



What Large Law Firms Do Differently with their Websites

A website is more than a page, picture and words. Visitors can assess the size of your law firm simply by looking at the design of your website and the way you organize content on it.

Last year, we wrote a blog titled, “What You Can Learn from Large Law Firms”. We looked at some of the largest law firms in the U.S. and discovered that most of these firms hosted libraries of content on their websites.

When our blog article was published in April of 2011, DLA Piper was the largest firm in the country by number of attorneys. Their website had more than 37,000 pages indexed in Google. Other firms had a few thousand pages of content, but overall, most large law firms filled their websites with massive amounts of content.

This year, DLA Piper was dethroned by another Chicago giant, Baker & McKenzie. It is here that we start looking at how large law firms design their websites.

Traditionally, large firms have treated their websites like corporate brochures. A lot of text, generic skyscraper imagery and some photos of well-dressed partners were all they needed to show off the size of their empires. But large firms are now putting a strong focus on making their websites functional. With global name recognition, onsite conversion is more important than key phrases and search engine rankings. Everybody knows their name, but why should they consider calling the firm?

Convert and Support

When looking at Baker & McKenzie’s website, it’s obvious they are an international firm. The slideshow on the homepage covers such topics as the Eurozone crisis, private equity and international stock exchange regulations. These highlights define their audience and target market. And without directly saying it, they have made it clear that they work with large corporations.

Founded in Cleveland, Ohio, Jones Day is America’s third largest law firm with over 2,400 lawyers. Their website’s design is pretty basic, but the white space enthusiast can enjoy the neat layout and logically organized content. The home page is made up of some law firm news and announcements, but the visitor’s focus is entirely on one thing: “One Firm Worldwide.” In three words, Jones Day speaks past small business owners and directly to Fortune 500 companies that have an international presence.

The goals of a large firm’s website include turning a qualified website visitor into a new client without wasting time talking to non-qualified prospects and supporting existing clients. Many of the largest firms offer RSS feeds, and publications cater to the interest and issues of their clients. The firms successfully make themselves the source for news in their practice areas.





Not only is this a prodigious benefit for people and businesses that trust them with their legal complexities, it also helps build a library of content that further substantiates their website in Google.

Large firms that are ignoring their online presence will soon realize that it's absolutely necessary to offer online value to their practice. A clean design and well organized content can not only lead to a multi-million dollar client, but it can also retain existing multi-million dollar clients.

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