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Now that the successful New York Committee program is behind us, I find myself again trying to find what are the best and most useful law blogs out there in the overgrown underbrush of the internet. Being fairly lazy (and having conflicting obligations and responsibilities that prevent me from spending all my time reviewing law blogs), I chose to focus on different listings of law blogs, as a short-cut to finding what is best out there.

One very useful source is the website entitled simply Top Law Blogs, found at http://www.avvo.com/stats/top_legal_blogs. It is posted by Avvvo, which promotes itself as being the world's largest legal directory. They list several hundred blogs, and rate them based on a 30-day average of rankings, to identify the "top" blogs. However, their rankings are based on the Alexa ranking—which is based on web site traffic. They apparently have a list of law blogs, and track their performance on the Alexa ranking, then use those rankings to rank the law blogs.

Avvvo's highest rated Law Blog, based on an Alexa ranking of 28,565, is for Above the Law (<http://www.abovethelaw.com>). It's a useful site but I am skeptical that website traffic can usefully identify the most helpful websites for busy practitioners—since no matter how many lawyers there seem to be, and sometimes it seems like quite a lot, there are many, many more non-lawyers who are visiting websites and driving up Alexa ranks.

Avvo's highest ranking site is interesting however—Above the Law has a variety of law related articles, including one about an attempt to get intellectual property lawyers to sign up for \$395 a month for administrative fees, and to pay 20% of any funds received to the organizing company which doesn't actually have any clients or customers looking for intellectual property services but hopes that the "partner" attorneys will identify customers or clients. So its not quite clear what the lawyers are getting for what they pay, but it seems like a pretty good deal for the company. The big "advantage" the founder mentioned was that although the only service being provided is legal services, since the company itself is a management services company, it claims not to be bound by the limitations on client solicitation and advertising restrictions. <http://abovethelaw.com/2010/05/is-anyone-desperate-enough-to-do-this/> As you may be able to tell from the title of the article ("Is Anyone Desperate Enough to Do This"), Above the Law is not endorsing that service, or their claims regarding their supposed immunity from the prohibitions on fee-splitting.

Dean Caron, of the University of Cincinnati Law School, runs a similar ranking, which focuses on the Blogs from only law professors. http://taxprof.typepad.com/taxprof_blog/2010/04/law-prof-1.html He ranks 35 professor blogs, which all have site-meters to rank website usage. Dean Caron acknowledges that some blogs that might qualify are excluded because they do not have site-meters. He tracks blogs' relative improvement on a quarterly snapshot. His highest rated law blog is Instapundit. <http://pajamasmedia.com/instapundit/> . Among the pundits cited on Instapundit is, ironically, Dean Caron, for a short article about the tax issues confronting the alleged Times Square bomber from the foreclosure sale of his home in Connecticut. http://taxprof.typepad.com/taxprof_blog/2010/05/faisal-shahzad.html The alleged bomber's problems with taxes are not unique, although the decision to use him as an illustration of how taxable income can arise from a foreclosure, may be unique. Incidentally, Dean Caron is a prolific blogger on multiple sites, including his own taxprof site and another personal site, <http://money-law.blogspot.com/> , Money-Law Blog.

Finally another listing of top law blogs, is <http://www.wikio.com/blogs/top/law> . It has Dean Caron's blog listed second on its list of top blogs, and Above the Law is 3rd. Its top blog is SCOTUSblog, a blog unsurprisingly dedicated to following the US Supreme Court, <http://www.scotusblog.com/>

The Wikio rankings purport to be based on how often the blogs it cites are cited in some way. That seems to me to be a very different and potentially more useful metric than site visits.

Any of these listings are useful beginning places to find popular sites on a variety of legal issues. Each seems to use very different standards of measurement for recognition, so I would probably try to use at least two if I was attempting to be thorough when searching for on topic blogs.