

BLF

BIGGER LAW FIRM

A magazine for attorneys

LAW FIRM MARKETING SUCCESS STORIES

VIRTUAL IMPRESSION

Create a consistent brand experience for clients and prospective clients.

May/June | Vol. 58

SEO IN-DEPTH

New structured data markup for FAQs provides opportunities for attorneys.

MESSAGING

Tell compelling stories to boost marketing efforts and connect with new clients.



Law Firm Marketing Success Stories

To be competitive, you need a marketing strategy that fits your needs for lead generation and business development. Determining the specific tactics that work for your firm will take a combination of research, agency assistance, and trial and error. Learning from the experience of others cannot hurt either. *BLF* asked attorneys what tactics were working for them. Find out what they had to say

11



5



19



Bigger Law Firm™ was founded to introduce lawyers to new marketing and firm management ideas. Advancing technology is helping law firms cover more territory, expand with less overhead and advertise with smaller budgets. So many tools exist, but if attorneys are not aware of these resources, they cannot integrate them into their practice. The *Bigger Law Firm* magazine is written by experienced legal marketing professionals who work with lawyers every day.

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2 **GET LOCAL**

LOCAL SEARCH RANKINGS

Have you been troubled to find your firm ranking far lower in your "near me" Google searches? Find out what you can do about it.

5 **HOW TO** EVENT MARKETING

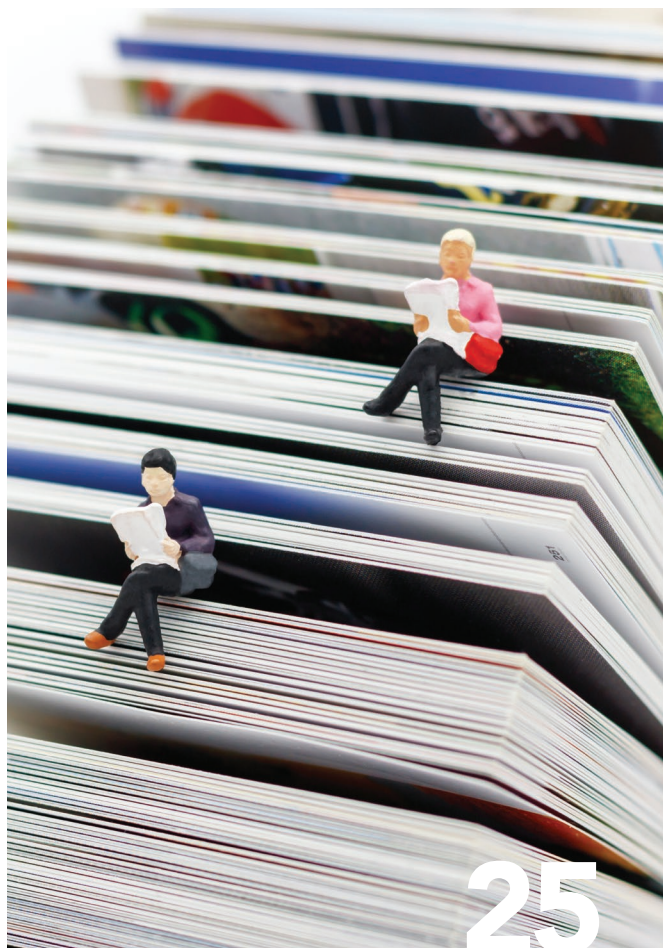
Hosting an event is a great way to strengthen existing client relationships while developing connections with valuable new prospects.

9 **LAW + TECH** GOOGLE'S NEW MINI-APPS

Law firms can use mini-apps to their advantage by creating easier, shorter funnels to potential clients.

17 **SEO IN-DEPTH** NEW SCHEMA FOR FAQs

In May, Google announced its support for structured data for FAQs. How law firms can benefit.



19 **LAWYER SPOTLIGHT**

TODD J. LEONARD

Meet Todd J. Leonard, a New Jersey injury lawyer.

22 **VIRTUAL IMPRESSION** BRAND CONSISTENCY

In today's competitive legal landscape, law firms need to go further to create a compelling impact.

25 **MESSAGING** MARKETING STORYTELLING

Make sure your marketing is connecting with your target audience on more than a surface level.

27 **VERDICT ROUNDUP**

Recent noteworthy verdicts and settlements.

29 **PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT** FASTCASE

Fastcase is increasingly popular as a legal research tool.

Here & There:

Understanding local Search Rankings

While thinking about how to drum up more business and grow your practice, you have likely performed Google searches to see how your rankings stack up against the competition for various relevant search phrases. You have performed these targeted searches from your office, and even if you did not rank highly in the standard, 10-links-per-page search results, you may have noticed you are well-represented in local searches.

But have you ever performed similar searches from home and been troubled to find your firm ranking far lower? Read on to understand why, and what you can do about it.

PROXIMITY IS KING

Local Google searches are those with results displayed on a map. Searchers can navigate to Google Maps on a computer or phone, or click on the map embedded in a search engine results page to perform a local search. It is not only your phone that can tell Google where you are, but also your desktop or laptop web browser. For local searches, your location is crucial.

For local search, proximity to the searcher is the top factor. Even a small, little-known business can rank well in a local search if you are standing right outside its door. But it is possible for your firm to rank highly in local searches performed outside your immediate vicinity. This depends on a number of factors.

OLD METHODS ARE OUT

Before discussing what to do, we will cover what not to do.

“Virtual offices” are a shortcut local SEO strategy that appeals to many businesses. Virtual offices may be legitimate, full-fledged offices where you can meet clients on an occasional basis, or they may be little more than a mailbox and a phone number, specifically intended to dupe search engines. In either case, trying to register these addresses with Google



My Business is a bad idea, because the company is cracking down on this loophole in a big way, in the name of a more informative user experience.

Google guidelines state:

If your business rents a temporary, "virtual" office at a different address from your primary business, do not create a page for that location unless it is staffed during your normal business hours by your business staff.

The penalties for faking a GMB listing are steep: It is grounds for a hard suspension, meaning your listing, reviews and photos will be removed from Google entirely, likely for all locations, including your main office. Having a hard suspension reversed is very difficult.

In mid-June, agencies managing Google My Business accounts began noticing a steep spike in profile suspensions. Some companies reported having all profiles suspended, even those that did not contain a virtual office profile. It seems Google has begun cracking down on virtual office spam in earnest,

to the point that legitimate offices are getting caught up in the dragnet. You should forget about using such an office to rank in local searches unless your own staff occupies it on a daily basis and can prove its validity.

REALITY CHECK

For all local searches, Google will attempt to put together a “local pack” of results: a number of relevant matches at the top of the results page that give the searcher something to choose from. If the search returns a lot of results in the immediate area, searchers are quite unlikely to see



results from further away, no matter the qualities of any given business.

Consider two people side-by-side in a car. One searches for “fast food near me” and sees a dozen results within a few miles. Results in a neighboring town will not be returned, even if relevant. The other searches for “Ethiopian restaurants” (try it, it is delicious) and sees a zoomed-out map view with just one or two results. These restaurants easily rank outside their immediate area.

How well-represented is your practice in your local market and neighboring markets? If you practice a more common field of law, ranking well in local searches from outside your vicinity may be out of reach.

Perhaps you have a sub-practice area in which you have carved yourself a niche in the local market. These are

In Local Search, proximity is a powerful ranking factor that tends to trump other factors by design. The good news is that it is possible to rank well outside your immediate area.

the search keywords you may wish to analyze and target in surrounding markets. For example, you may focus on intellectual property, but have important related experience in entertainment law. If you can find a practice niche without a saturated market in nearby communities, you may have a viable target for attaining a high rank.

TOOLS

If you want to get a clear idea of how you rank on a variety of searches from a number of locations, you are going to have to do some research. Fortunately, some powerful tools are available to help you, and save you from having to drive around town seeing how your ranking fluctuates.

LocalFalcon is one of the best. It displays a graphical ranking overlay onto a Google Maps view of any area for any target search phrase. The results are eye-opening, clearly showing how steeply a business’s ranking can drop off with distance, especially for competitive searches in competitive markets. Other tools worth exploring include **Whitespark**, **BrightLocal** and **Mobile Moxie**.

FACTORS

In the end, proximity is a powerful ranking factor that tends to trump other factors by design. After all, if the searcher is thought to be seeking a nearby result, that is what they should see most often.

The good news is that it is possible to rank well outside your immediate area. The bad news is that there are no shortcuts. The methods for increasing your local search ranking are not unique

unto themselves — they go hand-in-hand with standard SEO practices.

As the specific workings of Google’s algorithms are a closely held secret, no one can spell out exactly which factors are the most important for a given search. But casual analyses tend to point in the same directions.

Reviews: Local search rankings are heavily influenced by both the quantity and quality of reviews. Businesses with a few good reviews will rank higher than those with none, and businesses with many good reviews will rank higher than those with just a few. It is worth swallowing your pride to gently request an honest review from your valued clients.

Links: This encompasses both the number of links to your site and the “linking root domains,” i.e. the number of different sites which link to yours. Link-building is a cornerstone of any SEO strategy, and tactics for link-building are as numerous and varied as the reasons to pursue it. Join free and paid legal directories. Start or sponsor a Meetup group. Comment on legal blogs. Offer to write guest posts. Answer legal questions on forums.

IT IS IN YOUR HANDS

It is a recurring theme in the SEO world: Shortcuts do not cut it. Any method of gaming a search engine is a detriment to the user experience and will be ruthlessly coded out of existence. The way to rank best is to be the best, both in your practice and in your online presence. So get to work and make it happen.

- Ryan Conley

A GUIDE TO **PLANNING & MARKETING** LAW FIRM EVENTS

Relationships are at the heart of every successful law practice. Hosting an event is a great way to strengthen existing client relationships while developing connections with new prospects and potential referral sources. Events offer opportunities to engage on a deeper level, which is key to forming the trust that is crucial for business development.

Face-to-face interaction continues to be a powerful way to build relationships and better tap into client needs. A 2018 joint survey by Bloomberg Law and the Legal Marketing Association found that 45 percent of attorneys identified firm-hosted events as the most effective tactic for business development, second only to client meetings. Around 27 percent expressed a desire to see more event planning and execution from their firm's legal marketing team.

Regardless of whether they are informative or social in nature, events can be a valuable part of a law firm's overall marketing strategy. They can help lawyers obtain new leads, generate positive publicity and position themselves as thought leaders, among many other benefits.

The phrase "event planning" may conjure up images of cavernous auditoriums full of rows of people staring at a stage. While certain events do indeed require a robust marketing budget and extensive preparation, not all of them have to be large-scale undertakings to have significant impact. There are several types of events that lawyers can put on themselves, both offline and online, without expending considerable resources.

Educational events

Educational events allow law firms to engage with the local community and demonstrate their professional knowledge in person. While such events can take on various forms like classes or workshops, seminars are especially popular in the legal industry. For example, an immigration attorney can host a seminar about updates to state and federal laws that may affect their client base.

Littman Krooks LLP is a New York-based law firm with a track record of hosting successful community seminars and



The seminars provide us with enhanced visibility as well as an opportunity to interact with our community.

webinars that focus on topical issues in their practice areas like long-term care, special needs planning and elder law. "The seminars provide us with enhanced visibility as well as an opportunity to interact with our community," said Littman Krooks Marketing Manager Maria Mirto Brill. "Webinars enable us to communicate to those that may only be available to attend online. Our goal is to provide individuals with information that they may need to properly plan for their future."

With attorneys serving as seminar speakers, potential clients can get a sense of what a law firm is like. Remember, avoid using such events as sales pitches. Instead, focus on providing value to attendees. Initially it may take a few sessions to get people in the door when you first start off with educational events. As your law firm builds credibility, your seminars will start to fill up.

"Importantly, these events are successful because our attorneys are well-regarded in their fields and are experienced public speakers," added Brill. "Additionally, our seminars and webinars are successful because we choose topics that are of interest to people and address their questions."

Joint marketing events

If your law firm is just starting out with event marketing, it can take significant promotional efforts to attract attendees in the beginning. Joining forces with other organizations can help fill more seats at events as you will be able to

leverage their audience database. For instance, an IP protection law firm may decide to cohost a talk in partnership with a local venture capital firm.

Partnering with local nonprofits can not only broaden your reach but also strengthen your ties with the local community. By strategically teaming up with a charity or professional group that has experience hosting various types of events, law firms can mitigate risk and share in costs while increasing the chances of a robust turnout.

Although Littman Krooks sponsors a lot of its own events, the firm also recognizes the benefits of partnerships. "Sometimes we partner with other organizations — nonprofits, financial advisors, assisted living centers or educational services — that are aligned with our mission to inform and educate our community," said Brill.

Community initiatives

Not all events hosted by lawyers have to be directly related to their practice. Law firms can organize fun, social activities such as hikes, or events geared toward a collective purpose like a beach cleanup or blood drive.

Along with allowing law firms to further their mission of giving back, getting involved in the local community helps enhance brand awareness. A law firm can develop ongoing relationships with charitable causes or organizations its lawyers and staff support or are personally affected by, and then participate in related events.

Online events

Online events like webinars can be a useful option for law firms seeking to cut costs and eliminate the logistical challenges of offline events. They enable lawyers to reach more of their target audience without being limited to a single geographical location, which can be beneficial for larger, multi-location practices.

Webinars are essentially seminars delivered in real time or on demand through web-based conferencing tools. Another increasingly popular format for online events is livestream video, which has rapidly gained traction among marketers and is used across various social media platforms like Instagram, Periscope and YouTube. Facebook Live is the dominant livestreaming platform today, boasting a user base of more than 2 billion.

Lawyers can host webinars and livestreams in various formats including Q&A sessions on a specific topic, presentations, commentary on case law developments and more. Online events allow real-time interaction with your target audience. By sharing their knowledge with viewers in an engaging way, lawyers can establish authority as a trusted resource for prospective clients. However, law firms should be careful to keep their broadcast content general and avoid giving specific legal advice online.

A key factor driving the popularity of online events is that they do not require fancy video editing equipment or technical skills. Simply decide on start and end times and share the broadcast details with your audience in the days leading up to the event to encourage attendance.

Law firms can archive video recordings and make them available to people who were unable to attend the live

event. Facebook Live streams become re-playable after a live broadcast is complete, providing an opportunity to capture the attention of many more viewers. Lawyers can also extend the shelf life of their video content by repurposing it into blog posts or ebooks, turning their event into a content marketing treasure trove.

While livestreaming can be an event itself, it can also be used as a marketing tool for other events. Consider livestreaming from your law firm's seminar or conference to reach a wider audience.

The planning process

When hosting an event, law firms should identify their target audience and focus on the desired outcome, whether it is to boost the profile of a specific practice area, thank clients for their business or connect with the local community. The event should provide attendees with something of value in return for their time and attention. Consider offering information, networking opportunities or exposure to high-profile speakers to enhance the experience.



Our seminars and webinars are successful because we choose topics that are of interest to people and address their questions.

The next step is to pick a date and time, along with a venue. "Our goal is to reach the right people, with the right content at the right time. With that goal in mind, we want to ensure that we not only pick the optimal day and time but also have strong content to share," said Kyan Mama, marketing coordinator at Littman Krooks. "When thinking of logistics, we want to

ensure the seminar is convenient for people to attend, but we must consider the availability of our attorneys as well as the suitability of the event space."

Certain events, such as workshops or networking events, will require more logistical considerations and larger budgets. If food or drink are integral to the event, lawyers can try establishing a mutually beneficial arrangement with local restaurants or caterers in which the businesses get a free marketing opportunity in return for their services.

If many of your attendees are coming into contact with your law firm for the first time, offer them a valuable resource — like an ebook, guide or video — with additional information related to the topics covered at your event. They can then access the materials on your law firm website in exchange for their email address.

Getting the word out

Law firms can use a combination of marketing tactics to announce their events and generate interest among

their prospective attendees. Lawyers can contact local media and place advertisements in local newspapers to publicize their event. If you are partnering with another organization, ask them to announce the event to their audience.

Email marketing is a popular method for communicating about an event.

Not only are email blasts useful for sending periodic reminders to attendees leading up to the event, but they can also be used to send out thank you messages afterwards. Unfortunately, overflowing inboxes and spam filters mean not all emails are actually opened, so it is important to diversify your communication channels instead of relying just on email to market your event.

Social media is an effective event marketing tool due to the large number of users and ease of sharing it provides. It is a great way to stay top of mind among your target audience. Make sure to announce the event and post regular updates across your firm's various social media accounts like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Law firms can also promote events on their own website through their event calendar or blog. The blog can be a versatile place to share related content leading up to the event, as well as the event's success afterwards through photos, video clips or recaps. This is good for search engine optimization purposes and also helps keep your audience engaged.

Consider setting up online registration on your law firm website or an external platform. Online registration offers a quick and easy way for people to sign up for an event, such as a seminar or class. It can also help you anticipate the number of attendees and prepare accordingly.

After the event

If your law firm is investing time, energy and marketing dollars into an event, it is important to maximize its strategic value. Events generate lots of content, which can be mined for marketing purposes. For example, seminars may involve slides, while webinars may result in video recordings. These can all be repurposed and shared on a law firm's website and across its social media channels.

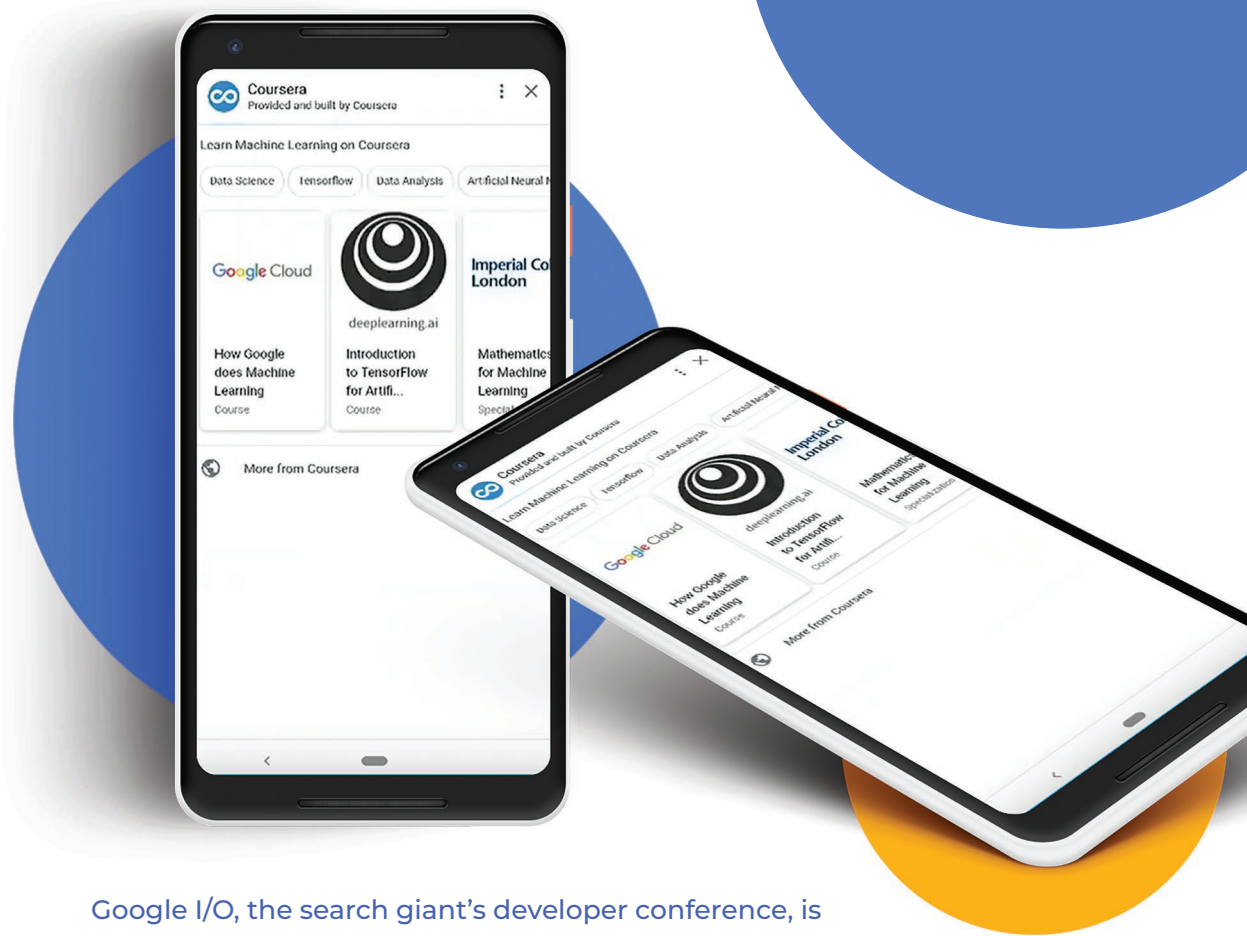
Make sure to follow up with attendees after the event. Their feedback can help you evaluate the event's success and determine things to improve for next time. Additionally, testimonials and referrals from satisfied guests can persuade others to attend future events. In fact, if your event is successful, you may consider creating a quarterly or monthly series.

When executed well, event marketing can be a valuable method for law firms to generate new client leads and grow their practice.

- Dipal Parmar



Create App-like Experiences in Google Search



Google I/O, the search giant's developer conference, is held annually in May. The three-day event is located at the Shoreline Amphitheater in Mountain View. Many of Google's most renowned products and features are introduced to the general public here.

Because the Google search engine is the company's primary venue for income, many marketers want to see whether Google will unveil a product or feature involving Google Search that they can leverage for their clients. During a seminar titled *"Create App-like Experiences on Google Search and the Google Assistant,"* Allen Harvey, a search product manager at Google, described how Google could help developers engage users with interactive workflows, create visual actions and maneuver beyond static web pages.

With the focus on interactive experiences, Allen introduced the mini-apps for Google Search and the Google Assistant

WHAT ARE MINI-APPS?

Mini-apps are web, mobile and smart home applications with a singular purpose that can be shown directly on Google Search and the Google Assistant. The goal of mini-apps is to empower developers to engage users with live and interactive content.

The mini-app has three primary functionalities: interactive workflows, dynamic updates and on-surface fulfillment. The mini-app will be able to respond to the user's input and morph its content depending on the choices a user makes.

Developers will be able to make live updates to the app, and the revised content will show up almost instantaneously on Google Search and the Google Assistant. Finally, users will have the capability to engage with the mini-app directly, such as through an online course sign-up, for example.

HOW DO MINI-APPS WORK?

There are two elements that power the mini-app: the application and the webhook. The mini-app has three components: the configuration information, the user interface definition and the triggering setup. The webhook has two components: the content and the business logic.

The configuration information is where developers add the code necessary to create the mini-app. The user interface definition compiles all the code and content from the configuration info and webhook respectively into a visually-appealing app, and the triggering setup is the search queries for which you would like your app to appear. It is important to note that all search queries for your triggering setup must start with your business name.

The webhook is where you add the content and the business logic that displays on the app.

HOW & TO CREATE MINI-APPS

In order to access mini-apps, and have your app shown, you need to join the Early Adopters Program and follow program requirements. These state the mini-app must:

- ✓ Help searchers find information more quickly or accomplish a task more easily.
- ✓ Closely align with the developing organization's primary purpose.

If your firm regularly hosts seminars or events, having an app that displays details with a register button directly in search results could drastically improve your sign-up rate.

- ✓ Only be eligible to trigger on queries that include the name of the mini-app provider.
- ✓ Not contain content that is obscene, profane, hateful, harassing, sexually explicit, misleading or graphically violent.
- ✓ Not promote any dangerous or illegal activities.
- ✓ Not deceive or mislead users, impersonate any organization, or misrepresent your ownership, affiliation or primary purpose.

If you are confident the purpose of your mini-app does not violate these rules, you can "express interest" in mini-apps by filling out the Mini-apps Interest Form. Submissions are currently open.

Once you have access to mini-apps, you can go to Actions on Google to create your app. After you enter the console, you will need to construct the app configuration; characterize your user interface for desktop, mobile and tablet, if you are planning on using all three; generate the search queries for which you would like your app to appear; and define where your webhook will be.

CAN LAWYERS USE MINI-APPS?

Law firms can use mini-apps to their advantage by creating apps that bring easier, shorter funnels to potential clients directly on Google Search. These could be contact forms, appointment schedulers, or event and seminar

sign-ups. If your firm regularly hosts seminars or events, having an app that displays details with a register button directly in search results could drastically improve your sign-up rate.

Another way lawyers can leverage a mini-app by pushing content straight to Google Search would be an app that functions as a feed for your content. You can set up an app that will update itself with new blogs, FAQs or sub-pages every time they are posted.

Mini-apps could be used as a tool for hyper-targeting potential clients. If you are running a focused marketing campaign, having mini-apps with narrow targeting and specific information about that campaign will entice the users you are aiming for.

HOW MIGHT MINI-APPS CHANGE GOOGLE'S SEARCH?

The more developers take advantage of mini-apps, the more likely it is that the standard, plain text and hyperlink organic listings users are accustomed to seeing on the Google search results page (SERP) will slowly disappear. Rich, interactive media might dominate the SERPs as visual experiences may start becoming more of a priority for Google.

There is only so much marketers and developers can do to utilize plain text. Conversely, visuals can speak a thousand words and spread your message more efficiently and vividly.

- Dexter Tam

LAW FIRM MARKETING SUCCESS STORIES

To be competitive, every firm needs a marketing strategy that fits its needs for lead generation and business development. Determining the specific tactics that work for your firm will take a combination of research, agency assistance, and trial and error. Learning from the experience of others cannot hurt either.

Complicating the challenges facing law firms in already saturated markets is the omnipresence of online, plug-and-play legal solutions, which, in the eyes of some, eliminate the need for an attorney. The changing landscape of the law, the advent of technology that produces increasingly unconventional circumstances, and the opacity of Google's algorithm have led to a marketing dilemma. How can a firm market attract more traffic and more business?

Who better to talk to than lawyers who have taken on the challenge first-hand. BLF spoke to several attorneys who are in the marketing trenches to ask:

“What are you getting right?”



GOOGLING THE RIGHT WAY

John P. Farrell, Esq., of Marietta, Georgia decided being more visible in this electronic age meant turning to Google to advertise his estate planning services.

“As a solo practitioner, it is important to my practice, The Farrell Law Firm in Marietta, Georgia, to ensure I have visibility when people are looking for my services. So, in the summer of 2018, I decided to see where I was in the rankings for my city and my practice area.

“ You had to go to page 13 to find my law firm. I started on a journey to figure out what I could do to fix that.

In under a year, I was able to move my firm’s ranking to the first page of Google for my city and practice area. Not only that, I sometimes show up 6 times on the first page. You could say I “own” the first page of Google for my practice area.

I have a series of articles called “Parenting Alone In Chicago” where I highlight a location you can take your kids to and then I include a map to that location from my office. I presume this tells Google Maps that I am very mappable and, hence, my ranking is higher on maps. I also respond to “Help A Reporter Out.” These are some of the best back links available.”

Farrell also has a robust SEO friendly site featuring articles with links going back and forth with keywords in the first paragraph and lightly sprinkled in long articles. Most of all, though, Farrell writes articles that he would want to read.

Farrell knew he needed more online visibility and went about learning how

to do it. Advertising on Google helped his practice hit the first page.



*John P. Farrell, Esq.
The Farrell Law Firm, PC.
TheFarrellLawFirm.com*

BLOGGING & TESTIMONIALS

Steven Isaac Azizi, Esq., is the Senior Partner at Miracle Mile Law Group located in Los Angeles, an employment law firm that practices workplace discrimination, harassment, wrongful termination, whistle blower retaliation and wage and hour violations. The firm helps ordinary people, not corporations. He turned to blogging and began using more client testimonials.

“An extremely successful campaign that I have had in the last year touched on two different areas: a) blogging, and b) client testimonials.

“

Blogging has reaped successes for me because the area I practice, employment law, is convoluted and difficult for the layperson to understand. Blogging has created a way for me to educate my clients on labor laws.

That in turn has helped me become an authority. Client testimonials, similarly, have been quite positive for me as they showcases the quality of work my firm provides.”

Azizi plans on creating an e-book and hopes to have an in depth publication done within a year. He currently blogs at least once a week and his posts are a minimum

of 1,000 words because it is likely when a “client asks me an interesting question ... it’s likely that someone else is asking the same question.”

Azizi always knew his calling involved helping ordinary people, not corporations, which prompted him to launch the Miracle Mile Law Group, to exclusively represent employees.



*Steven Isaac Azizi, Esq.
Miracle Mile Law Group, LLP
miraclemilelaw.com*

DOING IT IN THE COMMUNITY

Mitchell B. Gordon and Derek J. Bradford are Bradford & Gordon, a small Chicago law firm specializing in family law and divorce. Over the years of practicing law, they realized that a fair number of the clients were professional women who were the breadwinners in their families.

When it comes to divorce, women entrepreneurs carry the extra roles of parenting and housekeeping, and more than ever, they need legal help to navigate a divorce. But the question was, how to reach them? Gordon & Bradford came up with an interesting way to network with this demographic and just “be there” to answer questions.

“One of our most successful marketing techniques has been hosting Happy Hours for women’s professional groups. We have hosted events for female lawyers, female financial advisors, women in banking, women in the technology industry and women in commercial real estate. These small events give our attorneys the opportunity to network with professional and entrepreneurial

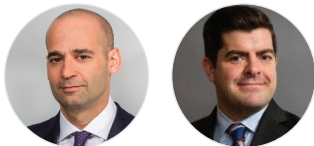
women, whom we find are a terrific source of referrals.

By getting in front of these women, we're able to share some of what we've learned from previous cases.

“ Even if the women at these events don't themselves need a divorce attorney, it's very likely that one of their female friends or colleagues some day will.

We find that women tend to seek referrals from their friends and professional network, as opposed to Googling “divorce lawyer.” Our approach is soft — we're not convincing anyone to get a divorce. We're just putting it out there that we're here to answer questions with no obligations whatsoever.”

Sometimes it takes an “ah-ha” moment to realize that an untapped resource is right out there, just waiting to be introduced to the help they may need in a legal dilemma.



*Mitch Gordon & Derek Bradford
Bradford & Gordon
bradfordandgordon.com*

LEARNING SEO AND DRIVING IT TO SUCCESS

Russell D. Knight, Esq., a Chicago divorce lawyer, wanted to learn about SEO and find out if he could do it well enough to propel his law firm into a force to be reckoned with. It was an

interesting journey for him and by all measures, a great success.

“In 2018 and 2019 I committed to having great SEO for my divorce law firm. I read articles, watched YouTube videos and talked to SEO ‘experts.’ Everyone said the same thing: you need content and back links. They proceeded to try to sell you back links but no one could sell good legal content.

The content for sale was bad — just meandering paragraphs that always ended in ‘consult a lawyer.’

Quality legal articles should be written by lawyers who care about their practice. For whatever reason, lawyers will not write content. If you liked what you did wouldn't you want to write about it?

“ I started writing articles that I, as a divorce lawyer, would like to refer to if I encountered an issue.

I cited the statute. I cited the case law. I kept it simple and most of all I kept it long.

With quality 1000+ word articles on my website, sooner or later people started reading them. A few a day and then dozens a day were reading my content. Then something really amazing started happening, I started climbing Google Maps. Now I'm # 1 in Chicago, America's third largest city, for 'Chicago Divorce Lawyer' on Google maps.”

In an increasingly crowded legal market, lawyers who want to go the distance are looking for more and better ways to make their name and firm stand out from the crowd, and focusing on quality is a great method.



*Russell Knight
Law Office of Russell D. Knight
rdklegal.com*

GOOGLE ADS SAVED THE DAY

Brooklyn, New York trademark attorney Jeremy Peter Green is the founder and manager at JPG Legal, but at one time he worked his solo practice at night. Wanting to expand, he built a website and started running Google Ads, which brought him great success.

“I'm a trademark attorney and I have a small law firm specializing in researching and registering trademarks. In 2016, it was just my solo practice I was running at night, while I worked in-house at a non-profit. Then I built out my website and started running Google Ads, which brought me tremendous success.

I went from about \$10,000 in annual revenue in 2016 to \$225,000 in 2017, to over \$700,000 in 2018. I ended up being the #10 trademark attorney in the U.S. by volume in 2018, with 770 applications filed.

“ I wish I could attribute it to some brilliant content marketing campaign, but it really is purely because of Google Ads.

Green also developed a successful website build-out that he “designed to make it easy for potential clients to hire me immediately.”

Green used PPC search ads, using the targeted CPA (cost-per-action) metric. “I figured it out myself. I almost blew through my entire savings of \$5,000 before I finally got the hang of it and started getting profitable returns.”

Although Google ads can be confusing, perseverance pays off.



Jeremy Peter Green
JPG Legal
jpglegal.com

INVOLVING CLIENTS IN ATTORNEY PRESENTATIONS

Criminal defense attorney Joseph Hoelscher, Esq., managing attorney at Hoelscher Gebbia Cepeda PLLC based in San Antonio, Texas, discovered that by inviting his clients to participate in seminars, like the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) seminar, the number of referrals grew.

“ I started inviting clients to participate when our lawyers are invited to speak at Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (“MCLE”) seminars.

For example, when speaking for the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Associations (TCDLA) ‘Against All Odds’ seminar on defending child abuse cases, I brought one of my clients who was acquitted to talk about how the process looked from his perspective.

He was able to humanize the technical info I presented and force the lawyers to see it from a different perspective, which happened to be the perspective of the folks paying our fees. It didn't hurt my reputation that he was a very satisfied and grateful client. In fact, we started getting regular referrals from other lawyers for cases like his. So, we now invite clients to help us present whenever possible.

“

Sometimes it takes an “ah-ha” moment to realize that an untapped resource is right out there, just waiting to be introduced to the help they may need in a legal dilemma.

— Mitch Gordon & Derek Bradford



An unexpected upside is that those clients turn into super referral sources themselves. They tell other people about how they spoke to a huge group of lawyers and really put themselves out there regarding stuff most people hide. On top of that, they become more authoritative to other lay people.

Our next step is to prepare a series of videos along the same line where our clients present the standard 'What do I do if arrested for x?' information. Who knew that listening to our clients would make us better, more successful lawyers."

While this strategy may not work for every attorney, it does humanize an often complex and confusing process involving criminal law. It never hurts to hear from someone who has been through a tough legal process and come out the other side acquitted just what it really means and how it affected them.



*Joseph Francis Hoelscher, II
Hoelscher Gebbia Cepeda PLLC
HGCLaw.com*

INFOGRAPHICS ARE WINNERS

David Reischer, Esq., LegalAdvice.com Corp., has found that infographics are extremely helpful when it comes to increasing traffic for law firm websites.

"Infographics are an excellent way to increase traffic for law firm websites. It is important when creating an infographic that the content topic is interesting. The infographic fails to engage users unless the topic is interesting to the website readership.

I scope out infographics that my competitors are using to see what good ideas resonate with me. Then



I frame the idea of my infographic trying to keep my website audience in mind. When we begin designing I instruct the designer to show the audience, rather than use words that tell the audience with too many blocks of text, keep the design simple and break up the pieces of the story into segments that can be easily digested at a glance."

Reischer usually creates a new infographic about every six months, and regularly reviews their analytics to see categories and topics that seem to get the most attention.

Breaking complex topics down into smaller chunks can help someone trying to figure out whether or not they need an attorney or if they even have a case.

“ Visual information often stays with website visitors longer than the written word.



*David Reischer, Esq.
LegalAdvice.com Corp.
www.legaladvice.com*

QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE AND WEBSITE CONTENT COUNTS

Scott Distasio, Esq., is located in Tampa, Florida, primarily specializing in personal injury law. His tried, tested and true point-of-view about increasing client referrals is quality customer service and good website content.

"The practice of law is more than just a profession. Most law firms do not realize that it is also a business. We have been able to take advantage of this in our marketing efforts. Our biggest marketing success has come from recognizing that successful businesses must provide outstanding customer service.

“ By focusing on customer service, we have happy clients. Happy clients have translated into increased client referrals.

Other marketing successes have come from focusing on high quality evergreen website content written by lawyers. The emphasis is on lawyers writing the content because lawyers provide more accurately described industry specific information. As a

result, the content has created link building opportunities that have increased website domain authority, website traffic and ultimately provided an increase in organic leads."

Distasio prefers to create longer blog posts that are anywhere from 800 to 5000 words, with the dual benefit of giving a solid amount of information, as well as deliver fresh, quality, long form content that the search engines generally favor.

Leads and referrals are the lifeblood of all law offices. Finding a way that attracts more referrals and leads can significantly promote the growth of a law firm.



Scott Distasio
Distasio Law Firm
distasiofirm.com

RE-BRANDING FOR SUCCESS

Robin Itule, Marketing Director at Fennemore Craig, located in Phoenix, Arizona said their greatest success was in refreshing the corporate brand identity from the inside out.

"This year we completely refreshed our corporate brand identity starting from the inside out. After a period of transformation and new leadership at the firm, our marketing (internal and external) needed an update to reflect our exciting new direction.

“ We brought the team together to do a tremendous amount of research with our attorneys, staff and clients to develop purpose, values, and mission and vision statements.

We recently unveiled these components to our team and have found they really resonate across every role in every office. We're excited to use brand as a business asset, because it will help us be strategic, focused and consistent as we market a firm with capabilities ranging from general counsel to niche legal specialties; and will influence every single marketing decision going forward."

Big or small law firms can learn a lot from re-branding, changing their look and approach to today's marketplace and revisiting goals and missions. As the world changes, so does the law.



Robyn Itule
Fennemore Craig
fclaw.com

BLOGGING ABOUT PAIN POINTS & SOLUTIONS WORKED WONDERS

Business law attorney Mark Tyson, from Seattle, Washington, found blogging about a problem and the possible solution was a huge hit with readers. With Tyson, what you see is what you get, an experienced attorney who only bills for his time and knowledge, hence his flat fee and lower rates due to lower overhead schedule for certain tasks.

"Blogging was a huge success for my firm in 2018. When I first started, I was guilty of writing about legal topics that interested me without thinking of whether they'd interest my ideal client.

Realizing this, I shifted my posts to topics that I thought prospects would find interesting. It worked in the sense that my web traffic increased, but I still wasn't seeing many conversions.

“ Eventually it occurred to me that tackling topics that interested my clients was just table stakes – to make a winning bet I needed to find their specific pain points and identify how I could address them.

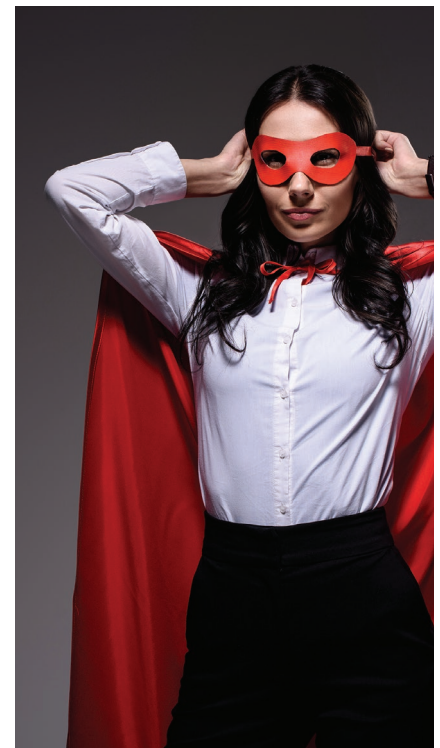
As soon as I started doing this, the phone started ringing and I've seen my web conversions skyrocket."



Mark Tyson
Tyson Law
marktysonlaw.com

Sometimes an attorney needs to think like a client to generate more leads that convert.

- Kerrie Spencer





*How you can use
structured data to*

WIN WITH FAQS

Google recommends web pages make ample use of structured data. This both allows its algorithm to better interpret the page and makes the page eligible to be displayed in graphic results, which are the row of listings accompanied by images that sometimes appear at the top of the results page.

Law firms can use structured data to describe events, reviews, articles and business addresses among other things. And now, they can use it to describe FAQs.

What is structured data?

Structured data is an established format for describing and classifying web page content. Search engines read structured data code and use it to both understand details about a page and display rich listings in results pages.

A rich result is one that contains extra features in addition to the page title, URL and description. One of the more common uses of structured data are recipe pages. When you search for a recipe and are served results that include photos, a star rating, nutrition facts, calorie counts or ingredients, those pages are using structured data to communicate that information to Google.

Structured data for FAQ pages

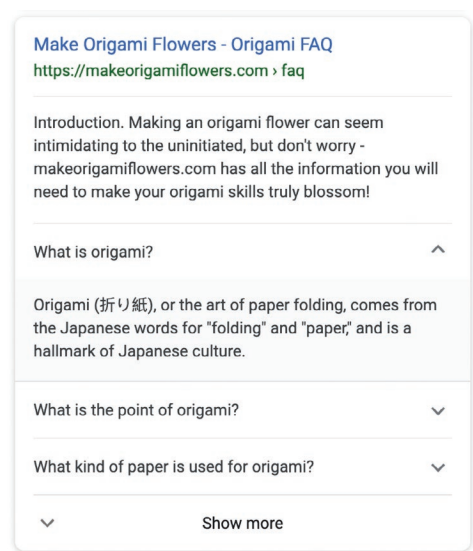
In May, Google announced its support for FAQ structured data. Google's support for FAQ structured data offers new opportunities for law firms. FAQ pages are already valuable to law firm websites, as they offer opportunities for firms to receive high-quality traffic from searchers that are looking for information about specific, long-tail

queries. People asking questions about the law are more likely to be in a situation where they are ready to hire a lawyer than those who may be in an earlier stage of research.

Additionally, pages that answer questions thoroughly and with authority may contain content that becomes a featured snippet — the coveted description box sitting in position zero at the very top of the search results page.

Now, when firms use FAQPage structured data, the content on their FAQ pages will become eligible to be displayed directly in search results and on Google Assistant.

For example, you are an estate planning attorney and your website has a FAQ page that uses valid structured data. The page answers the question, “What is the difference between a will and a living will?” If Google determines your page best answers this question, your listing will appear at the top of the results page with an introduction, question, answer to the question, and additional questions and answers from your page. Google gives the example of a FAQ page about origami on its webmaster blog. The answer to the question “What is origami?” would be displayed in results like this:



People who ask a question directly to their Google Assistant may also receive your content as the answer to their question.

Implementing structured data

To implement structured data, you must put specific code around each question and answer on your page. That code looks like this:

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "https://schema.org",
  "@type": "FAQPage",
  "mainEntity": [{
    "@type": "Question",
    "name": "What is the difference between a
will and a living will?",
    "acceptedAnswer": {
      "@type": "Answer",
      "text": "A will only has legal impact after
death. A living will takes effect while an
incapacitated person is still alive."
    }
  }
}
</script>
```

You can see at the beginning of the script the context is described as schema.org, often referred to as Schema, which catalogues structured markup data. The page is then labeled a FAQPage, and both the question and answer text is identified. Note that every question and answer on the page must be so identified before closing the script.

Validating structured data

Google provides a way to validate your structured data within Search Console with its rich results status reports. Rich result reports can be found under Enhancements in the Search Console menu panel. Google provides reports for both Events and FAQs, two items law firms should be using.

Should the status report show a parsing error, you can access an error details page, which offers insight on how to handle the problem. Additionally, status reports will tell you whether Google is seeing a drop in items containing structured data. If you have not removed items, this could be an indication that Google is having trouble accessing your pages, which should be investigated.

Adding structured data does require coding, which development professionals can handle. However, the reward for implementing the data correctly and winning spot zero on a search results page is worth the effort.



GET YOUR CONTENT DIRECTLY INTO SEARCH RESULTS

When you use structured data, the content on your FAQ pages will be eligible to be displayed directly in search results.



BE THE ANSWER TO PEOPLES' QUESTIONS

People who ask a question directly to their Google Assistant may receive your content as the answer to their question.



WIN POSITION ZERO

Gain authority as the first content people see at the top of search results pages.

- Kristen Friend

Lawyer Spotlight:

TODD J. LEONARD

M *et Todd J. Leonard.*
Mr. Leonard is a
personal injury lawyer
with a practice in

New Jersey. We caught up with Mr. Leonard and had a chat about his career as a personal injury attorney. He shared some of the highlights of his career in the legal industry with us during our discussion.

Mr. Leonard was born and raised in New Jersey and has devoted his entire career to personal injury law. He continues the legacy of his father, who was also a personal injury attorney.

Mr. Leonard was admitted to the New Jersey Bar in 1988 and has not looked back since. He is well known and respected for his single-minded drive to give each client the best possible outcome in either verdicts or settlements.

In 2019, he was again selected to the New Jersey Super Lawyers® list, for the eighth time, being previously selected in 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. He is certified by the New Jersey Supreme Court as a Certified Civil Trial Advocate, a certification achieved by only 3 percent of New Jersey attorneys.

While working with his late father, trial attorney Alvin R. Leonard, he witnessed a compassion for clients



“ Being an attorney is the highlight of my life and something that I love to do. It’s not just a ‘job’ it’s an integral part of me.

and a zeal to help them recover. Along the way, he learned some very valuable life lessons about how important it is to treat clients like family.

There is something about Mr. Leonard that not everyone knows, and that is he has been coaching the Special Olympics Basketball program for Morris County for over 20 years, run through the Arc of Morris County, New Jersey. Five teams competed in the Special Olympics North Sectional Basketball Tournament in 2019, and two of the teams won, advancing to the finals. Mr. Leonard welcomes others wishing to join the Special Olympics team to contact him for more information.

BLF spoke with Mr. Leonard, and below are some of the highlights of our discussion.

Lawyer Spotlight (BLF):

During your 30 years of practicing law, what are the highlights that stand out the most for you? Specifically anecdotes that you recall that arose during your career that you clearly remember as possibly teaching you a lesson.

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

Being an attorney is the highlight of my life and something that I love to do. It’s not just a “job” it’s an integral part of me. I have been blessed to help families who have lost loved ones and help them get the justice they deserve. I’ve been very fortunate over the last three decades to have the honor of representing many clients, and have tried over 30 cases to conclusion and settled thousands.



Each case and each client is unique. One memorable case that comes to mind is a trial on a serious construction accident case. The client’s daughter had the jurors in tears discussing the changes in her dad. It was a total game changer and brought home the fact that you need to know your clients, their family and how an accident impacts their lives.

In another case, I represented the mother of a young girl who was killed as a result of a road defect. She was ridden with guilt that she may have had some responsibility for the accident, but the trial proved the government was solely at fault.

I was also privileged to represent a severely brain injured client and as a result of settling the case, she was fully protected for life.

BLF:

How are you able to keep a fresh outlook on your practice and the law in general?

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

Each day I feel so lucky to help our clients and do our best to be there when they need us the most. I have never really considered what I do as work, but rather something I love to do.

BLF:

Are there any pitfalls that catch attorneys who have a long record of serving the law?

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

Some attorneys who have practiced for long periods of time lose their interest and enthusiasm in handling cases. They can be complacent and overlook important details.

“ *[My father] was my hero and inspiration. I really took great pride in how the clients, Courts, and fellow attorneys respected his dedication and skills.* ”

BLF:

What made you decide to become an attorney, and what motivated you to choose personal injury law? Was it solely due to working with your father, or were you motivated by other factors as well, such as a passion for personal justice to right a wrong?

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

I was very fortunate to watch my father practice personal injury law as I grew up. He was my hero and inspiration. I really took great pride in how the clients, Court, and fellow attorneys respected his dedication and skills. I recognized at a very young age that this was my calling and his love in helping his clients and hard work ethic was something I wanted to continue. I strongly believe that when someone is seriously injured or has lost a loved one in an accident that I can help them get the justice they deserve.

BLF:

What are some of your most memorable case highlights?

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

I have handled a lot of cases over the years and the wrongful death cases are the most challenging and rewarding. I recall taking on a case that five other law firms rejected and I was able to get a multi-million settlement. Another case involved a fatal apartment fire and sadly a 3-year-old boy perished. It was heartbreaking to learn all the mistakes the defendants had made that cost his life and that of his grandmother.

**BLF:**

Tell us about some of your marketing successes.

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

We have been very active with internet marketing, and Custom Legal Marketing (CLM) has done a great job in drawing many visitors to our site daily.

BLF:

Tell us about the highlights of some of your recent million dollar settlements and awards.

Todd J. Leonard, Esq:

In the last few months, I have been able to successfully resolve a number of million dollar cases, including: 1) a \$3.1 million slip and fall accident,

2) a wrongful death car accident for over \$1 million and 3) another slip and fall accident for \$1 million for the full policy limits.

Mr. Leonard was chosen by the National Trial Lawyers to be on the list of Top 100 Trial Lawyers for Civil Litigation from 2013 to 2018, has been appointed to the Board of Trustees for the Trial Attorneys of New Jersey (TANJ) and holds a lifetime membership in the Million Dollar and Multi-Million Dollar Advocates Forum.

- Kerrie Spencer



In today's competitive legal landscape, law firms need to go further to create compelling impact in the minds of their audience. Clients crave efficiency and affordability, and they are adapting to new technologies.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A **Consistent Brand Experience**

To meet these adapting client demands, the legal industry has seen an influx of commoditization, alternative fee structures, vendor reviews and larger more influential in-house teams.

These changes have created what The American Lawyer, a legal news and analysis magazine, has coined as the "Hollow Middle" that exists between high-end law firms and cheaper commodity work. This "Hollow Middle" refers to the jack-of-all-trade law firms that are likely to be overlooked by clients with either the funds for high-end attorneys, or the desire for cheaper commodity work, like that done on LegalZoom. Law firms stuck in this middle cannot rely on prestige or rates alone to ensure business. When browsing the legal marketplace, clients desire a partnership with a methodology and mission that aligns with their goals.

Building a strong brand for your law firm is vital to helping you compete in this landscape. Your brand is more than just a logo and website. Your brand is the heart of your organization: it is who you are, what you stand for and where you are going. To have a strong brand you need to understand what makes your law firm stand out and appeal to your particular clientele. This is your brand promise.

Delivering on your brand promise through consistent actions and behaviors as an organization helps develop and maintain long-lasting relationships. Effectively communicating your brand promise is equally important. To have a strong brand, consistency on a large scale (cross-platform, social, from TV to print to online, etc.) is essential.

Systems are key

Effectively communicating your firm's brand is like wearing your heart on your sleeve. With your brand identity on clear display, your potential client can make a decisive judgement on whether you will be a good fit before you meet. This is great for brand recognition and generating qualified leads who have already shown interest in your service and mission.

A Brand Identity System (BIS) is a valuable resource to help ensure your firm successfully delivers on its brand promise. A BIS is a collection of elements that work together to create a unified, consistent group of assets that convey your brand value. Developing a BIS helps efficiently communicate your law firm's brand identity between different stakeholders and agencies, preventing common confusions that slows down the marketing and outreach process. Your BIS should be:

1. Flexible: Design for the future. Flexibility is necessary to anticipate potential changes and growth.

2. Comprehensive: Provide all the necessary tools to your agency and any content creators to ensure that the job will be done properly.

3. Intuitive: Your system should be designed so that all elements are well-constructed and made to complement one another.

4. Accurate: A BIS is a tool to accurately communicate your brand's essence, values and personality. Creating a visual identity system helps maintain this essence across any medium.

Great Vs. Average Brand Identity

Before you create a Brand Identity System, you need to understand how law firms with great branding differentiate themselves from a sea of average firms. Your brand identity is not only visually appealing; it has a purpose.

Elements of a BIS

There are no hard and fast rules to constructing a system (after all, your brand is flexible), but there are basic elements commonly found in any BIS.

Primary brand mark (main logo):

Your main logo is the star of the show. This mark is your most visible and recognizable branding asset. It needs to be easy to reproduce and be versatile to be functional across different media and in different sizes. Your logo should be: scalable, adaptable, memorable, unique and on message.

Secondary brand mark (secondary logo): Secondary logos can be used

to stand out even more in a crowded industry. This mark supports the main logo and is often used for marketing collateral and social media campaigns.

Color palette: When choosing a color palette for your brand, think about its compatibility with your core message and how your audience could perceive the colors. Depending on the context, colors evoke particular emotions and symbolism. Stick to a limited color palette to avoid overwhelming your audience. A typical color palette should include:

- 1 main color
- 2 primary colors
- 3-5 complementary colors
- 2 accent colors

Fonts & typography: Similar to color palettes, fonts can evoke different emotions. For example, serif typefaces come off as traditional, while sans serif typefaces appear modern. Some typefaces can look serious and corporate, while others are more open and friendly.

When choosing your fonts, limit your selection. It is recommended that you have 2-3 fonts max, including a primary and secondary font.

Consider legibility and readability. Be mindful of the font size and choose typefaces that do not obstruct your reader's experience.

Brand tone: This is how you convey your brand's personality to your audience. This can manifest as:

- Your mission statement
- Social media presence
- Your brand's tagline
- Press releases
- Your blog posts and articles
- Your communication style — email, face-to-face, newsletter, etc.

SAMPLE TOUCHPOINT CHECKLIST

ADMINISTRATION

- ✓ Email addresses
- ✓ Business cards
- ✓ Internal documents
(employee handbook, etc.)
- ✓ External documents
(presentations, etc.)
- ✓ Financial materials & Trademarks
- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Ad words

SOCIAL

- ✓ Handles
- ✓ Profile pics
- ✓ Bios
- ✓ Hashtags

DISTRIBUTION PLAN

- ✓ Brief stakeholders
- ✓ Brief internal team
- ✓ Prepare public announcements

WEB

- ✓ Domain names
- ✓ Redirects
- ✓ Meta data & Tags
- ✓ Logos
- ✓ SEO/keywords

MARKETING

- ✓ Brand style guide
- ✓ Brand asset library
- ✓ Content guidelines
- ✓ Newsletter templates
- ✓ Promotional materials
- ✓ Media kit

Visual brand extensions: There are the many additional elements you could use to spice up your brand experience. If you plan to use any of these elements, be sure to document and provide guidance on how to use them in your BIS. These additional elements include:

- Photography
- Illustrations
- Iconography
- Data Visualizations
- Interactive elements
- Motion graphics
- Video
- Web Design

Intuitive hierarchy in layouts: In all branding material — marketing promotions, web design, business cards and social media — an intuitive visual hierarchy is essential. The goal is to communicate your message in a way that is enjoyable for your audience. You will need to consider the proper order for your content, including headers, sub headers, body copy and images.

Getting everyone on the same page: tips & tricks

To set yourself up for long-term success, you will need to have everyone in the branding process, from stakeholders to a marketing agency to team members, involved from day one.

Prepare from the beginning: A first step in the branding process is to identify and prepare for potential roadblocks and speed bumps. This can be done by creating realistic timelines, assign point people and providing people with all the necessary tools and information to do their jobs.

Write down touchpoints: Remember, brand consistency is key. Create a checklist (see sample above) to make sure nothing falls through the cracks and you accidentally launch something with an outdated logo or image.

Have a brand style guide: Your style guide is a great resource for everyone to reference. Your style guide needs to be comprehensive, easy to navigate and accessible. Include real-world examples and make sure that all sets, such as logos, fonts, color palettes are easily available.

Start with a soft launch: A soft, internal launch is the best way to get everyone on board and fix any bugs. Here are some tips:

- Start your soft launch three to four weeks before the public launch.
- Have the creative team walk everyone throughout the brand story.

- Encourage feedback and questions. Assign point people to tackle any tasks derived from the assessment.

- Coordinate across teams and departments.

- Identity where the brand style guide and assets live.

Let everyone know: It is launch time. Make this an exciting event by preparing press announcements, blogs, marketing newsletters and videos. Create promotional material for all your social media platforms. You and your team have worked hard on your law firm's brand. By now you should know your brand story inside and out. Share it.

Conclusion

Your brand was not built in a day. So much goes into creating a great brand experience. It is an investment of time, money and manpower. But crafting a brand story and experience that is true to your firm and its mission is worth it. Follow these steps to set your law firm's brand on the path to success.

- Jessilyn Los Banos

Marketing as STORYTELLING

Your firm's marketing efforts are your opportunity to show potential clients what you have to offer —and why you are the best choice. You need to make sure your marketing is connecting with your target audience on more than a surface level.

You may know how it feels to have an experience with a brand that is truly meaningful. It is gratifying; you may feel seen or heard in a way that you have not by other businesses. You want your clients to feel seen, recognized and important in a way that allows them to feel a rapport with your firm. One of the ways to accomplish this connection is through great storytelling.

Why storytelling?

Some common marketing components are formulaic, consisting of advertising, communications, public relations, and sales strategies. Each component is systematically built on the foundation of the cost-benefit analysis. Firms often use this analysis to determine which approach is best for each marketing component in order to gain the most benefit at the lowest cost.

The lure of the marketing blueprint can be strong, especially in the case of online marketing. Firms have been told for years that content is king, and in this environment it is easy to place an emphasis on quantity in a push to produce as much content as possible. Focusing on numbers, however, inevitably harms quality. Writing loses its purpose and its humanity.

In the current era of the internet and social media, consumers want to feel real connections to businesses. It is important in modern marketing to talk to potential customers about topics that go beyond the practice area. Storytelling is a great way to accomplish this.

Correcting the record

Many times, people outside the legal industry have preconceived ideas about attorneys that in no way match the attorneys' actual personalities. People who have not worked with lawyers, or encountered them in their lives, have only second-hand accounts and rumors to shape the perception they have about law firms. Unfortunately, the negative anecdotes are often those that get the most traction. Storytelling can help show the human side —and real personality —behind the firm.

Storytelling is a great way to brand and market your law firm. The application of the law is similar, if not identical, in many cases. Your law firm stands out from the rest because of people who work there and clients you represent. The story of who you are, what you offer and how you help your clients is a more effective way to engage potential clients than with facts and figures.





A good story can allow clients to see themselves within a scenario. For example, Amazon Prime's "Lion Dog" commercial, which depicts a family bringing their baby, who hates dogs but loves lions, and their Golden Retriever together by ordering a lion's costume for their dog, was still producing comments on Twitter long after its release. Within a year, the commercial had aired over 10,000 times nationally and been seen over 2 million times on YouTube.

The commercial's success was of course not based on people's natural love for Amazon, but on its ability to tell a story viewers could relate to viscerally. Amazon successfully used storytelling to sell a service, fast delivery, that on its face is technical, not emotional.

Lawyers are natural storytellers

Law schools train students to present a case through creative and compelling stories. From the opening and closing arguments of litigation to private contract negotiations, attorneys must tell the story their audience wants to hear. They must be able to put themselves in the shoes of the jury, or of their negotiating partners, to speak convincingly. Storytelling is an art; therefore, your legal marketing must craft stories that feel personal to each person that hears them.

Storytelling marketing is an art backed by science. The story must have a structure that ensures the information about your firm is not lost in the telling. Create an outline to keep your story on track. Ask yourself whether there is an aspect of your value proposition that can be turned into a story. What is the benefit clients will see from working with you, and how can that benefit be expressed creatively?

Also, think about whether there is an aspect of your personality or past experience that is particularly relevant to clients. For example, if you are an estate planning lawyer who has experience caring for an aging or disabled parent, do not be afraid to share that experience. Show yourself in your client's shoes, and they will be able to see themselves in your story.

When you know your industry and clients, you can create stories that cater to them. Try to focus on the positive. Clients want to feel comfortable contacting you, not frightened by the idea of what might come next. Personal injury law firms, for example, may market stories that speak to the relief clients will feel knowing their bills will be paid and their families taken care of.

Ask yourself whether there is an aspect of your value proposition that can be turned into a story. What is the benefit clients will see from working with you, and how can that benefit be expressed creatively?

One size fits all is not the approach to take with storytelling marketing. Much like handling a case, you must look at the facts in each situation. What may work for the target audience in one area of the law may appear offensive or irrelevant to that of another.

In addition to presenting stories connected to the legal services your law firm provides, you must market the human elements of your law firm: the attorneys and staff. Often people choose to hire a firm because they connect with the people who work there. Stories from a lawyer about why they practice law or what motivates them may make a potential client feel like they would be more than just a paycheck.

Let storytelling marketing elevate your law firm by creating a real connection with your clients. When people feel this connection, they are able to have the sense of trust that makes your firm the right choice.

- Chyrra Greene

VERDICTS & SETTLEMENTS

APRIL - JUNE | 2019



**80
MILLION**

**MYPHILLYLAWYER
WITH
KLINE & SPECTER**

JUNE 2019

JURY AWARD IN A TRANSVAGINAL MESH CASE

MyPhillyLawyer's Dean Weitzman joined forces with Kline & Specter to help a 75-year-old woman win more than \$80 million in a defective vaginal mesh case against Ethicon, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson.

Transvaginal mesh is used to treat urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse. Defective devices can cause serious injuries including organ perforations, infections and internal bleeding. The plaintiff, Patricia Mesigian, sustained multiple

injuries after the erosion of an Ethicon transvaginal mesh implant to treat organ prolapse. The six-week trial culminated in a significant verdict.

"Knowing when and who to partner with on complex matters is more important than you realize," said Weitzman. "Our team jumped into high gear, gathering all of the necessary information, preserving all of the evidence and, at the right time, partnering with the premier litigation firm handling transvaginal mesh litigation in the United States."



**21.6
MILLION**

LAW & MORAN

MAY 2019

JURY AWARD IN A PERSONAL INJURY CASE

Continuing a string of multi-million dollar verdicts, attorneys Pete Law and Mike Moran recently won a 21.6 million dollar verdict on behalf of a client who lost his leg in a workplace accident.

Their client, Donald Monroe, was severely injured at the All South Metals recycling center in Dalton, Georgia, when he was hit by a truck as he was walking from his loader to the exit to stop traffic for a truck leaving the facility. His injuries caused his left leg to be amputated below the knee. According to official reports, the accident was caused because the semi-truck driver, Daniel McGuffee,

did not wait for Monroe to stop traffic before pulling out of the facility. Greefus Patterson, who was driving the truck that struck Monroe, did not have time to stop and swerved to avoid hitting the semi, hitting Monroe.

Monroe and his wife sued the trucking company, McGuffee and Patterson. The trial was notable in the rural area where it took place, as was the size of the verdict.

"A lot of local lawyers came to watch the trial," Moran said. "They don't get a lot of civil trials up there."

Around the country, attorneys are working diligently to achieve the best outcomes for their clients. Here are some of the results of all of their efforts in our most recent verdicts and settlements roundup.



**229
MILLION**

**WAIS, VOGELSTEIN,
FORMAN & OFFUTT**

BIRTH INJURY JURY AWARD | JUNE 2019

In what attorneys are claiming is the largest medical malpractice verdict ever in the United States, a Baltimore jury awarded \$229 million to a woman and her daughter for a brain injury her daughter received at birth. A lack of oxygen during delivery caused brain damage, and the child lives with cerebral palsy. Mary Koch, who represented the plaintiffs, said they were grateful for the jury's decision. The verdict follows a 2012 award of \$55 million for a birth injury at the same hospital.



**1.6
MILLION**

**PETRILLO &
GOLDBERG LAW**

CAR ACCIDENT JURY AWARD | JUNE 2019

The plaintiff was rear-ended in 2013 and sustained significant injuries that resulted in her needing surgery to her cervical spine. She had initially sought non-invasive, conservative treatment for four years, including steroid injections, physical therapy and medications, which were unsuccessful. Scott Goldberg, the lead attorney on the case said, "As with all our cases, this was a team effort. In the end we were gratified that the jury awarded such a tremendous verdict to our very deserving client."



**151.7
MILLION**

**J & Y WITH PANISH
SHEA & BOYLE LLP**

TRUCK ACCIDENT CASE | MAY 2019

The client in this case was riding a mountain bike and was run over twice by a commercial truck. Both were traveling south. When the truck started to turn right, the bike collided with the truck. The bicyclist sustained 25 broken bones and required spinal fusion surgery. His medical costs were significant, and the collaboration of the two firms ensured he won \$3.65 million to pay medical bills and cover his lost income and extensive pain and suffering.



**5.0
MILLION**

**PANISH SHEA &
BOYLE LLP WITH
CUNNINGHAM LAW**

JUNE 2019

JURY AWARD IN A TRUCK ACCIDENT CASE

Panish Shea & Boyle LLP attorneys Adam Shea, Ryan Casey and Nicholas Yoka, with local counsel, Matthew B. Cunningham of Cunningham Law Firm obtained a \$5 million verdict in a wrongful death case involving a semi-truck and passenger SUV. The defendant driver, Brian Knoll, claimed to have no memory of the accident and could only guess that he had fallen

asleep. The victim, Paul Troupe, and his wife were traveling on I-17 when their SUV was rear-ended by Knoll's 18 wheeler, pushing it across the highway and into other passenger vehicles. During an investigation of the accident, Knoll admitted to police that although he understood the risks, he often drove tired due to the financial incentive of covering more miles.

LEGAL RESEARCH WITH FASTCASE

For years, Westlaw and LexisNexis have been the two leading online legal research tools. However, a 2017 survey of Clio users indicates the emergence of a third: Fastcase.

Of the respondents, 20.58 percent said Westlaw was their research tool of choice, 20.35 percent reported that Fastcase was their top choice, and 20.21 percent chose LexisNexis. Google Scholar received 13.6 percent, and Casemaker had 10.22 percent. The three top legal services were within eight votes of each other among the 2,162 people who participated in the survey: Westlaw with 445, Fastcase with 440 and Lexis Nexis with 437.

Fastcase's popularity is on the rise. Is it right for your firm?

Fastcase may have an inside track with Clio users. The two companies have an exclusive integration agreement that allows Fastcase users to track their legal research time and record documents with the Clio dashboard in Fastcase. Nonetheless, Fastcase has made remarkable progress in the legal market and is a free service offered by many state bar associations.

Review of Fastcase

Fastcase provides access to court opinions from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Supreme Court, federal Courts of Appeal, U.S. District Courts and U.S. Bankruptcy Courts. You also get statutes, regulations, court rules and constitutions from the 50 states. You can get most of the same information from Google Scholar or the Public Library of Law for free, but you do not get the search tools and other features offered by Fastcase.

Locating cases: You can locate cases on an issue in Fastcase by using keywords and Boolean searches. You can search for code sections cited within cases. You can sort your results by date, relevance, authority or alphabetically. Your results show the name of the case, its relevance ranking, how often it has been cited and a brief excerpt. You can filter your search results by document type, jurisdiction or level of court. Also, you can save your search for later reference.

You can easily locate a case another party has cited. Type in the names of the parties or the style of the case, or the citation of the case, and save, print or email the case.



Checking authority: Fastcase lets you view a list of cases that cite the case you are viewing. An Authority Check Report gives you a list of subsequent cases that cited the case you are viewing. A Bad Law Bot alerts you to a case with a negative citation. The service is similar to Shepardizing a case to make sure the case you cite is still good law.

Browsing documents: Fastcase displays a list of cases matching your search. You can hover over a case to see the first paragraph of the case. Fastcase highlights your search terms, so you can jump to the relevant part of the case. You can browse statutes and regulations using an outline.

Printing: To print a document from Fastcase, you click on the print icon and select the format you prefer, for example, PDF or Microsoft Word. You download the document to your computer or mobile device. You can choose whether to have one or two columns and whether to have your search terms highlighted. You can add multiple documents to your print queue so that you can print them at the end of your research session.

Research tips: Fastcase provides a series of online webinars to make your research more efficient. The courses qualify for continuing legal education credit. You can consult a short reference guide for assistance, or you can take a quick tutorial in Fastcase. You can click on the Fastcase chatbot if you need immediate help.

Mobile app: The Fastcase app is available for iPhones and Android devices. The app allows lawyers to perform legal research from anywhere on any device.

Disadvantages of Fastcase

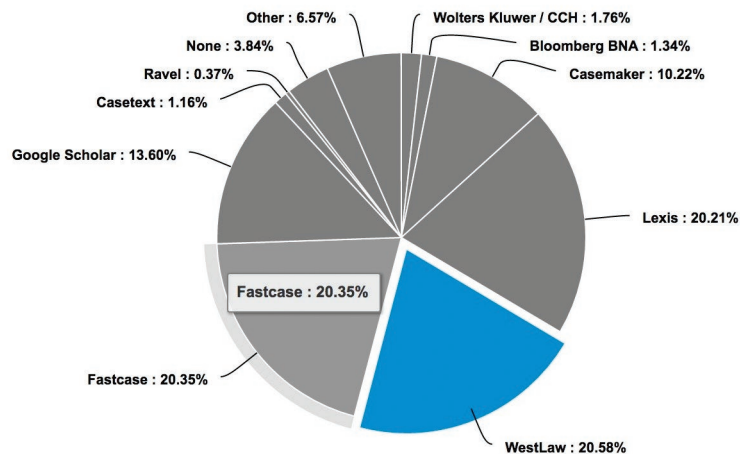
Westlaw and LexisNexis include a case summary and headnotes with court decisions. WestlawNext classifies the headnotes in the key number system,

while Lexis Advance uses the Lexis Topics system. Fastcase does not offer proprietary secondary sources. LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters and Bloomberg BNA publish treatises and form books. Some courts require Lexis or Westlaw citations when a lawyer references an unpublished court opinion in briefs or other legal documents.

Public records search

In March 2019, Fastcase announced that it had partnered with TransUnion to give subscribers access to public records information and analytics for individuals and businesses. The service is offered through TransUnion's TLOxp platform. Fastcase subscribers get access to information such as addresses, phone numbers, places of employment, professional licenses, criminal records, bankruptcies, liens and assets. Lawyers can use the information to perform due diligence, locate witnesses, track assets and perform other investigations.

The integration is available through Fastcase 7. When a Fastcase subscriber performs a search that involves an individual or company, Fastcase offers the subscriber the option of extending the search to TransUnion's public records. To get access to the public records information, the subscriber needs a separate subscription to TLOxp.



Expert witness profiles

In April 2019, Fastcase announced partnerships with JurisPro and Courtroom Insight, companies that provide expert witness profiles and information. The move allows Fastcase to provide subscribers access to over 100,000 expert witness profiles when using the Fastcase 7 platform. Lawyers performing searches on Fastcase will be able to view JurisPro profiles at no extra cost. To see full Courtroom Insight profiles, a subscriber must pay a separate monthly subscription fee.

JurisPro's expert witness information includes the expert's background, contact information, areas of expertise and testimonial background. Information on Courtroom Insight includes a full profile of the expert, the number of court challenges to the expert's qualifications, the name of each case, the type of case and an analysis of the challenge. A lawyer may discover that a court has specifically accepted or rejected an expert's testimony and why.

Many lawyers belong to state or local bar associations that offer Fastcase as a part of the membership. Does what Fastcase offers satisfy a lawyer's research needs? A law firm can compare what Fastcase offers to what other companies provide and make an informed decision.

- Virginia Mayo



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