

INTERNET

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Law firms use podcasts to attract young recruits

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As Boston law firms chase early-adopted law school graduates, podcasts are expected to play a more important role in coming years.

Law firms are producing MP3-based programs for young recruits and posting them on websites for marketing purposes. Some firms use the podcast to recruit prospective employees, including future lawyers. Others use the technology for client development — educating current and potential clients about legal issues.

A Wellesley company, **Legal Insight Media Inc.**, recently produced podcasts for two Boston firms — **Goulston & Storrs PC** and **Day, Berry & Howard LLP**.

But more firms are expected to use podcasts for marketing, said **Michael Rynowecer**, president of **The BTI Consulting Group**, a Wellesley marketing consultant to law firms.

"It's an excellent tool, especially now that we have early adopters," he said. "Many times law firms will see if anyone else is doing it. They like to see if it's really going to work first."

Northeastern University law student **Marshall Senterfitt**, 27, said he's looked at 25 to 30 Boston law firms — and has interviewed at roughly 10 of them. But he's only seen podcasts at Goulston & Storrs.

He said podcasts are only helpful if they answer questions that he wouldn't ask a partner directly — such as pay levels or vacation policies.

"If it's helpful information, that's great," Senterfitt said. "If it's just a repeat of the brochure, then it's not."

Podcasts are a quicker and more effective way for firms to get their message to time-pressed law students, **Legal Insight** President **Peter Marx** said.

"They get much better information listening than just reading something on a website," he said.

Marx said he got the idea for the podcasts for law firms after reading about Boston consulting firm **Bain & Co. Inc.** using them.

"I just thought, 'We could do this better,'" he said. "There's definitely going to be more of it — it just makes so much sense."

Boston's Goulston & Storrs launched a 16-part podcast series this month to answer questions from prospective new lawyers. The programs are based on questions that summer associates said they

wanted answered but wouldn't ask firm officials directly, said **Jennifer Smith**, Goulston & Storrs' legal recruitment coordinator.

Questions related to issues such as the partner-to-associate ratios and whether associates would be offered positions if they didn't perform well as interns, Smith said.

Goulston & Storrs associate **Deborah DosSantos**, who graduated from Harvard Law School in 1998, participated in the making of two of the podcasts. She said selecting a firm can be stressful for a new lawyer, and podcasts can ease some of that stress.

"There's no better marketing than hearing it directly from the people who are actually doing it," she said.

Day, Berry & Howard, which operates offices in eight cities including Boston, posted three podcasts for its website, according to its chief marketing officer, **Roberta Montafia**.

Podcasts are a useful recruiting tool because they are quick, to the point and in a medium that potential employees understand, she said.

Kim A. Perret, president of the **Legal Marketing Association** and chief marketing officer of Washington D.C.-based **Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP**, estimates up to 20 percent of firms nationally use podcasts. Perret said their use isn't limited to recruiting or to a specific type of firm. "It's really about the firm and the feedback they're getting from clients, and how they want to project themselves," Perret said.

She expects widespread adoption of podcasts as a marketing tool.

"It will grow exponentially," she said. "You can't ignore technology."

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