

Client-FocusedClarity.



HARRINGTON

Is Your Law Firm Website Getting "Reads" or is it Getting Leads?

Many law firms resign themselves to the idea that a website is only an online brochure-a place for visitors to view practice area descriptions and professional biographies.



We hate hearing the term "online brochure." It sets such a low bar for what should be your strongest marketing asset. A law firm website should look great and function flawlessly-that's table stakes.

But done right, it can be the fuel powering a marketing machine that tells a compelling story, attracts your ideal clients, generates leads, and turns leads into new business. Best of all, by incorporating the right mix of marketing automation technology, it can work for you while you're busy working for your clients.

Too many law firms are realizing few, if any, of these benefits.

Many law firms are paying tens and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars to design and develop new websites, and investing even more to drive traffic to the site via spending on advertising, events and content marketing. Despite these investments, most law firm websites are doing little to nothing to capture the traffic and convert it into new business.

Is your website passively displaying information, or is it serving as an inbound lead generation machine? Are you tired of trying the same old website marketing tactics and getting the same mediocre (or worse) results?

If your website isn't playing an integral role in generating and nurturing new business leads, then I have both bad news and good news for you.

THE BAD NEWS

You're missing out on a huge opportunity. Your law firm website should serve as the hub of your marketing. If it's not generating leads it's not doing its job.

THE GOOD NEWS

While there may be many things you could and should be doing to improve your website, there are some relatively simple changes that you can make to just your homepage to dramatically improve your website's leadgenerating potential.

The 5 essential elements needed to create a lead generating law firm website homepage fall into three categories:

1. Client-Focused Copy

2. Reinforcement

3. Calls to Action

Make the following 5 changes and you'll gain more traffic, turn traffic into leads, and leads into new business.

Sincerely,

JAY HARRINGTON
Co-Founder and Chief Strategist
Harrington



Client-Focused Copy

1. Solution-Oriented Tagline

When potential clients visit your website, are they crystal clear about how your firm and its lawyers can serve them better than anyone else? If not, that's a big problem, because you have mere moments to grab their attention. Here's the solution:

Craft a clear, solution-oriented tagline, and display it prominently-front and center-on your website homepage.

Many lawyers, and therefore law firms, are afflicted with what's called "The Curse of Knowledge." They're so close to their business, which is one that operates in a noisy and complex world, that they project that complexity through their website marketing messages, and in doing so they confuse their clients.

Instead of leading with a solution, law firms will often start with the services they provide. The problem is that clients aren't buying legal services, they're buying outcomes.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLE.

A typical firm that handles estate planning will lead with something like:

Specializing in Estate Planning, Wills and Trusts Since 1954

Most potential clients are vaguely familiar with these terms, but they'll have to expend a lot of time and energy to understand if what the law firm is selling is what they need.

Here's a better approach:

We'll Help You Get Your Financial Affairs in Order so Your Family is Taken Care of

See the difference? The first is all about the law firm. The second is all about the client.

ACTION STEP: Craft a tagline that's easy to understand, focused on solutions to the challenges facing your client. Don't make it about yourself.



2. Tell a Compelling Story

Law firm website homepages contain more copy than just a tagline, so create more client-focused copy throughout the page. This is best done through a focus on storytelling.

For thousands of years, storytelling has been the best way to communicate a message that stands out and leaves a lasting impact. There's a story that matters to every client. It's what either attracts or repels clients from your law firm brand and website. But here's the thing: The story you tell on your homepage, like the tagline you use to grab attention, has nothing to do with the law firm itself. It's the client's own story that matters most.

This means that your website homepage must reflect your ideal client's story. It's not about crafting a message that is clever, cute, or flashy. It's about clarity, which is demonstrated through a deep understanding of:

Who your ideal client is;

The unique pain points they feel and opportunities they face;

What it's like to walk in their shoes; and

What success means to them.

Talk about your clients' challenges more than your own accolades. Don't market your practice areas, market the problems you solve. Repeat the story of your ideal client back to them. Demonstrate understanding and empathy for their challenges. Then tell your own story by sharing your wisdom, and demonstrating that you're in this together with your clients. But always lead with the client in mind. Doing so achieves what we call Client-Focused Clarity.

These issues are nuanced, but vitally important to the success of your law firm website. Story, which requires an understanding of audience, characters and key objectives, is the glue that binds an effective website together, and the magnet that attracts others to it.

ACTION STEP: Build your story around the challenges and opportunities facing your most important clients—the types of clients who fuel your firm's growth and you'd like to attract more of.



3. Social Proof

When potential clients visit your website, there are two questions that they are probably asking themselves: "Does this law firm understand me?" and "Can it help me solve my problem?"

The first question is answered through client-focused storytelling. By focusing on what matters to your client, you express empathy and understanding. But you also need to establish authority and expertise. A potential client wants to know that you have what it takes to guide them where they want to go. The internal pages of your website-your About page, Practice Area descriptions, and Attorney biographies-offer an opportunity to dive deeper into expertise, but you don't want to clutter up your homepage with too much copy. So how do you quickly demonstrate authority in a way that connects, but doesn't sound braggadocious or overbearing?

USE SOCIAL PROOF ON YOUR HOMEPAGE

Social proof is a term from psychology that refers to your level of perceived credibility. Are you attached to people, brands, or institutions that are recognizable and perceived as trustworthy? If so, that affiliation encourages others to perceive you as high quality, also.

There are two primary forms of social proof that you can leverage on your website homepage. Which one you choose to focus on often depends on whether you primarily serve consumer or business clients.





TESTIMONIALS

If you have a more consumer-oriented practice, such as estate planning or family law, place a few short quotes from satisfied clients on your homepage. This allows others to know that you've served others with similar issues who have left happy.

CLIENT LOGOS

If you have a more business-oriented firm, feature logos of business clients that you've worked with on your homepage. This provides instant credibility to potential clients that you're equipped to serve them too.

ACTION STEP: Make it easy for clients to provide a testimonial. Provide them with a short example of the type of testimonial you'd like to receive, which gives them a guide as to what length it should be (short), and what it should focus on (the result you helped them achieve).



Calls to Action

4. Make it Easy with a Clear Call to Action

Prospective clients are often anxious and confused before hiring a lawyer. This anxiety stems, in large part, from lack of clarity about the process involved in moving forward. How do we get started? Through what means and how often will we communicate? Something as seemingly simple as a desire to not sound uninformed and ignorant about next steps can serve as an impediment to scheduling a consultation.

This begs the question: When someone visits your website homepage, is it clear what action you'd like them to take? Too many law firm websites lack a prominent call to action, and as a result miss out on opportunities. Remember, you may be so close to your business that it seems obvious that someone should pick up the phone and schedule an appointment to talk to an attorney, but don't assume that a layperson knows that. Make it easy for them.

Create call to action buttons that are a main focus of your homepage. If you don't, you're making your potential clients work too hard to engage your services. Calls to action may include:

Schedule an Appointment

Call Now

Get a Free Consultation

ACTION STEP: Create an action-oriented call to action that makes it easy and obvious for clients to understand how to take the next step with your firm.



5. Offer a Transitional Call to Action to Continue the Conversation

It would be nice if every website visitor took immediate action to schedule an appointment with your law firm, but of course that's not realistic. If even 2 or 3 visitors out of 100 convert into clients, you should start throwing high fives around the office-and stop reading this, because your website is performing great!

The truth is that most website visitors click away and you never hear from them again. They're not ready to act –at least not ready to pick up the phone or send you an email immediately–so you need to offer them an opportunity to stay engaged with your law firm, but on their terms. This is accomplished by creating what we call a "Transitional Call to Action."

A Transitional Call to Action offers potential clients something valuable, called a "Lead Generator," on your website homepage. Website visitors can access the Lead Generator in return for their email address. The email address should then be filtered directly into an email service provider (such as ConvertKit or MailChimp) so that you can continue to engage with them by sending them valuable information via email. Do this so that, when the time is right for the prospect to take action, you'll be top of mind.

TIP: You can set up a pre-written, pre-loaded automated email sequence that drips out to prospects over time. It's automatically triggered once someone downloads your Lead Generator. With a little bit of work, you can have an automated email marketing system that works for you, while you're busy working for your clients.



So what is a Lead Generator? (Hint: You're reading one!) It's a resource, such as a downloadable PDF document or a series of instructional videos, that is of intense interest to members of the audience you're targeting.

For example, if you have a healthcare address, it might focus on something like "5 Things Every Hospital Administrator Must Know About HIPAA." If your firm serves privately held small to mid-size businesses, it may be "10 Mistakes to Avoid When Creating an ESOP."

PRO TIP: If your firm has a more broad focus, with lots of different practice and industry areas of focus, you can develop a Lead Generator to be featured on each practice area page. Emails can be filtered into segmented lists so that you can customize your email sequences with information relevant to each audience.

Keep in mind that a Lead Generator does not often lead to immediate new business. That's why it's called a *Transitional* Call to Action. It's valuable information that invites someone to engage in a conversation with your firm over time. It's a cup of coffee, not an engagement ring.

The purpose of the lead generator is to pique the potential client's interest with the "What" and the "Why" of a problem or opportunity they are facing, and then position your firm as the guide that will show them "How" to achieve the outcome they are seeking.

ACTION STEP: Create a Lead Generator that provides value and establishes your firm as an authority in its field. When creating a lead generator, here's a good rule of thumb to follow: It should take no more than 5 hours to create, and no more than 10 minutes to consume. It needs to have a strong title and be chock full of great information. After all, you're asking your law firm website visitors to turn over something valuable to you (their time, attention, and email address), so you need to provide them with something valuable in return.



Legal Marketing that Delivers Results

A lead generating law firm website is within your reach. For law firms big and small, we design websites that deliver results. Our work is based on the foundational principle that a clear, client-focused message always beats a complex one.

Bring Client-Focused Clarity to your law firm's marketing and business development initiatives. Schedule a free consultation so we can discuss your objectives.

TO GET THE BALL ROLLING, PLEASE CONTACT:

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