



Wrongly Accused Person
Helping your battle against injustice

CASEBLOGS

There is no doubt about it, the internet has become a valuable tool when campaigning, whatever the cause. However, while the use of the world wide web can be a powerful force for good it can, if you're not careful, have the opposite effect.

That is in large part why Wrongly Accused Person began hosting free websites for individual cases which we've called caseblogs and have proven to be a great success. Magistrates, solicitors and even junior counsel have commented on how effective they are in presenting the cases and some have gone so far as to leave messages of support on the comments pages. Opinions have been changed, people previously convinced of guilt have openly stated that they are now either not convinced or convinced of innocence instead. The best example comes from perhaps the most surprising of places, the mother of a young murder victim saying someone so obviously innocent should be freed to make room for the guilty. That is after all one of the things you want in your site as you try to raise awareness and gather support, it's more about reaching the people who don't know than telling the people who already do.

Another thing to consider is how *technically* effective and consequently how visible websites are, or that they even display properly on all browsers. How websites are laid out, along with various hidden tags and structures all have an impact on how prominent they will be in search engine listings. There would be nothing more frustrating than going to the time and effort to make sure everything is worded the right way, that it puts the case across properly and accurately, only to find that it never appears above tabloid articles reporting from a biased perspective of guilt. We take care of all that so you don't need to worry about it along with keeping the server scripting up to date so performance and security are the current optimum.

Once you've got a website and started gaining support, it's good to have somewhere that people can leave messages of support. These messages can be a great lift to those serving prison sentences for crimes they didn't commit, but there is no way that the general public could leave them without the risk of offensive and distressing messages being left too. Again, we take care of that for you. In any case, particularly those which are high profile, the media have had a free reign by the time a campaign website has been thought of so we make it clear that the page is for messages of support only and any others simply aren't published. We do however provide a link to the Wrongly Accused Person forum which is freely available to the public, opinions and views can be discussed there openly but we monitor it so discussion is respectful to all concerned. In this way, further interest is generated in your website, the most successful being where family/supporters are able participate and you'll find our members sincere and supportive too.

Social networking sites have become popular with campaigning too, but there are pros and cons with those also (See the included associated guidance). For that reason, caseblog sites come with built in facilities to make use of the positive aspects of what they can be used for and many other tools too if need be. This

makes it easy, not only for you, but for visitors in general to share links to your site with friends and associates who can in turn share them with theirs. We also have our own account on many of them reaching thousands of people every time we post links which we do regularly among the ever growing community.

Lastly, but by no means least, caseblog websites benefit simply by association with Wrongly Accused Person along with our other caseblog sites. The sites have become a community of sites with interest in one also feeding interest in others. We have our own server to handle the high traffic with enough spare capacity to handle days when news articles cause large surges in demand. We don't publish anything that can't be corroborated and update anything should new information come to light. This has successfully countered the "They would say that wouldn't they" argument in the past. With a caseblog site, you don't just get a website, you get a whole package, complete with credibility that you couldn't get with an independent website despite your own honesty.

Unfortunately there are some cases which are either too sensitive in nature, or the circumstances mean that a website wouldn't be appropriate, however we assess that on a case by case basis since each is unique.

If you are interested in having a caseblog website set up, you can enquire using the contact page at the top of www.wronglyaccusedperson.org.uk

Social Networking

Some helpful guidance.

There is a wealth of social networking sites available and like individual websites they can be a force for good if used in the right way, however they are very much open to being abused and frequently are. The main reason being that it doesn't matter whether it's facebook, twitter, google +1 or any other mainstream networking site, they are all equally as open to people trying to damage campaigns as they are to people using them legitimately. There are also limitations to how effective they are and are of very little worth on their own.

If we consider the limitations first using facebook as an example. You either have an account already or open one to start spreading the word, adding a few friends and joining some related groups. After a short time you'll begin to see that you have x number of friends in common with person y, and x number of friends in any groups you've joined. If you're lucky when you add it all together you'll be connected with just a few hundred people in reality. In terms of exposure, after a period of time, your comments and links are being shared within that relatively small circle and you're not really reaching new potential supporters. There are exceptions, Wrongly Accused Person for example reaches several thousand people and growing across its profile page, cause page and other networking accounts but they are the exception rather than the rule. You can't simply add hundreds of people you have no connection with either or your account will be restricted before long. Networking sites are a tool, and used the right way they can be a useful one but they are not a silver bullet that will expose a miscarriage of justice on their own. By design, search engines will favour websites and online newspapers ahead of facebook groups etc. when people search for anything related to your case. Links from networking sites TO websites do however help to improve the site's ranking in most search engines so tweets, likes, shares and diggs do have a positive effect over time. The other positive side is that if and when you do have something important to report you can reach your supporters quickly rather than waiting for them to visit your website of their own accord. Wrongly Accused Person for example can reach several thousand people, literally in seconds, should there be anything important to report but getting to that position didn't happen overnight and we have had to endure considerable hassle along the way.

That brings us on to the more harmful side of networking sites. There are literally millions of users on all of the mainstream ones, therefore if you do come into contact with anyone who has an ulterior motive the networks are inundated with complaints and so take time to resolve any issues. It can't be stressed enough the need to be careful over who you accept friend requests from. Make use of any privacy settings the social network site has to offer. You, your family and friends have enough to contend with without putting up with unwarranted attacks from people who can't be reasoned with. You want as many people to see your campaign as possible, what you don't want them doing is turning away as soon as they see the page because it presents as nothing more than hostile mudslinging. Far by the best way to deal with this potential problem is to delete offensive posts, and report/block anyone persisting in any sort of vendetta if they won't respectfully listen to reason. Public feuds do neither side any good, civilised debate is one thing, but constantly reacting to hate campaigns and the like will only ever use up all your time and energy when it would be better spent doing what you set out to achieve. If you see someone post something nasty about a friend, post something nice and supportive on your friend's wall or profile instead of being

dragged into a confrontation. If you and those around you all do the same, abusers/bullies don't get the attention they crave and anyone suffering from it get the support they need instead.

There are some useful strategies you can use. Not everyone is a facebook fan, there are people who predominantly use twitter and vice versa. The same applies for any of the other networking systems, but most can be linked so that posting in one will also send the same post to any others you make use of. Again, there will likely be people in common on both/all but there will probably be others too increasing your reach even if only slightly at first.

Setting up a group page is by no means a substitute for a dedicated website, but it can be an effective way of separating your personal profile page from one specifically for your campaign. The privacy can be set so that the page is publicly viewable but only members can post and if you have trouble with abuse you can alter the settings further so that the administrator must approve new members. It's worthwhile too having someone else that you know you can trust assigned as an administrator, no one can be online all day everyday monitoring what everyone else is doing.

The bottom line is, networking sites should be used with care because it's difficult to know who you can and can't trust.