

# Expanding and Rebranding!

I am absolutely thrilled to be expanding and rebranding my firm from Marc Ian Snyderman, Esq. PC to Snyderman Law Group, PC today. Bringing on Antonella Colella, Esq. and opening an office in Bala Cynwyd, PA to better serve my clients is a huge step for me after only a year in business.

Running your own business is a funny thing when it comes to time.

Some days feel like they are literally forever but most days are gone before you blink. Reality is, time just keeps moving on and it goes so quickly.

I'm surprised as to how excited I was to rebrand after only a year until I started thinking about why I was so excited. I've learned so much about what I want to do and where my passion lies over the past year and it comes down to wanting to support businesses in achieving their dreams, whether that be in developing an ongoing relationship or transactional-based engagements.

My new firm's logo and colors are designed to inspire collaboration, plant and nurture growth. Our tag line is simple: we support, you grow.

Check us out at [www.snydermanlawgroup.com](http://www.snydermanlawgroup.com). This site will remain up and I'll continue to write about management topics, current events and such; please keep following me here and check out our firm blog.

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## Find and Sound Your Barbaric Yawp

*"I sound my barbaric yawp over the rooftops of the world" -Walt Whitman*

Every business needs to find its barbaric yawp and shout it out. Mr. Anderson found his barbaric yawp in Dead Poet's Society: <http://bit.ly/2wrDCHK>.

The problem is you can't just go online and search for yawps on Amazon - all that shows up are tee shirts or baby onesies or stickers with the word yawp on them. There's no great definition of a yawp: "a harsh or hoarse cry or yelp."

### **So, what is a business's yawp?**

In a single word - - purpose - the one statement that says who they are, why they exist and why you should do business with them. One of my favorite recent management books is Dan Pink's Drive. I liked the book so much I got certified in Drive theory and have read all his other books. In defining what motivates us in the Motivation 3.0 world, Pink points to purpose as a core driver.

It's well documented that the millennial generation needs that sense of purpose to be engaged.

### **Why sounds your yawp over the rooftops?**

Let people know your yawp. Give them a reason to work with you, hire you, buy your products. Add value everyday in the great conversation that is social media. There's a ton of noise out there but there are many of us always searching for strong voices to listen to, to admire, to converse with. Not everything you say has to be what you do, in fact, it shouldn't be. Share music, articles of interest, let us connect with you and your business.

### **How do I find my business' yawp?**

Here's a quick exercise for identifying the organization's purpose and almost more importantly what the employees actually believe that purpose to be.

- Pull in your team and hand them each a note card.
- Ask them to anonymously write down the company's purpose in approximately a 6-word sentence in the next 5 minutes.
- Collect them all and read them aloud.
- Are they similarly aligned or all over the place?
- If you're the manager or the owner, is it the same as your yawp?

If your team isn't singing the company's yawp from the same sheet of music as the owner or the manager, how can anyone be motivated on either side of the buy - sell equation to work with you.

If you're looking for assistance in finding your purpose, give me a yawp.

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# 525,600 Minutes on the Highway

525,600 minutes

525,600 moments so dear

525,600 minutes

How do you measure, measure a year?

I can't believe it's been 525,600 minutes since I went out on my own. There's been a lot of ups and

downs this past year, to say the least, but it has been incredibly rewarding and empowering while at the same time exhausting. I find myself reading more than ever before and looking for inspirational quotes on social media or just talking with friends and colleagues. @GaryVee says you have to “put in the work” and keep hustling and executing to create your legacy. Nothing can be truer. Taking on bold initiatives and dreaming big can only be accomplished when you wake up every day and plan, execute and then reflect to find continuously improve. I do this every day of my life - it’s not easy, but it’s fulfilling. Thinking back to the first days in my new office by myself wondering how was I going to make this all work it all feels like a whirlwind. Here are some highlights of this year:

- I have new fantastic clients both supporting with strategic consulting as well as outside General Counsel services;
- I’ve joined ranks with some of the best lawyers and all around people I’ve ever met at Nicoll, Davis and Spinella LLP
- I’ve met amazing and inspirational people and networked with them, had great conversations and learned from all of them
- I’ve taken literally 100s of meetings just because you never know
- I’ve had failures and learned from every one of them
- I’ve supported strategic growth of companies and been rewarded with helping people define their goals and find ways to meet those goals
- I’ve found there are still generous people out there that genuinely want to help others

It’s truly a privilege to work with great people and be trusted to help them. To those of you that have supported me in this journey I want to thank you. I’ll keep learning, keep hustling and keep trying to be relevant on the highway of life and hope you’ll jump in for the ride whether it’s for an exit or two or for the long haul with me. Here’s to the next 525,600 minutes.

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## Get in the Trenches

I had the great fortune of spending a week with Hangtime Media on a video shoot for the beautiful and eclectic Union Station Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. Hangtime creates destination video content that is unparalleled and is setting the standard for drone videography. I’m a highly active member of the Board of Advisors of Hangtime and have been involved with the business for the past 2 years or so. Assisting with the strategic planning and direction of the company is extremely rewarding and I’m honored to work with such talented and creative individuals.

While I’ve seen the finished product and even unedited footage I hadn’t had the opportunity to see the process from front to back onsite with the venue and felt that in order to truly provide quality advice to the company I needed to witness the inner workings first hand. If I never see the process myself how can I help operationalize it and grow it? Throughout my career I have worked to understand what the projects are from a technical standpoint and translate those into

non-technical terms. As a lawyer, it's impossible to write an agreement for a technology if you don't understand it. From my perspective, this eagerness to learn and get involved has paid dividends back in my ability to build trust with my teams as well as helped ensure I guide the project to success.

So, I got into the trenches and learned how to set up and break down tripods. I carried equipment around and moved furniture to stage rooms to shoot with video. It's certainly not a new lesson to managers but it's one that many of us forget as we go through our daily routines.

- Reset your thinking.
- Plan out a trip into the trenches of your organization.
- Gain a new perspective on the hard work everyone does.
- Be inspired to develop new processes.
- Achieve success.

I promise you this is a rejuvenating experience that will help you be a better advisor and leader for your organization.

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## Design Thinking as a Lawyer

“What business needs now is design. What design needs now is business.” – Beth Comstock, Vice Chair of GE.

So, we've established law isn't the most progressive business sector. Then why am I talking about design thinking? Because I believe every business in every industry needs to adopt a new way of thinking to compete while technology and innovation are moving at what seems to be light speed. As artificial intelligence continues to develop, many more core functions of lawyers will become automated beyond the ones handled by current LegalTech sites.

If you don't know what design thinking is – it can be described as a discipline that uses the designer's sensibility and methods to match people's needs with what is technologically feasible and how a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity. It's a process that requires the “designer” to empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test to go to market with a new product or service.

The traditional law firm model revolves around lawyers being experts and clients paying them a pre-set billing rate for however long it takes to resolve an issue or guide them. I personally do not believe this is sustainable, nor do I believe it's the answer. So, I applied design thinking to the model to develop my own practice.

- Empathize – having been a General Counsel and a consumer of outside legal services for more than a decade I understand what clients want from their outside counsel. Clients want

value add and reasonable costs for services rendered.

- Define - I defined the problem clearly as (i) costs which are too high, in particular for work which can and will at some point be replaced by software, and (ii) no predictability in cost.
- Ideate - In starting my firm, I adopted the concept that I would keep my overhead and billing rates extremely low and provide high-value services at lower costs, mostly on a flat retainer basis to provide predictability in costs to clients and value add.
- Prototype - I developed and continue to iterate on a value add methodology of legal services.
- Test - For over 6 months I've been testing the marketplace and finding positive results.

The bottom line is design isn't just for designers - it's for all businesses looking to strategically grow and define an industry in an ever-changing technology economy.

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## The Yelpification of Society

I was watching an interview between author, Dan Pink, and Hubspot CEO, Brian Halligan and Brian used the phrase the "yelpification" of society to describe how people buy goods and services.

I started thinking about how whenever I'm traveling I pull open Yelp and look for the best rated Mexican restaurants within a quick uber shot of the hotel I'm staying at. I even use the Yelp maps or "melps" as I affectionately call them to do this. I started thinking about how we use a Yelp-like tool for every situation in our lives.

So I looked up the word "yelpification" and found it in **urban dictionary**:

The process by which a place of business is reviewed by an online community. Can also be used to describe the phenomenon of people becoming more aware of a business, area, or region through online reviews.

I then found multiple articles citing the "yelpification" of different industries and it made me think about how this phenomenon affects businesses. Long before Yelp, our parents trusted the word of their friends over advertisements when looking for service people. Further, if you wanted to buy a new vacuum cleaner or a television, you'd reach for a copy of *Consumer Reports*. Now I wouldn't buy any electronics without checking CNET. If you were interested in finding a new restaurant, you'd look for reviews in the local paper or maybe spring for a Zagat guidebook. Now, you just click on Yelp.

The web has literally changed the game. People everywhere can post their own reviews about anything, and anyone can read them — instantly.

Where else do we see yelpification? Everywhere! Some examples:

- TripAdvisor (which I actively use and participate in) for travel reviews
- CNET for electronics
- Avvo for lawyers (that's right even we get rated)
- Glassdoor for employees
- Angie's List for contractors

### **Net Effect of Yelpification**

This phenomenon started in B2C but B2B is seeing a huge uptick in yelp-like reviews. So what's the net effect of yelpification?

- Increases market efficiency: Consumers as a collective will provide a more complete information profile of any particular thing than a professional critical. The result is a more accurate correlation between price and quality.
- Increases transparency: Consumers gain real-world insights from other customers.
- Increase quality: poor quality cannot survive in an on demand ratings world.

### **What can you do?**

What can you do in a yelpified world to promote your business?

- As always, be consistent in your branding and messaging
- Mobilize your advocates to help create a strong, positive presence online.
- Manage your brand on social media like LinkedIn and Twitter and Glassdoor.
- Show you are an influencer and engage with influencers in your industry.
- Publish content that shows you know your world

### **Conclusions**

On a side note, one funny Yelp lesson I learned over the years - never trust the melps, next thing you know you're walking down a center lane median of a divided highway in Georgetown.....

The on demand generation, as I like to call it, combined with the yelpification phenomenon creates a B2C and B2B world of vigilant brand management and studies in encouraging good reviews of your goods and services.

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# What Can Marc Ian Snyderman, Esq. PC

# Do For You?

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## Early Thoughts on the Trump Administration and Government Contracting

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### Embrace the Suck

“Embrace the suck and move the f\*\*\*on, ma’am.”

I was watching *Whiskey Tango Fox Trot* on a flight back from a non-profit board meeting the other day and this phrase just resonated with me. Just a few weeks ago I watched *A Game of Honor* about the Army vs Navy game and they all talked about it as well.

I would never try to compare the “suck” of everyday life and work to what our military personnel go through day in and day out as they defend our country and do the job of making our world a better, safer place. That suck is a level most of us can only imagine and watch in movies which could never compare to the real life work these brave men and women do every day.

What I would like to do is explore how we can all learn from this simple, not so elegant phrase from our military.

When you face a mundane, boring, sometimes loathsome task in life or at work, you have two choices: complain about it and be miserable all day or just embrace it and move on knowing it’s part of what you have to do. If you embrace it and make those tasks into a challenge that you can do them without it bringing you down.

Make a list today of 3 things in your life that you do that you think suck at home or at work. Can you eliminate them? If you can’t then you need to embrace it and move the f\*\*\* on.

I know this is all a bit existential and it's actually a Buddhist concept but we all deep down know it to be true. Complaining and avoiding is toxic and draining. It reduces our drive and motivation and spirals our minds down rabbit holes that are hard to climb out of. Instead, **embrace the suck** and know you are strong enough to do anything that is in front of you.

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## Any fool can lose money

So much great advice can be found by reading what other leaders say and often times that advice comes from their family. Lloyd Carney, CEO of Brocade, in a NY Times Interview for the Corner Office section on 4 September 2016 said one of the best pieces of advice he ever got was from his father who said, "any fool can lose money."

When you work in technology for a successful company, or even if people just know you're a techie, you get pitched lots of innovative ideas and concepts and it's a real challenge to determine which ones are viable. It's easy to get excited about a new app, a new widget (what's a widget? [https://youtu.be/H0J6Z\\_9JgcU](https://youtu.be/H0J6Z_9JgcU)), or some other cool tech that we sometimes lose sight of the business aspect and whether you can really make money doing it.

The days of the 50-page business plan and executive summary are virtually gone, so how do you evaluate demonstration on one side and evaluation on the other side that your idea is viable, has customers, and will make money to potential investors or senior leadership or even your family as you decide to venture out and make your dream come true? I got introduced to the Business Canvas at a Philly Tech Week event and it's life changing. Do you know the business you want to get into well enough that you can demonstrate your value proposition and competitive concept this succinctly (<http://www.businessmodelgeneration.com/canvas/bmc>)? With this relatively simple tool you can iterate your model, prototype pivots, check financial viability, get feedback and de-risk your assumptions.

Step back and evaluate what you're working on and ask yourself that most fundamental of questions - can I actually make money doing this? Then prove the concept, test the market and make it happen.