

From the Great Jakes Blog

Attorney Bios & Microsites: Attorney bios in the age of Facebook.



By Dion Algeri, Founder
September 22, 2010

As you may know, at Great Jakes we're champions of the attorney bio. In fact, we recently predicted that a small revolution in the legal marketing world will be centered on attorney bios. Why? Because bios are the most visited pages on law firm websites. And there is much room for improvement.

So, what makes for great attorney bios? I believe that it can all be boiled down to two vital elements:

Proof of Your Expertise

People are cynical about marketing. In today's world, you can't simply tell them that you're an expert in a particular area — you need to *prove* it. This means that your bio should provide links to a deep library of content that you've developed that contains your *best, most original ideas*. This content library could include articles, blog posts, case studies, case summaries, client testimonials, photos, speeches, podcasts, webinars, presentations, etc.

An important consideration: It's best if you focus on a fairly narrow niche. If you're properly focused, it becomes much, much easier to prove that you possess leading expertise.

A Sense of You

Nearly every prospective client will visit your bio as part of their selection process (according to a 2009 study by the Wicker Park Group). What will they see? In most cases, lots of text that describes your expertise. While this is certainly important, it's not everything. You also need to connect with people on a personal level.

In times past, prospects may have visited your office, where they could see photos of your firm's client golf outing, your Citizen of the Year plaque and the photo of you shaking hands with Governor Schwarzenegger. These personal mementos are important in sparking the kind of conversations that build relationships. Unfortunately, in the internet age you are unlikely to meet your prospective clients in person — never mind get them into your office to see your collection of PEZ dispensers.

While I'm not suggesting that you include photos of your PEZ collection on your website, it's important that you include some personal details on your bio that paint a rich picture of who you are. Mention your charity work. Include a video clip of you being interviewed on a local news program. Show photos of you shaking hands with dignitaries.

While this type of information has not traditionally been featured prominently on attorney bios, it will *inevitably become standard practice* as the Facebook generation comes of age. More on this in my next post.