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# Online Contests: Make Them Effective by Simplifying the Mechanics

*Seattle Business*

Lane Powell Attorneys Steve Winters and Lisa Poplawski co-authored an article in *Seattle Business* magazine's April 2015 issue titled "Online Contests: Make Them Effective by Simplifying the Mechanics." In the article, Winters and Poplawski discussed the mechanics of effective online contests, as well as the issues that arise from doing too much with a single contest or sweepstakes.

You might think this sort of advice is obvious and goes without saying. But we find ourselves regularly saying it. From a business perspective, complicated contest mechanics can lead to confusion among entrants and may dissuade people from entering altogether. From a legal perspective, online contests must comply with online data privacy laws, the CAN-SPAM Act (which sets rules for commercial emails), and the aforementioned third-party website terms and conditions. If your contest involves the creation of any sort of intellectual property (e.g., a photo submission contest), then the rules and administrative mechanics will need to address the licensing and ownership of the submissions, as well as the publicity rights of participants and winners.