

ARIZONA ATTORNEY MAGAZINE

In the February 2009 issue, ARIZONA ATTORNEY magazine published the results of its economic survey of Arizona lawyers. What follows are three additional questions that were asked, and lawyer responses.

QUESTION: What practice areas do you think will increase in 2009? (*most-listed categories from aggregated responses*)

- Bankruptcy/debtor-creditor/workouts/foreclosure
- Litigation
- Family law/divorce/domestic relations
- Criminal
- Personal injury
- None
- Employment

QUESTION: What practice areas do you think will decline in 2009? (*most-listed categories from aggregated responses*)

- All
- Real estate
- Corporate/commercial law
- Mergers & acquisitions/transactional

QUESTION: Please feel free to add your thoughts on the economy and the legal profession. (*Answers are exactly as written by respondents, and in the order in which they were received. Lawyer names and firm names have been removed wherever they were provided.*)

I am a government non-profit lawyer (criminal defense). I do not think this is relevant to me. Sorry.

Save us, Obama! ;-)

Affects everyone - even in my area (criminal violent crime), we are seeing more property crime and crimes of violence due to frustration with defendants' financial circumstances

I've been unemployed for 2 years, can't find a job. Have my own practice that isn't going good

Troubling times overall.

Survive 'til one five.

I am now working two part-time jobs besides my full-time job to pay my mortgage and bills!

I just opened my own law office in August and find that my workload has increased every month and I expect it to continue to do so.

It will get far worse before it ever starts getting better.

The current economic situation will require a major shift in the way this country does "business." We need to once again become a country that actually produces rather than simply be a country of consumers. Perhaps that means redefining how we "practice" law.

In my firm I believe it has significantly delayed the partner track timeline for those attorneys who do not practice bankruptcy law.

Lawyers must bend with the ebbs and flows of the economy, as they will always be there.

Uncertainty. The firm remains optimistic, but I question whether this is reasonable.

Bar should join in by reducing fees.

Cuts in legal services funding, cuts in federal funding, increased operating expenses have a devastating impact on our work.

I am being laid off b/c of the economy!

I think for my practice and perhaps others the impact is going to be lower settlements and verdicts. People, including the representatives of defendants in settlement, judges and juries are going to see the value of the dollar as more.

Am very concerned that business and fee collections will be down, possibly even significantly, in 2009. Just don't yet know what 2009 will bring.

A lot of clients are experiencing severe financial pressures, so the professional and thoughtful handling of their matters with realistic input becomes an important attribute of the attorneys handling these client matters.

President Obama will bring about a speedy economic recovery which will culminate with our withdrawal from Iraq.

Over the past twenty-eight years, the economy has not affected my practice very much. I do not expect that the current recession will have much effect either.

I have found that people just cannot pay their legal fees. There is plenty of work, however the economy has drained the pocket books of the average person.

I am experiencing a slowdown in legal work, just as I did last year around this time (holidays). It's hard to tell if this slowdown is related to the holiday season or the economy.

There will always be a demand for certain types of lawyers which people seek when they are in a desperate situation. But there still is an issue of people not being able to pay for a lawyer. We may see more people trying to go pro se or lawyers significantly reducing their rates if the economy stays bad over a long period of time.

I believe that there are, and will always be, opportunities in the law. It may require us to adjust or “evolve” practice areas. I wish all of my colleagues well—we will pull through this.

The business model for large law firms is under great pressure and may force changes in staffing and otherwise. Law firms will not be immune from the economic downturn.

Your survey is really not designed to elicit accurate responses from government employees. That may be intentional, judging from the subject matter (as we all know how the government budget is made). If so, however, you should have sent this only to attorneys in private practice or should have provided instructions stating that it is only to be completed by attorneys in private practice. It seems like the Bar focuses primarily on private practice. There are a lot of government lawyers out there too. It would be nice if that were recognized more consistently.

Our resources for defending indigent clients is worsening. Also, our convicted clients have less ability to pay legal fees because more are out of work and struggling

There will always be legal work. It just shifts among different practice areas. A “down” economy more significantly affects the more lucrative areas, so more lawyers may have to learn to make less, and new lawyers will find the job market tight as the available work is spread among lawyers already employed.

It will be tough all over.

Hope all those bloated law firms in Phoenix go bankrupt.

In other areas of the law, clients may be scarcer and money-making deals more rare due to the economy. In legal services, the downturn in the economy means that although the same caseload and problems exist (if not increase), the legal services available to the people in need of them decrease, meaning that large segments of the population are forced to do without adequate, or any, representation in a system supposedly based on equal access to justice. Protections need to be put in place for this.

Insurance defense, with the exception of AIG situations, appears to be recession proof.

Reduce CLE and bar dues.

Potential clients put off seeing a lawyer when they don't have \$ to pay their own bills or buy food

The causes of the economic collapse were the Republican trickle-down theory and the Bush Administration's policy of helping big business and the wealthy at the expense of the rest of the nation. Poor education in rural areas leads many rural voters to vote Republican, which is almost always against their best interests.

Widespread downturn that affects nearly every practice area with a few exceptions.

There is no longer any reasonable expectation that a lawyer will be more financially successful than any other occupation.

I am particularly upset that that Bar did not challenge the new reciprocity rule of the Supreme Court.

We will be faced with working for existing clients for deeply discounted rates or for free and hope that they will be loyal when the economy turns around.

The recession may be helpful to the small law firm because larger firms will lay off staff and those experienced staff personnel will be seeking employment. Previously the small law firm could not afford to pay an experienced legal secretary the type of salary they were commanding. This may level the playing field a little.

It's time for us to renovate our billing practices and begin offering more comprehensive flat fee and value pricing options.

It's going to be a wild ride.

Thank you very much for conducting this survey - the aggregated data will be very helpful.

Obama brings hope for economic recovery, after which time the outlook for the legal profession will improve IF the profession revitalizes itself in the interim by updating its customer service and billing practices.

Boy, did we have it coming.

The economic downturn may be a good thing i.e. cause the legal profession to live within its means and learn how to be more efficient in providing quality services to their clients.

I keep thinking that a change is gonna come. Too many people at the financial "top" of the profession have unrealistic and incompatible expectations about income and lifestyles. I think there is a chance that economic stress will at last trigger substantial changes in the consolidating large firms' business model.

Profession looks bleak until 2010-11.

Buckle up, it's going to be a bumpy ride.

In any economic event, there will be both positive and negative impacts on the legal profession. New opportunities arise as people adjust their strategies to cope with changing economic times. I believe the legal profession therefore has some insulation against economic downturns, which makes it difficult to predict the overall impact on the profession as a whole.

Attorneys are going to have to get more creative in billing practices. The days of unlimited billable hours is long gone. Clients will scrutinize work billed much more carefully and demand lower rates. Those firms and attorneys who cannot adapt will most likely not do well.

I think this is a good time for many lawyers to acknowledge that legal costs/hourly fees are too high so that a great portion of citizens feel they cannot afford to hire a lawyer. We need to make an adjustment in our fees to serve more people.

The State Bar should move to rescind the recently passed Admission Upon Motion. Thousands more attorneys fleeing the Rust Belt states are not going to make things any better as far as the economics of the practice of law are concerned in the current economic downturn we are facing.

I am a diehard Democrat and believe strongly that President Obama will right this ship.

I feel the need will be greater, the ability to pay and to recover damages will be less. Clients will be watching every penny.

I believe that the downturn will cut across many practice areas and have a severe impact on business and real estate related practices.

I've never had to work so hard for so little...It's hard to be optimistic given the climate. It's easy to see why so many attorneys turn to substance abuse, the stresses are many, the rewards minimal.

Our practice is strictly personal injury so I think that we are less affected. But we are starting to see things like decreases in the credit that is available to the firm to finance things like capital expenditures, etc., which does make it more difficult to grow the practice.

It provides a good living even in difficult times.

I think we have yet to see whether the economic stimulus concepts are successful in moderating the recession. If not, it could be a long and difficult several years for all persons, lawyers included.

Profession is suffering as a result of the mindless TV promotions and solicitations in all areas of the law, P.I. being the worst.

When the economy goes down, our caseload goes up. Regardless, I expect our clients to be eager to reach quicker settlements to save on legal fees.

It is difficult to anticipate precisely how the economy will affect various practice areas. Without a doubt, however, the impact of the financial crisis will be significant for private law firms and may well cause companies to bring more lawyers in-house as a method of cost management.

Too many people are listening to the people around them and operating in a panic mode unnecessarily, which only makes the problem worse. Loosening credit requirements and

encouraging the kind of consumption that brought on a recession is not the solution. The legal profession can help by encouraging mediation and helping people think long-term before filing suit. This helps clients in the short-term and ensures repeat business long-term.

So much for Reaganesque trickle-down economics and the Bush encouragement of unfettered greed.

I do family law, which is usually recession proof. However, I have seen a major slowdown in cases since August. So, even divorces are declining because it is less expensive to stay married.

Malpractice costs will continue to rise b/c now that the State Bar advertises we are going to see more client's placing bogus claims for malpractice. Also, attorneys will need to purchase insurance to pay for Bar Complaints because the policies at the State Bar are out of control and/or touch with prosecutors seemingly running the show and threatening attorneys.

In 2008, I left a large (200+ attorney) law firm to start a small firm with two of my partners focusing on our highly-specialized practice. The problems with the economy have helped our practice to grow substantially and we see no end to that in the next several years. That having been said, part of the reason we all left the large firm was because many of the lawyers there practice in areas like real estate development, that have been slow since at least mid-2007 and which have only gotten worse since we left. I believe it will take several years for the economy to recover sufficiently to enable lawyers in quite a few practice areas to do well.

The assumption of this survey seems to be that the downturn in the economy equals a downturn in work in the legal industry. Although I am sure that this is true in some practice areas, the growth in other areas may equalize or exceed any decrease (which is what I have noted in my practice). Regardless, it is certainly true that the downturn in the economy has left clients cash poor, so they are taking much longer than normal to pay and in more cases seeking discounts or failing to pay at all.

Good lawyers will always have plenty of clients.

I wish I could work in business more and lawyering less. I am pessimistic.

Worst I've ever seen.

I live and practice in a small town where the effects of the recession can be seen on a daily basis. Many businesses have gone completely out or have scaled back. The quality clients, meaning business owners and those able to pay their bill monthly in full or come up with the retainer I require are becoming fewer and farther between. Clients are more and more commonly having "other payors", or taking out personal loans from friends, family or institutions (if they qualify) to pay the retainer. The state bars recent ban on taking credit card retainers makes it much more difficult for clients and attorneys to "meet the mark". Happy holidays and good luck to all in 09.

There are far too many new graduates for the profession to absorb. This, coupled with outsourcing to Indian firms, will erode the income potential of the legal profession as a whole going forward.

An area of added expense that adds to the financial stress is the ever increasing demand for CLE courses and the related costs.

Good Luck, to all ...

Economic downturns 1940-2007 cause increases in many litigation filings (commercial, real estate, shareholder for example) and little effect on others (criminal and PI). But is this a depression era more like 1932-1940 than anything we've seen the past 70 years? If so, while BK, criminal and divorce filings will go up significantly, potential casualty company dissolutions could topple most civil litigation. It can't be contained just to real estate bad debt that many companies hold because they co mingle services. Lawyers who need access to credit will find little. If companies that buy insurance and/or companies who sell liability and casualty either stop buying, stop selling or both, the affect on the legal profession and the thousands of clients they represent could be unlike anything post 1941. Right now with unemployment hovering below 7% and the feds pushing up consumer income by federal spending and lending on jobs that cannot be out sourced we MAY avoid a depression and domino affect collapse into the legal sector. Too early to tell and relatively NO public focus on insurers' financial health except those heavily steeped in secured real estate paper, good and bad. For certain, divorce opportunities abound when marital estates appear to show zero value to certain business assets; BK will explode; foreclosures have a long way to go; and criminal law will spike as families and individuals stress.

Tough times are generally good for attorneys, but this will be the first economic slowdown where the profession is so large. The effects on me are to be determined.

I work on the low end of the above-indicated salary range. I think that the hardest hit attorneys will be those whose salaries are paid by taxes, charitable contributions or other government and public funding. While some small, boutique or specialty law offices may feel a downturn, bad economic times are more likely to lead to more litigation over monetary issues rather than less litigation and the firms that can handle these issues in general will likely do well even in the bad economic times. However, even these firms may decrease their normal hiring levels as some people are forced to stay on longer thus making it more difficult for new lawyers to find jobs.

In my answers to the survey, it seemed contradictory to state that the financial circumstances of the firm were better this year than last year, but later stated that we are on a hiring freeze and not receiving bonuses currently. Our firm believed that we had a high probability of feeling the rippling effects of the recession come next year, and are preparing accordingly.

Poor economy, opportunities for some practices.

As the legal profession hits on all aspects of life and the economy, I think that the economy will have a drastic impact, both good and bad on the legal profession. We for instance have already chosen to move all of our IP work to a smaller boutique firm and away from our prior National Large firm setting because off both cost and poor service concerns, as well as lackluster legal work and poor communications. On another note, while I have some friends that deal with land use and zone in and even construction defect cases that are struggling, my

friends doing bankruptcy law are busier than ever so it is hard to say where exactly the economy will affect attorneys.

I do primarily personal injury. It is not affected by the economy.

The economy will be weak throughout 09; resulting in less legal work, because there will likely be less demand for legal services.

“Not Applicable” should also be a choice. I work in a two lawyer firm with my father. Neither of us is going to be let go, and we’ve never really had plans to hire. So N/A would seem like a good answer option for some of the questions.

We have not yet hit bottom.

The limitations placed on attorneys to accept credit cards is further increasing this difficult economic situation, both by limiting the attorneys’ income, and by limiting a client’s ability to retain counsel.

“Many people are not paid what they are worth; some of them are very fortunate in that regard.” Those who do good work and keep their noses to the grindstone should be fine. Those who slack are more likely to be noticed.

The Arizona Bar needs to reduce its “luncheon” expenses for committees. When there is a lunch meeting at the bar too much free lunch is given and it ends up going to bar staff members. This is not a necessary expense and it should stop.

Glad to get rid of Bush—worst President since Hoover.

It’s a cyclical phenomenon and will self-correct.

The local economy has been hit with substantial layoffs by the major industry. The industry is now foreign owned and there is little incentive to protect or help local employees.

We are going to suffer.

Given the size and circumstances of our firm, some of the questions were not applicable so I did not answer them to avoid skewing the results.

There is always work for people who think and write. Maybe not lots of very high profit jobs, but there will be work.

As we learned in the 1990 recession, it’s tied to the real estate industry more than we generally recognize.

It’s currently not a desirable profession to be in. Not only is the economy terrible, but a lot of legal work has been taken over by websites and paralegal offices, and court self help divisions. Litigation is too expensive for the average person. Maybe it is a shake up the market place needs. Perhaps potential law school students should be given a assessment of what most of

them are really getting into, i.e. most lawyers are unhappy, stressed, income is down, and the profession is way overcrowded. If you are not making a decent income it is not worth the stress. Bar Associations are expensive and generally speaking, not beneficial. CLE courses are mandatory and too expensive. A good lawyer does not need mandatory CLE, and bad lawyers are bad lawyers regardless of mandatory CLE courses. Finally many firms and lawyers make the experience worse by forsaking collegiality and honesty.

I don't think lawyers are used because they are liked, but because they are needed. We will be needed during this downturn in many areas, but realistically, in many areas people who need advice may not seek it, for financial reasons.

Just as law firms and government offices are being required to cut back on expenses and operate more efficiently, the State Bar should look at ways to keep from raising bar dues and operating more efficiently.

This is a time when Legal Services lawyers such as myself feel increased demand, not less, as the need for free legal services only increases with the frequency of money problems / lost jobs / foreclosures, etc.

I'll be joining another firm of counsel.

We are seeing good cases but clients cannot afford to initiate them or continue to prosecute them

I would still rather be employed (and have been educated) as a lawyer, because I think I have more flexibility in the marketplace, even for non-legal positions.

The sole and small firms especially in rural AZ are in as much of a bind and struggling as any other small business and hopefully the Bar will recognize this and be a source of support and recognize our unique needs which are not the same as "big business."

Your survey needs to add the option of indicating that the specific question does not apply to the respondent so you don't "force" misleading responses.

The legal profession rides with the rest of the economy. We all need to quit buying foreign cars and back out foreign energy from the economy, or else we are headed for second-class status globally.

Hourly fees must be re-evaluated.

I regret becoming a lawyer.

White males hardest hit regarding new hires. Trust me on this.

This survey, like most State Bar efforts, adopts the premise that most lawyers work in firms with partners, bonuses, and all the baggage of big firms. I suspect that's just not true. But the State Bar's bias continues as it was when I joined the profession 30 years ago.

Although we are a society of laws, hiring a lawyer is an option no longer available to a large segment of society and therefore as the economy goes, so goes the legal profession.

I think there will be a slowdown in those areas of the law where clients have discretion in spending, where they can either forego the expense or delay it to a future date. There may also be a trend to use more in-house counsel.

I practice family law. Economic strife usually means an increase in business, although more difficult cases.

We've seen downturns before and weathered them just fine. We must remain optimistic and treat our clients with the same amount of care even if we don't recoup all we are owed. It will pay off in the long run.

The real estate mkt has affected the family law cases b/c homes are usually the most valuable asset of the marriage and they're not selling in any reasonable time frame. I also sense that people are not spending money at this time b/c of the perception of difficult times. The gov't has a significant presence in my community, so layoffs and pay cuts are not the norm. People have money, they're just not spending it b/c of fear. Discretionary spending, even employing a lawyer, is not "in the cards."

This is cyclical, and it will turn around.

The legal profession has become less of a profession, more of a business and the lawyers are becoming greedier each year. The practice of law used to be fun but judges, clients and other miserable lawyers have taken the fun out of it. The Bar interferes with the law practice by making rules that burden the practice and the mandatory nature of belonging to the Bar is absurd with lawyers having a tougher time being able to make a living. You pay \$460 per year and get nothing for it. With 20,000 plus lawyers one would think that one benefit would be a good group medical plan, but even this is priced out of sight. The law practice is absurd, lawyers have become inconsiderate and less sensitive to other attorneys and client's needs. Lawyers with low bars numbers are especially obnoxious.

This is going to be as bad if not worse than the great depression.

Another Bush fiasco. There will be less dollars available for the consumer/business to spend.

Some questions difficult to answer as house counsel.

When you idiots at the bar finally recognize how you are harming the public with your newest fiat regarding credit cards as well as hurting some of the sols practitioners it would be a welcome thought. Do you recognize how many people cannot afford attorneys as it is and now you do this. Only a jackass who gets paid a salary for being the minion of a bureaucrat would have little care about the public or the profession. ... Have a nice day.

The Arizona State Bar is an unnecessary overpriced involuntary bar. I would prefer a system more like New York State, where the courts regulate the bar, those licensing dues are less than half of Arizona, and there are many excellent voluntary bars from which to choose.

It is cyclical.

Random thoughts: 1. I have always considered that good lawyers are recession-proof. However, recessions are good excuses to eliminate poor lawyers. 2. These tough economic times require lawyers to select clients who can pay, otherwise, lawyers work for free. I have always said “I would rather be fishing than working for free.”

This has happened before; those who want to continue to practice law will adjust and get through it.

The economy has made it difficult for recent law school graduates to find jobs at Phoenix firms. Firms are not hiring as many new associates this year or they are not hiring any new associates at all. The economy has also affected the retirements of many senior partners, thereby, delaying retirement and taking jobs away from younger attorneys.

I have seen AZ cycle through at least one real estate meltdown (late 80s) and been through other credit crunches (1980s). The difference on this cycle is the worldwide involvement -- our economy is much more interdependent than during prior cycles.

I believe the economy has forever changed, inevitable given the “flattening of the world.”

I represent poor people. They are screwed. Some desperate. I am doing much more counseling than in the past.

Once President-elect Obama and his team take charge, the economy will begin to turn around, but it will take at least two years for us to get back to where we were in early 2007.

As with all costly services, some of which may be considered luxuries, I expect lawyers in private practice to be impacted in a financial fashion more than government lawyers, who will be impacted with an increase in cases. There may be a financial impact for legal-aid lawyers whose salaries are funded by the Legal Services Corporation, as large law firms place fewer funds in trust accounts due to less work.

I believe that, as a profession, we will see an extension of what has already been happening in a number of fields of law. Specifically, attorneys with experience that are seeking jobs will find themselves competing with an ever-increasing number of other unemployed, experienced attorneys as well as recent law graduates. This will ultimately lead to lower wages and reduced benefits as employers find themselves in a position where they are able to essentially look for the “lowest bidder,” meaning the attorney with the most experience willing to work for the lowest price.

Some will prosper, some will fail—all will be affected in some way by this recession—likely the worst since the Great Depression.

If we can avoid famine, insurrection, military coup and nuclear destruction of the Northeast, the economy will be fine. If some lawyers have to leave the practice to make a living, they’ll be fine.

Some of the questions were leading, i.e., assuming facts, e.g., if you are a solo practitioner, questions re layoffs; partner capital contributions, etc. are inapplicable.

Don't need to add to the doom and gloom - the economy is a very psychologically sensitive beast. I don't want another source of bad news, i.e. the state bar telling me how bad things are. I know.

The local economy has been hurt by the arrests and deportations of thousands of Mexican immigrants.

The legal profession as a whole is less susceptible to an economic slowdown.

I would like to see the Bar come down hard on advertising abuses and multi-state law firms advertising in Arizona. Too many legal mills based in other states are competing with Arizona attorneys through TV and Internet ads that make false claims and even violate rules by referring to themselves as attorneys even when not admitted in Arizona.

I have seen it before. More people will want to bring lawsuits where attorneys' fees are recoverable.

As I have written before, I think [some firms that advertise on TV] should be incriminated for their persistent defrauding of Arizona consumers. They take too many paying clients away from good quality, talented lawyers, many of whom do not advertise whatsoever, and this, in and of itself, is something of a local tragedy.

The impact is already being felt in my public office with a hiring freeze, increased caseloads, elimination of bonuses and reduction of salaries.

Our firm is an Indian Law boutique which is relatively unaffected by the current economic situation. I practice on a part time basis almost exclusively on the Navajo Nation and am seeing an increase in my person practice although I had intend to cut back when I was over 70.

The economic decline will present opportunities for lawyers to further demonstrate to the community their commitment to public service through pro bono representation of those who face legal challenges but lack the funds to pay for legal representation.

More so than the economy, the change in control of government, both at state and federal levels, will mean that certain legal specialties will either increase or decrease.

Tough times ahead.

I believe that more lawyers will delay retirement until their plans regain some of the lost equity. I believe that starting lawyer salaries will flatten or even drop a little. I believe that more lawyers will leave the practice in favor of other business/employment opportunities.

I blame Congress for much of what is currently happening. They are inept—very few have business or practical experience. Most are lawyers—so there you go.

The Bar's policies about credit cards and advanced fees are detrimental to both the public and the attorneys.

Law schools charge too much for tuition. This causes graduates to be stuck with massive student loans, and they probably won't find a job very easily. They probably will be in economic slavery for years unless they are in the top ten percent of their graduating classes.

I believe small firms and young lawyers will be impacted the most, as more senior attorney's and larger firms cut their fees, take cases that they would not have taken 6 months ago to sustain themselves, devote more money to advertising and possibly even cut their fees and/or offer more flexible payment options (ie. require a smaller retainer fee). I also think that many firms will implement either a hiring freeze, or limit their number of new hires, which combined with government layoffs will force recently graduated attorney's to open their own firms and thereby create more competition for the already dwindling pool of potential new clients. Finally, as far as family law specifically, I believe divorce rates will decrease due to insecurity and the feeling that can best be described as, "I hate you, but I will probably need your income just to survive, so I am going to stick it out for now."

I think we have to take our lumps like the rest of the country. I do think we have too many lawyers. I also believe that Arizona has done a poor job of protecting its citizens with the establishment of the document preparer. What I see is horrible work product, the giving of legal advice by non-lawyers, and people who therefore believe they do not need a lawyer. There is virtually no oversight of these folks and the clients do not even know they have trash for documents. Get rid of these document preparers.

We are all subprime!

Unlike consumer spending, which correlates positively with economic conditions, I assume that legal problems show a negative correlation. When times are tight, people do more to clobber one another.

They both stink.

As a nonprofit public interest law firm our donation base has held steady despite bottoming markets.

I've seen downsizing lots of places, not sure if it is the economy or just those law firms.

I work in divorce and I don't think much is gonna change in that area. Typically when there is a recession divorces increase.

GIVE ME BACK MY CREDIT CARD RETAINERS! ARE YOU NUTS????!!! THE FIRST TIME YOU GO TO WORK WITHOUT GETTING PAID, OR THE FIRST TIME YOU GIVE YOUR PAY CHECK BACK AND SO NO THANKS TO GETTING PAID, THEN YOU CAN COME TALK TO ME ABOUT WORKING WITHOUT A RETAINER!!!!

We have too many (ABA) law schools, turning out too many lawyers every year. Nation can not absorb and employ the number of lawyer who graduate each year.

Blame Bush!

This close to retirement, (2 years) I may have to find work in another profession to make ends meet before drawing social security.

I foresee further consolidation of large, multi-state and international law firms, reduction or consolidation of small firms into large firms, deterioration of the presence of the general practitioner, and fewer opportunities for law school graduates in the next five years. On the other hand I believe the legal services industry will rebound strongly after 2012 or so, and continue a general growth pattern in the state long term.

While we are not recession proof, we are clearly better positioned than many professions or job categories to survive the downturn!

These are dire times. Businesses propped up by Government bailouts and the end of easy lending. Businesses will continue to close and things will continue to slow—we just returned from Las Vegas and it was a semi-ghost town (in Las Vegas terms). One has to wonder what will happen to all those stores, all that commercial space, all those hotel rooms, if the economy continues in this downward spiral!

I started my own firm because I was bought out of my firm and could not find alternative employment. The job market is incredibly tight.

Because we are in a Legal Aid/Services type of practice, our volume is actually increasing. More people who have little money but who are having more legal problems actually helps us. However, as a firm, our budgets are very tight, so we are always looking for ways to reduce costs.

I believe that competent, experienced lawyers will do just fine. I am a plaintiffs' personal injury lawyer. I had a very strong year in 2008, which is why 2009 will be a bit lower. But, unless major insurance carriers file for Chapter 11 protection, my practice will continue to thrive.

I don't think Marxism is the solution but I'm in the minority. Until the real estate market turns around we will remain in a state of recession.

The economy is bad and cannot be cured with the selection of the new president and the cabinet individuals he is choosing. If anything, there will be a global recession with 50% of the workforce unemployed. The Bar needs to be more aggressive on corrupt attorneys and discipline needs to be tough. More attorneys will be getting into trouble since the temptation to cheat the average person will be greater than normal.

Need stimulus from gov't in form of SBA loans.

I think there will be a major readjustment to more realistic fees, and law firms will have to run more conservatively. Civil litigation will have to become more affordable.

There are more foreclosures and bankruptcies.

I think that the legal profession will withstand the economy issues, but there will be a long term impact on quality practitioners because less people will choose the option of attending law school due to the price.

Many of the questions above did not apply to my situation because I am a sole practitioner. I think there will be many more sole practitioners as firms won't be hiring and may even be laying off. I think hourly rates may come down. Which may not be a bad thing.

It really hurts our profession, when a few attorneys charge lower than what is customary. Discount attorneys.

Both are disappointing.

I think it would help if attorneys would lower rates slightly, lower advance fees, and be more flexible with payment options. Many clients hire me b/c I provide better quality service and charge less, and am flexible with payment options, so most do pay over time but they do pay. They appreciate me being reasonable, which appears to be lacking in the legal profession.

This survey has some loaded questions which will skew the results. Have a professional researcher review before you make any sweeping statements based upon the results.

I think this survey is a bit biased with a presumption that the legal profession will be impacted immediately by the economic downturn. It seems that the legal profession lags a bit behind general market activity. People will always need legal services, especially when they are facing changing economic conditions.

Those who are panicking and pulling their money from the stock market are unnecessarily adding to the decline of the economy.

Thanks for the opportunity to take part in your survey!

The availability of online forms, free legal advice (in reality) at the court office and document preparation firms have made the possibility of the sole practitioner becoming a dying occupation. It is simply too expensive to maintain an office, take CLE and advance costs upon promises of repayment for some sole practitioners to keep their practices going. My solution is to retire early on less income than to continue to use savings to pay bills.

I have practiced through several recessions. This is the worst one however. When times are tough for the general population, they are generally good for lawyers!

As always provide service level such that each client feels important during and after receipt of quality legal "product" at a reasonable price.

The survey monkey failed to take into account that not all lawyers answering work for law firms. I "not applicable" answer should have been added.

It's pretty uncertain how long the economy will take to recover from the past 8 years of poor economic leadership.

Things are bad and getting worse but all lawyers that are not in real estate and business transactions seem busy. The problem is that clients are slow to pay.

These are uncertain times. Generally speaking, attorneys have more insight into the direction in which things are heading than any other single group. Accordingly, more than any other group, attorneys should be able negotiate their way through these difficult times (at least those who are willing to be flexible and somewhat creative).

Question 4 had no good answer if I answered question 3 with no affect on attorney practice.

I should have gone to med school.

My guess is that the days of large reception areas and law librarians at big law firms is coming to an end.

Here's my question: who is going to bail me out? Do you think I an going to get a letter from the IRS in January 2009 that says "Dear Sir, we have decided that paying taxes this year is optional. Pay only what you want and not a penny more?" I'm not holding my breath.

There are problems with your survey. For instance, there is not an option for not applicable. We do not bill for fees.

It is like all other professions—clients don't pay, courts demand more and we keep dodging economic bullets (like increased health insurance premiums, business taxes and bar dues). What's to like? But I wouldn't trade my job for a widget maker at GM right now.

Buckle up, it is going to be rough! Even though my practice is mostly recession proof, the peripheral issues will be substantial.

I expect the economy to tank in 2009 and start to recover in 2010. In 2011 I expect it to be fully recovered. As for the law profession, people will be looking for money, so we will see a lot more of the smaller lawsuits and claims which people used to ignore. As for government lawyers, they will be busier as everyone turns their ire to the government, but will expect the government to solve their problems and provide more services to them.

God help us.

As prospective clients lose their jobs and their homes, they put off needed legal services or figure out a way to handle things themselves. They will focus more on their basic living needs and put off dealing with their legal problems.

Very uncertain times. Fees are flat for our type of work, but coasts continue to rise.

I work on collection matters on a contract basis and my work is steady. However, I worry about my husband's job. He is the main bread winner for the family--his job provides good income, health insurance and other benefits. If he loses his job, my job just doesn't offer those things and it will be very difficult on the family.

The rules regarding credit cards is hurting my business. Most clients do not carry checks anymore and want to charge my services to their cards.

This country is going to go through a very bad economic crisis and I am not sure how we are going to get things turned around. Unfortunately, this is just the beginning.

It is probably time that lawyers—particularly hourly lawyers—get in step with the economic realities.

Client intakes haven't declined, but I notice a sharp increase in client's failing to pay and intakes unable to retain (despite I charge relatively low amounts and allow payment plans).

While I truly believe the legal profession is—more than any other industry—substantially insulated from the economic downturn, it won't escape it entirely and many practitioners will be hurt.

Pay cuts have already occurred and lay-offs are being discussed.

Economy is tanking and the State Bar raises dues. Brilliant!

The economy is in its present state because of the utter failure of Reaganism-Bushism. A large segment of the law profession supported or failed to oppose governments which adhered to this misbegotten worldview. All of us—lawyers and lay people, Americans and tramontanes—now reap the whirlwind of unbridled greed, fawning militarism, and proud ignorance. Will smart, savvy, and dedicated save us from the Sarah Palins of the world? The jury hasn't even begun its deliberations.

I feel bad for new graduates. I am getting a lot of calls from them seeking work and advice.

Our profession is safer than most.

It has been tight for over a year now and tightened severely in 2nd and 3rd quarter 2008. Most attorneys I talk to have been adversely affected in some fashion by the downturn in the economy. I have had to eliminate some staff and services from my budget in order to maintain my income level.

I think people won't be hiring lawyers for divorces or family law cases because they can't afford to. I think we are going to see an increase in criminal activity and child abuse/neglect related to the economic hardships, which means more cases in the criminal and juvenile systems and more people qualifying for court appointed attorneys.

We are facing unprecedented economic uncertainty. There could be opportunities for the nimble law firm. But the effect will be largely negative. As the business climate goes, so goes the climate for large private firms.

The state bar, the judiciary, and the legislature need to be sensitive to imposing unnecessary obstacles in the way of successful law practice.

The economy is affecting attorneys personally, however, collectively as a Firm we will and are experiencing increase in work load due to an increase in clients and a decrease in staff due to staffing cutbacks.

While there are very real problems I keep thinking of Roosevelt's quote that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Fear produces paralyzing inaction and makes existing problems worse than they have to be. This phenomenon is true in the broader economy and within the walls of law firms.

Large firm fees will have to be reduced and alternative billing will probably expand across all areas of practice.

The legal profession needs to be more conservative in billing practices and try to be even more efficient.

Some questions do not apply to sole practitioners and there is no place to put NA.

Funds should be directed to provide adequate compensation to attorneys representing low income clients; economy makes it virtually impossible to work pro bono.

It's getting harder and harder to make a living as a lawyer. I probably should have gone to medical school.

I'm working harder than I ever have, but clients are going out of business, filing bankruptcy, or simply not paying. The result is that, despite the longer hours, my income is staying about the same.

The legal profession tried, in the last ten years, to make the legal system more accessible to the middle class and working poor. This downturn is going to the legal profession a tool of the rich, beyond the reach of anyone else because all cash will go to survival necessities. Litigation will decrease because overall less assets are available for collection.

Difficult to increase lines of credit. Credit lines being closed by banks.

Bad economy has resulted in more good cases than any time previously. I do employment litigation, discrimination, etc.

Passed the Bar in May '08. Laid off from a small firm in Nov. '08. Things look relatively bleak for me.

Old models of partnership track and exhaustive billing hours have ceded ground begrudgingly, but new models are much needed.

I have no idea what is going to happen, and I don't think anyone does.

It appears that the economic turndown affects all lawyers in some way. People don't have the discretionary income they once had to spend on legal representation. I believe 2009 might be worse than 2008, but I anticipate some recovery in 2010.

Because salary increases for government lawyers have not kept up with inflation for many years (decades?), relative earnings have been eroding each year for a long time.

Law firms need to conduct themselves as businesses in order to survive.

More free or discounted trainings/CLE would be appreciated, particularly in a state that charges \$460 per YEAR, versus New York state, where I am also licensed, and I pay \$350 FOR TWO YEARS. Give us some free or discounted CLE in consideration of that large annual licensing fee.

Whether the economy is good or bad, clients still seem to prefer male lawyers.

I think that overall, our profession suffers less in an economic than most others, other than medical.

INTERNATIONAL LIQUIDITY MELTDOWN, DIFFICULT TO STOP, ALL PROFESSIONS UNKNOWINGLY WILL NOT BE EXEMPT FROM DETERIORATION IN LIQUIDITY/CASH FLOWING INTO THEIR BUSINESS OPERATIONS, THE LEGAL PROFESSION'S HISTORICAL BILLING RATES AND OVERALL COST IN PERFORMING LEGAL SERVICES CANNOT BE SUSTAINED, IN A LIQUIDITY CRUNCH ENVIROMENT, NONADVERSARIAL EDUCATION IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION IS NECESSARY. WE NEED TO LEARN TO CHANGE GEARS IN OUR PRACTICES.

For all legal work, regardless of the practice area, clients are already becoming extremely frugal and are closely examining each and every dollar being billed. This is true of both small and large clients. Everyone has marching orders to cut costs, regardless as to the size of the business. That could get extremely complicated and complex with matters where it is hard to predict or even control billable legal services, such as complex litigation and work where issues arise that require more attorney time. Clients will vigorously negotiate to limit the attorney's fee in some way (i.e., flat fees, maximum fees, etc.). That may be ok depending on the matter, but I think the bar should advise all of its members to make sure each representation letter agreement is tightly drafted to cover the scope of the work and what work is and is not included in the quoted fee. I think it would be a great idea for the State Bar to post on myazbar.org a really good representation letter agreement form addressing this concern. If you want, I am happy to help with that.

Buckle up, we're in for a rough ride.

I think that it's time for large firms to adjust their "bill a quarter-hour for a three minute phone call" mentality. It's affecting everyone--businesses, consumers, plaintiffs, defendants. It's also ludicrous for brand new attorneys to start at six-figure incomes.

Tough road ahead just like the economy around us.

Lawyers need to diversify their practice areas.

Unless we change the ways we do business, the legal profession is going to be subject to a number of substantial changes. People will rely less and less on lawyers because of the costs, resulting in more problems in resolving disputes or in doing transactions.

Economize! Bar dues are too high already!

Low paying government departments will have an easier time recruiting lawyers if the economy continues downward. It will actually help the poor counties if they are able to hire and don't have to freeze or layoff.

Because I work as in-house counsel for a non-profit, some of the questions were not relevant. Also, I am part of a staff union working under a three-year contract, so salary and working conditions are set—subject to reductions-in-force or re-negotiation.

Keeping people focused on long range planning is crucial. Pessimism is contagious and debilitating, often with little realistic focus. The temporary loss of value in a persons stock portfolio with no near plans for even touching those funds, combined with a good stable carrier shouldn't result in personal spending cutbacks. Those cutbacks have an immediate effect on the overall economy. If you have access to cash, save a little and don't retreat--fight the storm and move your business forward.

I have seen an increase in people interested in civil litigation for small amounts of money. It is indicative of the overall angst over money. People are more willing to take an aggressive approach to suing for money they think is owed to them.

Gas prices while up to \$4.00 impacted driving habits and insurance purchasing, people driving less and cutting costs leads to less traffic and possibly fewer claims and even less accidents...fewer lawsuits.

I'm just glad Bush is gone!

The recession is great for bankruptcy lawyers.

I am a "mostly" retired sole practitioner and only represent a very few clients. I pick my clients, they don't pick me. Thus, I will feel very little impact from the downturn in the economy. I suspect that I am NOT typical.

I think your survey is skewed toward finding recessionary problems. The questions on the first 2 pages give no option for positive responses only the degree of negative impact. I don't think your results can be considered scientifically derived.

The economy will favor those who can adapt and take on more diverse projects. Specialization will become more difficult to sustain.

Thanks for the opportunity to participate!

I am very concerned about increased tort reform with the current economy and the change in administration here in AZ.

I'm a bankruptcy attorney. That is the only reason I feel my work load and compensation will improve. Not the case generally for other attorneys, regrettably.

Too many lawyers competing for a smaller market of clients. Too many law graduates and one too many law schools in the state.

Really need assistance from State Bar. Instead continually looking for ways to catch lawyers making mistakes under very difficult circumstances, the Bar needs to assist members during these economic hard times by thinking out of the box. Offer tutorials on how lawyers can make money by focusing in on foreclosure workouts and other areas that may see significant work during this recession.

I am fortunate to be able to work out of my home with very low overhead, which keeps my costs down. I am always looking for new niche areas of practice to complement my work in Family Law and Landlord/Tenant. I expect to do more collection work in the future. You should also be encouraging attorneys to continue to provide reduced rate and Pro Bono assistance to potential clients in need.

You should include "not applicable" in the questions that are not geared for solos.

2009 will not be a year to sit in your office and wait for the phone to ring.

Choose to be an optimist.

Legal advice is important, but at a price. If the price is high, people will tend to believe it is less important. The option is there to choose someone whose rates are more reasonable. Our office is staffed by volunteers with VERY low rates, but we are seeing people needing to spread payments or put off what otherwise they might do. It will be necessary for the "high priced lawyer" to take a second look at their rates.

Thought about the survey - the choices were not appropriate for government lawyers in several sections—you needed a not applicable choice throughout.

Are these survey's valid beyond the anecdotes? Will we see the results?

My impression is that people see more value in seeking quality counsel before making decisions now than ever before. I think that this is an opportunity for attorneys to offer sound advice and use our skills to allow people to make the best decisions for their families.

The global economy will emerge from this recession, transformed, but it will emerge. The legal profession will thrive over the long term.

We'll get through it, baby!

Our firm does a considerable amount of reorganization and restructuring law, which is going to make us an outlier in your statistical analysis.

I think the downturn will result in additional financial incentive for firms to consider outsourcing legal work, possibly to places like India. Once that trend sets in, I think there will be a decrease in demand for law grads from all but the top tier law schools.

I specialize in domestic relations and there is a clear decrease in new clients due to the economy

Dinosaur bones like myself have seen these cycles many times. This one may set some records but, the reality is, our services are needed in good times & tough times. Competent and careful lawyers will adjust as needed.

Response #5 above on page 4 is a pessimistic estimate. Compensation as in-house general counsel at real estate development company reach \$360,000/year as of January 1, 2007; then was reduced to \$260,000 as of June 1, 2008; then I was laid-off as of October 3, 2008. Current income is dismal and prospective income in 2009 is completely unknown.

I think a lot of legal sectors are insulated from the economy to a certain extent due to the Statutes of Limitations and Repose, but I project that we will experience a downturn, if the economy stays sour and those built-in buffers begin to catch up with us.

You need to have an "N/A" choice for Gov't lawyers on several of your questions, like partner capital contributions. For most of those, I answered "Not likely."

Let's just have faith it can only get better.

I expect new lawyers and laterals to be adversely affected by the downturn in the economy as firms start tightening their belts.

I would really hate to be a mid-sized law firm burdened down with tons of staff. Hard times are coming and they will be around for a long time.

We need to project positive thoughts about our future, as does the entire nation. The more negativity out there, the worse it will be.

The economy right now is the worst that I can remember since starting to practice law 25 years ago this month. Controlling overhead will be more important to law firms in 2009 - more so than usual. Lawyer marketing, which tends to decline in a favorable economic environment, will be a vital skill in the current economic climate.

This too shall pass...

Prior to the economic crisis, the legal profession was already difficult in terms of unreasonable client expectations, lack of professionalism and lack of collegiality within one's own office. The economic crisis will only make these problems worse.

Difficult times now and ahead.

More municipalities and counties in Arizona should offer a student loan forgiveness program for public lawyers who serve their community after 3-5 years of service. This would take some of the economic pressure off of new lawyers in these tough economic times who work for the government after graduating law school with a tremendous amount of student loan debt. Maricopa County offers an incentive program.

I think this would be a great time for large firms to cut back on huge starting salaries and allow for lower billing requirements to increase quality of life.

While there are certain economic issues that are obviously real, a great deal of our “recession” and economic outlook is due to puffed up fears. Meaning if the government officials and academics desperate for face time would quit harping on how bad things are, the majority of people would realize their personal circumstances--in terms of actual income—has not changed. Hying up and promoting fear has been the biggest economic problem by far.

Although my personal finances will decline, I believe that the adjustments in the economy are necessary and will create greater sustainable economic strength in the future.

I would like to see the final results of the survey in an e-mail.

Very uncertain.

Some of the questions should have offered the following answers: “None of the above” or “N/A” as options too.

It’s a time of great opportunity for the bold, intelligent, and adaptable people; while at the same time the worst thing that could have happened to the lazy and stupid.

Lawyers with good reputations will continue to develop and increase their practice; Small business clients are showing signs of reduced business which has ripple effect on paying bills and hiring but they still have legal issues; payments may be a little slower.

You should disregard this survey. I retire in 3 weeks.

No bailouts, let the crashes and subsequent liquidations take place, and go back to popular election of judges.

One of the safest professions in which to be during the downturn. The wheels of civil and criminal justice require the care and attention that attorneys provide, and even the transactional attorneys will be able to find a way to make ends meet.

Student loans—especially private loans with variable rates—are going to force government lawyers into further debt, bankruptcy, etc. because finding alternative better paying work is next to impossible. Someone should work on assisting prosecutors and defense attorneys in government practice in fixing and reducing student loans rates.

The recession provides opportunity for smaller firms and sole practitioners because of the ability to provide legal services at reduced rates compared to many of the large, high overhead

law firms. It may also reduce the opportunities for entry level positions if the larger firms and governmental agencies implement hiring freezes. Lawyers may need to engage in more marketing and may need to be more flexible in their fee structures and payment schedules.

The legal profession has become more and more a business than a profession. This legal downturn will only intensify our profession's image as a business instead of a profession.

many of the questions have no application whatsoever to indigent defense. You need to have an "NA" option for accuracy.

None, as this took up enough time...

I see the number of and compensation of government lawyers staying pretty steady. There will be more fluctuations in private practice, particularly in large firms that rely on real estate transactions and business development as their key practice areas. Lawyers overall, however, are less likely to feel the economy long-term as compared to other professions because there will always be lawyers, regardless of the economy. If one practice goes away, lawyers learn another or transfer their skills to doing something else.

I am truly concerned about my practice and supporting my son due to financial difficulties. I practice primarily Juvenile and Dependency areas, however, but because my income has declined drastically, I have had to consult another attorney about filing bankruptcy due to my own divorce and the economy. Many other lawyers I know are experiencing similar issues and have the same concerns for their own practice. This has been difficult and emotional for many of us.

Many newly graduating attorneys will be hard-pressed to find a job today. The ABA, state bars, and law schools need to seriously consider the number of new lawyers coming out of school.

S.O.L.

The poor economy will make clients and client relations more avaricious as they all begin to feel the economic hardships of the times—practice will be even less enjoyable.

Economic conditions may trigger changes for which pressures have been building for some time, including demand for greater efficiency and economy in delivery of legal services, de-personalization and commodification of legal services, consolidation of the practice into large international firms, and the effects of broader availability of information through the Internet.

I think the rates for legal work at large firms were unsustainable, as were first year associate salaries and hiring bonuses. As a small law firm, we are perfectly positioned to pick up the former clients of larger law firms who simply cannot afford \$400+ for an attorney.

A lot of the questions were not precise enough. The answers to the imprecise questions could mean a lot of things and should not be definitively relied upon.

I am a government lawyer and due to the economy we are being appointed on more cases and no new resources are being added to help so it's very difficult.

Anyone who isn't concerned right now, should be. Certain areas of the country's economy will be hurting for years to come. People will be desperate and will do desperate things. That doesn't mean that they will have the resources to pay their attorney. It will not be pretty.

I think my bar dues would be better spent on something other than a silly survey.

Does anybody care about the client's well-being?

I do primarily personal injury work. I don't see this area as being as widely affected as other areas. People still get in accidents. I foresee possibly an increase in cases, as more people having hard financial times seek to be compensated for their injuries. I also think insurance companies may be less willing to settle larger cases due to their own financial difficulties, so we may see more cases go to trial.

I believe large law firms with "branches" or "divisions" that are fueled by a few large corporate clients will be affected when such clients are lost, resulting in mass layoffs. I believe general commercial litigation will increase. I believe that attorneys will work harder in the sense that they will be more careful with their work and their client relations, but will not necessarily work longer hours or have any additional work load issues (generally). In going through the interview process recently to hire an associate for our firm, we posted an ad with AZ Attorney and had about a dozen applications for a 3 yr associate position within only about 6 hours. Most were unemployed due to a current layoff with a large "slave-driver" firm that lost an entire division of staff due to one or two major clients. All that I interviewed were over-paid at their previous employment based on the limited experience they had, yet still wanted the same salary. Virtually all were told that our position would not have a similar salary and nearly all expressed the willingness to negotiate much lower amounts. Also, I received quite a few applicants fresh out of law school with no experience and, given the economy and market conditions, I am currently not willing to take on that liability for training. Many also had several years (10 - 20 yrs) experience and were out in the market looking for a 3 yr associate position knowing the anticipated salary range. As an attorney that practices mainly collection work, my general practice has skyrocketed with the increase in consumer collection cases and bankruptcies. However, it is more difficult to find sources of income to satisfy the debts owed to my client, so the market has forced me to carefully review my practices, hone my skills and deal with many, many issues that I have never before had to face because of the need to become created and masterful to assist clients who are also struggling financially. We will also increase our expenses this next year, but are not raising rates in an effort to stay competitive. I also find myself writing a lot of time off or down to make my work appear more successful, efficient or effective. Notwithstanding, I believe next year will be my best year yet due to the amount of collection and foreclosure related litigation that has increased in my office.

Lawyers need to "fair-bill" based on results rather than on hourly rates.

Practicing law remains interesting and fulfilling even in less-than-ideal times

This is probably the worst recession since the great depression of 1929.

It has definitely affected my employment search efforts—given that experienced lawyers are also looking for new employment opportunities due to the economy developments.

It's looking grim.

I had hoped to retire in 2009 or 2010 - but with the current state of the economy, that's not possible.

I do not agree that admittance by motion will be a good thing. It will encourage more attorneys to move to Arizona and place more pressure on those already here. People can say what they want but these attorneys will not have been required to study AZ. law and it will result in problems.

There will never be a lack of demand for legal services, only the ability to pay for them.

Most retired persons have lost nearly 40% or more of the savings in the last 6 months. The economy is tied to the subprime mortgage fiasco. The federal government so far has not done anything in this area to help borrowers modify their ARM mortgages or stop foreclosures. Persons will not incur legal fees now unless absolutely necessary. This will slow down the overall practice of law for most lawyers except for example, personal injury cases. Expect a rebound in stock prices around 2010 after the prices on homes has stabilized and then starts to increase because of undervaluation. There still is a risk of a depression however which would hurt everyone financially. I don't know how the government can continue to borrow money, do financial bailouts, and yet still pay for all of our welfare programs, including Medicare and Social Security. Down the road a few more years, say 5 years, this could likely come back again to hurt the economy, resulting in welfare cutbacks, increased taxes, layoffs and a serious depression. Advice: save money if possible, fully diversify investments and have at least 50% in income triple or double A bonds, etc., and also real estate to offset stock market, and conserve spending.

I'm using more contract lawyers and finding many are out there looking for extra work. I'm swamped and have been all year with no end in sight. My practice is commercial litigation and appeals.

I would never encourage children to "be a lawyer when [they] grow up."

This year has been a very poor year for me. In 2007 I earned \$150,000. This year under \$50,000.

Better start giving clients some value for their money, with or without a bad economy.

As a rural lawyer but one who has handled various cases, including at least 4 jury trials in phoenix, this crunch forces an opportunity for judges, lawyers, staffs and other components of the legal system there to simplify things, learn to say "yes" rather than "no," make things faster rather than creating hurdles at every turn. The clerks office is clearly the worst offender of a system in need of a structural adjustment. With to many firms churning the discovery process in civil litigation, to many "matrimonial" lawyers making mountains out of divorce mole hills, the client suffers severely from excessive fees and he public unwittingly suffers because tax

dollars that could be servicing the needy are being wasted in an inefficient world that makes good money for us but is immune from any meaningful public scrutiny.

As lawyers, we charge too much for too little, and too frequently overbill based on unrealistic estimates of how much time it takes to accomplish simple tasks. We do this mostly because we can. But economic recessions, and certainly depressions, always readjust the cost of services downward. Most practicing lawyers have never known a downturn of this magnitude. Survivors will charge less, work more, and pay more attention to financially weak clients.

I am now doing bankruptcy work but our firm does other areas of law that are declining and may continue to decline.

This economy is making it almost impossible for recent graduates to find employment because no one is willing to “invest” in someone with little to no experience during this time of tight finances.

I think that the legal profession will take a hit, but once the economy starts to recover, the legal profession should also recover.

The poorer the economy, the more work for lawyers in general.

Bar dues should be decreased.

I think we're in for a truly catastrophic economic climate that will last a long time.

Smart and prepared lawyers will do well. Inflexible and unprepared lawyers will suffer, regardless of the level of experience.

Certain law practices are inversely correlated to the economy. As things in the economy worsen, human frailties are tested. Humans fail. Some lawyers will be positioned to assist those clients out of their problems.

Lawyers have become their own worst enemy by becoming more and more aggressive and uncordial in their dealings with other lawyers. This behavior damages the legal profession.

I am responsible for my own investments and have converted everything into safe vehicles such as CD's so the market does not worry me as much as others. I do see bad times over the next two to three years as this recession will continue to snowball - there are no quick fixes especially with the do-nothing politicians in D.C. - their only solution is to print money and throw it at the problem and there is soon going to be a line of industries - Airlines, Insurance Companies, High Tech Companies looking for handouts just like the automakers and banks..... No end in sight. I think risk mitigation and use of attorneys by all size companies will go by the wayside as it is a non-essential expense when you have to pay your light bills and rent - I think attorneys charging exorbitant fees as outside counsel will see there “wells running dry” so to speak. It looks pretty bleak and I work for one of the few Fortune 100 Companies that is still making a profit right now.

More will expected to succeed.

I have closed my practice and I have not been able to find steady employment elsewhere. I am about to lose everything. There is your economic survey.

On a national scale, the economy is much better than being portrayed.

Lawyers are affected by the economy, but probably less so than most people.

Young lawyers will have a hard time finding work. Government jobs will be winners in the short term until economy turns around and maybe for quite some time.

Although my legal education and training are invaluable, I would not enter the profession again if I had the chance to live my life over.

Pray for our Country and our State.

The economy is driven by supply and demand, by making economic incentives or bail outs to the supply and demand parts as opposed to the individual citizens for socially reasonable need based goods/services (particularly when the incentives or bail outs are unknown/un-clarified as to what they will be spent on) makes for a unnatural market place and that causes action and reaction that cannot be calculated effectively nor relied upon effectively and creates a cycle of bad reaction causing the market to remain unstable and therefore a normal balance of supply and demand cannot take place. Example: stocks drop as people pull money from funds because of financial companies failures in response to housing market fallout, the gov makes bail out commitments to the market but absolutes on what and how that spending will take place creates a lull in the market while people wait to invest/spend the money they pulled out (instead of spending it on the real estate foreclosure market where the money would cause a natural bail out) and that caused further hardship and further bail out and then, and further instability takes place because the market did not self adjust and is waiting to see the effects of the unnatural market condition or bail out. This effects lawyers by giving them many bankruptcy and trustee jobs, this gives lawyers jobs for dividing up what is left, but ultimately it is lawyers who drafted the short sited stuff and so ultimately it gives lawyers a bad name.

I want to go out on my own. But given today's economy, I am in no rush to leave my government job.

The practice of law is a great profession that I love dearly and hope we can improve the image of the legal profession. Good luck with your survey-glad to have assisted.

Litigation (my specialty) is likely going to be relatively unaffected by the economic downturn as it has very little to do with economic conditions.

Although we will always have economic cycles, greed tends to make them much worse. We should try to implement some restraints to minimize the downturns. I don't know if we will ever learn our lessons.

I know that private attorneys are already feeling the effects of the recession because less clients are seeking their advice.