

Introduction: Welcome to the Enchanting Lawyer Podcast. The show that walks you step by step to improving strategies you can use today to grow your business. We show you how being kind, useful, and, of course, enchanting will bring you more clients and build a thriving community. Now here's your host from sunny San Diego, Jacob Sapochnick.

Jacob: Hello everybody, this is Jacob Sapochnick, the host of the Enchanting Lawyer Podcast. Welcome to our show.

Every week we try to gather creative, innovative people in the legal space and also entrepreneurs, who are not lawyers, to share their ideas with us and help us just do our job better.

Today, I have an interesting company and the founder of company called LawLytics. The company was actually started by an attorney and a software engineer and their promises to empower lawyers to have better websites, made better marketing choices, and get a better value from their marketing. They believe that every law firm should own and control their own websites, and the content, and they also build systems to allow them to do it easily.

I am excited to have the founder of the company Dan Jaffe join us here from Phoenix, Arizona. How are you, Dan?

Dan: I'm good Jacob, how are you doing?

Jacob: Actually, you're in Tucson, not in Phoenix.

Dan: Yeah, we're in Tucson.

Jacob: Yeah, perfect. I'm doing pretty good. I'm excited to have you on the show.

Most of our listeners are attorneys and other professionals, you are an attorney yourself. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your journey from an attorney to somebody who is in a tech base. I'm personally curious to learn about your transition and what you do at LawLytics.

Dan: Sure, yeah, and thank you for having me on.

I graduated from law school in '98 and started my first solo practice in Seattle in '99. At that time, the internet was just coming on board as a viable way of communicating. I was sitting there in my office doing work for other lawyers, just barely scraping by trying to survive, waiting for the phone to ring, and decided to teach myself how to build a website.

Built it and was one of the first lawyers to have a website in the Seattle area, trying to attract clients, and my practice just immediately took off once the website was launched and started getting traction.

Was there for a few years practicing and ended up then moving down to Phoenix for a number of different reasons, including my wife is from Arizona, and did it again there in Arizona; practiced in Arizona really until 2009. During that time, I was constantly getting questions asked of me by other attorneys both in the Phoenix area and in other jurisdictions, how are you doing this, how are you attracting clients online.

Around 2008, a friend of mine from Seattle was trying to grow his practice which happened to be a DUI in criminal defense practice which was the area that I was focusing on as well. I had this domain name, DUIattorney.com that I had purchased early on in my career. I decided, well, I could see if I could try to help him get some business by developing it and in more of kind of like a joint tenancy type website, and did that.

It ended up taking off so quickly as a directory where attorneys basically occupied exclusive areas within their state or counties. Within a year, I had to make the decision, do I do that full time or do I practice law full time because there was no time to do both well. Having started two successful law practices, I was kind of bit by the tech bug. Basically saw that through; started getting acquisition offers from big companies shortly into it really taking off.

We ran it for about 2 years and finally got an offer that I thought was in the best interest of both our attorney-customers and the company and my family as a whole. And that acquisition offer was what was going to see LawLytics which is an idea that I'd had for many years and wanted to go. That's what led me to startup LawLytics.

Jacob: There's something that you mentioned earlier describing when you build your practice. What do you think was the main difference in the way you were running your website and generating leads back in the day that was so popular and so attractive for you to be able to get those clients?

Dan: Well, back then I think it may have just been a numbers game. So if you're the first actor in a new market and there's a lot of competition, then you have a severe advantage. At that time there was this internet boom going on in the Seattle area, there's Microsoft there, there's Amazon there, there are a bunch of other startups as well with all these tech savvy young people who were getting arrested for various things, mostly DUIs. They did not want to open the phone book, they wanted to look online and it was me and essentially one or two other attorneys there. I got to have a lot more conversations than young lawyer in his mid-20s would typically have based on that.

I saw that that worked and I've always been a student of what works online and trying to see a couple steps ahead whenever possible. Back then pay per click came on and at that point to get a case using pay per click, the acquisition cost was roughly 15 or 20 cents because nobody was doing it. Each click was a penny or two. As each of these spaces got crowded, they became less cost effective if not less viable. For me, it's always been kind of discovering that next line.

Jacob: I think it's so important what you just said being first in anything that we do, especially in the legal space because everybody, back in the day we're in the Yellow Pages, how can you penetrate that? It's impossible.

And so you said being first ... I kind of compare it to what I've done in the social media space, we were the first to use Facebook as a predominant tool to reach out to our clients and build a platform which was, again, today it will be very difficult to do what I've done five years ago. But, again, being first and finding out what is the next thing is really crucial especially in our industry because everybody's copying each other. I'll just do the same website, I'll just do the same blog, and it's very difficult to do that. Again, that area of DUI is so competitive. These are great insights as to what you've done.

So tell us a little bit about LawLytics. Why did you decided to do another company that will do websites for attorneys? I mean there's so many of them out there. What is different about LawLytics?

Dan: When I was practicing early on, actually when I had first started my practice in the Phoenix area, this is about four years into practice. Got very busy and got to the point where the internet was becoming more and more competitive and decided to try to delegate some of the work on my website. Ended up delegating it to a company that had a great sales pitch and ended up almost completely ruining my website. If I hadn't caught what they had done which was a bunch of really nefarious practices at the time that I did catch them and stayed up all night and changed it, my website would have gone down and gotten banned along with all of their other customers.

At that point it made me realize that, one, as an attorney, there's not enough hours in the day to become a tech expert and a marketing expert and an expert in all these other things that you really need to be able to keep up a comprehensive web presence. What I wanted, I had this vision of what would the ideal technology do to empower me to be able to market my practice, participate in as much as I wanted to without really having to worry about how it's happening behind the scenes.

The technology there didn't exist at the time. There's all these companies that provide various legal marketing offerings, most of them don't have their own technology, and I saw some severe advantages both to the customers and from a

business model and the long-term of building our own technology. And so that's what we did.

Jacob: Essentially, if I'm an attorney and I want to use LawLytics, what would I get? So you'll build a website and also give me the power to control ...

Dan: Yes. Typically speaking, if you're an attorney that signs up, either you have a website or you don't. Most attorneys have a website of some sort at this point, and a lot of attorneys are not happy with the way that their website is going, or they just want to be able to do more or they have to email their web guy to make changes or whatever the case may be.

And so the first thing we do is either build them a website using our platform or build the website using our platform and import their existing website. Once we do that, we have the sandbox where we can show them what their website is going to look like, how they're going to control it and so forth, before it's ever launched. And then we give them training and strategy on how to use it.

Not only do we teach them how to blog but how to configure their contents so that it conforms the best practices using Google Webmasters guidelines and also talk about site architecture. How if they're going to build a site that has 500 or 1000 pages, how they might want to plan that out and organize it if they're going to do it themselves.

Because a lot of attorneys come in with a lot of enthusiasm, they want to build this empire. Without the right guidance right out front, they can quickly paint themselves into a corner and cause a lot more work and it can be discouraging. We're not only providing the technology but we're providing kind of the road map and the guidance to get to where they want to go.

Now some attorneys don't want to go there, they just want to have something that's mobile compatible, responsive, looks great when they get referral so that there's a soft place to land. We certainly provide that as well. But really, the power of LawLytics is in the technology combined with the collaboration with us.

Jacob: Right. One thing that's interesting and I wanted to – it was good that you came in the show. Is that I speak to a lot of attorneys and law firms, it looks like many of them are in the process of rebuilding or redesigning the websites these days. I'm sure you see that as well. Why do you think is that? Like why now, why so many law firms are eager to change their websites and redesign them.

Dan: Well, from the conversations that we have with attorneys, it's not that they just started changing their mind about the fashion of their website. It's just their website as it is or was has stopped working. Most attorneys, if it's working it's producing ... They don't necessarily want to change things just to change them.

They've been either with a company for a long time and that company has maybe painted them into a corner using black hat tactics that used to work but are no longer viable. Or they did it themselves and they've taken it as far as they can go themselves, and maybe their website is not mobile compatible. Or maybe it's even responsive but it wasn't designed with a mobile first approach and they're realizing that their client base is now largely mobile.

There's all kinds of reasons but I think it all boils down to the same thing in that they realize how important the internet is and how ineffective what they currently have has been for them.

Jacob: Right. I also think, again, like you said, having a website that's not working for you is definitely a reason for somebody to start thinking, "Well, I better change something." I also see, you know, the economist definitely doing better, attorneys are making more money. I feel that they feel that they understand the value of marketing more than before.

Before our lawyers thought marketing was just, you know, you do it when needed, but now they know that they have to do it on an ongoing basis. It's not like when business is not ... you don't have business coming from the door you have to start marketing, no, you have to do it on a regular basis and the first thing is a website. I always tell people that if you don't have a good website that tells a story or educates your customers for the sake of educating them, not for selling, then you're not doing a good job.

I wanted to ask you, what are some of the things that you see right now, some of the new trends in website design, website ... some things that we need to know as lawyers as we plan or redesign or upgradeable website, what are some of the things in 2015 as we almost come to the end of the year we should be aware of?

Dan: I think the first and biggest thing on everybody's mind is how does it perform in a mobile touch enabled environment. Can people contact you by touching the phone number on the phone, can they use the gestures that they're comfortable navigating with. And as the experience transition well from a mobile to a desktop or laptop environment and back and forth because the content is going to get consumed on so many different screen sizes and devices.

It's not enough to just make it mobile compatible anymore, that's become a buzzword and it's a very low standard. It really has to be designed for mobile first and when you do that because it's a smaller screen size then you get a good experience on all screen sizes. Because it's a lot easier to design something that's beautiful and functional for a desktop than it is for a screen or for a cell phone size screen. So there's a lot of that.

There's always a lot of distractions that people get focused on which I think are important to potentially ignore a lot of trends, a lot of plugins, a lot of bells and whistles that people come to us and they say, "I think I need all these things, all these 50 plugins that you live chat, that you live video that do all these things. But we try to focus them on the environment that the potential clients are going to consume the content in and the content itself first because that's really the foundation that everything else is built on. Technology trends come and go.

Jacob: If you're talking about technology right now, can you point to a specific platform or technology that you think lawyers should be embracing right now in their websites that is something new that came out in the past year or so?

Dan: As far as anything that came out in the past year or so, I don't really think that much has changed. We've tried to design LawLytics to be comprehensive. We are not a WordPress platform. I know that's what a lot of attorneys are focused on right now. We are proprietary.

There's a lot of WordPress plugins that come out, come and go, and become kind of trendy amongst attorneys. We hear these different things recommended and attorneys ask if they can use this. Most of the stuff we already have native in LawLytics that we've determined that it is useful for attorneys to have.

But in terms of outside things that we don't do that I am starting to see a greater need for that if you were to ask me a couple of years ago, whether I think this is a good idea or not, is more of the marketing automation end of it.

Several years ago, I was of the opinion that if you're an attorney and ... especially if you're in something that's sensitive like criminal defense or bankruptcy or divorce, you don't necessarily want to have a drip email sequence coming to you just because you visited a lawyer's website and requested information.

Now we are starting to recommend that in certain areas or practice, when done tastefully and strategically, that lawyers do start to embrace marketing automation. Because it allows them to keep in contact with and exert influence on those that are researching even though they may not necessarily be ready to engage an attorney.

Jacob: Right. And I think the follow-up process and the communication of automation is important because most people complain they don't get follow up from their attorneys, so they may send them an email with an inquiry and they never get a response back. I think with a proper automation it can happen that you get several emails, eventually the client will like to engage with you because they feel that there is a consistent follow-up from the firm side. Absolutely, automation is key.

What is your opinion on blogging? Because, you know, blogging was huge several years ago and then recently people don't see so much value in blogging. And also talking about blogging, blogs that are part of the website or separate from those sites. I'll be curious to know your opinion on that as well.

Dan: I see the two questions as absolutely related.

First of all, I don't agree at all that the blogging is in anyway diminished from where it was. I think that blogging is every bit as powerful as it ever was. I think that there are marketing [purposes 00:20:12] out there that are trying to convince attorneys to spend money on disposable advertising, pay per click marketing, remarketing. These things that one don't require any effort or thought from attorneys.

Two, [unclear 00:20:27] the marketer's pockets are better. I think the ones that are being honest about it that are really encouraging attorneys to do what's in their best interest are still very much encouraging attorneys to blog. Because the fact is it works like nothing else works.

When you're talking about having either a website or a blog or the two of those combined, back in 2003, 2004, it was really difficult to have the two of those things together. The best you'd have to have a blog on a sub-domain because the technology wasn't there, blogs definition was basically a journal online that you can update periodically. The website was more of the static content.

I believe that in most cases, and there's certainly are some exceptions, that the website and the blog should be combined. I think that it's a bogus argument at this point in the internet's evolution, to argue that the website is advertising, the blog is just conversation.

The fact is that pretty much every attorney that's out there is not blogging for their health, they're blogging because they're trying to build readership, they're trying to build influence, and ultimately the goal is to get new clients whether it's through referrals or reaching them directly. I think it's more efficient to have the two of those combined if it's done in a tasteful way.

It's natural. It's a potential client referral source is reading a blog and they like what the attorney has to say to want to find out about that attorney and the services they offer and so forth, and to disrupt them and have to take them to another property, I don't think is the right tactic in 2015 and beyond.

Jacob: Right. And we talked about this earlier before we start the podcast that there's been a lot of changes in SEO strategies and just the way content is being created. Why don't you talk a little bit about that? What are some of the new ways content should be created? Before the notion was that we have to use heavy

keywords, we have to place those keywords everywhere, we have to write articles for SEO. Right now it feels like it's more for the content itself. Why don't we talk about that, some of these changes, and what does it mean for lawyers.

Dan: Well, if you look at Google's intension historically, it's – and I say Google because it's the dominant search engine. You could substitute any of the other search engines as well. Their business is largely based on giving their customers, the researchers, the best, most relevant results. All of the keyword stuffing used to go on was very much designed to trick Google.

Google has gotten a heck of a lot smarter than any of the internet marketers that might cold call a lawyer's office at this point, and in order to sell stuff like keywords and [honor 00:23:46] and backlinks and so forth. I think that most of that stuff is completely useless if not counterproductive at this point.

The way that I would like to describe it to our clients is when you go to create content for your website, if you really sit down and think about when you're sitting across your desk or your conference table from a potential client, what questions do they have of you? How do they ask those questions? What words do they use? Where are their major concerns?

If you will write your website, and whether it's a website or a blog, I'm just talking about all the material that you put online in a place that you own and control, so on your domain. As you add that information, if you're answering their questions the way that they would ask them, it's not only going to do well with the search engines, it's going to also convert those people into fans, followers and potential customers or clients if they need it later on.

Google is just basically a one big question board where people go to ask questions that they want answers for. As attorneys, we have to give them the answers. If we just give them a page that's stuffed with keywords or is written in poor English or whatever the searcher's native language happens to be, it might get them there if the trick works for a while but it's still not going to convert them well.

Jacob: I totally agree with that. Answering questions, write down questions that clients ask and craft content around that is definitely going to be the way to go in the future. That's what the search engine's the one you see in. Yeah, it's actually good practice because not only it helps you rank high but also people who come to your website, they can feel that you generally know what you're doing and know what to do, right?

Dan: Yeah, absolutely. There's also an ancillary benefit that once the person becomes a client that you've done enough to educate them on your website and blog. One, it's going to take less of your time answering their questions. Unless you're



charging by the hour, that is probably a good thing. Also, as a great place to set expectations and do some pre-retention client expectation management which can also go a long ways. It gets them participating more and more involve in their case without you having to spend any additional time.

Jacob: Exactly. Absolutely.

Hopefully that's something that people can take away from this because, again, content and how to create it and what to write is always a big question people want to know.

Dan, as we come to the end of our show, I wanted to perhaps ask you this question, maybe you can share this with our listeners. If I want to ask you what will be the best way to [unclear 00:26:57] to craft their website strategy, what will be kind of like a mini roadmap that you will tell somebody to follow?

Dan: Well, one, I don't think that there are any shortcuts. For me, it's really difficult to encapsulate it in a couple of minutes of talking about it. But I think it really boils down to you, as the attorney, know everything about your practice area and you're head better than anybody else knows it. You also care about your practice more than anybody is going to care about your practice for you.

The single most effective thing that you can do, even if you don't do any of the work on your website or your market in yourself is to not advocate that responsibility entirely. Because if you don't spend time thinking about what you want and how to get it and learning about how this stuff works, there's so many predatory marketing companies out there that their sales pitches are going to sound better to you than the things that really work because there's a lot of stuff that sounds. Once you understand how the stuff works it is too good to be true. And so the best thing that you can do is protect yourself by becoming involved.

And then really it's just a matter of focusing in on who you want to communicate with. I see that you've done a really good job of really focusing your practice on a niche area and I'm assuming that that has served you really well.

Jacob: Yeah, absolutely. I've decided early on that one practice area will be the way to go. Just because you can focus the content, you can get more authority, and just be able to position yourself as an expert. So that's one way to do it. I agree that ... trying to understand who is the audience, who are the people that you want to attract to the website is always something that I ask myself every time and that's how we tweak our content.

We're not serving everybody. Even within immigration, our client is defined as an immigrant who came here to the purpose to start a business. Just an idea of ... if you're a criminal attorney, your profit will be that client, and then you want

to [rife 00:29:26] with that person, and build all your branding for that avatar who is your client. I think it'll be helpful to work for someone like you who works with clients and also for us when we come to work with a web developer that we know who we are trying to sell and who we're serving.

Dan: Yeah, absolutely, who do you want to influence. Attorneys tend to use big words. When we're talking, especially amongst ourselves, we tend to forget that a lot of people that haven't gone through law school or even practice law don't understand those words. It's a matter of really considering your audience like you said.

Jacob: Exactly.

Dan, I wanted to thank you for coming in the show. Why don't you tell us where the listeners can find your website, and maybe connect with you if you have an email or a Twitter account.

Dan: Great, yeah. Again, thank you for having me. I really appreciate it. It's been a great conversation.

The company is LawLytics. We're at [www.lawlytics.com](http://www.lawlytics.com). Our phone number is 800-713-0161. If anybody's heard this podcast and wants to speak directly with me, they can email me directly at [dan@lawlytics.com](mailto:dan@lawlytics.com) or call our main number and I'm happy to chat.

Jacob: Perfect. Thank you so much, Dan, for taking the time and coming on the show. Thank you to our listeners who listen every week. Sending your emails, comments, and help us improve our show and to get great speakers and guest to come on and share their wisdom.

From sunny San Diego, I'm saying goodbye and we'll see you next time in our next episode.

Closing: Thanks for listening. You can find even more resources, including the show notes for this episode, at [enchantinglawyer.com](http://enchantinglawyer.com). That's [www.enchantinglawyer.com](http://www.enchantinglawyer.com).