

How to Boost Your SEO Without Breaking the Bank

By Terrie S. Wheeler, MBC

Why is that lawyer showing up above you on Google? You're a better lawyer. As frustrating as this situation may be, the truth is, that lawyer has likely invested heavily in their SEO – Search Engine Optimization. Many law firms pay thousands of dollars per month to SEO companies who work magic behind the scenes and deliver high rankings on major search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing. And generally, they pay dearly for SEO that includes pay-per-click and AdWords campaigns, Google Retargeting, Facebook campaigns, and other pay-to-play techniques. But is this necessary to achieve top search rankings? My answer is no.

This article will focus on raising your organic, non-paid search engine results. But first, let's start with a few SEO basics.

Paid & Organic SEO

Organic search engine results appear directly under the paid ads because you have created timely, relevant and targeted content, rich with the search terms and keywords you would like to be found under when your prospective clients search for a lawyer.

Paid search engine results are reflected in paid ads directly above the organic results, which feature a little box that says “ad.” I don't know about you, but when I see the paid ads, I gloss over them, searching for the “real” organic results just beneath the ads. When you see the non-paid results, you know you are looking at a firm with strong, compelling content; a firm that didn't have to pay for

their high rankings. For me, these results are simply more credible, just like a published article in a magazine is more credible than the paid advertising on every page.

Development SEO & Post-Launch SEO

If you are working with a skilled website developer, they know the importance of using SEO best practices as the foundation for the infrastructure of your new website (development SEO), and will create strong and compelling content using

keywords with SEO in mind. In addition, they will do keyword research and a competitive analysis, and put time into developing SEO-friendly page titles, descriptive URLs, and compelling meta descriptions for each page.

Post-launch SEO represents the ongoing SEO required to continue increasing your search engine rankings over time. This is where you hear terms like backlinking, link building. This also includes understanding the importance of tools like Google Analytics and Google Search Console, which provide a “real time” analysis of how different pages of your website are performing.



Google Your Firm Name

Pause for a moment and do a Google search for your firm name. The results should dominate page one. Next, conduct a search for a keyword or phrase you would like to be found under. Chances are you won't see the page domination you did when you searched for your firm name. But you will see people you may not even know who have higher rankings than you. Why? Likely because the content on your website is not compelling, nor does it target specific audiences and services.

Organic SEO Tips for Non-Techies

Following are some organic SEO tips that will help increase your organic search engine rankings in key areas:

Keyword Research. What words or phrases best describe your practice? When you search for those phrases, what firms come up? How do they use the keywords in the page description, and on the landing page?

Consistently Create Compelling Content. It is impossible to “SEO your website” for keywords or phrases if you are not extensively using these keywords in the content on your website, in your blogs, in photo captions, or in video summaries. You need to be consistently adding new and compelling content to your website at least once per week!

Responsive Website Design. You must have a website that is responsive – that is, it looks great and has complete functionality on all screen sizes from iPhones to large monitors.

Blog your Way to High Rankings. If you don't blog, consider starting. Create blog titles using the keywords and phrases you want clients to find when they search for a lawyer like you. When you are consistently creating new, high quality content, search engines increase your “authority” as a subject matter expert and rank your content higher.

Integrate Social Media. Make sure you have branded company pages on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Post on your social media sites every day using the keywords and phrases you are building in your SEO efforts.

Your Bio Matters. Review your website biography and make sure it is current and

chock full of the words and phrases that make you and your practice unique.

Add Video. The more engaging content you have on your website, the higher your search engine authority will become. Make sure you use SEO terms when you describe what your video is about.

Use Google Analytics. Your website developer should add Google Analytics coding to your website. By analyzing your analytics each month, you can track unique visitors, time spent on your website, key landing pages and more; all of which will help you refine your SEO strategy.

Google Reviews. Make sure your firm has activated its “Google my Business” page, which appears on the right side of the screen when you search for your firm name. Within this section, you can ask your satisfied clients to review your firm and its work. More Google Reviews equals higher search engine rankings. Set a goal to have 20.

News Releases. If your firm has something newsworthy to report, consider distributing a news release. We use PR Newswire with our clients. Within hours of distributing a release, you will start seeing your news release when you search for your law firm's name.

SEO done well can be extremely technical. It is my hope you walk away with one key thought – to rank higher on the major search engines, you must use an analytical, keyword-based approach to your SEO, and consistently write new content to boost your organic SEO results.



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