
10 Ways to Turn Legal Websites Into New Client Magnets

Learn how...

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1 Analytics

Most law firms believe that they know what their clients are looking for online. Shockingly often however, they are mistaken. Poor marketing decisions are made using assumptions. To truly understand what clients and potential clients want from your legal website, you have to look at your data. Analytics will uncover the truth—what motivates site visitors. It will also uncover trends and opportunities. The data you unearth will lead to a better strategy, which will in turn lead to better results and new business.



Diving into website analytics is the first step to a winning website strategy. What pages are clients viewing on your website? What pages are referring traffic to your website? What social media posts do clients comment on, like, and share? What type of content are site visitors willing to give you their contact information for (videos, whitepapers, how-to information, etc)? Armed with this data, you can craft a web experience and winning content strategy that will deliver the best results, including delivering targeted content. You can order navigation menu items with the highest probability for results. You can create the shortest path to conversion. When armed with the right intel, you can deliver the best web experience possible to guarantee the best results possible.

2 SEO

96% percent of clients use a search engine to find a lawyer. 62% percent of those searches are “non-branded” meaning they aren’t searching for an attorney or law firm by name. This means that you absolutely need to have a strategy for search engine optimization. And you better have a CMS that helps you optimize for search engines easily.



Here are just a few of the ways to ensure your site is well optimized.

- Go mobile. As of April, 2015 Google began penalizing websites that aren't mobile friendly. Go mobile or your search engine results will take a hit.
- Publish relevant content regularly. Search engines reward sites that keep content fresh and relevant.
- Share content socially. Shared content creates social signals that help search engines determine content relevancy. Widely shared content ranks higher in search results.
- Use videos. Serve compelling video sourced from YouTube, Brightcove, or local hosts. Tag and classify video content, categorize by media sources, create playlists, and re-use video anywhere across your site to help search engines find and index multimedia content.
- Blog regularly. Blogging regularly causes your site to be indexed more frequently by search engines. More blog posts translate to more social shares and inbound links, improve site credibility and rankings.
- Keep an eye on performance. Quickly measure and adjust page performance to ensure load times are faster than four seconds. Users expect good response times and search engines now include performance as a ranking factor in their algorithms.
- Use human readable URLs. Publish paperthin.com/products instead of paperthin.com/product/URL.index.html?id=246247896234 to tell search engines that each page name is unique and meaningful.
- Use heading tags to organize content. Search engines use headings to determine relevance between content and associated headers. A good semantic structure helps search engines better interpret and report on your content.
- Use logical navigation. Navigation tells search engines which pages are important, improves page rankings, and creates a clear path for information discovery.
- Leave breadcrumbs. Breadcrumb navigation makes your site more trustworthy and positively impacts page ratings by providing a structure that search engines can easily analyze.
- Don't forget the map! Site maps help search engines locate your content and help site visitors find what they are looking for.



3 Profiles

When clients search for a new law firm, they are evaluating you based on expertise, credibility, and approachability. When done right, attorney profiles give you the opportunity to differentiate your firm by showcasing your greatest assets—your attorneys. Demonstrate you have the most experienced, respected and approachable law practitioners around, and you're that much closer to winning a new client.

Make sure your attorney profiles include what clients expect to see, such as vCards, education, admissions, work experience, professional associations, practice areas, industries, related news and publications. And then add information that they typically don't see, such as major achievements, published works, lectures/speaking engagements, ongoing and settled cases, news citations, presentations, videos and webinars, pro bono work, and more. The unexpected content is what demonstrates credibility and earns respect which translates to confidence in your firm.

4 Practice Pages

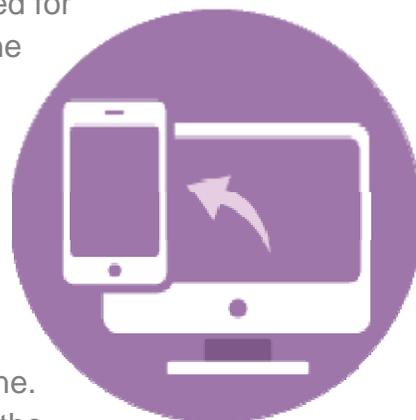
More often than not, practice pages consist of long blocks of text that make people's eyes glaze over almost instantly. Devoid of visuals of any kind, they're just begging for a digital makeover. Here's an interesting fact to consider. Our brains process visuals 60,000 times faster than text and can recall images much more effectively than text. You need to throw away your practice page and start over.

To be truly effective, practice pages should serve as perfect positioning pages. They must demonstrate thought leadership, and content should be presented in easy-to-scan digital sound bites with engaging images—similar to what you would see on an online news site, for example. Give site visitors the opportunity to scan, read what interests them, and move on.

- Differentiate with your page title: i.e., Strategic Advisors to Securities Firms.
- Include a succinct positioning statement.
- Include an engaging practice-related image.
- Include clearly defined sections with easy to scan bullets that add value and demonstrate expertise, such as Research Projects, Recent Articles, and Emerging Issues.
- Include attorney and partner profiles.
- Include case summaries and client testimonials.
- Include a clear call to action.

5 Mobile

Less than one third of law firm websites are optimized for mobile today. Why should this matter? Search engine results for one. As of April 21st, 2015 Google started penalizing websites that aren't mobile friendly in its search results. Almost as important however are visitor experiences. If you have a website, then clients are already viewing it using mobile devices whether mobile-friendly or not. To not have a mobile-friendly site is a mighty big gamble considering fifty percent of clients will never visit your site again if the first experience is a bad one. You must engage clients on multiple channels. And given the exponential growth of mobile devices fueled by the mobile craze, mobile is arguably the most important channel. Go mobile.



6 Personalization

The legal marketplace today is highly competitive making differentiation increasingly difficult so you must differentiate in every way that you can. Your website can help. The key to success is to deliver highly personalized content that anticipates a website visitor's needs, whether they are a prospect or a client. This means delivering relevant content to the right audience at exactly the right moment creating unparalleled web experiences that engage and convert.



Marketers on average see a 20% uplift in new business when personalizing web experiences. And yet only 3% of law firm websites deliver personalized content to site visitors. See the opportunity? Given these numbers and increased competition, personalization arguably should be at the top of every legal marketer's website strategy. If landing new clients is getting more difficult for you, the time to act is now. Better web experiences increase engagement and will help improve your chance of winning new clients, and keeping existing ones.

7 Blog

Blogs are the hard-working underdogs in your firm’s digital marketing toolkit. They open a 24/7 line of communication with clients, build attorney credibility, improve SEO results, achieve higher website traffic, and drive significantly more new business leads. There are three important rules to follow when it comes to blogs.

- Publish content regularly. Stick to a schedule—one post per week is fine—and you will be rewarded with repeat visitors and better search engine results.
- Keep it relevant. Content must be relevant to your business, and it must be approximately 1,000 words in length. Gone are the days when a short post was rewarded with good search engine results. Search engines are smarter now. Relevance and value are essential.
- Share it widely. Sharing blog content socially greatly increases your reach. It also creates valuable inbound traffic to your site through re-sharing which search engines love.



8 Social Media

In an industry where reputation is everything, social media cannot be ignored. Social media is a conversation between your law firm, attorneys, and clients. It’s a real opportunity to build brand equity and establish positive online reputations. It also increases website traffic and search engine page rankings.

- Identify the social platforms where client needs and your goals intersect.
- Integrate those platforms with your website to enable social sharing.
- Map client needs to your own goals and objectives.
- Share high quality, useful content (blog posts, infographics, commentary, etc.) to position yourself as a thought leader within your area of expertise, regularly
- Listen and join the conversation. It is not just about sharing. Interacting with people who share and comment on posts is where real connections happen.



9 Video and Multimedia

How do you engage prospective clients more effectively? Video provides law firms with an enormous opportunity to engage directly and authentically with



website visitors. They make attorneys appear more human and approachable than the typical bio and headshot, which can be a significant differentiator in the competitive legal industry. Whether featuring Supreme Court ruling analysis or editorial opinion pieces, videos are a great opportunity to demonstrate expertise and showcase your firms greatest assets—it's people. A general rule of thumb is to keep videos short, under five minutes is optimal.

Also, unlike other marketing tactics, video content draws clients directly to you via search engine and social media traffic. In fact, video content is 53 times

more likely to appear on the first page of results now that Google and Bing display blended video and text content, making it a very powerful marketing tool for driving new business.

10 Re-use and Relate Web Content

It takes a lot of time to create great content, whether text, video, presentations, infographs, etc. You want that effort to be rewarded with eyeballs. You want it to be seen. Re-using and relating content across your website using cross links increases the likelihood that your most valuable content—the content that builds credibility and earns respect—will be read. A video case summary for example should appear in the blog, on the home page, in the attorney profile, and on any related practice pages. It exponentially increases the reach and value of your content, while enriching your client's web experience as well.



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