - Electronic delivery of the *Bar Journal* and *State Bar News*.

General Observations – Pain Points

- Members are annoyed by the volume of correspondence in both paper and digital formats.
- Members are annoyed by having to log-in to access information.
- Members perceive that the Association is too focused on areas that do not pertain to them.

General Observations – Content and Distribution

- Members want layout and design to be improved so they can easily find what they are looking for.
- Members want case analysis and breaking news that impacts their day-to-day practice.
- Members access information both online and in print. Individual members will prefer one over the other, and those preferences break generationally. Younger members prefer electronic. Indeed, according to the Survey, younger members are far more likely to access legal news and information digitally than are their older counterparts, by 17%. In accessing such information they are 3.5 times more likely to use a smartphone than those older than age 35, who are more likely to use either a tablet or a laptop/desktop when accessing material electronically.
- Older members are more likely to read all or most of both the *State Bar News* and the *Journal* than younger members. According to the Survey, 64% of members older than age 35 report reading the *Journal* “always” or “almost always,” while only 28% of younger members report that frequency. Indeed, 32% of younger members report “never” or “seldom” reading the *Journal*.
- Topic preferences do not vary much based on age, except on career-related issues and ethics. As would be expected, younger members are more likely to be looking for career advancement information. Older members are far more interested in ethics issues than younger members (which could be the subject of separate concern).
- There are two major demographic populations of NYSBA membership: those who are 35 or older, and those younger than 35 years of age. Those who are under 35 want everything accessible through their phone, tablet or computer. Those who are 35 or older generally want publications and communications on paper, or delivered in a combination of paper and electronic media. The world is changing, and NYSBA must adapt. There is a need to maximize readability, accessibility and the ability to find information. However, paper is still very important to a large segment of NYSBA members, so it should not be eliminated – at least not for the foreseeable future – for all publications. At the same time, presentation and availability of material on electronic platforms needs to be the driver for future strategy on publications.
- According to the Survey, younger members are nearly twice as likely to prefer to access the *State Bar News*, *Journal* and the *Law Digest* in digital-only format:

NYSBA Publication Preferences		
	<u>Under 35</u>	<u>Over 35</u>
<i>State Bar News</i>		
Digital Only	40%	20%
Print Only	24%	47%
Both	30%	24%
<i>State Bar Journal</i>		
Digital Only	33%	14%
Print Only	29%	50%
Both	32%	34%
<i>Law Digest</i>		
Digital Only	50%	25%
Print Only	15%	31%
Both	30%	38%

Currently NYSBA e-mail communication has a 25% open rate, with much lower engagement and click-through rates (CTR) to enclosed content. Reducing e-mail over-communication and sending relevant content to the right audience should serve to increase e-mail open rates and engagement rates. Distributing relevant content through targeted e-mail lists will create more engagement and more opportunities to share content on social media, and to increase website traffic search engine rankings. See the “Proposed Solutions” section of this Report for implementation recommendations.

Competitive Analysis

The current landscape of lawyer-related services and providers has changed significantly over the past decade. While associations are viewed positively, they are seeing increased competition from technology providers, online legal service providers, third-party providers of member benefits, and other bar associations. These factors have contributed to the decrease in NYSBA membership as members seek value and services outside of the Association.

Competitive factors include:

Other Bar Associations. For example: the ABA, the NYC Bar, local and regional bar associations, and affinity and niche-based bar associations. It would appear from our

review of the publications of these other associations that they have not implemented a significant content marketing strategy.²

Providers of legal services. Companies like LegalZoom, Rocket Lawyer; lawyer referral and pro bono services; and individual law firms have embraced content marketing to drive engagement and sales. They produce and distribute a wide range of content, which is more prominently found in search engines than current NYSBA content. For legal practitioners who distribute content, there is a host of service providers who will create and distribute content for them.³ This impacts NYSBA's ability to increase distribution and reach of its current content.

By modernizing NYSBA's content strategy to be more relevant, and more easily found in an online search, the Association will reach more attorneys – and consumers – with relevant content. This will build the NYSBA brand, which is strong but could be strengthened further.

Expenses/Revenue and Net Performance

The NYSBA *Journal* costs approximately \$46,147.00 per issue to produce. The paid editor position was eliminated in 2017, so the costs in 2018 should be approximately \$40,972.00 per issue. The advertising revenue in the *Journal* was much higher in the past and decreased significantly when Fox Advertising was selling advertising between the years 2013–2016. In June of 2016 Network Media Partners (NMP) was retained to sell advertising and sponsorship for NYSBA. NMP had sold advertising in the past for the *Journal* but the new arrangement has bundling opportunities for advertisers to reach members in a variety of print and digital platforms (NMP media kit). The projected sales by NMP for the *Journal* for 2018 are \$176,000, and they are currently at \$144,806. The bundling opportunities will increase revenue in this area. Increased engagement will also increase the *Journal* advertising revenue.

The *State Bar News* costs approximately \$35,718 per issue to produce. Network Media Partners projected that NYSBA would net approximately \$52,000 in 2018 on advertising sold in the *State Bar News*.

The above *Journal* and *State Bar News* per issue cost do not include staff positions (see *Expense/Revenue for Journal and SBN*, in **Appendix B**).

² Samples of competing bar magazine designs can be found at <http://www.nysba.org/workarea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=79826>

³ Service providers who create and distribute content, see <https://www.topseos.com/rankings-of-best-legal-content-distribution-software>.

With the onboarding of NMP in June of 2017, NYSBA significantly changed the way advertising is handled internally and externally. There is greater focus on producing non-dues revenue from a variety of new sources. NYSBA (NMP) now sells advertising/sponsorship in the *Journal*, *State Bar News*, NYSBA.org, *CasePrepPlus*, *Sidebar*, *Professional Services Guide* and CLE events, and is expanding all opportunities where advertising or sponsorship revenue could be created or increased. There is one internal staff position who manages the relationship with NMP and works with outside companies. This has improved the pricing and provided consistency with outside vendors.

NMP was conservative in their initial projections for 2018 revenue as they knew they would have to invest time rebuilding and creating relationships. As of January 10, 2018, NMP is at 80% of projected sales for the 2018 year (\$349,000), so it is anticipated revenue will exceed the projections. With the reduction/elimination of the *State Bar News*, increased readership of the magazine and increased blog traffic should boost advertising revenue significantly to cover the projected expenses for SBN.

NYSBA has kept NMP in the loop on the work of this Subcommittee to ensure advertising revenue is not negatively impacted by recommendations regarding publications.

NMP has advised NYSBA that anything that improves engagement and click-through rates will help in sales.

Challenges

Several areas in NYSBA's current content distribution model have limited the brand and editorial value. Meeting these challenges by utilizing practiced content marketing methodologies will increase the reach and the value of this content, promote increased readership inside and outside of the Association, and significantly build Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and social sharing rankings and metrics. The following observations outline specific areas that should be improved or modified to maximize the value of editorial content, maximize reach and create advertising opportunities.

- There is no editorial calendar to coordinate efforts between the *Journal*, *State Bar News*, other NYSBA publications and social media.
- There is no coordination with key industry and Association dates, CLEs, Section objectives, or House of Delegates and Annual Meeting initiatives.
- Existing content is scanned as a PDF; it is not searchable and can only be accessed by members who are logged-in to the NYSBA website.
- Content is not indexed or easily searchable within the current nysba.org website or on major search engines (Google, Bing and Yahoo).

- Content is not integrated into a content marketing strategy that integrates current blogs or social media initiatives to increase membership and sales objectives.
- Content cannot be shared by readers on social media.
- Sections currently maintain their own blogs, but most do not generate new content or manage their blogs effectively. Currently, most Sections have not added new content to or managed blog pages *since 2012*.
- The *State Bar News*, existing blog content on the nysba.org website, and nysbar.com blog page generate little ad revenue, and have low recognition and engagement rates.
- Members are receiving too much e-mail and have complained of a lack of thoughtfulness in e-mail communication. Much e-mail is being filtered directly to members' trash folders. Survey results bear this out.
- NYSBA should be viewed by all members and potential members as an effective, technologically advanced communicator. So, there is a need for relevant, effective communications to Millennials, younger audiences and law students – materials that will attract new law students and also appeal to tech-savvy members of all ages. Law students and young lawyers have stated an interest in digital content in the form of electronic content such as articles and podcasts.

Proposed Solutions

The following proposals aim to modify the existing brand, modify distribution methods, and introduce more clearly defined inbound and content marketing strategies. This will help increase revenue and branding opportunities, as well as mitigate many of the concerns revealed in the 2017 Member Publications Survey – such as reducing e-mail communications, while providing relevant content to members. These proposals will help align goals and objectives across multiple Association departments and efforts. This will create more sales and promotional opportunities, as editorial content becomes more valued and useful to members. While the *Journal* is an important medium for communication of information, a redesign will help to showcase the NYSBA brand, the value that the Association and the members place on this premium content, and will establish a more regimented and coordinated editorial calendar to assist in distributing the information in a timely manner.

Therefore, the Subcommittee's Recommendations include the following:

1. **Create a coordinated editorial calendar.** The calendar would align content with industry need and mission objectives. It should include social media placement, paid sponsorship of relevant content and tactical strategies that promote member renewal, sales and sharing of content. The ideal calendar would sync CLE offerings, publications, and Section, Committee or professional/social/mentoring events in one location full of relevant content,

with a more regimented editorial schedule to provide for more efficient delivery of information.

2. **Include Sections and CLE opportunities.** Attach relevant editorial content to CLE efforts, Sections and publications. This includes on-site programs, and electronic and print communications. A master CLE Calendar could be included in the *Journal* as part of the redesign, for a central repository of all NYSBA information and marketing.
3. **Redesign the NYSBA *Journal*.** The *Journal* is NYSBA's flagship publication, and a premium member benefit. A redesign would make it a premier electronic and paper publication of NYSBA. The redesign of the dated publication would create a more contemporary, well-designed magazine, and the electronic version would allow for a blog portal for instant and interactive communication between authors, readers and others, based on design and user experience/user interface (UE/UI) best practices. It would include design best practices to create a well-organized, beautiful monthly signature that members would keep and showcase in their waiting areas or their libraries. The redesign would add full biographies of authors and contributors, and develop thematic issues based on interest and relevance.
4. **Reimagine and re-format publication of the *State Bar News*.** As *State Bar News* conflicts with the editorial content and regular release of the *Journal*, it is recommended that *State Bar News* be reduced from a six-times-a-year publication to three times per year. This would produce an immediate savings in print and mailing costs. Explore possibility of printing *State Bar News* in-house, perhaps by tweaking size and format, and thereby affecting the release date. It is recommended that *State Bar News* event content be released as a signature three times per year (*i.e.*, corresponding with the Annual Meeting issue, Cooperstown issue and Fall election year issue), highlighting statewide events. Event content now in the *State Bar News* should be used as social media content and postings, and some could be integrated into the *Journal*, as appropriate. Article content should be integrated into the *Journal* as per a predetermined editorial media calendar.
5. **Thoughtful migration to digital channels.** Develop a migration strategy that allows members the choice of opting-out of print or mail to increase use of digital channels. This will lower printing and distribution costs significantly. Forms should be created to encourage member migration to digital channels for membership renewal, editorial content, submission of member content, and CLE, Section, publications and member services purchases.
6. **Increase digital distribution and reach of content.** Utilize social sharing, e-mail marketing, communities and blogs to increase exposure, and encourage member and non-

member sharing of content in social media channels. Align these efforts with editorial calendars and events to insure maximum reach.

7. **Use tags and keywords to organize editorial content for relevance.** Use descriptives and “tags” to identify articles by subject. Use tags and keywords to create relevant libraries in communities, e-mail distribution, Sections’ communications, etc. Consider inserting links, references and search phrases in article content.
8. **Add relevant “tagged” editorial content.** Add to all e-mails, Section and CLE communications, communities pages, blog articles, etc. This will increase “backlinks,” which build Search Engine Optimization (SEO) rankings⁴ and create more places for this relevant content to be found.⁵
9. **Centralized blog.** Create one searchable blog that categorizes and stores all content, articles and other relevant editorial content. Tag and categorize content for searchability. Add social media sharing buttons. Drive to this blog portal from e-mail, print communications and the NYSBA website. This could include combining the community pages with blog articles for more member relevance and increased social sharing.
10. **Simplify e-mail strategy to reduce overuse of e-mail to members.** Be mindful of member complaints on this issue and work to regain trust. Reduce e-mail frequency as much as possible, ideally to no more than one per day, which would include a CLE calendar, and content such as that found in *Sidebar*, *CasePrepPlus*, or the electronic version of the *Law Digest*, or their successors. Send messages that consolidate multiple communications and that are relevant to readers, while promoting products and services that can be purchased, shared and calendared for increased revenue and opportunities.⁶
11. **Reduce amount of e-mail to members.** In coordination with Recommendation 9, consolidate Association messages to reduce volume. With input from Sections manage an e-mail strategy that incorporates messages to members who subscribe to multiple Sections and practice areas. Member frustration over e-mail traffic, and member confusion as to NYSBA communications and publications, as highlighted in the Survey results, is a great detriment at a time when membership numbers have continued to fall year after year.

⁴ For more information, see <https://www.redevolution.com/what-is-seo>.

⁵ Blog SEO: How to Search Engine Optimize Your Blog Content, available at <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/seo-friendly-blog-post-checklist-ht>.

⁶ NYSBA Email redesign and test results, available at <http://www.nysba.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=79825>.

12. **Timely digital delivery.** Consider releasing content that is very relevant and current to the right audiences at the right time. Enhance the monthly print publication by posting articles as content on blogs and in social media shortly after members have received the printed magazine.⁷
13. **Develop a strong digital communications strategy to engage younger audiences.** Starting in law school channels, utilize social and digital channels to support the Pathways program. Create and distribute relevant digital content in the form of blog articles and podcasts to solicit feedback, contributions and social sharing.⁸
14. **Maximize content in social media by encouraging sharing.** All channels should prominently display social sharing buttons and links, and actively promote shareable content to increase reach to non-member audiences and other industries, and to increase NYSBA's reputation as a world thought-leader.

Transition Planning and Timing

Reaching the goals of increasing editorial value, developing inbound marketing strategies and making content more accessible and relevant will require a series of milestones. The following proposed timeline outlines key objectives and relevant dates necessary to implement a brand redesign, survey concerns, and complete a content marketing initiative.

March 2018 – Create an editorial calendar that integrates topical *Journal* issues, key Association dates for CLE, Sections and publications, and e-mail and social media schedules.

March 2018 – Develop all tagged article content into a comprehensive e-mail strategy that attaches relevant article content to outbound e-mails by interest and category. Align with CLE, Section and Publications editorial calendars to support reduction of e-mail and maximization of e-mail open and click-through rates (CTR).

March/April 2018 – Redesign the *Journal*. The redesign will include all aspects of the publication: content, organizational and visual elements. This is tentatively scheduled to launch in the March/April issue of the *Journal* dedicated to the theme of technology in the profession.

⁷Content Distribution Strategy Timeline, available at <http://www.nysba.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=79827>

⁸See also **Appendix D**, annexed hereto.

⁹"5 Key Research Findings about Young Audiences from BBC World Service", available at <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/five-key-research-findings-about-young-online-audiences-from-bbc-world-service/s2/a588021/>.

September 2018 – Move the *Journal* to a monthly schedule, with January–November distribution (11 issues per year, with one combined 2-month issue).

September 2018 – Deploy a blog of recent and archived articles on the nysba.org website. Archive, tag and catalog articles for social media sharing, e-mail and SEO. Reduce and consolidate current disparate blog assets into new format. This includes individual Section blogs, Pathways blogs, and online *State Bar News* and *Journal* pdfs.

September 2018 – Reimagining and reformatting of the *State Bar News*. Communication plans to advise members should be implemented in June, three months prior to the September date.

December 2018 – Integrate blog articles into Community pages by tagged category.

January 2019 – Create a year-end *State Bar News* signature for Annual Meeting distribution.

Conclusion and Future Work

By utilizing a content marketing strategy to market already valuable editorial content, the Association will achieve the following goals:

- Deliver targeted, relevant content to members – the right information for them, to be accessed at their convenience.
- Significantly reduce expenses by cutting back on printing and mailing.
- Increase the value of editorial content by extending its lifespan beyond 45 days.
- Strengthen the Association’s brand beyond our loyal member base, and position NYSBA as a thought leader.
- Deliver content by boosting search results so people looking for this information can find it – including going beyond NYSBA membership (which may aid in attracting new members).
- Increase the relevance of e-mails and NYSBA communities by incorporating relevant content.
- Create opportunities for content to be shared and discussed.

Additional scope of work to increase the effectiveness of editorial reorganization and distribution channels will include the following support initiatives:

- Build a centralized blog portal, integrating communities and member information through a specific web community/blog portal(s). Seek buy-in from all NYSBA departments (Sections and Meeting Services, CLE, Publications) and Sections and Committees, to coordinate all efforts in the best interests of the members. This includes commitment to creating and cultivating content to support members’ and the Association’s goals and efforts. While it is understood that Sections have, for some time, operated in a largely independent fashion, the fact remains that the Sections are part of the larger New York State Bar Association. To

paraphrase a popular advertising campaign, “what is good for NYSBA is good for all the Sections and members.” If the current financial, membership and communications obstacles are not addressed in a coherent, concerted and cooperative effort, neither the NYSBA nor its Sections will be able to anticipate prosperous days. Rather, what lies on the horizon may be quite different.

- Work with Publications to incorporate best practices for tagging and categorizing content. This includes adding keywords and links to each article for increased Search Engine Optimization or SEO.
- Work with IT to integrate recurring membership renewal, monthly payments, product purchases, member preferences, etc., through the IMIS MCIF. This will insure that auto renewals, pre-purchasing of CLEs and publications, section renewals and other sales opportunities can be mapped, implemented and tracked easily.
- Coordinate the categorization and organization of content for communications, CLE, Sections, and Publications to identify sales opportunities in Sections, CLE and Publications. Then drive automated marketing messages through web pages and e-mails to support increased sales opportunities.

For example, the following audiences should be identified and mapped for auto enrollment/ renewal and purchase each year.

Audience	Message
Active members	NEW! Auto renew and monthly billing options
All previous CLE attendees	Pre-register for your topical CLE(s)
Members who have not renewed membership in the past 4 years	We miss you. (renew)
Section renewals	Auto renew, monthly billing, bulk discounts
Annual meeting attendees	Register, share on social media
Non-Annual Meeting attendees in the past 2 years	We miss you. (attend)

- Develop a thoughtful migration communication strategy that fully manages members’ expectations about the changes in how we will be communicating with them. Develop a

communication timeline outlining how and when these changes will be implemented, along with a three-month schedule for reimagining, digitization and engagement.

Conclusion: With the adoption of the above recommendations, the New York State Bar Association should see significant increases in the value and exposure of its editorial content and, ultimately, the value of the NYSBA brand. At the same time, we anticipate a reduction in excessive print distribution costs, and expect that the Association will be positioned as a leader in content distribution and marketing. This will have profound impact on exposure in industry trades and events, social media channels, and in member pride in NYSBA. This will also mitigate excessive communications to members, and address many of the shortcomings found in the 2017 Member Publications Survey.

The Subcommittee on Association Publications of the NYSBA Executive Committee is confident that these recommendations will positively impact Association budgets, maximize staff labor hours, and build increased member relationships as NYSBA moves to modernize the effectiveness of editorial content distribution.

Appendices

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

Appendix B – *Expense/Revenue Report for Journal and State Bar*

Appendix C – *Content Distribution Strategy Timeline*

Appendix D – *Journal Redesign and Blog Page Design*, also available at <http://www.nysba.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=79844>.

Appendix E – *Sample Communities Page Design*, also available at <http://www.nysba.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=79845>

Appendix F – *2017 Member Publications Survey*

Appendix G – *2004 Report and Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Association Publications*

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

Blog - A blog (a truncation of the expression “weblog”) is a discussion or informational website published on the World Wide Web consisting of text entries (“posts”). Posts are typically displayed in reverse chronological order, so that the most recent post appears first, at the top of the web page.

Content Marketing - Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.

Inbound Marketing - Inbound marketing is focused on attracting customers through relevant and helpful content and adding value at every stage in your customer’s buying journey. With inbound marketing, potential customers find you through channels like blogs, search engines, and social media. Unlike outbound marketing, inbound marketing does not need to fight for potential customers’ attention. By creating content designed to address the problems and needs of your ideal customers, you attract qualified prospects and build trust and credibility for your organization.

Keywords - A keyword, in the context of search engine optimization, is a particular word or phrase that describes the contents of a Web page. Keywords are intended to act as shortcuts that sum up an entire page. Keywords form part of a Web page’s metadata and help search engines match a page with an appropriate search query.

Search Engine Marketing - Search engine marketing (SEM) is a form of Internet marketing that involves the promotion of websites by increasing their visibility in search engine results pages

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - The process of maximizing the number of visitors to a particular website by ensuring that the site appears high on the list of results returned by a search engine.

Social Media Marketing - Social media marketing is the process of marketing through social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. By utilizing the social aspect of the Web, social media marketing is able to connect and interact on a much more personalized and dynamic level than through traditional marketing.

Tagging Content - In information systems, a tag is a keyword or term assigned to a piece of information (such as an Internet bookmark, digital image, database record, or computer file). This kind of metadata helps describe an item and allows it to be found again by browsing or searching.

Appendix B – Expense/Revenue Report for Journal and State Bar News

New York State Bar Journal

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Average Cost Per Issue (9 Per Year)</u>	
2016	130,174.40	418,138.07	(287,963.67)	Postage	17,701
2015	106,690.40	464,083.69	(357,393.29)	Printing	22,490
2014	58,272.40	476,642.03	(418,369.63)	Editor	5,175
2013	210,171.82	473,659.95	(263,488.13)	Insurance & Other	781
2012	203,594.42	480,567.15	(276,972.73)		
2011	184,440.75	590,326.59	(405,885.84)	Total	46,147
2010	181,047.46	573,754.07	(392,706.61)		
2009	238,770.01	592,128.00	(353,357.99)		
2008	295,103.09	587,689.48	(292,586.39)		
2007	215,933.24	546,223.29	(330,290.05)		

New York State Bar News

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Average Cost Per Issue (6 Per Year)</u>	
2016	21,476.26	173,259.11	(151,782.85)	Postage	16,187
2015	19,602.84	256,857.18	(237,254.34)	Printing	15,704
2014	33,417.33	247,411.60	(213,994.27)	Writers/Photo	3,484
2013	91,173.70	275,847.50	(184,673.80)	Insurance & Other	343
2012	99,042.19	266,417.88	(167,375.69)		
2011	75,813.93	317,433.54	(241,619.61)	Total	35,718
2010	67,325.30	255,249.65	(187,924.35)		
2009	72,416.93	274,247.59	(201,830.66)		
2008	123,288.55	314,046.63	(190,758.08)		
2007	126,360.48	316,689.45	(190,328.97)		

Appendix C – Content Distribution Strategy Timeline

Proposed calendar timeline for content distribution

The following methodology is how NYSBA currently distributes content to its members in print and digitally.

Current distribution system:

Day 1:

Printed journal distributed to members
Journal PDF posted on NYSBA website

Limitations to this method include:

Inaccessibility to non members through search.
Non-searchable content lives behind the firewall, requiring login access to view. Limits exposure to outside audiences and potential members
Limits longevity to about 45 days before content becomes irrelevant and unable to be found.
Lacks Search optimization, which depresses search rankings for the nysba.org site overall.
Lacks social sharing which significantly reduces exposure.

This provides a very short life expectancy of 30-45 days for relevance of content before it's forgotten and not referenced in search.

Proposed distribution system:

This strategy will allow for a creation of a centralized blog page where content can be continually added and repurposed.

Day 1:

Printed journal distributed to members

Day 3:

Relevant content is continually delivered in secondary channels like emails, communities, and on-site events based on “tagged” relevance of content.

Day 10:

Articles begin to be added to website blog page. This is the landing page for all article links where article views and social sharing can be promoted and tracked through analytics.

Articles are added 2 -3x weekly until all relevant editorial content is moved to the blog pages in advance of the next print distribution release.

Day 30:

Next edition of the Journal printed and distributed to members, 30 day cycle begins again.

Benefits to this method include:

Accessibility of content to non members through search.
Searchable content increases Google SEO page rankings
Increases exposure to outside audiences and potential members
Increases longevity indefinitely as topical “tagged” content can be found in searches
Increase exposure when people share articles and content in social media