

The Legal Whiteboard

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April 14, 2012

What is Law Without Walls? Why does it matter?

I am

LAWWITHOUTWALLS™



spending the weekend in Miami at the **Law Without Walls** (LWOW) ConPosium. What's LWOW? Not an easy question, but here it goes: LWOW is a completely new forum and methodology for teaching, learning, collaborating and -- most importantly -- spurring innovation in legal education and the legal services industry. Twelve U.S. and foreign law schools are involved, with **Miami Law** taking the lead. LWOW is part law school class, part idea laboratory, part networking venue, and part case competition. I struggle in vain to find an adequate metaphor.

What's a ConPosium? It's LWOW's annual penultimate event. Over the course of the weekend, students present their "**Projects of Worth**" to a large audience of students, lawyers, law professors, regulators, business executive and entrepreneurs. The presentations are evaluated *American Idol*-style by a panel of experts, including -- yes -- a handful of

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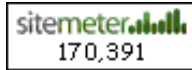
The Competition is for Full-Time, Professional Law-Related Jobs, Part I

"There's A Lot of Money in that White

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venture capitalists. Thanks to the efforts of **LWOW founders Michele DeStepano** and **Michael Bossone**, the weekend also is an amazing aesthetic experience -- a theater of sofas and overstuffed chairs, inspiring music, multi-media stimuli, and a nonstop train of cleverly presented ideas from students, professors, judges and the audience.

As an educator, the most exciting facet of the LWOW format/methodology is that it pressures law students to be creative *and* economically viable.

(Understatement: these topics are generally not covered in law school, especially the latter). Not all ideas are good; and good ideas by themselves are not enough. As the venture capitalists tell us, nine out of ten good ideas fail due to lack of execution. To survive, hard questions have to be asked, and the answers provided have to be realistic and accurate. And then there is follow-through. That requires passion.

LWOW is a grand experiment. 20 years from now, the DNA of a lot of innovation in legal education and legal services will be traceable to the seemingly impractical ideas that were trial-ballooned here. And one or two may be brand names in a few short years. So cool.

[Posted by Bill Henderson]

April 14, 2012 in [Current events](#), [Innovations in law](#), [Innovations in legal education](#), [Structural change](#) | [Permalink](#)

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