

# Keys To A Successful Law Firm Website

## The Bottom Line: An Effective Website Will Increase Your Business

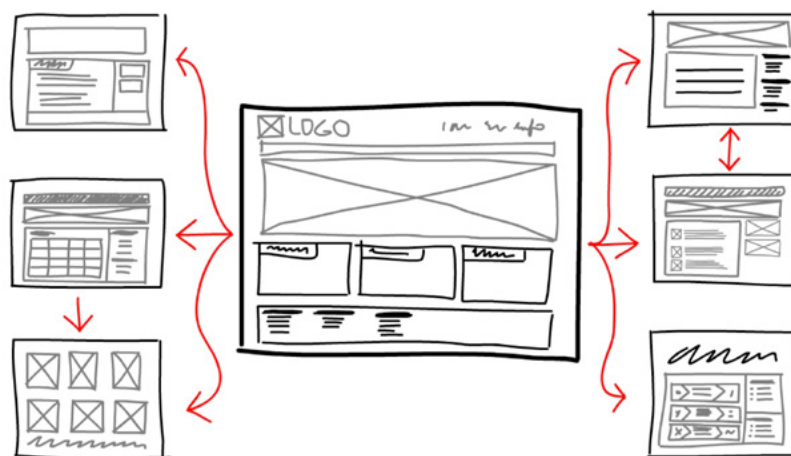
Why is a great law firm website so important? Because, according to a the 2012 Attorney Selection Research Study conducted by The Research Intelligence Group, **more than 76% of adults who seek to hire an attorney use online resources at some point in the process.** Unfortunately, many law firm websites leave a lot to be desired.

But never fear—if you haven't recently updated your website, now is the time and we can help! This document will cover the best practices to build an effective website and how to get started so that your law firm's website is found by your potential clients.

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# Let's Start With A Few Website Basics

- 1 **People are impatient.** They want to find the information on your website quickly so they scan each page looking for clues.
  
- 2 **Your website must be useful and usable.** The days of fancy, spinning and dancing graphics are over. Think Google.com – it's super useful and is the simplest site you'll find. The first objective should always be to ensure that your customers can easily find useful information on your website (and remember, people are impatient!).
  
- 3 **Websites should be designed for our brain's strengths.** Our brains are designed for high speed problem solving. To design a good site for brains:
  - › Have clear **headings, labels and hyperlinks**
  - › Clearly differentiate **buttons and input fields** so they stand out
  - › Highlight **keywords or phrases** in text
  - › Provide a **clear call to action** (our brains like to be told what to do)



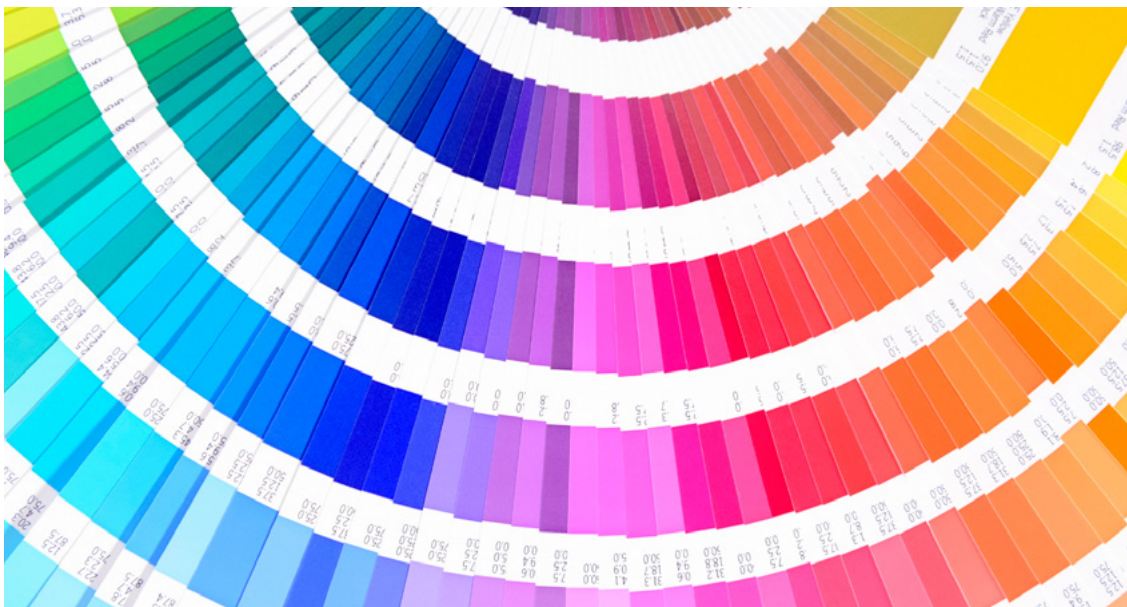
# Keep Your Site Simple (K-Y-S-S)

## Simple Navigation

Your **website navigation should be simple** and you should offer only a few choices. We recommend no more than seven. The best navigation tabs for law firms are: Home, About Us, Attorneys, Practice Areas, Locations, Testimonials/Results, and Contact Us.

## Easy On The Eyes

**Choose a simple color scheme and use it consistently** throughout your site. You can find suggestions at [www.colourlovers.com](http://www.colourlovers.com). Choose a color palette of no more than 3-4 different colors and make sure your site content is short and to the point...make it easy to read.



# Tailor Your Site To Your Client's Needs

## Ask Yourself:

- › Is my site **interesting** to potential clients?
- › What do **potential clients** care about?
- › Are potential clients **getting the information** they need?
- › Does my site **showcase my firm** in the best light?
- › Are there **clear calls to action** to get visitors to contact me?
- › **Am I satisfied** with my site?



# Content Rules The Day

## Key Content

- › **No more than seven navigation tabs.** As discussed above, we recommend: Home, About Us, Attorneys, Practice Areas, Locations, Testimonials/Results, and Contact Us
- › **Attorney bios** are very important. Include professional photos and highlight each attorney's education, recognition, successes, and bar admissions
- › **Don't forget firm recognition!** Showcase firm-wide successes and media mentions
- › Make sure clients know **where your offices are located** and make it easy for them to **contact** you

# Design And Branding

## Modern & Professional Design

Your website needs to portray the same quality and professionalism that your law firm upholds. **Modern design is clean and simple.** The text is easily readable. Images and graphics should be relevant and appropriate, and must render properly on the page. It is important that your website render properly on all browsers, and work on both Mac and PC.

## Usability

One key factor of successful law firm websites is that they are easy to navigate. The structure is organized in a logical, thoughtful way. **Visitors to the site will have no problem finding the information they are looking for.** They will be able to get in touch with you easily through a form or contact information. Ideally, your website will be integrated with the software your firm uses to manage your law practice.

## Your Law Firm's Branding

**Feature your firm's logo prominently on the page.** Match the site design to your firm's colors or branding. Your site should use your firm's website URL/domain name.

## Social Sharing Features

**Make it easy for visitors to connect with your firm** (and possibly its attorneys) on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and other social media. Share icons will encourage visitors to share information they find on your site on their own social media channels.

If your firm has a blog, allowing moderated comments (comments that you can approve prior to posting) is a way to engage your community, expand the conversation, and increase readership.

**70%** of law firms maintain blogs and nearly **50%** of firms report that blogging and social networking had **helped produce leads for new clients.**

—ALM Legal Intelligence 2012 Survey



# Mobile Accessibility

## Mobile

Increasingly, people are using their smartphones and tablets to access the web. Websites built for desktop platforms do not always come across well on mobile devices.

**It is essential that your website is compatible across all types of smartphones and tablets.**

Some companies do this using responsive design that adjusts to fit any size screen. Another option is to build a version of the site specifically for mobile usage. If you have a separate mobile site, make sure that your mobile site is updated when your main site is updated.

**90%** of people move between devices to accomplish a goal, whether that's on smartphones, PCs, tablets or TV.

—Google



# Integration With Your Law Practice Management Software

By integrating your firm's website with your law practice management software, your clients can quickly access their case information, pay bills online, and securely communicate with you directly from your website.

Some Law Practice Management Softwares, such as [MyCase](#), offer website templates that automate this integration process, making it much more cost effective than a custom integration. If you are already using law practice management software, make sure to investigate their website offerings and see if their integrated websites will work for your business.

## PROS

- › **Functionality designed specifically for lawyers** and provides clients with a streamlined user experience
- › Website layout designed to **maximize lead generation opportunities** and provide attorneys with more consistent branding
- › Modern, professional website design with **built-in mobile version** will offer your firm credibility with clients
- › **Affordable**, fixed cost of the website
- › **Faster timeline** to get your website live

## CONS

- › Fewer design options than are available when using a web developer
- › You'll only be able to add the features offered by the company



# Conclusion

A great website can do more than just improve your online presence, it can boost your business productivity and profit. By doing some due diligence before you start the project, you'll save yourself time and money, and have a website that fulfills both your needs and the needs of your clients.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Spiegel is the Vice President and General Manager of MyCase. He is an attorney in San Diego, California and started his criminal defense law practice in 2009 after working for four years with one of San Diego's largest consumer law firms. As a practicing attorney and a founder of MyCase, he often speaks at legal conferences regarding the ins and outs of running a law practice and on how cloud computing technologies can benefit the legal profession. He can be reached at [matt@mycase.com](mailto:matt@mycase.com).

## ABOUT MYCASE

MyCase, a subsidiary of [AppFolio](#), is an affordable, intuitive and powerful practice management software designed for the modern law firm. Easily organize your firm with a complete solution—contacts, calendars, cases, documents, time tracking, and billing. Reap the time-saving benefits of MyCase's integrated client portal so everyone stays informed and connected. Learn more at [www.MyCase.com](http://www.MyCase.com).

## CONNECT WITH US:

