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## Social Practice Management with “MyCase”

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When I began my practice almost 30 years ago, the primary office equipment consisted of a typewriter and a “Xerox” machine. I held out from purchasing a fax machine for as long as possible. I thought facsimile machines were a passing fad and only necessary if I were an architect or accountant.

Needless to say, times have changed. Computer programs drive word processing systems and manage data faster and more efficiently than ever. I can complete a document that I started on my iPad which automatically appears on my iPhone, office or home computer. The scanner has replaced the fax machine in the amount of usage. Communication is sent and received instantaneously through the cloud. Automated programs from credit reporting agencies download the creditors’ names, addresses, account numbers and debt amounts into bankruptcy software, reducing hours of preparation time of bankruptcy petitions. Courts now require Bankruptcy petitions to be filed electronically, which means cases can be filed 24 hours a day without leaving my office. Gone are the days of racing to the bankruptcy court in my car to beat a foreclosure sale on the courthouse steps.



With instant access to the Courts, it seemed like a natural progression for clients to have instant access to their attorney, documents, dates, and information about their cases. I subscribe to an attorney/client social media service that functions like “Facebook”. The San Diego-based company is called “My Case” ([www.mycaseinc.com](http://www.mycaseinc.com)) and refers to itself as “Social Practice Management”. This website grants immediate access to my clients. Clients are given permission to

enter a secured website that gives them access to their particular information, documents, files, and dates. They can upload and download documents. My Case now gives clients access to me 24 hours a day. They can send and receive secured messages to me whenever they are able. My bankruptcy clients, especially the Chapter 11 clients who have to submit monthly operating reports, are always able to communicate with me. I am somewhat of a workaholic so it is not rare for me to dialogue with clients at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning.

The significance of this social media is that client communication and relationships are improved. The ability to share the file with the client and giving them unlimited access to information as their case develops allows them to participate and gives them greater confidence in the work we do for them because they are involved in the process. Clients are able to immediately share any opinion or new circumstances that may affect their case. They can review and comment upon their bankruptcy petitions at every stage of the case. If a hearing date is continued, the new date and the reason for the change are simultaneously reported in their electronic folder. A court order or tentative decision is instantly shared with the client once it is received. Clients have immediate access to the flow of correspondence, motions, and due diligence that occurs during their case.

Needless to say, clients appreciate this new line of communication. All communication is documented. Clients can always go back to their electronic folder to review dates, documents, or instructions that were previously given. More importantly, clients know that they can always “reach” me when telephonic communication is difficult. Playing “telephone tag” is as extinct as “typewriters” and “Xerox” machines! Social media has helped streamline our bankruptcy practice and made our office communication more efficient.



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