



SEO FOR LAWYERS:

**Why and How to Implement
a Search Engine Optimization Strategy
for Your Law Firm**

CONTENTS

What Is Law Firm SEO?	7
Why Do Law Firms Need SEO?	8
Crawling	14
Indexing	14
Ranking	15
Ranking Factors	16
On-Page SEO	16
Off-Page SEO	17
Ranking Factors	17
Content	18
Links	19
RankBrain	20
Local Ranking Factors	21
Black-Hat and White-Hat SEO	23
Notable SERP Features for Law Firms	23
Mobile SEO	25
What Is Keyword Research (and Why Does It Matter)?	27
Search Volume and Competition	28
Short-Tail and Long-Tail Keywords	28
Determining Search Volume and Competition	29
Search Query Intents	31
How to Find the Right Law Firm Keywords	32
Evaluating Keywords	35
Evaluating Keyword Intent	37
Website Design and Structure	39
Navigation and Internal Linking	40
The Solution for Site Speed	42
URL Structures, Title Tags, and Meta Descriptions	43
URL Structures	44
Title Tags	45
Meta Descriptions	46
Implementing URL Structures, Title Tags and Meta Descriptions	48
Mobile Optimization	49
Website Design	49
Above the Fold Content	51
Simplification	52

Breadcrumbs.....	53
Checking Mobile Performance.....	54
Schema Structured Markup.....	55
Generating Schema Code.....	57
Alt Text and Image Optimization.....	57
HTTP vs HTTPS / WWW vs non-WW.....	58
WWW vs non-WWW.....	59
Understanding Technical SEO for Law Firms.....	59
Legal Blog Posts and Articles.....	61
Topics.....	62
The Skyscraper Technique.....	63
Tone and Style.....	64
How to Structure a Legal Blog Post.....	66
Keep Things Local.....	67
E-A-T Scores.....	67
Pillar Pages.....	70
Optimizing Content for Position Zero.....	71
How to Optimize for Position Zero.....	74
Best Practices.....	75
Practice Area Pages.....	77
The Hierarchy of Practice Pages.....	78
Clear Purpose.....	79
Writing Practice Area Page Copy.....	81
Compelling CTAs.....	83
Chat Bots.....	84
Multiple Locations?.....	85
The Anatomy of Your Practice Area Page.....	85
Video SEO for Lawyers.....	90
Law Firm Video Types.....	90
Turn Your Blog Posts into Videos.....	90
Testimonials.....	91
Website Videos.....	92
How to Optimize Legal Videos for Search Engines.....	93
Should You Promote Your Legal Content?.....	95
How Does Link Building for Law Firms Work?.....	96
Domain and Page Authority.....	97
Do-Follow and No-Follow Backlinks.....	98
Different Types of Backlinks (and How to Get Them).....	98
Editorial Backlinks.....	98
How to Get Editorial Backlinks for Your Law Firm.....	100
Self-Created Links for Law Firms.....	104
Message Boards for Legal Topics.....	105
Directory Links.....	108

Links Your Law Firm Should Avoid.....	110
A Three-Step Process for Measuring Your Law Firm's SEO Results.....	112
1. Your SEO Goals and Tactics.....	112
2. Gather Your Law Firm's SEO Data.....	114
Google Search Console.....	114
Google Analytics.....	115
3. Analyze Your SEO Data.....	116
SEO Audit Tools for Your Law Firm.....	117
Ahrefs.....	117
Woorank.....	117
BuzzStream.....	117
Moz.....	118
SEMRush.....	118
Ready to Start Measuring Your Results?.....	120



Introduction

In this day and age, a law firm can't generate revenue just by employing capable attorneys. The number of cases is increasing every day, and new firms are constantly popping up.

When a potential client starts looking for a lawyer for a particular problem, they're faced with thousands of potential choices.

However, they no longer page through Yellow Pages. Today, when your clients need legal counsel, they turn to the same place they turn to for everything:

Google and search engines.

Billions of people may be using social media, but Google is still the go-to source for information; from recipes to legal services.

Fortunately, law firm marketing doesn't have to be hard. All you have to do is appear on the first page of Google.

The only question is: how can you get there?

In this guide, we're going to discuss **how search engine optimization can help law firms improve their lead generation and consequently, their profitability.**



What Is Law Firm SEO?

If you want to reach the millions who use Google to find their next attorney, you have to optimize your law firm website.

SEO is a marketing discipline that helps with lead generation for law firms.

SEO consistently attracts visitors to the website (leads) by helping you increase your visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs).

Law firm SEO, in particular, focuses on attracting leads who need legal services in a particular area. This gives law firms an additional edge over standard SEO practices; the focus has to be on **the locale** as well as content itself.

For example, your lead could search for “*personal injury attorneys*.” Both they and Google know that they are looking for an attorney in their area, effectively making their search: “*personal injury attorneys New York*.”

Typically, other businesses don't have the opportunity to create highly-specific content, both in terms of subjects and areas.





However, law firms can optimize their website to increase their visibility by creating content that's specific to a state's laws.

As a local effort, law firm SEO is relatively simple to implement. And once that's done, it's easy to maintain it and see the returns for years to come.

Just a few tweaks and a good SEO strategy can take law firms towards a bright future with many satisfied clients and an improved reputation.

Why Do Law Firms Need SEO?

Law firm marketing is an absolutely necessity for any practice that wants to stay competitive in this day and age.

However, there are so many tactics, not all of which pay the same returns. Typically, lawyers opt for PPC (Pay-Per-Click) advertising campaigns when they want to promote their firms. However, PPC campaigns come with hefty costs, and they're one-hit wonders.

As soon as a law firm stops paying for PPC ads, they'll stop receiving the traffic they need.





Additionally, it's impossible to remarket to potential clients with PPC. As soon as the click has been paid for, there's no easy way to reach the people who have visited your website again and entice them into scheduling a consultation.

To put it simply: if you haven't converted the lead to a customer the first time they visited your site, you won't get the chance to do it again.

Conversely, with SEO, it's much easier to **reduce costs while improving the effectiveness of marketing.**

When a law firm appears on the first results page for their target keywords, they stay there. They don't have to pay to appear, as is the case with PPC ads.

SEO lives long after the initial investment.

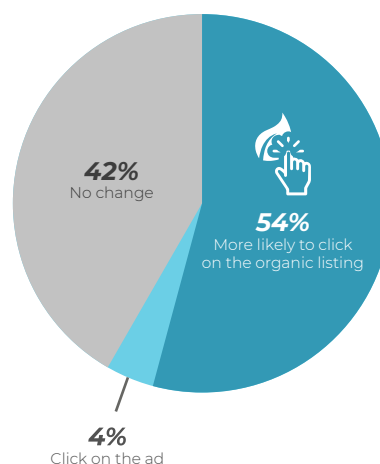
Additionally, law firms can track leads with the help of pixels, and remarket to them later. So even if the lead didn't convert on their first visit, you get a second chance at turning them into a customer.

Leads and clients trust SEO more than paid advertising.

SEO comes with a plethora of benefits for leads, as well. [People are more likely to click on organic results than ads.](#)

The reasoning behind this is simple: everyone can run an ad promoting their services.

However, only trustworthy and reputable law firms can get on the first page of Google without paying for it.





Additionally, search engines have improved their algorithms in order to please searchers. They understand different intentions, locations, and other factors that weigh into someone's decision to click on a particular search result.

All of this makes Google a one-stop shop for leads looking for legal advice.

The clients believe that websites displayed in organic results are:

- More relevant than advertised websites
- Trustworthy
- Worthy of their SERP position
- Reputable

If the leads see the same website in the ads sections and in the organic results sections of SERPs, 54% of them are more likely to click on the organic result.

Speaking of organic results, first search results on a search engine page have [a 34% click-through rate on desktop, and 35% on mobile.](#)

Ads may be effective, but they rarely have CTR (click-through rates) as high as 34%.

When attorney SEO is done right, your organic pages appear before ads. This goes for organic, local and video results.

SEO has the ability to improve a law firm's reputation – both online and offline.



Search engine optimization relies on content (among other ranking factors which we'll discuss later in this guide), and the best way to rank highly on Google is by creating valuable content full of information that the leads want to read.

However, providing value and demonstrating expertise goes farther from search results.

The effects of content marketing can have a snowball effect; not only will your law firm attract new clients immediately, but you'll build a reputation for expertise in your practice area(s).



The point of law firm marketing is to reach the customers where they are. They're all using Google.



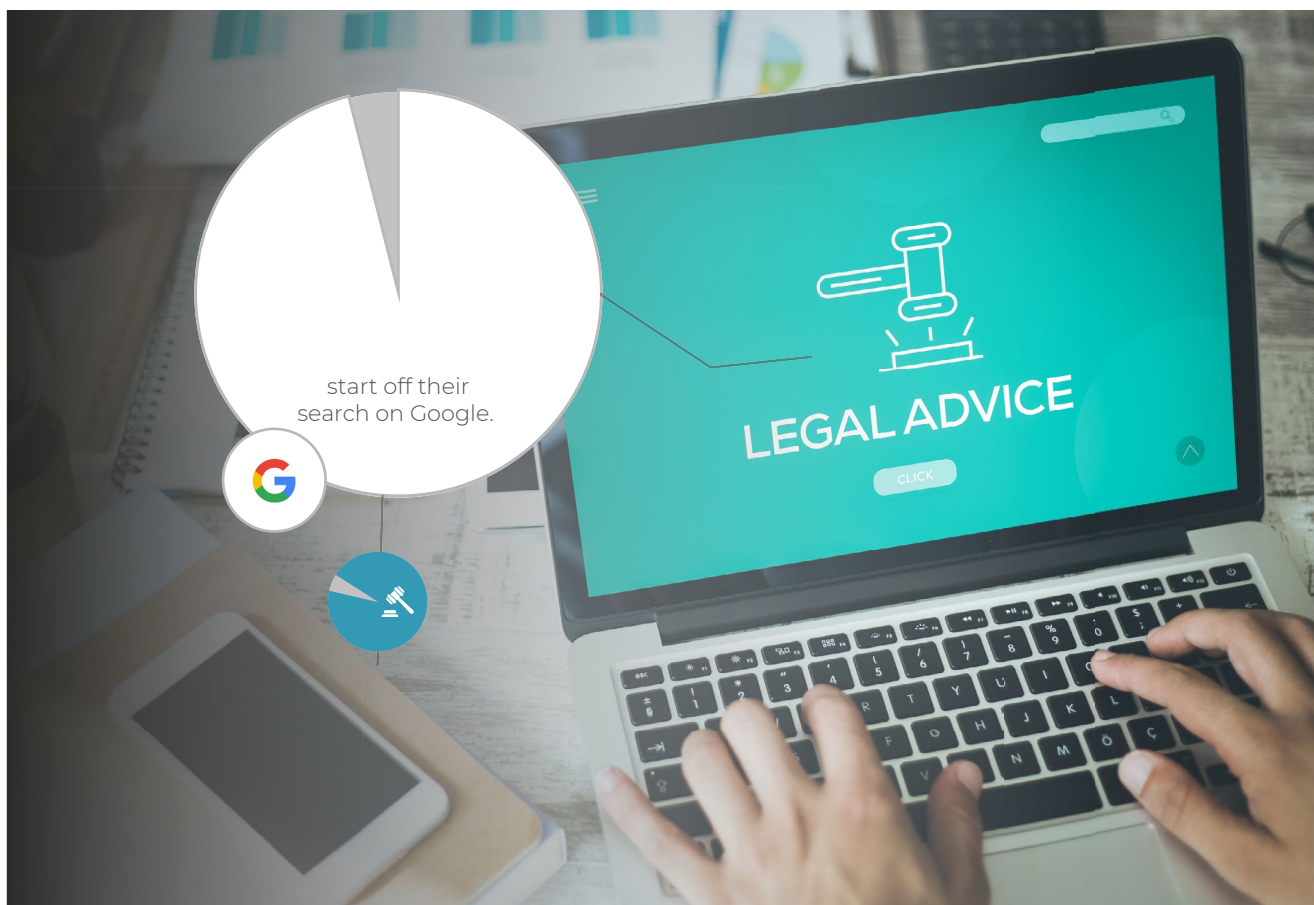
According to [The Rainmaker Institute and Nat Law Review research](#), 96% of people who need legal advice start off their search on Google.

74% of those people visit law firm websites with the intent to take action – not just browse.

This gives law firms the perfect opportunity to capture truly interested leads faster than with PPC advertising.

After all, customers need to know they can **trust** the law firm they are interested in.

And what better way to show your trustworthiness and expertise than by earning the first position in search engine results?





Part I: The Basics of Law Firm SEO

Before we get into the thick of it, you should understand how search engines work. There's no mysticism to it.

The process of appearing on a search engine results page (SERP) takes place in three phases:

1. Crawling
2. Indexing
3. Ranking

Google has bots that automatically “explore” the internet and store new sites and pages for later retrieval. Whenever they come across a new page, the bots crawl it, picking up and storing information about content and page quality.

Then, the bots memorize websites through the process of indexing. To put it simply: Google uses indexing to place particular pages and websites into the grand scheme of topics, and store it for later retrieval.

Finally, once law firm websites have been crawled and indexed, it's time for ranking.

Google's algorithms deliver the pages in the search results based on topics, content quality, backlinks and other ranking factors that also include each searcher's preferences and intents.

For example, if someone in Chicago typed “*personal injury attorney*,” they wouldn't see the results a New Yorker would.



And therein lies the brilliance of using SEO for law firm marketing: since Google's first priority is providing the searchers with the most accurate results, a smart SEO strategy allows law firms to optimize their websites and become the ultimate resource.

Automatically, Google will position them higher in the rankings.

Crawling

Normally, Google takes a lot of time to find new websites – unless they're being linked to from other websites. This is because Google bots use links to understand the internet, and organize it in a way that adapts to individual searchers and their queries.

However, attorneys can submit their sitemap through [Google Search Console](#) and speed up the process.

It's an incredibly useful tool. GSC is essentially a SEO dashboard for any practice that wants to rank higher and get more leads.

Indexing

The sooner Google bots crawl and index a website, the faster will it start appearing in the search results. The first step towards speeding the process up is submitting a sitemap through the Search Console.

However, indexing is where the technical side of SEO takes precedence.

In order for bots to quickly crawl and properly index the website, law firms should:



1. Monitor crawl and indexing status through the Google Search Console
2. Use responsive web design and create mobile-friendly pages
3. Update content as soon as new information about a subject has appeared
4. Create a website hierarchy that allows visitors to access the most important pages within three clicks at most
5. Improve their website speed











Once indexing has been completed, your law firm's website will have been successfully stored in Google's database.

Ranking

Finally, ranking is the part of the process where results start appearing, and it's the most important part of law firm SEO.

Ranking Factors

Google has [thousands of ranking factors](#) (and counting).

1	 Content that Targets User Search Queries	6	 Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness
2	 Crawlable + Accessible to Search Engines	7	 Freshness
3	 Quality & Quantity of Links	8	 Click-through Rate (CTR)
4	 Satisfies User Intent	9	 Speed
5	 Uniqueness of Content	10	 Built for Multiple Devices



However, they can be sorted into two categories:

1. On-page ranking factors
2. Off-page ranking factors

For example, content is an on-page ranking factor, and a part of on-page SEO.

Conversely, link building is a part of off-page ranking factors and off-page SEO.

We'll cover both in greater detail later in the guide.

On-Page SEO

On-page SEO deals with all the things a law firm and their SEO agency can control: content, website design, and technical specs like loading times:

- Meta tags, URL structure, and headings
- Internal links and website hierarchy
- Website speed and design responsiveness
- Image and code optimization

The main goal of on-page SEO is proving to Google that the website is valuable in the grand scheme of the topic.

The pages have to offer a good user experience and relevant, useful content in order to rank well on the on-page SEO side.



Off-Page SEO

Off-page SEO pertains to all the ranking factors that cannot be directly manipulated by a law firm.

The most important part of this category are certainly **links**, as Google uses them to understand the value of individual sites.

Other off-page SEO factors include:

- Social signals
- Mentions
- Outreach
- Other marketing tactics for content and law firm promotion

Ranking Factors

There are three most important ranking factors:

1. Content
2. Links
3. RankBrain

These three ranking factors are the ones that law firms can easily influence by adapting their optimization strategies.

While each comes with its own specifics and tactics, **Google's main goal is providing the searchers with the best possible experience.**

Therefore, law firms have to keep searchers (their leads and potential clients) in mind as they optimize.



The process is quite intuitive, as both law firms and Google want the same thing.

Content



Content is quite possibly one of the most discussed ranking factors, and there are a few rules of thumb when it comes to law firms creating content that both Google and their leads will love:

1. Content has to target search queries
2. Content has to satisfy user intents
3. Content has to be unique and fresh
4. Content has to have a high EAT (expertise, authoritativeness, trustworthiness) score
5. Content has to be an in-depth resource updated frequently
6. Content has to be readable and engaging

We'll cover all of the aspects of SEO content creation later on in this guide. However, all of these factors boil down to creating content that is interesting, useful, and trustworthy.

If law firms want to reach the top spot on Google results, their content has to feel like it was specifically made for their target audience. Personalization, relevance, and delight are key to SEO content creation.



Links

If a law firm wants to rank highly for their target keywords, they'll need more than great content.

They'll also need links from other sites that will increase their authority.

There are two key terms when we talk about the value of links for law firm SEO: Domain Authority and Page Authority.

The more links your page has, the better will it rank in SERPs.

Consequently, if your website has a lot of high-ranking pages, its domain authority will increase.

In the long term, this means that your law firm's website will rank easily for new keywords and attract more visitors by appearing in the coveted top spot.

However, the quality of links matters.

A law firm that has a lot of links from topically unrelated websites won't rank as highly as a law firm that has two or three links from authoritative legal websites.

Fortunately, we'll cover strategies that you can use to get more links from other websites.

The last link category are internal links.

While internal links won't immediately and directly improve your search



rankings, they will improve user experience and show Google how thoroughly you've covered a topic on your website.

RankBrain

Google has been paying a lot of attention to user experience recently. They're constantly modifying how they serve search results with the help of their machine learning algorithm RankBrain.



The goal of RankBrain is to understand user intent: what does the searcher really want to do by typing in a certain search query?

For example, RankBrain understands that when someone types in “personal injury attorney Florida price” they are considering hiring an attorney.

If they type in “*personal injury laws*,” they're likely only looking for information.

This is why Google is now able to personalize results based on a variety of factors such as location, previous searches and so much more.

Then, it delivers customized results and evaluates whether they satisfied the searcher's intent.



If they hadn't, Google will serve new results the second time.

Optimizing for RankBrain is essentially optimizing for user experience.

Since Google uses RankBrain to understand whether a law firm's website satisfies searcher intent, you should:

- Create highly-targeted content
- Write engaging meta descriptions which appear in the search results
- Understand different searcher intents
- Increase dwell time on your website

When your page gets plenty of click-throughs from search results and searchers stay on it for a long time, that sends a signal to Google that it should display your page more often.

Local Ranking Factors

Now, regular ranking factors can be applied to any type of business.

However, **local SEO and local ranking factors** are particularly important for law firms that want to attract more clients to their practices.

Law firms should first create their [Google My Business](#) profiles.

If they have multiple offices, there should be one GMB profile for each location.

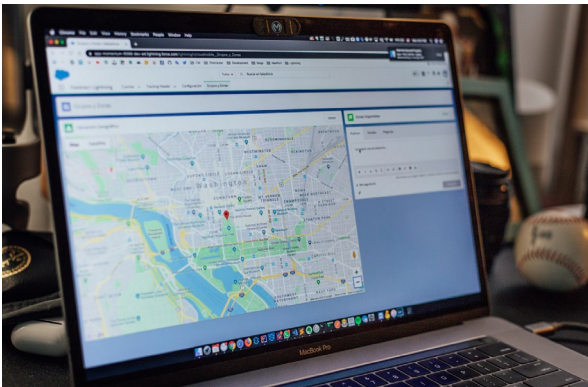
It's important for the profile to contain accurate information such as:



- Categories and practice areas
- Work hours
- Addresses
- Images
- Descriptions of services

The second important local ranking factor is **distance**.

The entire point of local SEO for Google is to display businesses near the searcher.



Physical location determined by IP addresses and stated addresses on GMB profiles weighs into the search engine's decision to display one result over others.

Finally, the main goal of local SEO is to appear in the first three listings on Google Maps or local results.

This can't be done only with GMB profiles.

Instead, law firms have to take care of other SEO aspects (including links and reviews) to improve their reputation and prove to Google and searchers that they deserve to be in the top three.



Black-Hat and White-Hat SEO

There are a lot of SEO agencies promising law firms that they'll rise to number one in SERPs in a few days.

This typically means link-building schemes and spammy tactics that Google has started penalizing with the latest algorithm updates.

They are **black-hat SEO practices**.

We can think of black-hat SEO as exploiting loopholes in the law, and even explicitly breaking the law in some cases.

[Google has clear guidelines](#) on what can and what can't be done to manipulate search results, so black hat SEO is not a good idea under any condition.

Conversely, white-hat SEO is the type of optimization that ensures long-lasting results.

White-hat SEO includes approved tactics that focus on improving the reputation and standing of a law firm's website, and generating more traffic by providing value with content.

Notable SERP Features for Law Firms

Different businesses can benefit from different search engine results pages' features.

However, Google has been working to display some results more



prominently and satisfy the searcher intent as soon and as fully as possible. This is why results pages these days include:

- Videos and images
- Maps
- Featured snippets
- Frequently asked questions
- Instant answers
- Site links

And so much more!



Law firms that properly optimize their websites can **get more search engine real estate** by appearing not only in standard results, but in other features as well. It's called optimizing for Position Zero, and we'll cover it later on in the guide.



Mobile SEO

Finally, mobile SEO has never been more important than it is today. Around [60% of searches are now coming from mobile.](#)

Google has recently decided to implement a **mobile-first index**.

It will evaluate the quality of law firms' websites based on the mobile versions of their websites, not desktop (as it had previously).

This takes us back to user experience – it's a priority for mobile optimization.

People search differently on mobile, and Google's RankBrain recognizes it and adapts results accordingly.



For example, law firms should make their websites **easy to browse**, and display information clearly without too many interactive elements not meant to consume on mobile.

Since devices are different, you have to be careful not to serve the same site versions to searchers coming from mobile and searchers coming from desktop.

Law firm website design should be **responsive**; the website should display



modified versions to searchers coming from different platforms.

Similarly, the majority of searchers won't wait longer than 3 seconds for a page to load. **Speed** is crucial for mobile SEO.

Finally, people don't just type search queries into their phones. They use **voice search**.

When optimizing for mobile and voice search, you should be careful to consider natural language processing and use the same words your clients would use.

For example, a regular client wouldn't type in the following search query: *"Statute of limitations applicable under personal injury law xyz."*

Instead, they'd likely type: *"How long do I have to sue for personal injury?"*

A law firm that understands how their clients discuss these topics can properly optimize for desktop, mobile, voice search, and reach the coveted top spot.





Part II: Keyword Research for Attorneys

Keyword research is the foundation of good law firm SEO.

It's to search engines what categories are to libraries; an indispensable way of organizing information that benefits readers, librarians, and writers themselves.

However, it's not enough to just come up with a list of five generalized keywords and call it a day.

In order to gain traction, law firms have to strategize.

What Is Keyword Research (and Why Does It Matter)?

Keyword research is a process in SEO that identifies popular words and phrases searchers use to find content they are interested in.

Now, there are different types of keywords, both in length and in substance.

Each type is used by **a particular group of potential clients with different intents.**

A law firm that understands the intent behind different keyword groups can easily adapt content to satisfy searchers and drive more conversions.

Consequently, by serving personalized content that leads want to see and find useful, the law firm will rise in rank on Google as its content will be perceived as valuable.



Search Volume and Competition

One of the most important parts of keyword research is determining the competition and the search volume of particular keywords.

Competition itself is defined as a number of websites with high domain authority that are creating content for the same keywords.

For example, a small law firm that only started with SEO and wants to compete for *“lawyers in Chicago”* won’t have a lot of luck.

There are a lot of firms competing for that keyword, and if the small firm just started with SEO it likely doesn’t have enough backlinks yet. Consequently, without backlinks, the firm doesn’t have a high enough domain authority. Conversely, as a law firm attracts backlinks from reputable sites, it will rank higher even for the most competitive keywords.

Search volume defines how many people search for particular keywords on a regular basis.

Short-Tail and Long-Tail Keywords

As a rule of thumb, general, **short-tail keywords** (e.g. *“lawyer”*) are always more competitive.

However, just because the search volume for these keywords is high doesn’t mean that they convert many leads.

Due to the generalized nature of the keywords, they don’t provide specific answers for specific situations, and they’re typically informational.



Conversely, **long-tail keywords** (e.g. “*tax attorney in Chicago*”) convert more people. Searchers who type in those keywords are more likely to be interested in performing a transaction such as scheduling a consultation.

The goal of keyword research is finding keywords that don't have a lot of competition, but still attract a decent search volume.

Again, Google is being quite intuitive about this.

A law firm that specializes in tax wouldn't advertise itself as just “*a law firm.*” Instead, it would put their practice area at the forefront, attracting the clients who need tax attorneys.

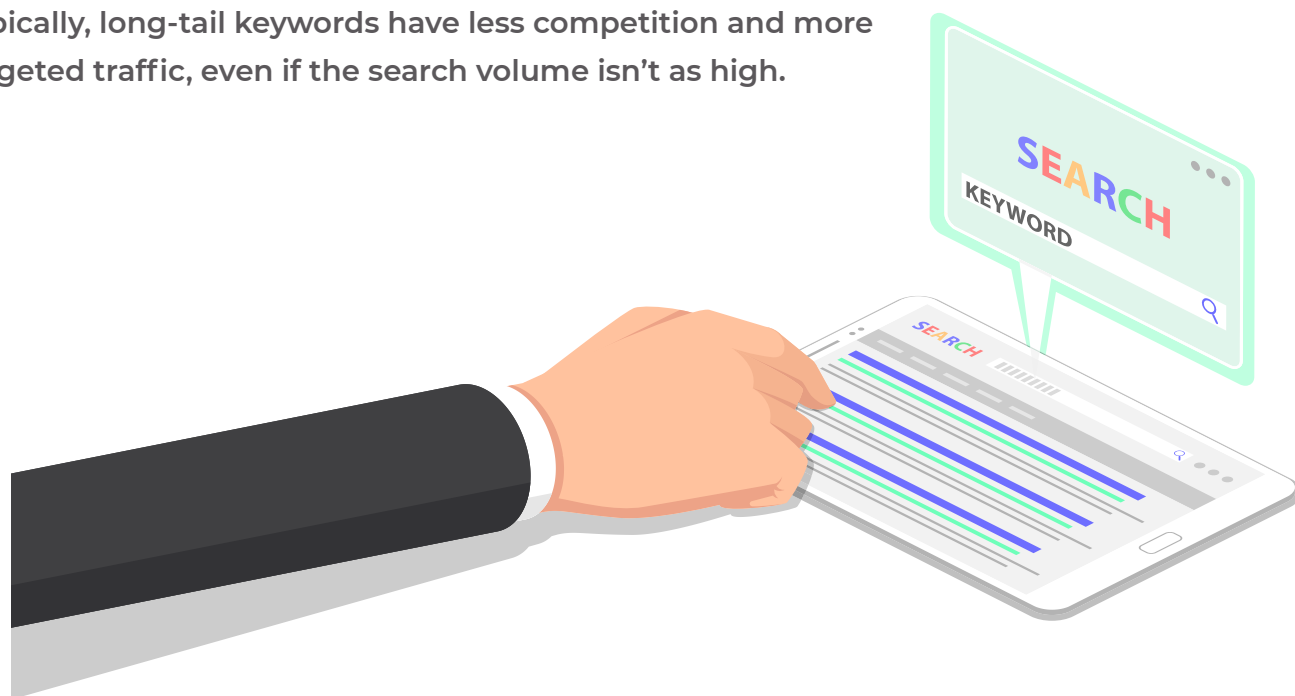
Determining Search Volume and Competition

The simplest way to determine search volume is with Google Keyword Planner.

While the tool was originally created for businesses that use Google Ads, it can also be used for SEO as it displays search volume accurately.

It's the best way to validate keywords and gauge leads' interest in them.

Typically, long-tail keywords have less competition and more targeted traffic, even if the search volume isn't as high.





When law firm leads type in long-tail search queries, they are more likely to know what they want and convert as soon as they land on your firm's website.

Conversely, short-tail keywords have a high search volume, a lot of competition, but fail to convert as much as long-tails.

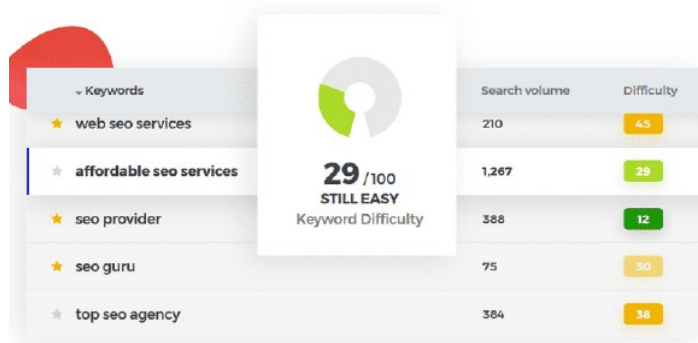
One caveat is that Keyword Planner displays keyword competition based on advertising data.

While this is not completely accurate data to base your SEO efforts on, it can be a good indicator of how competitive a keyword is.

Other tools that law firms can use to assess competition are:

- [KWFinder](#)
- [Ahrefs](#)
- [SEMrush](#)

As a rule of thumb, it's good to **use long-tail keywords when you're first starting with search engine optimization.**



They're much easier to rank for (due to low competition) and offer targeted traffic.

And speaking of targeted traffic...



Search Query Intents

There is a specific intent behind each search query.

Google's RankBrain is dedicated to understanding the intent behind each query and serving relevant results, which means that law firms have to do the same.

Search queries can be categorized into the following groups:

1. Navigational search queries
2. Transactional search queries
3. Informational search queries





Navigational search queries are commonly used to find particular websites.

For example, a lead could search for particular law firms (e.g. “*Johnson & Johnson tax attorneys*”). These searches are usually performed by searchers who are already familiar with the law firm, and they’re high-converting.

Transactional search queries are performed by leads who are interested in making a transaction. For example, contacting a particular law firm.

Naturally, this type of search query converts easily, as **the searcher intent** behind it is to take action.

Finally, *informational search queries* are conducted by people who simply want more knowledge.

In terms of legal SEO, this could mean a lead typing in “*how to sue for personal injury*.” It’s a great opportunity for a law firm to publish a blog post explaining how to do it, and then direct the lead to their contact form.

Each type of search query/keyword has its place in a well-formed SEO strategy.

The best strategies for lead generation for law firms use all three.

How to Find the Right Law Firm Keywords

There are a lot of ways to find the right keywords. However, the search has to begin with a law firm’s audience and practice areas.

As with all things related to Google, user experience is crucial.



Law firms can start by asking questions, i.e. using [AnswerThePublic](#) to understand the terms their leads frequently search for.

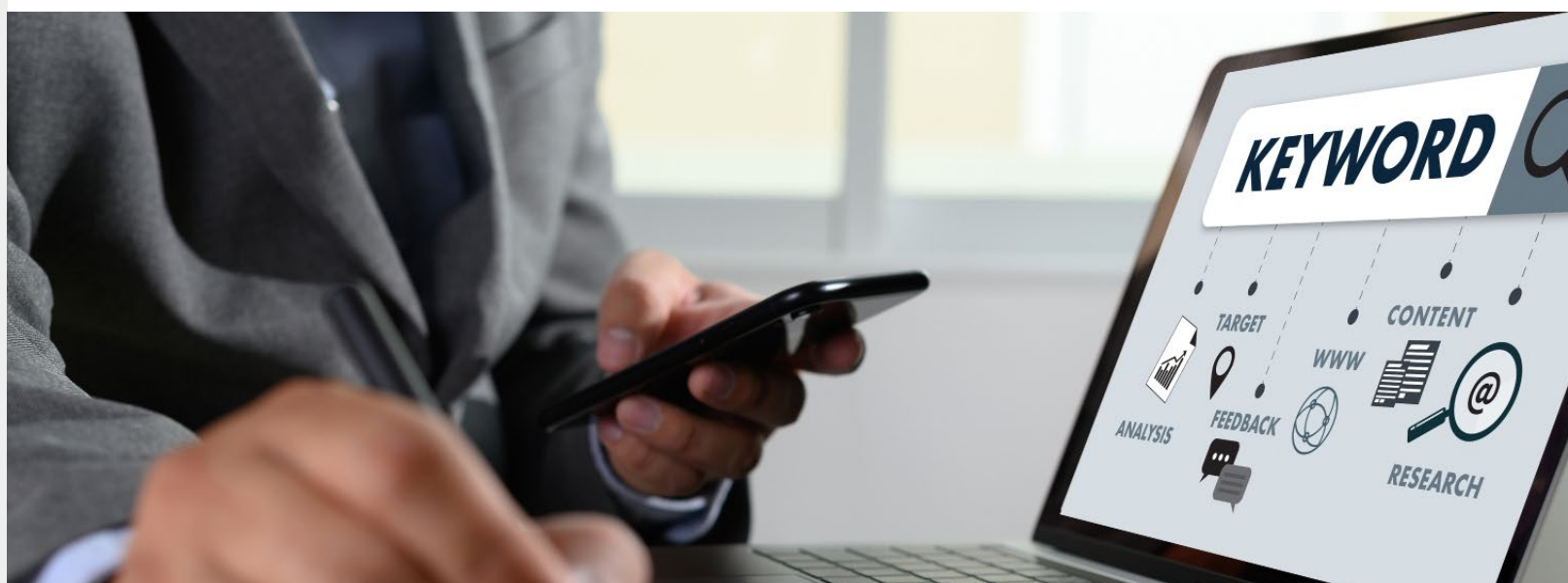
Again, keywords are only meaningful in as much that they are words used by potential clients.

The keyword *“statute of limitations personal injury”* means very little to clients who are not familiar with legal terms and would search for *“how long do you have to sue for personal injury”* instead.

As far as keyword ideation tools go, AnswerThePublic is a great option for law firms that want to attract as many leads as possible through informational keywords.

Another option for finding frequently asked questions are **message boards**, either specific to legal matters or general ones like Reddit.

Not only will they serve as a good source of keywords, but they’ll also give law firms plenty of content ideas. And as Google values providing answers to FAQ (even has a featured snippet section in the SERPs for it), this approach will impact the page authority of a law firm’s pages in the long term.





Law firms can also start their keyword research by entering a seed keyword (e.g. tax lawyer Arizona) and going through:

- **Keyword Planner** related keywords suggestions
- **Google suggestions** in SERPs (Google Autocomplete, Related Searches, People Also Ask)
- [KWFinder](#), [Ahrefs](#), [SEMrush](#) and [Ubersuggest](#)'s suggestions

Social media, message boards like Quora, and other websites can be great tools for keyword research, as well.

They are the best sources for finding natural keywords that clients frequently use.

In fact, some of them can be a great asset for competing for big keywords. The law firm that knows how its clients speak is the law firm that wins at SEO in the long term.

If your law firm has been using Google Search Console for a while, you'll see keywords your leads often use to arrive on your site.

This can be a good way of finding keywords you may not have originally thought of.

And when GSC is integrated with Google Analytics, law firms can also understand which keywords bring the most conversions – even if they haven't been optimizing their site before.

Finally, a competitive analysis can also be beneficial – especially if a law firm has a lot of competitors using SEO to improve their lead generation.



With competitive analysis, it's important to go through content and the competitor's results in SERPs.

Law firms should pay particular attention to highest ranking pages. This will not only inform keyword strategy, but content strategy, as well.

Evaluating Keywords

When you've created your keyword list, it's time to validate each keyword.

Good keywords should be:

- **Popular** – The keywords should have a good search volume
- **Relevant** – The keywords should satisfy a particular searcher intent, and so should the content that is aiming to rank for the keyword
- **Rankable** – The competition isn't high and you stand a chance of competing for the keyword

Law firms should also incorporate LSI keywords – semantically related keywords.





For example, if the main keyword is “*tax attorney*,” a semantically related keyword you could add to a blog post would be “*tax debt*.”

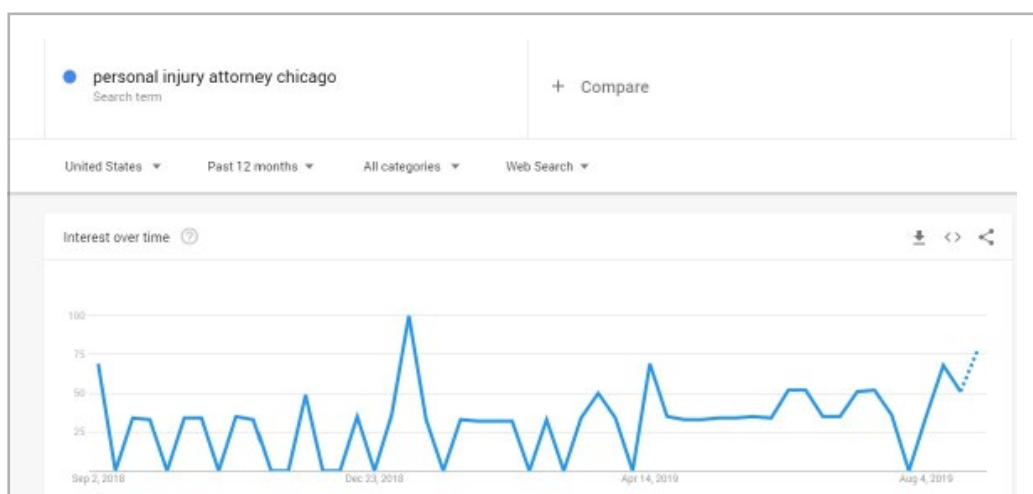
Google uses LSI keywords to understand which words and phrases are related to a greater subject.

Consequently, when a law firm uses applicable LSI keywords, Google perceives its content as more thorough and valuable than other practices’ content that does not contain LSIs.

Since SEO is a long-term law firm marketing approach, law firms can also use [Google Trends](#) to understand the popularity of keywords over time.

The Trends search will display:

- Popularity in an area
- Popularity over time
- Popularity in different search networks (e.g. Web Search, YouTube Search)
- Interest over time
- Related topics
- Related queries





For example, a Google Trends search for “*personal injury attorney Chicago*” shows that personal injury leads’ interest for the topic peaked between January 6 and 12 in 2019.

Additionally, these searches can be compared against other searches.

This gives you the ability to assess different keywords, something that comes in handy if you plan on creating evergreen content.

Evaluating Keyword Intent

Finally, you should evaluate keyword intent.

As we already discussed, every lead searching for a particular keyword performs that action with a specific intent.

Some want to get more information on the subject, others are looking for specific firms, and the last group wants to get a lawyer as soon as possible.

When evaluating their keywords, law firms should understand what the lead wants to achieve by searching for that specific keyword.

Informational searches can be recognized by phrasing such as:

- How to file a personal injury claim
- How to hire a lawyer on retainer
- Filing a lawsuit

The leads’ goal here is getting more information or legal counsel.

Consequently, these keywords can be incorporated into informative, educational content.



Transactional searches can be recognized by phrasing such as:

- Schedule a consultation with an immigration lawyer
- Chicago personal injury lawyer
- Attorney pricing

The goal is performing a transaction. Typically, scheduling a consultation or inquiring about pricing.

Law firms can use their transactional keywords by creating intent-affirming pricing, scheduling, and practice pages.

After all, keywords are not only meant to be used in blogs.

Finally, navigational searches can be recognized by branded keywords (keywords denoting the name of your law firm).

In this case, the lead knows exactly which firm they want to hire and they are merely using Google to navigate to their website.

In general, the longest transactional keywords are usually the most profitable ones.

Understanding the intent behind each keyword helps law firms affirm it by personalizing their content.

This way, attorneys will be able to capture leads at all stages of the marketing funnel; from those merely looking for more information to those who trust the firm that produces such valuable content.

In that sense, SEO is a top-to-bottom funnel strategy that ensures long-term results.

And not only will it improve your law firms' marketing results, but SEO will also help you understand your clients even better.



Part III: Technical SEO for Law Firms

SEO is more focused on satisfying people than search engines.

As we already discussed, there are two parts of SEO: on-page and off-page optimization.

Technical SEO is in the on-page camp, as it covers the aspects that lawyers (or their SEOs) can optimize themselves immediately.

Contrary to popular belief, it's not enough to just have great content. The entire user experience should be great if you want your page (and your website) to rank.

Fortunately, there are quite a few things law firms can do to make sure they've set themselves up for success with the technical aspects of search engine optimization.

Website Design and Structure

The first item on our checklist is website design and structure.

Back in the good old days when Google was still chaotic, we could see websites with confusing design appear in the first place on SERPs. There were ten menus, an incomprehensible internal linking structure, and a lot of confusion for every lead that landed on the site.





However, organization and simplicity are the main SEO priorities nowadays.

The main thing to implement is **responsive website design**.

Google is rolling out the mobile-first index which means that law firm's website quality will be judged by how the site is displayed on mobile.

Any unnecessary elements that don't play well with mobile should be removed.

This is in part due to loading times and different experiences when browsing on mobile.

The majority of site visitors won't wait longer than three seconds for content to load, and clunky elements can be a significant obstacle to speeding up pages.

Navigation and Internal Linking

Navigation should be simple.

The golden rule is:

The most important pages should be accessible within two-three clicks.

For example, a law firm should have a menu that helps leads reach pages like *Practice Areas*, *About*, *Pricing* in a few clicks.

This internal linking structure doesn't just help searchers understand the site better. It also helps bots distinguish between important pages and less important pages.



The more a page is linked to from within a text or placed prominently in the menu or on the homepage, the higher chances it has of receiving a Sitelink position in the SERPs.

Latham & Watkins, LLP

<https://www.lw.com> ▼

Latham & Watkins lawyers provide strategic and innovative legal solutions to clients' complex business and legal challenges.

Our People

Find Our People. Clients rely on Latham & Watkins' vast team of ...

About Us

About Us. Latham is dedicated to working with clients to help ...

Los Angeles

Latham's Los Angeles office, the firm's oldest and one of its ...

[More results from lw.com »](#)

New York

The New York office delivers renowned transactional ...

Washington, DC

Latham & Watkins' Washington, D.C. team works seamlessly ...

Practices

Practices. Advising clients across a wide spectrum of transactional ...

An example of a navigational SERP with sitelinks

If you want to improve your **link equity** (the amount of attention each page on your law firm's website gets), you can ask for all external mentions to link to your homepage, and then link to other pages on your website from it.

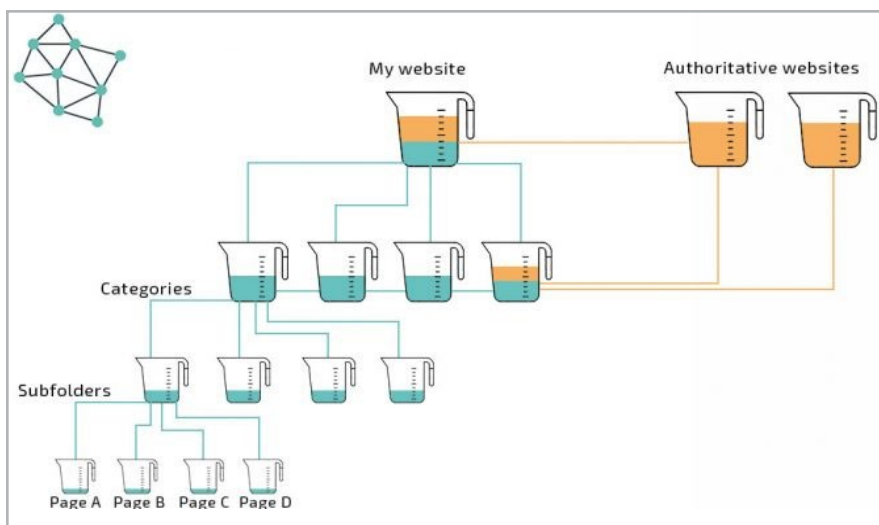


Image source: [Optus](#)



This way, link equity is shared equally between different pages on your site.

A good internal linking structure is crucial to ensuring that all of your pages are linking to one another, and that “link juice” is flowing between them.

When you receive an external link to from an authoritative website, you’ll be able to leverage it to improve the ranking of all the pages on your site.

The Solution for Site Speed

Sometimes attorneys have slow-loading sites and don’t know what the problem is.

In that case, it’s simple to run diagnostics and get suggestions for improvement with [Google’s PageSpeed Insights](#).

Usually, it’s one of the following causes:

- Large files
- Hosting providers
- Malfunctioning code

Large files and images can be compressed easily with plugins like [Smush](#) for WordPress, or external services like [Compressor.io](#).

They reduce image file size without sacrificing quality or user experience.

Malfunctioning code can also be to blame for slow sites.



In that case, there are also plugins that minify HTML and other scripts, or manually stop them from loading first and consequently slowing down the rest of the site's content.

This is a solid choice if your law firm wants to hang on to particular elements. However, if the aforementioned elements are not absolutely necessary for good user experience, they should be removed.

Finally, sometimes a slow site can be blamed on your hosting provider.

Typically, cheapest hosting options are the ones where law firms share their website server space with other websites.

This means they cannot handle a significant volume of traffic, and they get bogged down by other sites' traffic. In the long term, it's much better to opt for private hosting.

URL Structures, Title Tags, and Meta Descriptions

Some aspects of technical SEO require professional help to be implemented.

However, URL structures, title tags and meta descriptions are usually simple enough for a beginner to set up and experience immediate results.

Title tag

4 Steps for Every Personal Injury Case in Georgia - The Brown Fi..

https://www.harrybrownlaw.com › blog › steps-in-every-georgia-personal-... ▾

Dec 12, 2017 - If you were involved in a **Personal Injury** Accident in **Georgia**, and you want to file a lawsuit to obtain **compensation** for the damages that you ...

Meta description

URL structure



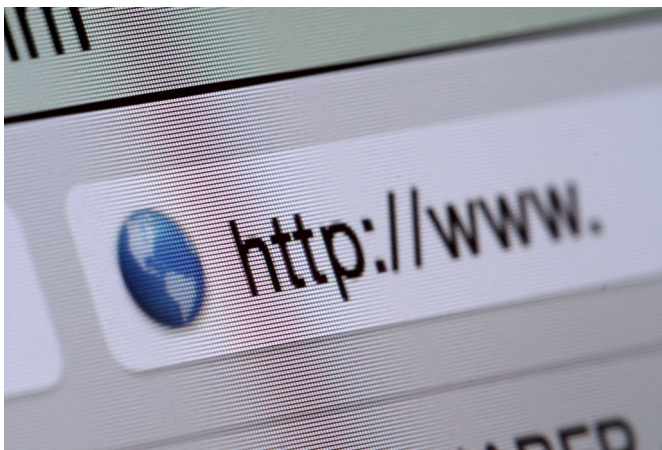
URL Structures

Back in the day, it was fine to have a URL that went something like this:
“xyzlaw.com/page/1234567.”

However, we know better these days, and Google demands us to do better because it likes it when we add keywords and descriptive words to our URLs.

There are two main URL structures being used today:

1. **Flat URL structure:** xyzlaw.com/personal-injury-lawsuit
2. **Sub-directory structure:** xyzlaw.com/services/personal-injury



The URL structure a particular law firm will use depends on their own business structure.

For example, a **flat URL structure** is great for firms that don't have a lot of directories based on topic categories, locations, services, and

so on. If they're specialists, they don't have to implement the sub-directory structure.

However, if a law firm specializes in different legal areas, it's good to have **multiple sub-directories** to organize content for user experience.

The main caveat is keyword confusion.



When there are multiple keywords mentioned in the URL, search engines may choose to prioritize only some of them.

Conversely, a flat URL structure clearly shows search engines which keywords are being targeted.

Most SEOs believe that a flat structure is superior because there is no confusion about important keywords or length.

However, it can create confusion when it comes to internal linking and user experience.

Again, the URL structure a firm will choose depends on the way they do business; their service areas, locations, and much more. However, it's all good as long as there is an organized URL structure that the firm adheres to consistently.

Title Tags

We can consider title tags to be the foundation of on-page SEO. They're just that effective.

Not only do they tell bots what the content is about, but they also affirm leads' searcher intent with keywords.

With title tags, it's important to keep things simple.

Law firms should focus on one practice area in their title tag, and keep everything focused on the intent.



For example, if the query is informational, the title tag should include a keyword and reaffirm that intent: “How to File a Personal Injury Claim.”

Again, attorneys are at an advantage here because they can use **local SEO modifiers such as “near me” and particular locations.**

“How to File a Personal Injury Claim in Nebraska” will always rank better for searchers in Nebraska than the regular garden variety *“How to File a Personal Injury Claim”* that can pertain to any state.

The more searchers can relate to results, the more clicks will the pages get. Finally, content should utilize **H1, H2 and H3 tags** as a way of organizing content.

Search bots recognize them, and use them to understand how thoroughly a subject is being covered.

Meta Descriptions

If title tags announce what a page is about, then meta descriptions **entice** searchers to click on it.

The most common mistake law firms and websites in general make is that they repeat what they’ve already stated in the title.

This is a big no-no, as meta descriptions should be 160 characters max and they have to be put to good use.

When reading the meta description, leads should be convinced to click through.

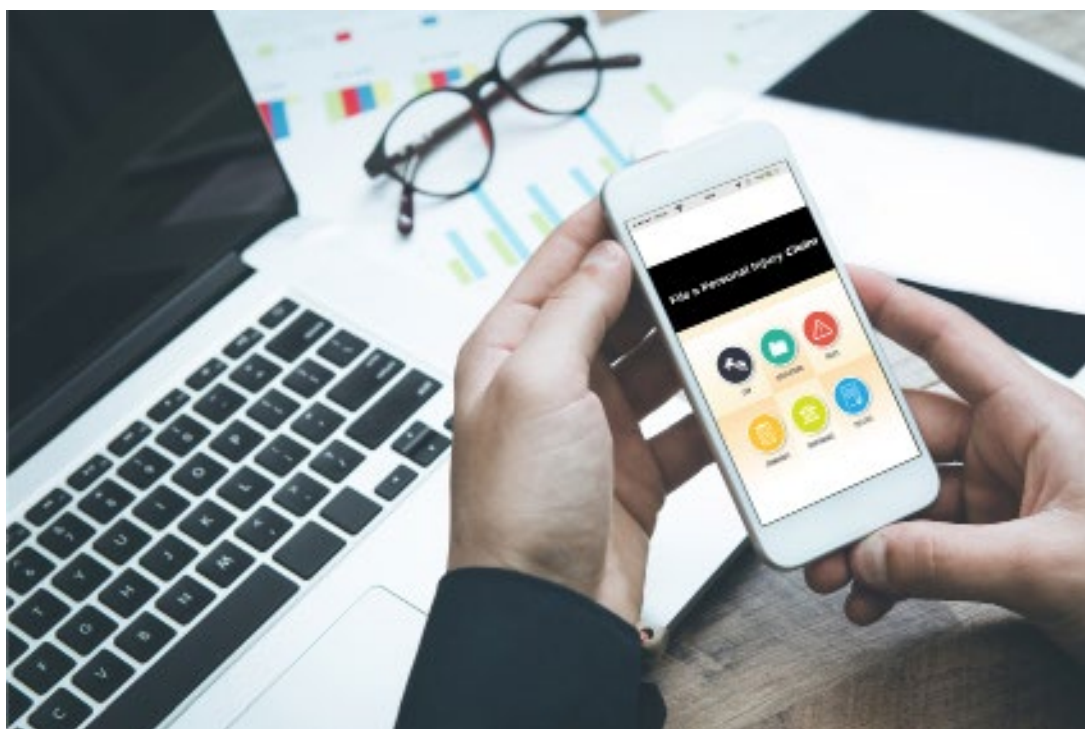


Law firms can optimize by:

- Using keywords • Using [actionable words](#)
- Making a tangible offer in the meta description

In short, meta descriptions for law firms should be written like ad copy: enticing and engaging, with a promise of benefits to come.

Finally, there is no guarantee that Google will use your defined meta



description for each page.

However, if the target keyword is mentioned in the description, you have a higher chance of your pre-set meta description appearing in SERPs.



Implementing URL Structures, Title Tags and Meta Descriptions

Since majority of websites use WordPress, law firms can implement URL structures, title tags and meta descriptions with a plugin like [Yoast SEO](#).

While the plugin is no match for a certified SEO professional, it can be a good solution for beginners and firms who want to start optimizing their content as soon as possible.

It also measures keyword density and readability, adhering to Google SEO best practices.

The URL structure can be modified in WordPress settings (*Settings* → *Permalinks*), as well.

When all three elements are combined, we come to the intersection of SEO and UX:

- The right keywords show leads (and bots) what the page is about
- Clear and valuable information motivates leads to click and convert
- Great copy improves CTR and makes leads an offer they can't refuse

Ultimately, title tags, meta descriptions and URL structures all contribute to an improved searcher experience *and* better indexation.



Mobile Optimization

With Google's mobile-first index, it's important for law firm websites to optimize for mobile SEO, as well.

Website Design

Website design is the foundation of mobile optimization. Law firms can choose between **responsive design, dynamic serving, or completely separate sites for mobile visitors.**

Normally, the majority of businesses go with responsive design as it requires less work and reduces the chances of missing or duplicate content.

It's also [recommended by Google](#).

Responsive design simply recognizes the device that's being used to access a website and adapts content accordingly.

Law firms should avoid using Flash for dynamic content as it can't be loaded on mobile. It's much better to use HTML5, if it must be used.





Similarly, Google stipulates that resources like **CSS, JavaScript and images should be fully crawlable** on mobile.

Otherwise, bots may consider the mobile page to be malfunctioning and avoid serving it in search results.

You can check if you're accidentally blocking any resources in your **robots.txt** file.

The file is accessible through the website or through the Google Search Console. For errors, you can check by navigating to *Google Index* —> *Blocked Resources*.

Law firms should also avoid pop-ups that weren't made for mobile as they can impair user experience. Instead, it's better to use **native mobile pop-ups**.

While we can opt out of pop-ups completely, it's good to keep them in the form of exit pop-ups appearing only when leads want to leave the site.

This way, there's a minimal effect on user experience, and it could even improve dwell time.

Finally, keep **mobile constraints** in mind. On desktop, searchers use a mouse to click on buttons and browse websites.

However, mobile means fingers. Make sure that buttons are big enough, and that the content is readable without having to pinch to zoom in.

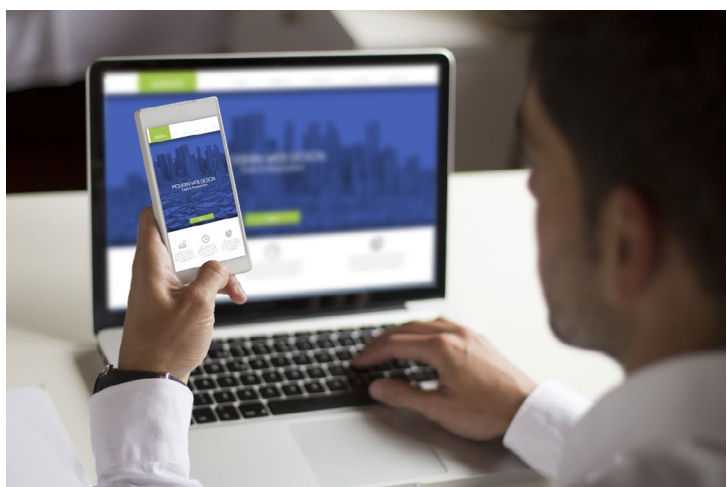


As a rule of thumb, content will be readable if:

- The font is at least 14px
- There are max 2 lines per paragraph
- Line length is not more than 60 characters
- The content is displayed as black text on white background
- There is plenty of white space

Above the Fold Content

While phones were made for scrolling, plenty of searchers won't hang around on websites that don't display the most important information front and center.



This is why it's important for law firms to state the most important offers and explanations **above the fold** (the portion of the screen that is visible without having to scroll down).

Above the fold constraints are particularly important in terms of landing pages.

For example, personal injury leads would be most interested in seeing how the practice can help.



Law firms should provide basic information containing an offer and add a call-to-action (CTA) button above the fold.

Simplification

Speed is crucial to mobile search engine optimization, so law firms should remove unnecessary:

- Images
- Videos
- Code
- Content

For example, background overlays could look good on desktop. However, on mobile they will take too long to load. It's much better to avoid them.

Similarly, videos and images that don't serve an action-driving purpose and distract the lead from the content should be avoided whenever possible.

If the element is not necessary, it has to be removed.

In cases where it's not possible to remove elements or code, you can use plug-ins for minifying code and cache plugins like [W3 Total Cache](#) to speed up your pages for mobile leads.



Breadcrumbs

Complex menus and navigation bars are a thing of the past – or at least a thing of desktop websites.

With mobile, everything has to be minimized and completely focused on providing valuable information to leads to stand a chance at converting them and ranking highly on SERPs.

One of the most important things law firms can implement to organize their content are **breadcrumb trails: simplified menus**.

The most important type of breadcrumb trails for law firms are **hierarchy breadcrumbs**.

Hierarchy breadcrumbs are convenient for practices that have directory URL structures and a lot of pages..





For example, if a law firm operates in different cities and covers different practice areas, their hierarchical breadcrumb trail could be displayed as:

Home – Chicago – Tax Counsel.

If a law firm covers multiple practice areas, their breadcrumbs could be:

Home – Practice Areas – Personal Injury.

Breadcrumbs make it really easy for users to visit higher-level pages. And when it comes to mobile, they can even fully replace traditional menus for a smoother experience.



Finally, even [Google loves breadcrumbs](#). The experts confirmed that it could positively influence a law firm's rankings.

Checking Mobile Performance

The most important tool is [Google's Mobile Friendly test](#). It reviews pages to determine whether they're mobile friendly or not.

The second most important tool for mobile performance is [Fetch As Google](#).

Fetch is especially handy when pages contain media elements. It will help attorneys understand whether all the elements are properly loading for



Google bots, or they're at risk of their mobile page not being served to mobile searchers.

Additionally, Matt Kersley's [Responsive test](#) will display different website versions. This way, you can see what your website and pages truly look like to visitors coming from different devices.

Schema Structured Markup

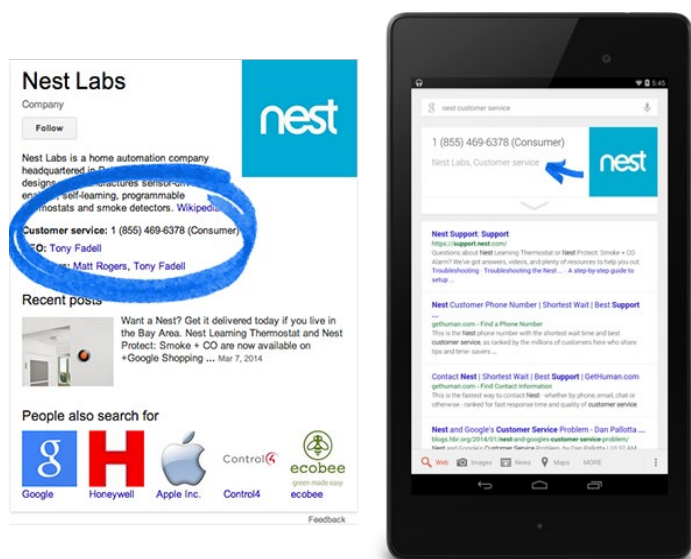
[Schema markup](#) is an incredible way for a law firm's website to stand out from competitors in the search engine results.

Once implemented, the markup creates an enhanced description – *rich snippet*.

If you used Fetch as Google, you've probably noticed that Google sees things quite black and white. And if it crawls and indexes them as such, it ranks them as such.

When law firms use Schema, on the other hand, it brings metaphorical color to indexing and results.

Schema tells Google that there are avatars and images in the text, and **specifies different elements and topics** covered in the content.





In this particular example, Schema was used to define contact information for this company, making it appear more prominently.

However, there are hundreds of [data types](#).

Schema can also be used to [specify practice areas for attorneys](#), contact information, addresses, CTAs, and much more.

It incorporates the best elements of general and local SEO to help your firm catch the attention of your leads.

Each separate page can contain specific microdata.

For example, blogs can use structured markup to specify events, professional credentials, reviews, and so much more.

With Schema, your law firm pages will stand out more prominently in the search results.

After all, would you click on the first result with Schema and ratings, or the second result with just text?

Inbound Marketing - Google Books
books.google.com › ... › Marketing › General ▼ Google Books ▼
★★★★★ Rating: 4 - 36 reviews
Oct 2, 2009 - **Inbound Marketing** is a how-to guide to getting found via Google, the blogosphere, and social media sites. • Improve your rankings in Google to ...

Inbound Marketing: Get Found Using Google, Social Media ...
www.amazon.com › ... › Industries › Retailing ▼ Amazon.com ▼
Inbound Marketing: Get Found Using Google, Social Media, and Blogs [Brian Halligan, Dharmesh Shah, ... Find all the books, read about the author, and more.

Image source: [Moz](#)



Generating Schema Code

You can create your Schema code with [Google's Structured Data Markup Helper](#).

However, it's better to consult a professional so you implement Schema properly and avoid messing up your website code.

Schema won't directly influence your SEO results. However, it will make more people click through to your pages, improving your CTR and dwell time.

Ultimately, that's what will tell Google to serve your site to more and more searchers, giving you all the leads your law firm needs.

Finally, you can test your Schema with [Structured Data Testing Tool](#).

Alt Text and Image Optimization

There are very few things on your law firm's site that can't be optimized. Even images and alt text (text displayed when the image can't be displayed) can be leveraged to improve your rankings and increase your visibility in different sections of search engine results pages.

For example, you can **add keywords to image names**.

If the image is displayed on a page about personal injury and depicts something related to it, you can title it: *"personal injury lawyers Chicago."*



This way, your pages won't only be displayed in typical Google Web Search.

They'll be displayed on **Image Search**, as well, which counts for [22.6% of all searches in the US](#).

Similarly, **alt text** (which is used by Google bots to understand what your images represent) can be modified to specify what is happening in the image.

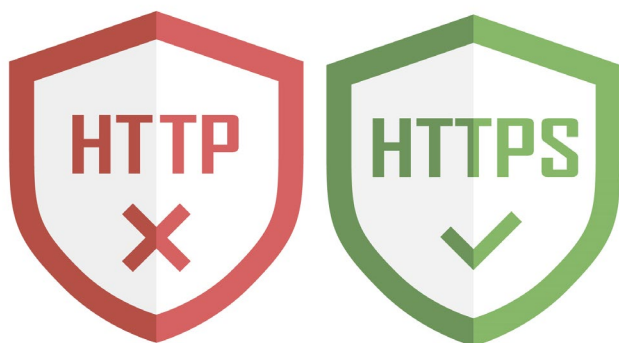
HTTP vs HTTPS / WWW vs non-WWW

Finally, Google has made it their priority to keep their searchers safe.

This is why the majority of high-ranking pages have SSL security certificates that prove their ownership of the website.

Otherwise, searchers will be directed to HTTP sites with a warning that the website could be fraudulent. If they're browsing from Chrome, they'll see a red opened padlock which can have a strong psychological effect.

If you want to make sure your pages are displaying properly, make sure you **purchase a SSL certificate that will make you URL start with HTTPS** (as opposed to HTTP) and prove to Google that you're making security your priority.





WWW vs non-WWW

These days, Google gives site owners a choice between their websites being crawled, indexed and ranked as WWW and non-WWW.

There's not much SEO value to it, but it's important to **specify a version and adhere to it**.

Otherwise, Google will index the other version as a different site, affecting your rankings in the process.

Understanding Technical SEO for Law Firms

You and Google both want to provide a great experience to searchers (in your case, leads) in order to retain them.

Technical SEO is all about providing the foundations for great content.

By organizing and structuring information in a clear, efficient way, your law firm will be able to convert more leads to customers.





Part IV: Content & SEO for Attorneys

If technical on-page optimization is the bones of SEO, then your content is the muscles making your website move and attracting more visitors to it.

While numerous marketers thought that content marketing and SEO don't go hand in hand, this is no longer true. Search engines and websites have come so far that **content and SEO work together perfectly** to improve rankings and provide valuable, readable content.

Long gone are the days of keyword stuffing when the sole purpose was pleasing the bots.

Today, great content serves its purpose in numerous ways:

- It provides information
- It motivates leads to take action
- It shows bots how thoroughly a subject is covered
- It attracts backlinks due to its quality and increases a law firm's (foot) traffic

Blogging is no longer just for writers and journalists. It's time for legal counsel's 15 minutes of fame.

While we mainly talk about blogs when we talk about content, the truth is that there are **different content formats** that you can use to improve your law firm's search engine visibility:





- Practice area pages
- Blog posts and articles
- Case studies and white papers
- Roundup posts
- Infographics
- Checklists
- Interviews
- Podcasts
- Videos

And so much more!

However, some work better for lawyers than others.

Here's what you need to know to make the best out of your content and SEO efforts:

Legal Blog Posts and Articles

Blog posts and articles are natural link beacons.

After all, search engines serve blog posts most often, and they've been used ever since the internet rose to prominence.

However, that doesn't mean you should write just any old blog post for your law firm's blog.

When written properly, blog posts can send you a lot of traffic. However, if you're not choosing the right subjects, your reputation may be harmed in the long run.



Topics

It's always good to start thinking about content in terms of keywords your leads search for.

The more specific you can be, the better.

Aim to identify the intent behind each keyword and build your blog posts around **informational keywords** (e.g. *"How to file a personal injury lawsuit"*).

When it comes to legal blog posts, how-tos still work best. You can use your practice areas pages for direct sales. Keep informational subjects to posts that will demonstrate your expertise.

People search because they want to solve problems, which is why tutorials and how-tos work perfectly for law firms.

Make sure you don't mistake the wrong keywords for right ones and create wrong content.

For example, someone searching for *"bus accidents Nebraska"* is probably not looking for legal counsel, but news websites. If they come to your law firm's website, it'll be just wasted traffic. This is why you shouldn't write about accidents in news style format. You can reference them, but don't make them the core of your article.

You can find topics by:

- Browsing search results for your target keywords
- Analyzing your competitors
- Using a tool like [Answer The Public](#)
- Browsing social media



The Skyscraper Technique

Analyzing your competitors is especially beneficial for topic ideation (and attracting backlinks) if you use the [Skyscraper Technique](#).

Originally coined by Brian Dean of Backlinko, the [Skyscraper Technique](#) relies on identifying gaps of knowledge in existing pieces of content and then creating content that fills them.

For example, if your competitors (websites ranking higher than you for your target keywords) are only covering statute of limitations and applicable laws for personal injuries, you could create content that also covers other factors such as examples, case studies, and a step-by-step guide to filing a personal injury claim.

Similarly, you could also go through that article's **comments** to see what other questions people are posing – what do they wish was covered in the text?

Maybe your competitors' posts are **outdated**. Have there been any new developments, changes in laws?

Sometimes a better way of putting things can also be beneficial for law firm marketing.





Maybe your competitors are writing about the subject in typical lawyer style that doesn't sit well with the majority of your shared leads.

You could get much better results if you adapt your tone of voice, or put the information differently.

Then, **go ahead and create more comprehensive content than your competitors.**

Google will recognize that you've covered the subject in greater depth, improving your rankings directly and by way of more people staying on your site (dwell time).

You can even use a tool like [BuzzSumo](#) to identify key pieces of content in your niche that are being shared and engaged with most often. This way, you can build onto it.

However, don't plagiarize. Add value.

Tone and Style

Your leads are not attorneys or legal professionals.

Your leads are regular people. They use colloquial words, speak conversationally, and like legal concepts to be put in layman's terms so they actually understand what to expect from your law firm.

The main problem with legal blogs is that they're written by professional attorneys who use a very formal, legal style of writing. This is not a good fit for blog writing.

Instead, it's much better to hire a writer or talk about law as you would to a friend who's not a lawyer.



Avoid blocks of text if you're writing a legal blog post.

Instead, keep your lines simple, and your paragraphs short. Remember that [8 words is the ideal sentence length](#).

The longer the paragraph, the more your leads will have to struggle to stay focused. People naturally skim through content, trying to find parts they are interested in.

Use **headlines and different styles** (bold, italics) to keep your leads engaged when reading your content.

Leads love **bullet points and lists**. They are a great way of organizing complicated information.

Avoid passive voice, as well. Law texts are full of it, but it doesn't sit well with blog readers.

Try to address people with the second person singular whenever possible. It creates a sense of directness and stimulates conversions.

If you're unsure about your blog post, use [Hemingway Editor](#).

It offers suggestions for spelling, long sentences, adverbs, word choices, and even grades your blog posts based on readability.

Finally, the tone of voice matters most when you're writing a law firm blog.

Often, leads feel like attorneys are unapproachable. They're hesitant to schedule a consultation.

If you make your blogs personable and understandable, you'll help your leads develop a sense of trust in you and your law firm.



How to Structure a Legal Blog Post

Longer posts perform better. Not because of the word count, but because they cover subjects in greater depth.

Google and leads value comprehensive resources.

A 2,000-word blog post covering all aspects of a practice area will always [rank better](#). More people will click and dwell on that content. Consequently, Google will perceive it as more valuable.

The best way to structure your post is to look at typical search queries and pose them as questions in the headlines.

Not only will that make it easier for people to consume the content and find the areas they're particularly interested in, but it will also help you rank for Featured Snippets.



For example, if your law firm specializes in car accidents and personal injuries, you could run a quick keyword search.

Then, you can take related queries and organize them into a blog post such as:

Title: What to Do If You're in a Car Accident in Florida?

Topic 1: What to Do After a Car Accident in Florida? [A Checklist]

Topic 2: What Are You Entitled to in a Car Accident in Florida?

Topic 3: Filing a Personal Injury Claim in Florida



Make sure your law firm blog post covers all the questions potential customers have about your practice area.

It's the best way to reach the top spot on SERPs and earn more conversions than ever before.

Keep Things Local

If your law firm is working in one area, don't shy away from **local references**. If there have been a lot of car accidents in your area lately and you're a personal injury attorney, reference it in your blog.

Show that you're local.

It goes a long way towards leads building trust in your law firm enough to schedule a consultation.

Finally, referencing your area in your blog posts is great for link building. You can pitch your blog post to local media outlets as it's highly specific to your area, instead of being generalized for the entire country.

E-A-T Scores

One area of SEO content lawyers should be particularly careful with are [EAT scores](#), i.e. EAT quality guidelines.

The acronym stands for:

- Expertise
- Authoritativeness
- Trustworthiness



It's not a well-known fact that Google actually uses human raters to train their machine learning algorithms. Recently, these human raters realized that **there is a lot of content being written by people who are not professionals**. This is especially true for medical and legal content.

To put it simply: Google thinks that professional content should be written by professionals.

But how can you prove you're a professional?

Firstly, start including **author boxes** with your legal content.

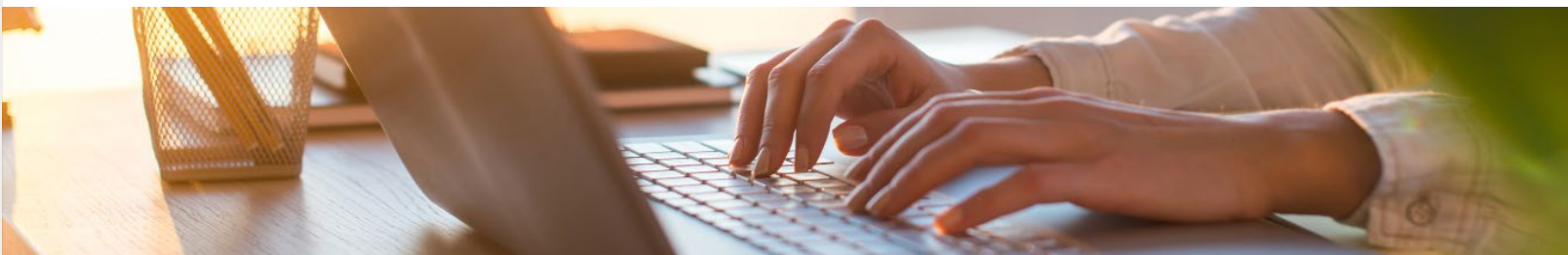
In them, the attorney writing the content (or reviewing it for accuracy, if you're using a ghostwriter) should state their credentials such as years of experience and degrees.

The attorney should also **build up online reputation** so there is no mistaking them for different people, especially when keywords like "law" are added to a Google search.

With EAT, it's all about proving an attorney is truly who they claim to be: an expert at their field.

When it comes to general EAT score of a website, you should increase the number of your **positive brand mentions**. Even if there are no links leading to them.

For example, if there's buzz about your law firm on social media, you should be keeping an eye on it. [Google is](#), and it's using that buzz to evaluate the reputation of your law firm.





Good reviews are paramount to increasing your EAT score. Even if you get a negative review, don't forget to respond to it wanting to improve your service.

If possible, try to **get a mention from a trusted news site.**

Again, you may not be able to reach the New York Times from the get go, but you should start by reaching out to your local outlets and building up your online reputation. Google values mentions from trustworthy websites. Just like with links, if your law firm is being linked to from an authoritative site, its authority will grow as well.

The more your firm and your attorneys are being **mentioned in connection with your practice areas**, the higher your reputation will be in the eyes of both Google and your prospective clients.

Sometimes even more **references to applicable laws and recent research** within texts can go a long way towards helping you and your law firm website build online credibility and improving your rankings.

You can also improve your EAT score by:

- Mentioning awards you've won
- Adding customer testimonials
- Creating attorney bio pages
- Creating press pages
- Discussing successful verdicts in target practice areas

While EAT as a measure of content quality that influences search rankings is still in its infancy, Google feels confident that they are able to algorithmically evaluate quality similarly to how human raters do it.



If you make sure you improve your EAT score now, your law firm's rankings will improve and stay solid in the long term.

Pillar Pages

Previously, Google only understood content through keywords. If you added enough instances of your target keyword, it would pick up and display your content to searchers.

However, algorithms have improved since then. Nowadays, Google understands **topics**.

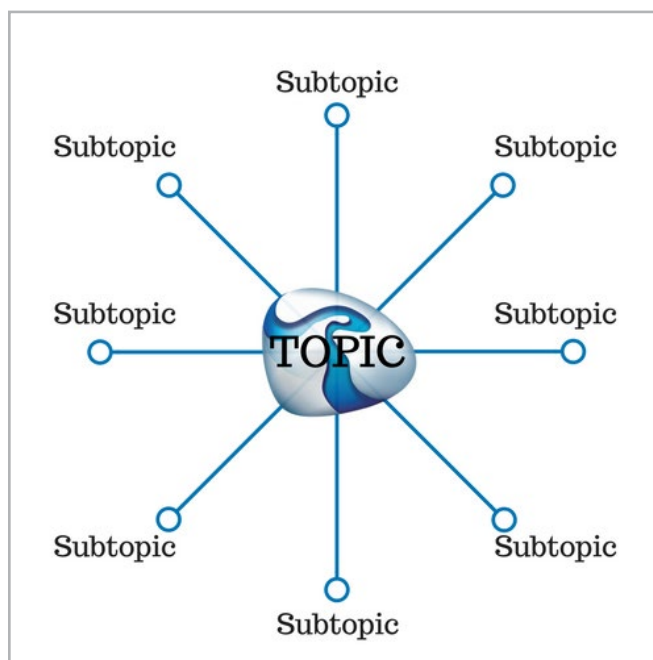
This is in part why keyword stuffing (overuse of keywords) is no longer a good idea.

Simply because you use enough keywords and LSI-keywords (related keywords) doesn't mean your content will rank well if it's not covering every keyword in depth.

You don't have to cover your entire subject matter in great depth with a single blog post. You just need a pillar page.

The pillar page (also called *topic cluster*) is a principle of structuring content in such a way that a page on the main topic branches out into multiple pages about subtopics.

For example, if your law firm represents clients in personal injury cases, you could create one general page about practice areas. Then, you could link to specific practice areas. For example, personal injury laws page which links to applicable conditions, statute of limitations, and so on.



Source: [Revenue River](#)



This method is similar to link equity method. You have one main page to which all the traffic flows, and then it's funneled towards specific pages.

Similarly, if your law firm practices multiple areas of the law, you could have the main practice areas page (your pillar page) that leads to subsequent pages on each practice area, which then lead to details about the law and the topic.

There are two main benefits to using topic clusters AKA pillar pages:

1. They improve user experience. Your leads can easily find the areas they're most interested in, and then navigate to subsequent detailed explanations.
 2. They improve Google's understanding of your site.
- Again, SEO is essentially focused on improving user experience and providing value.

As an organized way of delivering content, pillar pages can be a great asset for your law firm marketing.

Optimizing Content for Position Zero

Earning the first place on your target keyword search results pages is great, but Position Zero is even better.

Position Zero pertains to all those featured snippets and additional SERP features that Google uses to streamline content delivery.

For example, People Also Ask and Knowledge Panels are two of the most well-known position zero features.

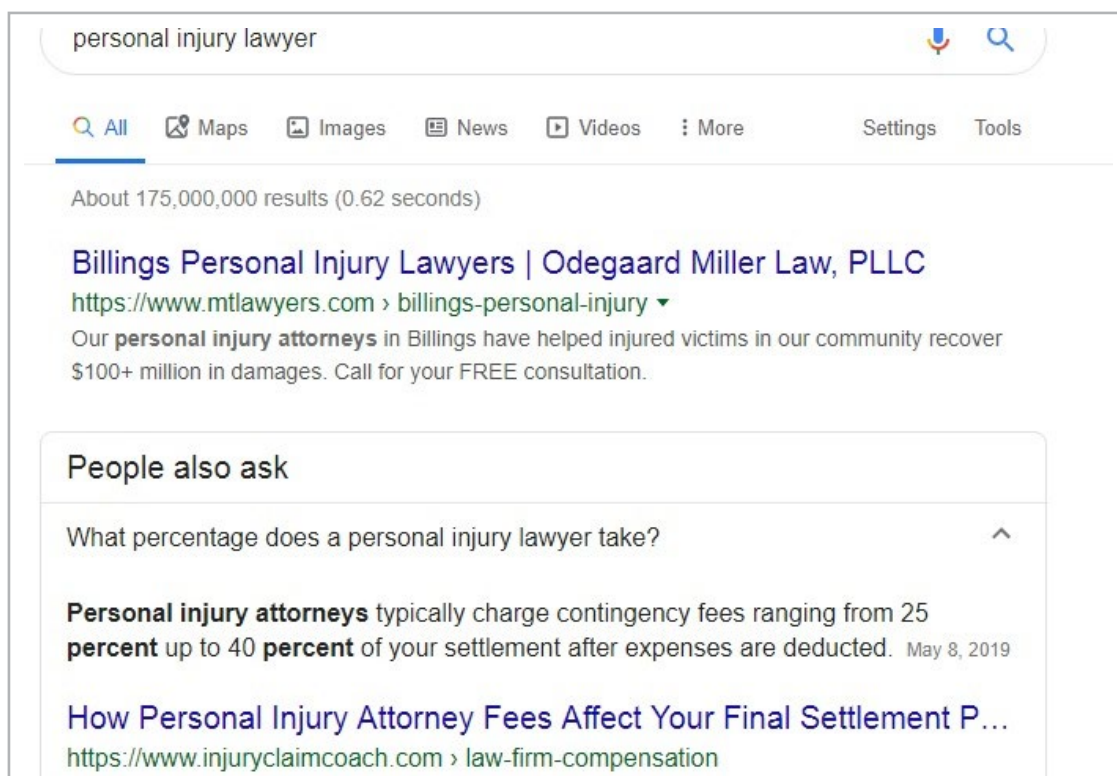


When your law firm's content appears in them (or in other snippets), it'll get more attention.

Consequently, you'll get a lot more leads.

The trick is in getting there.

The first way to optimize your legal content for Position Zero is by providing straight answers to frequently asked questions.



In this particular example, you can see that the website answers the question succinctly.

If you navigate to their website, you'll see that the answer is preceded by a heading denoting the question: "*Typical Attorney Contingency Fees.*"




Purchase price for a Tesla

Model	Base price	0-60 mph speed
S70	\$70,000	5.5 seconds
S70D (all-wheel drive)	\$75,000	5.2 seconds
S85	\$80,000	5.4 seconds
S85D	\$85,000	4.2 seconds

1 more row, 2 more columns

What Does a Tesla Really Cost? - NerdWallet
<https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/insurance/tesla-cost/> NerdWallet ▾



About this result • Feedback




Source: [Moz](#)

If you're talking about statistics, use a table to organize your content.

Crawl bots can recognize tables, and they'll prioritize serving content in featured snippets if it's tabular and contextually relevant.

For example, if you're discussing personal injury cases and car accident statistics, why not put them in a table?

You'll get much more interested personal injury leads that way.



[All](#) [Images](#) [Videos](#) [News](#) [Maps](#) [More](#) [Settings](#) [Tools](#)


About 283,000,000 results (0.89 seconds)

Part 1 Petitioning the Court for Divorce

1. Confirm that you are eligible to **file for divorce** in the state where you live. ...
2. Visit a **family law attorney** for a free initial consultation. ...
3. Check for forms you can use if you're **filing** on your own. ...
4. Reach a **separation agreement** if required. ...
5. Complete your **divorce** petition.

More items... • Jun 14, 2019

How to File for Divorce (with Pictures) - wikiHow
<https://www.wikihow.com/File-for-Divorce>



About Featured Snippets Feedback

Finally, **bulleted lists** are still effective. This is especially true when it comes to **processes and how-to questions** such as: "How to file for divorce?"



This example makes it pretty clear that if it's you're talking about a process and it can be ordered neatly, then it should be.

You don't have to mince words; Google will recognize starter words (if they include keywords) and simplify the list for searchers.

Usually, Position Zero featured snippets appear for the following **question types**:

- What (e.g. *What is a personal injury claim?*)
- How to (e.g. *How to file for divorce in Texas?*)
- How (e.g. *How much do tax attorneys charge?*)

If you answer these questions with your legal blog content, you'll have a much higher chance of appearing in featured snippets.

Focus on topics that already have snippets.

If you rank well for pertinent keywords already, they're a good choice for Position Zero optimization.

In the majority of cases, **proper formatting** (lists, tables, paragraphs) and some **technical SEO magic** (meta descriptions, structured markup, page titles, and H1-H5 tags) should do the trick.

And when you reach Position Zero, make sure you refresh your content with any new developments to stay there and get an incredible click-through rate.



Best Practices

You can have the world's best content but if your titles and meta descriptions aren't enticing enough, your content won't attract the interest of your leads. Make sure your **headlines** are intriguing. Use titles such as:

- The ultimate guide to...
- How to...
- 7 Ways to...

Then make sure you create **evergreen content**. It's content that doesn't go out of style.

For example, a post on filing for divorce isn't likely to change over time, and you'll be attracting quality backlinks and leads with it steadily.

Format content for featured snippets.

If you're answering frequently asked questions, place that question in one of the H-tags.

For example, you could preface a chapter on personal injury statute of limitations with a headline asking: *"How long do I have to file a personal injury claim?"*

The more you can adapt to the natural language of your customers, the better will your SEO results be.

Use visuals to get more leads with your legal content.





Brains simply process visual stimuli faster (and better) than text.

If you have to discuss a lot of complicated information, turn it into an infographic with the help of a free tool like [Canva](#).

This is especially beneficial for statistics or explanations of court processes.

If you're not sure what your leads are like, conduct audience research.

You don't have to be a marketer to understand who your clients are. If your clients are diverse in terms of demographics, make sure you focus on:

- Channels they use (digital, social networks, websites, newspapers, etc.)
- Questions they have
- Goals they want to achieve

Understanding your clients will help you understand the kind of content they want to see.

For example, if the majority of your clients use Facebook for information and communication, you can research how they communicate and use that to create content they'll be interested in reading.

Similarly, you should know what their main **objections** are to hiring you as their legal representative.

Maybe they're worried about your charges, maybe they're not sure what the process of hiring a lawyer looks like.

You can use that knowledge to adapt your content and come across as trustworthy and straightforward – always a good thing for a lawyer to be.



Finally, if you understand your clients' goals, you'll know how to motivate them to proceed with the actions you want them to take.

People rarely do something for the action of it.

Your personal injury leads aren't filing a claim because they want to file a claim. They're doing it because they want to get back on their feet or help their family financially as they recover.

Your goal is to understand your clients, and use it to market to them.

And once you've understood them, it's only a matter of time before Google recognizes it and rewards you with improved rankings.

Practice Area Pages

If blog posts are your lead generators and information drivers, then your law firm's practice area pages are the offer that seals the deal.

To put it simply: your blog content is there to generate interest, help you gain visibility in search engines, attract links, and introduce leads to your sales funnel.

Your practice area pages are your sales pages. They're there to turn your leads into.

As such, it's important that your law firm optimizes your practice area pages for search engines and conversions.



The Hierarchy of Practice Pages

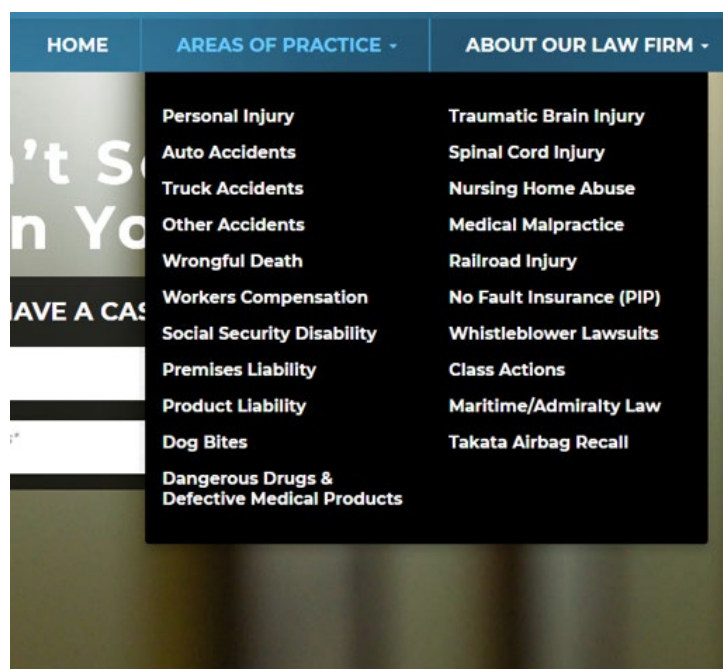
Since practice pages are so immensely important (especially for converting leads that are actively using search engines to find lawyers to hire), that importance has to be clear in your website hierarchy, as well.

In menus, make sure you place your practice pages first.

If you focus on different areas of law, make sure you have separate pages for each.

This way, leads will be able to find what they're searching for immediately.

From the main practice pages (e.g. Personal injury), you can direct leads to specific pages (e.g. Car Accidents). It's great for user experience, as well as SEO.



Source: [Dagmar Marketing](#)



Clear Purpose

We may call them practice area pages, but they're essential sales pages. And just like any sales page, your practice area page has to have a clear purpose.

Your practice area page has to be so single-minded about the action you want your lead to take that they have no other choice but take it.

But how does that work in practice?

Let's imagine your page ranks for the "hire a personal injury attorney in Chicago" keyword.

Imagine your personal injury leads coming to it.

They've searched for that exact keyword, which is transactional in nature. Their intent is to hire a lawyer – not get more information.

Often, law firms forget about the intent behind the queries and dilute the momentum.

They offer additional information on personal injury claims. However, that's unnecessary and it provides a distraction from the clear purpose the lead navigated to the site to achieve:

Hire a lawyer, plain and simple.



Nothing on your practice area page should distract the lead from scheduling a consultation:

- Avoid external or internal links in the above-the-fold portion of your content
- Avoid providing information other than information about your offer and the benefits of hiring you
- Cover one area at a time
- Match the lead's intent by using keywords strictly related to the topic that your page is covering
- Specify your location
- Embed multiple CTAs (calls to action)
- If you have to offer additional information, do it with a video (leads love it, and it improves your dwell time)

The screenshot shows the top portion of a law firm's website. At the top, there are two office locations: "Tampa Office (813) 250-0000" and "Sarasota Office (941) 210-0000". The firm's name, "DENNIS HERNANDEZ & Associates, PA", is centered in a serif font. Below this is a red navigation bar with links: "PRACTICE AREAS", "ATTORNEYS", "ABOUT", "TESTIMONIALS", "CONTACT", "EN ESPANOL", "WHAT JURORS ARE NEVER TOLD", and "BLOG". The main hero section features a large image of a man in a suit against an American flag background. To the right of the man, the text "WE FIGHT TO GET YOU PAID" is displayed in large, bold, blue letters. Below this, a "Call to Action" label points to a red button that says "GET YOUR FREE CASE EVALUATION". A small text line reads "We're here to help you get back the life you deserve." At the bottom of the hero section, a dark blue bar contains the text "Experience From A Harvard Law Graduate You Can Trust, Compassion And Care You Can Count On."

[Source: Dagmar Marketing](#)



Consider this example.

The most prominent heading on the page is *“We fight to get you paid,”* reminding this attorney’s personal injury leads of why they came to the page. The emotionally-driven copy works great in these cases.

Then, the page goes on to include a simple, red CTA offering a free case evaluation.

Finally, pay attention to how the attorney describes himself:

“A Harvard Law Graduate,” “Compassion and Care You Can Count On.”

Nothing on this page distracts the leads from clicking through.

Instead, they’re faced with a lawyer that looks trustworthy, educated, and willing to fight for them.

You can do the same for your law firm.

Writing Practice Area Page Copy

Since your practice area pages should be as distraction-free as possible, it’s good to stick to text.

Of course, you can (and in some cases, you should) add an image or two, but make sure they are contextually relevant and drive the lead towards conversion.

If it doesn’t add value, remove it.

Your practice area page copy should confirm your lead’s intent and give them motivation to click through and schedule a consultation with you.



Stylistically, writing convincing practice area page copy means that you should:

- Use short sentences and paragraphs
- Cover only one area/location at a time
- Emphasize the benefits and the problems
- Present your services as the solution
- Leverage emotion
- Use numbers whenever possible (e.g. number of cases won)
- Use [action-driven vocabulary](#) and 2nd person singular POV (“You”) whenever possible

People are always **emotional** about their court processes, it's unavoidable (unless you're in corporate law).

If we go back to our example of the personal injury lawyer, it's clear that he presents himself as a person his leads can trust – a person who is willing to fight for them to get reimbursement.

Depending on your practice areas, you should do the same. If you've researched your clients well enough, you'll know what they're motivated by.

For example, if you're a personal injury lawyer and your leads are often motivated by wanting to help with their family's financial issues caused by medical bills, you could start off with a heading such as:

“Give your family the life they deserve.”

The fewer words you say (while including keywords), the better.

Make the intention of your copy clear.



Understand who is coming to your practice area page, and then use keywords for both SEO and to reaffirm the lead's intent.

If you have to state a lot of information at once, use bullet point or lists.

They're much more readable while still conveying important information.

Headlines are key to high-performing practice area pages.

You should aim to intercept visitor's intent with your headline.

If they came to the page for personal injury counsel, state that you're a personal injury attorney.

Then, describe the benefits of your service with the second headline. If you can offer them a free evaluation, put that at the forefront.

Finally, avoid complicated legal terms.

Always remember who you're talking to, and speak to your clients in the same way they speak.

Compelling CTAs

Your CTA should reiterate your offer and motivate leads to **take action**; be that scheduling a free consultation, getting a case evaluation, or something else you're able to offer.

If you have a long practice area page, you can embed **multiple CTA buttons**.



Make sure they're contrasting the rest of your visuals.

For example, if your page is black text on white background, you can set your CTA to be red or blue. In any case, your CTA should visually stand out to catch the attention of your leads.

You can also experiment with forms and chat bots.

Forms can be great for nurturing your leads towards conversion with email marketing. However, chat bots convert even better.

Chat Bots

On average, [chat bots have a 3x higher conversion rate](#) than email marketing. And there are a lot of ways your law firm can use them.

For example, you could set up a chat bot to appear after a lead has spent more than ten seconds on your website.

It can prompt leads to share more details about their cases and problems, or collect their contact information.

Chat bots are completely automated, making them a perfect option for improving your law firm's conversion rate.





Simultaneously you'll also be improving your SEO results, as leads communicating with chat bots will improve their dwell time on your page.

Consequently, their **prolonged dwell time** will send a signal to Google that you've got a good page, making it serve your page to more searchers.

Your chat bot can also collect vital lead information, including their case specifics and their contact information. By providing their personal information, your leads will feel like they're making a **micro-commitment**, making it much easier to convince them to make a significant commitment (hiring you).

You can create your chat bot with builders such as ChatBot or Landbot.

Multiple Locations?

If your law firm operates in different areas, you should have separate practice pages for each location.

While it may seem simpler to create one page for all the locations, you'll be getting a local SEO boost by giving each location a specific landing page. Additionally, your customers will be more drawn to hiring you if they can see you're serving their particular area, and you mention it in your practice area page copy.

The Anatomy of Your Practice Area Page

While you may want to say a lot with your practice area page, avoid the temptation.

It should be simple, providing only the most necessary and convincing information.



Follow the outline:

1. Main headline that matches the title your leads clicked on (e.g. *Hire a Personal Injury Attorney in Santa Barbara*)
2. Supporting subheading that clarifies (e.g. *Law firm with over 10 years of experience*)
3. First call-to-action button
4. Customer testimonials or credentials
5. Simple copy clarifying your law firm's practice areas, experience, and other relevant information
6. Second call-to-action button
7. Internal links for more information at the bottom of the practice page (if necessary)

The screenshot shows the top section of a law firm's website. At the top left is the logo for 'VOGEL LAWYERS'. To its right, the text 'NO UPFRONT FEES.' is displayed. Further right, a phone number '(587) 802-1819' is shown with the tagline 'BOOK A FREE CONSULTATION' underneath. The main heading is 'PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS IN CALGARY' in large white letters, with the subheading 'INTEGRITY. RELATIONSHIPS. RESULTS.' below it. Two call-to-action buttons are present: 'REQUEST A FREE CONSULTATION' in a yellow box and 'VIEW OUR RESULTS' in a teal box. Below these are four statistics in white boxes: '\$ NO UPFRONT FEES', '89 YEARS OF COMBINED EXPERIENCE', '1,821+ INJURY CASES SERVED', and '8 PERSONAL INJURY LAWYERS'. At the bottom left, the word 'ABOUT' is partially visible. To the right, there is a paragraph of text: 'We are one of Calgary's leading personal injury law firms and have achieved some of the province's largest settlements for our clients. Our mission is to use our diverse backgrounds and skillsets to apply a common sense approach to our'.

Source: [Inbound Law Marketing](#)



This is a great example of a practice area page.

Note how this law firm is giving their leads two choices: book a consultation immediately, or review the firm's results if you're not convinced yet.

They also use **numerical values** to demonstrate their expertise through the number of clients served and their combined years of expertise.

DEFEND YOUR DUI
SAVAGE OYKMAN LAW

CALL US 24/7
587-600-8869 OR
SPEAK WITH A LAWYER, FREE

DUI Lawyers Serving Edmonton & Area

10,000+
IMPAIRED DRIVING
CASES SERVED

60+
YEARS CRIMINAL
DEFENCE EXPERIENCE

\$
FLEXIBLE
PAYMENT STRUCTURES

24/7
AVAILABILITY &
CLIENT SUPPORT

Speak With A Lawyer

Schedule a FREE, no-obligation case review
to receive professional legal advice.

First Name *

Last Name *

An Entire Team of Experienced

Source: [Inbound Law Marketing](#)

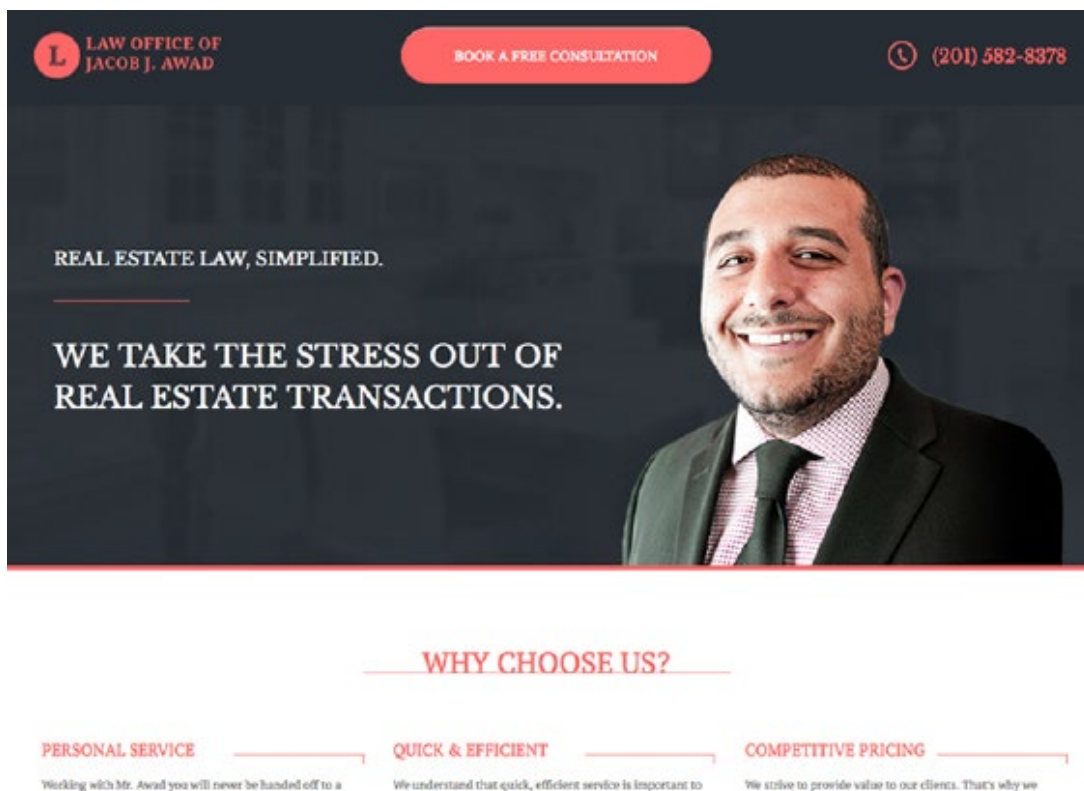
Notice how this law firm shows they understand their customers. They know what their leads care about:

- Experience and expertise
- Availability and support
- Payment structures



Then they display it clearly, including a **hero** image (header image) that shows their team of attorneys.

This helps leads build trust in the firm and goes a long way towards stimulating conversion.



Source: [Inbound Law Marketing](#)

Not all areas of law are a natural fit for emotionally-driven marketing.

When it comes to real estate, it's best to **emphasize the benefits** just as this attorney does.

Note the hero image again.

The attorney looks trustworthy and nice, making people more likely to want to hire him.



Still, the main heading promises to eliminate the stress out of real estate transactions, which is a **problem that the majority of this law firm's leads can relate to.**

The CTA is prominent (although it should be between the hero image and the benefits), and it follows the lead as they scroll down the page.

The screenshot shows the homepage of Gomez Trial Attorneys. The header includes the logo and a 'REQUEST CONSULTATION' button with the phone number 619.237.3490. The main heading is 'Award Winning San Diego Motorcycle Accident Lawyer'. Below this, there are two bullet points with checkmarks: 'Super Lawyers® named John Gomez the 2016 Number 1 Motorcycle Accident Lawyer Overall in San Diego County.' and 'John Gomez Peer Voted San Diego's Number 1 Motorcycle Accident Lawyer overall for 2015 & 2016.' To the left of these points is a vertical social media sharing bar with icons for LinkedIn, Google+, Facebook, Twitter, and a plus sign. Below the bullet points is a video player showing John Gomez, a man in a suit, sitting at a desk and writing. To the right of the video and bullet points is a 'FREE CASE EVALUATION' form with the text 'NO WIN NO FEE GUARANTEE'. The form fields are: 'Your Name', 'Your Email', 'Phone Number', 'Vehicle' (with a dropdown menu showing 'Motorcycle'), and 'Describe Your Case' (with the text 'Our lawyers will contact you immediately'). Below the form is an orange 'REQUEST CONSULTATION' button. At the bottom of the form, there is a small disclaimer: 'This is for administrative purposes only. All information will be kept in the strictest confidence.'

Source: [Instapage](#)

This is a great example that utilizes the recognition an attorney received.

Education, credentials, awards, and testimonials are powerful elements on a practice area page. They provide the social proof necessary for leads to turn into clients.

Notice how Gomez also uses video to introduce himself and reduce the length of copy on the page.



These examples are just one of many. There are as many types of practice area pages as there are lawyers.

However, it's important that your page matches the intent of your clients and that you address them the way they want to be addressed.

After that, booking a consultation becomes a routine

Video SEO for Lawyers

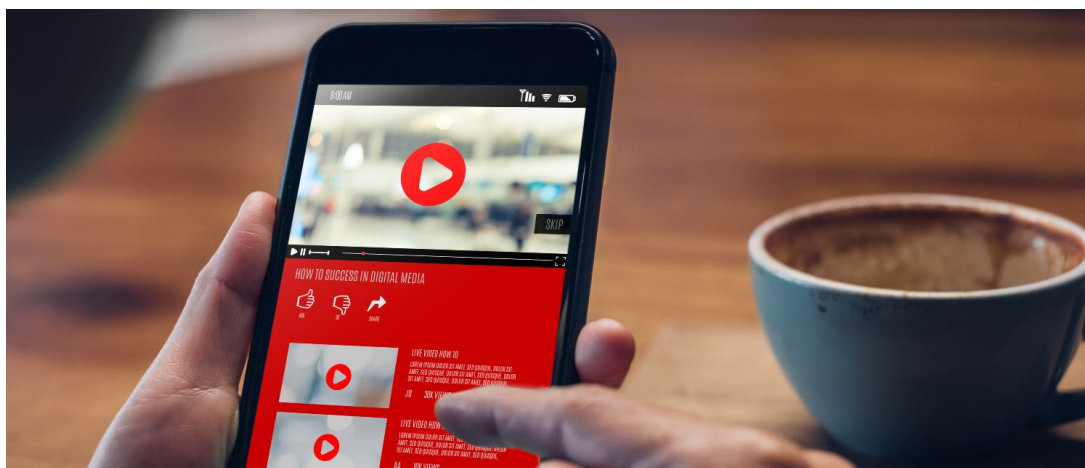
Video is an up-and-coming format that's quickly competing for the title of the most consumed content type. In fact, [YouTube is actually the second largest search engine](#) – right after Google.

So if your potential clients are watching video, you should consider making and optimizing it.

Law Firm Video Types

Turn Your Blog Posts into Videos

The easiest thing you can do is turn your blog posts into videos with [Lumen5](#). Your topics can stay the same, even though **how-tos** and **explainer posts work best** for videos.





For example, topics like the following perform best:

- How to choose a lawyer?
- How to file for divorce online?
- What makes a good personal injury case?

The more specific you can be, practice area and location-wise, the better.
Targeting the right keywords is the key to SEO success, even with video.

Additionally, since so few law firms are using video SEO for marketing, your videos could be displayed in SERPs even if you don't have a strong domain authority.

Due to the way they're displayed (as a featured snippet), you'll experience a higher CTR.

Your legal videos shouldn't be as long as your blog posts.

Instead, sum up the most important points and provide answers.

When your clients turn to video, they want answers and they want them now. Provide them in less than 3 minutes.

Testimonials

Video testimonials can be extremely beneficial, especially if you integrate them into explainer videos.

For example, when speaking about filing a personal injury claim, you could interview a few of your clients.



They can tell leads more about how the process went with your firm. Avoid promoting yourself from the get-go, instead opting for a subtle question such as: *“How was your experience with [Law Firm XYZ]?”*

In general, videos work so well because they allow your leads to see your personality.

They automatically feel like they know you more than they actually do. And when you build onto that by providing testimonials from people just like them, you'll win their trust and (hopefully) their case, too.

Website Videos

Finally, don't forget about embedding videos to your website or creating them specifically for that purpose.

Numerous law firms use videos to allow leads to learn more about their firm, process, and attorneys who could be in charge of their case.

You can even acquaint your leads with statistics such as the number of cases won, awards, and so much more.

If you use website video for your law firm marketing, you'll be increasing your dwell time.





People take a lot longer to consume video than regular written content.

Every minute they spend on your site signals to Google that you're a high-quality resource for the searchers.

You can even use your videos on landing pages to supplement leads with more information.

If you *wrote* it, the landing page would be too long and it'd meander.

But with video, only the leads who need more information will click through and they won't be distracted from their original intent.

How to Optimize Legal Videos for Search Engines

Video SEO works similarly to how regular SEO does.

Google has started including video in SERPs, and YouTube picks up on titles and descriptions when leads search for particular queries.

The same rules still apply to legal video SEO: start titles with keywords, and make sure you use LSI keywords in descriptions, closed captions, and in alt text.

The only significant difference is closed-captioning.

YouTube and Google value videos with provided **closed captioning** so much that they regularly prioritize them in results.

After all, not everyone can *listen* to your video. It's much better to provide them with subtitles explaining the subject.



And in addition to improving your search engine visibility, you'll also be reaching a greater number of leads.

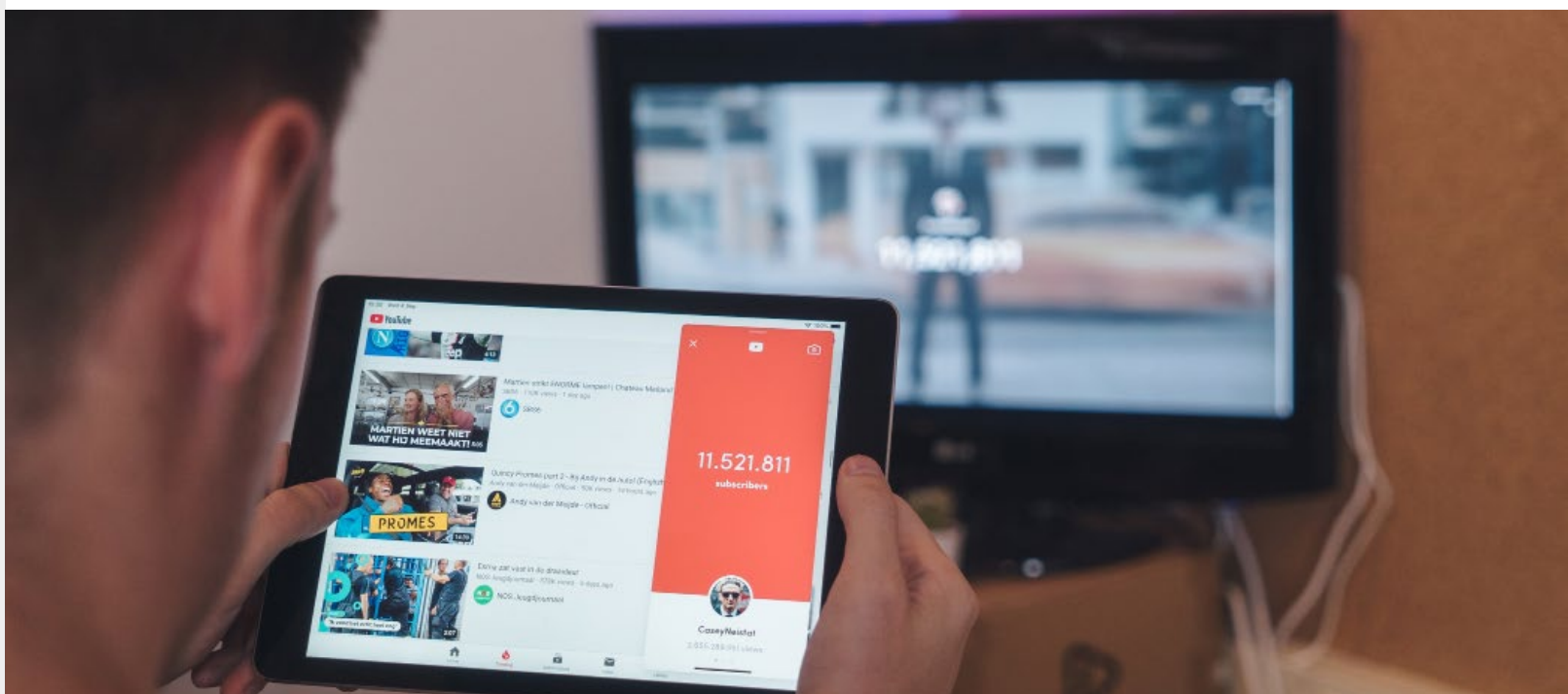
If you're uploading your videos to YouTube, don't forget about **tags**.

They're a great way of categorizing videos. Just make sure you use the keywords your leads use.

Finally, **thumbnails** matter.

Make sure they're enticing and feature people in them, as well as the title of the video or at least the subject matter.

When you combine both written and video content for your law firm marketing, you'll be reaching a lot more people. And you'll see both direct and indirect results from it.





Should You Promote Your Legal Content?

Yes.

In theory, social signals don't directly affect your search engine rankings.

However, when you promote your legal content on social media and other channels, you have better chances of attracting quality backlinks and leads.

And with Google's linkless future where they measure the sentiment about your law firm, promoting your legal content through other channels is a great way to attract reviews and positive mentions.

Even your EAT score depends on your online reputation.

You can promote your legal content by:

- Repurposing blog content for social media (e.g. Pulling quotes from long blog posts, creating infographics, making short videos)
- Using Facebook Lives to hold Q&A sessions and direct leads to your practice area pages
- Implementing an email marketing strategy
- Adding your law firm to reputable directories
- Advertising it

There are many ways of reaching your leads. SEO is certainly one of the most cost-effective methods.

However, it's a long game.

It'll take a while to start seeing the results. Using social signals to attract backlinks and reach leads will speed it up, and help you get to that coveted position:

Number one – in the eyes of search engines and your leads.



Part V: Link Building for Law Firms

Search engines care about your law firm's content, but they can only evaluate it if you're getting enough **votes of confidence**.

One type of a confidence vote is a click through from searchers when they see your pages in their search results.

However, in order to *appear* in the search results, you must first obtain quality backlinks to your content from reputable sites.

Here's what you should know:

How Does Link Building for Law Firms Work?

Google (and other search engines) understands the internet through links. Both search engines and your visitors navigate the web with the help of links.

But Google also uses links to evaluate the authoritativeness of your law firm's website. The more links you have from relevant and reputable websites, the better will your pages rank in the SERPs.

Now, defining what a trusted website means can get complicated.

Search engine algorithms don't possess human reasoning and they can't evaluate quality per se, so they substitute data on page quality with data on the quality and quantity of inbound and outbound links.

That's why we use the terms page and domain authority.



Domain and Page Authority

Domain authority is not an official metric.

However, for the majority of SEO professionals, it's an easy way to quantify the reputation of websites on the internet so they can build a good link profile.

DA expresses each website's relevance for a particular topic.

For example, [the National Law Review](#) is a website with a strong domain authority in terms of legal topics. If you obtained a backlink from them to your site, you'd feel the effects of it on the placement of your pages in SERPs.

Conversely, if you got a backlink from someone's personal blog that doesn't have any domain authority for legal topics, you wouldn't even notice it. Searchers looking for legal counsel haven't found their blog useful.

Similarly, **page authority** expresses the relevance and quality of each page on your website, as defined by the number of backlinks that page got.

You can evaluate the domain authority of a website with [the Domain Authority Checker](#).

The higher the score of your linking website is, the more "link juice" you'll get.

For example, Nat Law Review has a grade of 69.



Do-Follow and No-Follow Backlinks

Finally, some backlinks should be do-follow, while others have to be no-follow.

Do-follow and *no-follow* are two link attributes that define whether a search engine should count those backlinks or not into your link profile.

For example, a link to your website from your advertisement should be *no-follow* – it shouldn't be included in your link profile or considered by search engines when evaluating your law firm's domain authority.

If you don't tag a link you've obtained through link schemes or (paid) promotion with the *rel="nofollow"* HTML tag, you could be penalized by search engines.

All the links you've organically attracted with the value of your content should be do-follow.

Different Types of Backlinks (and How to Get Them)

Now, not all links were made alike.

Google's algorithms can actually recognize the **placement** and the **context** of every link.

Editorial Backlinks

Editorial backlinks are the most prized backlinks. They're links a site gives to your site within their native content.



For example, if your local newspaper wrote an article on car accidents and linked to your personal injury content as a valuable resource on the topic, that would be an editorial link.

Search engines typically recognize editorial backlinks through their anchor text – the text that is hyperlinked.

`Tiny dancing horse`

Target Link *Anchor Text*

Source: [Moz](#)

So let's imagine someone from your law firm was interviewed as an expert on personal injury lawsuits.

The anchor text could be something like:

"Attorney from XYZ law firm, John Doe, claims that settling personal injury lawsuits in Florida takes only a few months."

Notice the keyword – "personal injury lawsuits in Florida."

With that anchor text, you are being cited as an expert, while also including relevant keywords that place you in the context of the topic.

Other beneficial anchor text types are mentions of your law firm's name (e.g. *XYZ Law*) and CTAs (e.g. *Read more about personal injury claims*).



Other types of editorial backlinks include:

- Quotes
- Interview links
- Podcast interview links
- Roundup links
- Referencing your website as a source of information
- Crediting your website as the original source of content (e.g. infographics)

How to Get Editorial Backlinks for Your Law Firm

Ideally, you'll attract editorial backlinks organically.

Your content strategy will be so good that you'll be linked to from news outlets and other legal websites.

Great Content Strategy

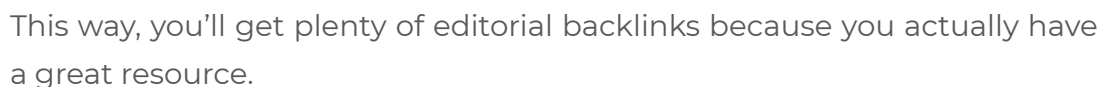
Getting editorial backlinks to your law firm's website is much easier when you create **comprehensive, evergreen resources on a topic**.

For example, you could create the ultimate guide to personal injury lawsuits in your state.

In it, you should could absolutely everything personal injury leads may be interested in – from conditions and statute of limitations, to the process and expected damage reimbursements.

While your content strategy should include short blog posts on recent developments, make sure you focus at least 70% of your efforts on evergreen content.

It's appreciated by leads and websites looking for sources on a topic.



It could even become a go-to resource that's quoted, linked to, and cited as a reference, improving your link profile, your rankings and your EAT score all at the same time.

Additionally, proving your expertise by creating legal go-to resources could help you get interviewed by relevant websites.

If you follow content creation best practices we've covered in the previous chapter, you'll be killing two birds with one stone:

- Make your formatting engaging to the reader
- Optimize for Position Zero by using H1-H5 tags and questions
- Use internal links to link to other relevant pages on your law firm's website
- Link to other trusted pages (e.g. Nat Law Review for research)
- Use visuals to keep readers engaged





HARO and SourceBottle

Another way to get editorial backlinks is by using [HARO](#) (Help a Reporter) and [SourceBottle](#) – websites used by journalists and bloggers when they need sources to interview about a topic.

For example, a journalist that is writing an article on personal injury lawsuits could post to these sites, looking for a lawyer to interview.

Then, they'd link to your website from their article because you're essentially their source.

As a rule of thumb, it's good to **show personality** and **simplify complicated legal terms** when answering source requests.

If you've already prepared a resource on something related to the topic (for example, a guide on a practice area), you can even send links to the reporters.

Guest Posting

The simplest way to get an editorial backlink is to put it there yourself. And that's exactly what happens with guest blogging.

When you guest blog, you're creating content about your area of expertise for another site. Then, you can reference your own content and link to it within the text.

Fortunately, a lot of publications offer guest posting opportunities.

You can find them by Google searching for *"law firm"* or *"attorney"* or *"lawyer" + "contribute"* or *"write for us"* or *"guest column"* or *"guest post."*



Make sure you double-check websites before you reach out to them with a guest post idea:

- Domain Authority
- Reputation
- Target Audience
- Traffic

Your time is hard to come by, so make sure you select only the websites with the highest reputation in the legal area. The more specialized they are, the better.

If you find a local news outlet that doesn't only cover the law, that's fine, as well.

Editorial backlinks from news sites can be equally beneficial, especially since you won't be just getting link juice, but leads.

Make sure your guest post is as good as the posts you publish on your law firm blog.

If no one sticks around to read your post, Google could devalue the backlink.

So when you're reaching out to the publication, make sure you have a topic in mind and know which searcher intent you want to satisfy.

Legal guest posting is all about benefits. Offer something to the publication, and they may just give you the chance to reach their audience.

After all, receiving editorial backlinks is all about providing value.

If you create good resources and clearly explain the benefits, you'll be on your way to building a healthy link profile.



Self-Created Links for Law Firms

Editorial links are the ones that have the most “link juice,” i.e. they influence your law firm’s rankings the most.

However, **self-created links** (links you place yourself on different platforms) can help search engines create a better image of your site.

Not to mention that adding links to your pages and websites is a great way to help leads navigate to your practice area conversion pages.

The first place you should add your links to is your law firm’s Google My Business profile.

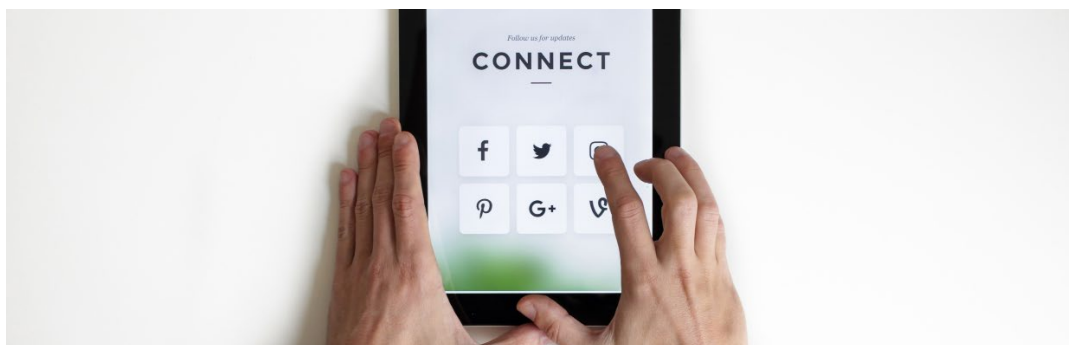
GMB profiles are great SERP real estate; they often appear within the first three results for local searches.

As you polish your GMB profile and receive reviews, you’ll start appearing in the top three law firms for your target practice area.

You can imagine how having a link to your website there may come in handy.

If you have official law firm social media, share your links.

However, make sure you’re actually using those social networks – not just creating profiles to add your links.





It's good to use them if your potential clients are using them, as well. You can even promote your content to get social signals and quality backlinks.

Stick to a few social networks and use them to the fullest capacity. If you share links to your content, engage with commenters and leads.

You can link to your law firm website from your professional profiles, as well.

Again, it's a matter of helping Google understand your EAT score. And in addition to SEO benefits, you'll also be attracting more leads than if you went without a link in your profile.

You can even connect with the editors of publications and other influencers in your practice area by using social media and posting your content.

It's a flywheel; the more people know about your law firm's website, the more backlinks will you attract.

Message Boards for Legal Topics

Another good way to create a healthy link profile is by participating in Quora and Reddit threads.

Both sites essentially function like message boards.

People ask questions related to their interests, you can discuss different topics with them, and then – if your content is relevant – you can link to your content.

Quora is a Q&A site with almost [2 million people who want to know about legal topics](#). It'd be a shame not to use it to attract backlinks to your website.



Quora's link value lies in profile links and self-created links.

For example, you can respond to a question about tax law in greater detail than everyone else on the thread.

Then, you can simply link to a blog post in which you wrote more about it, pointing leads and other readers to an insightful resource.

Don't just respond with one line and a link to your content.

Quora isn't Yahoo Answers. Don't be afraid to go into detail, write about personal experiences, provide anecdotes, and communicate conversationally.

Now, the links you place in your answers on Quora automatically have a no-follow attribute.

However, Quora's results often appear in the first few results on SERPs for certain queries.

If your answer is in the thread, more people will see it when searching for the same questions. And if you're also mentioning your law firm's name, you'll be improving brand recognition and your EAT score indirectly.

Not to mention that you'll be opening up the door to quality backlinks because more people will see your content.

Reddit is more wary of links, but you can still get backlink juice for your law firm's website.

Quora sorts questions and answers by topics, whereas Reddit sorts them by communities. Each subreddit is focused on a particular interest.

As a lawyer, you can participate in the following subreddits:



- [r/LegalAdvice](#)
- [r/LegalEd](#)
- [r/LawFirm](#)
- [r/Law](#)
- [r/Lawyers](#)
- [r/Insurance](#)
- [r/InsurancePros](#)
- [r/Tax](#)
- [r/TaxPros](#)
- [r/Custody](#)
- [r/SCOTUS](#)
- [r/CyberLaws](#)



Source: [Reddit / Leobreaker](#)

Depending on your practice areas, you can search Reddit for other communities. New communities pop up every day, and it's good to get integrated early.



Your main focus on Reddit should be participating in the community:

- Engage other users
- Comment on posts
- Offer helpful advice

At first, avoid posting links. Redditors (Reddit users) are extremely wary of self-promotion.

However, if you often participate in the community and you truly want to **link to a contextually-relevant resource** (that just happens to be written by you), you will be able to do so.

You should find and participate in other legal message boards.

There are plenty of legal advice message boards online.

Make sure you find the ones that cover your practice area, get a lot of views, and preferably, have more than a few posts about your state.

Directory Links

Directory links are another type of links you can create yourself.

Again, they come with SEO benefits (even though not as many as editorial links) and immediate benefits in terms of lead generation for law firms.

Apply to legal directories that have a high domain authority.

Some of the directories are completely free to submit to and they'll list your information without a fee.



However, others require a one-time fee, or even a subscription fee. Make sure they're worth the fee by checking their DA and their reputation.

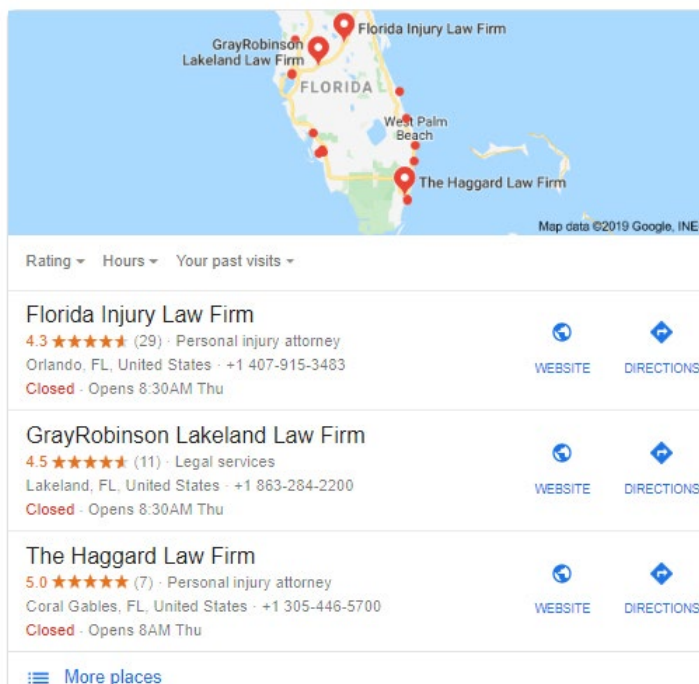
A backlink from a trusted directory like Avvo and Justia could improve your rankings and your EAT score.

However, a backlink from an irrelevant directory could hurt your link profile, so tread carefully.

You can also apply to local directories.

If your city or state has a local directory of service businesses, consider applying to it.

Not only will you be reaching your leads, but you'll also be improving your **local relevance and giving your rankings a boost**.



When it comes to local, Google is learning from numerous online directories to shape their local SERPs.

They even claim that [adding your law firm to local directories](#) will help you rankings.

Not to mention that being locally relevant is a great way to improve your EAT score, which is the future of search engine optimization.

Make sure your profiles are strong and contain all the relevant information, including appropriate keywords.



Links Your Law Firm Should Avoid

Not all links were made alike. In fact, some can actually hurt your rankings and even lead to Google penalizing your website by removing it from search results.

Don't participate in link schemes.

Don't exchange links with other law firms or businesses in different industries.

If someone promises they'll point hundreds of links to your website, steer clear.

It typically means the person offering is participating in a spammy link-building scheme that Google will recognize and penalize their (and your) site for.

Make all of your press release, advertising and sponsored post links no-follow.

The general rule of thumb is: if you're paying for the link, it has to be no-follow.

Press releases used to be abused in the past, leading to Google considering them a link scheme nowadays.

Don't keyword-stuff your content or your anchor text.

Remember anchor text – the text that is hyperlinked and should ideally contain keywords? While that is true, make sure you don't overdo it.

Switch things up by using your law firm's name or different wording as anchor text every now and then.



If you're using irrelevant directories to build your link profile, think again.

Relevant and contextually-appropriate directories such as local and law directories can be a great help for your rankings.

However, general directories that aren't really used by searchers and foreign directories will just hurt your SEO in the long run.

Sidebar and footer links aren't going to help you improve your law firm's domain authority.

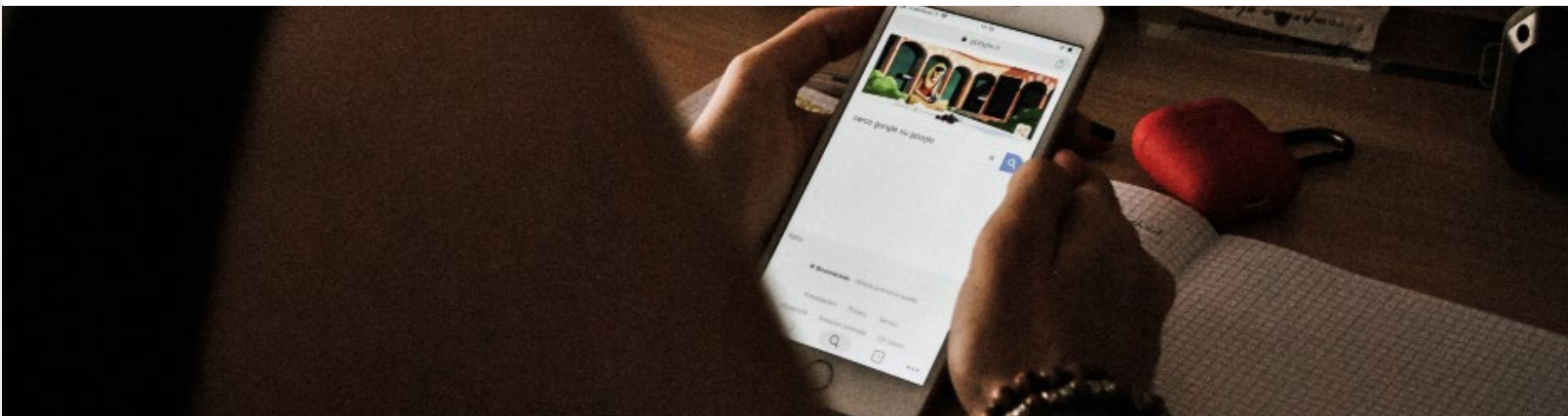
These types of links are typically featured in link-building schemes. However, Google's algorithms know how to recognize an editorial link that signals its value.

A link in the footer is just a piece of code that factors very little into your rankings.

The key to link building is in doing it as naturally as possible.

While you may need to "boost" it a little by participating in message boards and reaching out to relevant publications, don't forget about content quality.

In the long term, you'll attract more leads with quality content than with spammy tactics.





Part VI: Measuring Your Law Firm's SEO Results

SEO is a great option for law firm marketing. But just like any other marketing method, you have to measure its performance.

Since there are so many tactics you can use, it's important to know which ones bring you the most results.

Fortunately, measuring your law firm's SEO results doesn't have to be hard.

A Three-Step Process for Measuring Your Law Firm's SEO Results

It all comes down to your goals, tactics and your data:

1. List your goals, timeframe, metrics, and the tactics you will be using
2. Gather SEO data
3. Analyze SEO data

1. Your SEO Goals and Tactics

Your SEO efforts have to be coordinated, even if you're doing everything on your own.

While you can technically do everything at once, you should still prepare a list of tactics you plan on using within a given timeframe.

For example, you may decide that this month, you'll be focusing on link-building because you want to increase the number of quality backlinks to 5.



Similarly, you could decide to focus on keywords.

Make sure you focus on keywords that are going to bring you the most traffic and conversions, at least in the first few months of executing your SEO strategy.

Then, you have to note which metrics you'll track.

With SEO, there are plenty of them:

- Organic traffic
- Number of appearances in search
- Dwell time
- Bounce rates
- Click-through rates
- Conversion rate
- Local visibility
- Indexed pages
- Ranked keywords
- Crawl errors

As you can tell, it's easy to get lost.

The most important SEO metric you should be tracking for your law firm is your organic traffic.

To put it simply: you need organic traffic. So if you're not getting it, even if a significant amount of time has passed, whichever tactic you're using is not working.

If you measure just one thing, measure your organic traffic.



2. Gather Your Law Firm's SEO Data

Now, this is where we come to tools.

Google Search Console

First of all, you should add your website to the [Google Search Console](#).

It's going to show you:

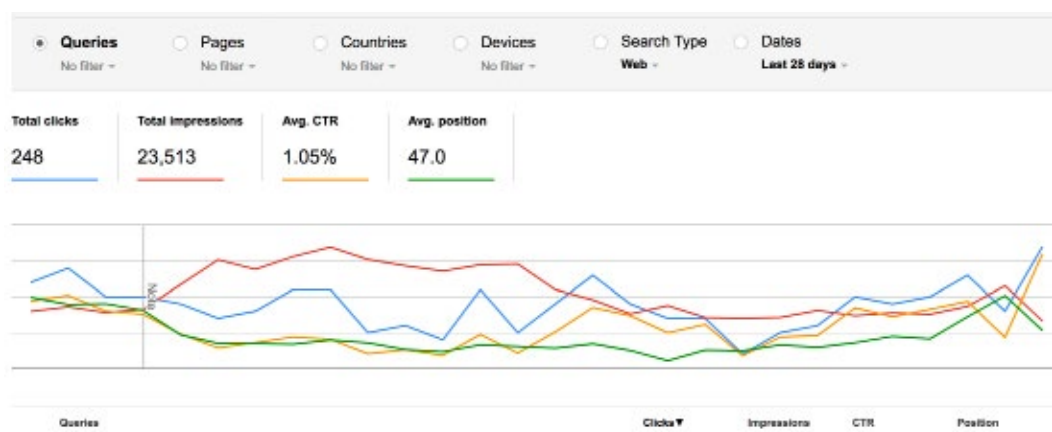
- Errors
- Backlinks
- Penalties
- Indexing and crawling statuses
- Keyword rankings, views and clicks

And so much more. It's a one-stop SEO shop.

When you submit your site and log into your dashboard, you'll be able to monitor the performance of different keywords.

Now, GSC doesn't let you select keywords for which you want to see performance, but it will show you the keywords and search queries leads use to get to your site.

That in itself is extremely beneficial – you could find a new legal keyword you hadn't thought of before.





Google Analytics

Secondly, integrate Google Analytics with your site.

It's a great traffic reporting tool, straight out of Google's laboratory.

Google Analytics helps you measure:

- Your SEO ROI
- Your website traffic (organic and paid)
- Referring channel performance
- The quality of your traffic
- Demographics of your website visitors
- The behavior of your website visitors
- Conversion rates and acquisition channels

And so much more!

GA even lets you filter by keywords and landing pages, so you can see what kind of influence they have on the quality and amount of traffic you are getting.

You can also set up phone and live chat conversion tracking with Google Analytics.

Simply navigate to the "Goals" section in your dashboard and select your conversion type.

Additionally, if you're advertising with Google Ads, you can connect GA with Ads and understand every step your leads take on their way to conversion.



If GSC is your command center for all things search, then Google Analytics helps you understand everything about your law firm's traffic.

Both are completely free.

When you use both Google Search Console and Google Analytics, you'll gain a better understanding of your traffic and your results.

For example, if you recently placed a backlink in a guest post, you'll see how many visitors you got from it by checking out Google Analytics reports.

Similarly, if you filter by "*Audience - Geo - Location - Primary Dimension: City*," you'll know if you're getting the traffic you want from your target area.

Your law firm doesn't just need traffic. It needs *targeted* traffic.

3. Analyze Your SEO Data

Finally, once you've got your data, you need to make sense of it so you can use it to improve your SEO strategy.

Fortunately, even free tools like GSC and GA are robust enough to provide you with basic insights about your audience and your tactics.

For example, if a backlink from a seemingly reputable site didn't result in any click-throughs, it may be time to reevaluate the sites you're getting backlinks from.

Maybe your content is being read by people in a different state. In that case, you should increase mentions of your area.



SEO Audit Tools for Your Law Firm

If you need help, you can always contact legal SEO professionals, or use SEO auditing tools such as:

Ahrefs

Ahrefs' tool gives you a complete SEO website audit:

- Evaluate individual pages
- Identify high-performing pages
- Understand your top-performing keywords

It's a robust tool that can show you everything you need to know about your law firm's SEO performance.

Woorank

If you want to find more opportunities for optimization, Woorank's auditing tool will come in handy.

The tool provides in-depth reviews and competitive analyses to help you identify low-performance areas, and areas that could perform even better with a few tweaks.

Finally, Woorank even provides you with a marketing checklist so you know exactly what you need to do next.

BuzzStream

If you need a little help with link building, BuzzStream can help you identify the most important people and websites to reach.



It's like a customer relationship management software for outreach and link building.

You'll see every entity's domain authority, relationship stage, domain, and request status.

Moz

Moz Pro is a SEO toolset trusted by millions, and for a good reason.

It gives you all the tools you need to understand your SEO results completely and improve them as you go.

Some of the features include:

- Site audits
- Backlink analysis
- Rank tracking
- Keyword research

Moz also has a tool for local SEO, which can be extremely useful if you're managing multiple practices.

SEMRush

SEMRush is another useful SEO toolkit. It digs deep into your (and your competitors') SEO performance to help you shape new, more effective strategies.

If you want to use the Skyscraper Technique for your content creation, SEMRush will even run a gap analysis.



This way, you'll easily create better, more comprehensive content than your competitors.

Speaking of competitors, SEMRush has great **competitive analytics**.

If you're in a particularly saturated market with a lot of practices using SEO, SEMRush can show you what they're doing, how their tactics are performing, and what you can do to rise above them.

You can even find out which websites are linking to them, and get new outreach ideas.





Ready to Start Measuring Your Results?

The key to successful law firm marketing is appearing where your leads are. Search engine optimization is just a natural extension.

By understanding the (key)words your leads use, the content they want to read, and by making sure that you're building up your online reputation, you'll become a SEO expert in no time.

Implement your SEO strategy and get ready for traffic!



