

Leveraging Local Search Marketing to Grow Your Law Firm

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We Make Law Firms Grow

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About BusinessCreator, Inc.

BusinessCreator, Inc. offers services that enable law firms to attract local online clients, achieving an edge over their competitors. The company's lead generation program includes onsite and offsite local SEO, mobile website and app development, mobile marketing, mobile ad targeting, social media marketing, video production, video marketing, and reputation marketing and management. The programs can be customized to suit any law firm and help law firms build a solid reputation on the web.

Our **Power Practice Builder** is a comprehensive online marketing program designed for total online local market dominance for law firms! We take a holistic approach to online marketing so our clients will dominate the search results for their most profitable keywords. We know the science behind creating lead generating websites and effective online marketing programs. Our **Power Practice Builder** will put you ahead of your competitors. There can only be one dominate law firm in your local market.

Leveraging Local Search Marketing to Grow Your Law Firm

Making the best use of modern marketing techniques can be a challenge for most law firms and attorneys. Like many legal professionals, you may employ a wide variety of marketing strategies while missing out on one of the most valuable approaches. Local search marketing is often overlooked or under-utilized, but it represents one of the most powerful tools available to your firm.

A strong local search marketing strategy can increase your visibility, pull in clients and help your firm grow. Additionally, local search marketing is often more affordable and effective than other marketing strategies that you may have tried in the past. What makes local search so unique, and how can you put it to work for your firm?

The Power of Local Search

When your prospective clients conduct a local search for law firms, they find listings of all of the firms located nearby. These listings are accompanied with other information that your clients might need to make decisions, including maps, reviews and ratings. Your law firm already appears in some of these listings, but if you haven't engaged in any local search marketing, your firm probably isn't very highly ranked or visible.

Improving your ranking on local search can have huge impacts because of the mindset that your clients are in when they conduct these searches. Most people don't perform local searches to find general information. Instead, they are looking for immediate advice or assistance. If you aren't focusing on local search, you're missing out on meeting clients who are actually ready to hire an attorney.

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Winning Leads With Local Search

Local search marketing also lets you harness the power of local reviews, which are more persuasive than you might think. Most legal professionals appreciate the power of word-of-mouth referrals but are surprised to learn that clients also put stock in reviews from strangers. One survey shows that nearly three-quarters of clients will trust your law firm more based on positive local reviews. Nearly four out of five clients will believe the content of local reviews as much as word-of-mouth recommendations.

Another exciting aspect of local search marketing is that your success should build on itself once you have established a strong local presence. As more clients discover your firm, use your services and share their experiences, your firm will become more prominent in local search. This cycle should reinforce itself and continue generating new business for your firm.

Strategies for Success

More law firms have started focusing on local search marketing, which means that increasing your visibility and differentiating yourself from your competitors is easier said than done. Still, with the right strategies, you can strengthen your local search presence in little time. The following steps can help you drive your law firm to the top of the local rankings.

1. Start Using Your Local Listings

Creating listings or claiming existing listings in local directories and maps is an important step toward improving your visibility. You should see the best results if your firm is listed in Google, Bing and Yahoo maps. Your listings should include all of the areas that your firm serves, and if you specialize in an unusual niche, you should consider targeting nearby cities as well.

You should also take time to clean up your listings. Confusing or misleading listings are bad for business, even if you weren't responsible for creating those listings. One survey suggests that nearly three out of four customers stop trusting a business if its online listings are inaccurate. When looking over your listings, make sure that you also delete any duplicates.

Finally, to ensure that your listings bring clients in, you need to seriously focus on reputation marketing. Besides addressing complaints, you should work on proactively developing a positive reputation. Write blogs that provide useful information and demonstrate your expertise. Create opportunities for past or potential clients to interact with you. These measures can help you brand your firm as a trusted and reliable source.

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2. Spend More Time on Social Media

Social media has evolved into a powerful tool for law firms. You can use social media to increase your visibility by listing your firm as a local business, optimizing your profile and encouraging clients to leave reviews. Social media can also help you generate local buzz. You can use it to alert followers to recent case outcomes, legal news that affects your local practice area and more.

Social media can help you improve your local presence and ranking, but don't expect it to work passively. Other firms are posting status updates, videos and links to helpful resources on a weekly basis or even more frequently. If you want your firm to stand out, it's critical that you start doing the same.

3. Venture Into Video Marketing

Some firms and attorneys focus primarily on producing written content, and others simply overlook video marketing as an option. However, delivering useful content via video recordings can be impactful. YouTube is currently the largest search engine, and even on other platforms, optimized videos can help your firm stand out.

Video marketing offers a few other distinct benefits. You can explain difficult concepts in a simple manner to produce content that is more valuable and worth sharing. You can showcase the professionalism and resources that your firm has to offer. You also can connect with clients by putting a human face on your practice. All of this can give you an edge when clients conduct local searches to find the law firm that they want to work with.

4. Your Firm's Reputation is a Valuable Business Asset

A business's reputation is arguably its most important intangible asset. Without a strong reputation, new clients will not choose to patronize your organization and existing customers will drift away. A reputation that is tarnished with negative associations has the potential to actively repel clients. Even the best run law firms can suffer from a damaged reputation as a result of action taken by former employees, association with a complex situation, or through a periphery connection with unfavorable circumstances. Reputation marketing services help law firms put their best face forward in order to provide current and potential clients with information that relevant and helpful.

6. Why Mobile Marketing?

In today's fast-paced world, the current buzzword of the day is connectivity. So much of what we do and how we interact happens in virtual space. Thus, it's no longer enough to

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be connected while at home or at work. Thankfully, mobile technology allows us access to our many personal and professional networks while on the go, not to mention allowing us unprecedented access to information on goods and services.

Now is the time to ask yourself if your law firm is capitalizing on all that this access has to offer. You no doubt enjoy the ease of communication between members of your firm and with your clients that your cell phone or tablet allows for, yet have you considered the potential that this technology presents for reaching an even greater audience of would-be clients?

Five Reasons Law Firms Should Care about Local Directories

Law firms must face the constant challenge of finding ways to get in front of potential clients.

Effective search engine optimization requires ongoing effort and utilization of all potential avenues. Among the avenues that should not be overlooked are local or niche directories.

Following are five ways that directory listings can help law firms with their SEO efforts:

1. Local SEO is Largely Off-Page

When it comes to local search, more than 80% of the signals that Google takes into account are from places other than websites. This makes any mention of a firm on other parts of the web highly important, including local directories. In addition, locality specifically was identified as one of the top local search ranking factors in 2014.

2. The Right Kind of Links

Every directory listing provides a link to a firm website and, as long as the information and the directory are of good quality, these are the links that every attorney should seek. They are natural, logical and relevant to the business and the client needs. These are the links that search engines reward for.

3. The Complete Client Journey

Most clients perform a decent amount of research before selecting an attorney. In order to be a frontrunner in the selection process, a law firm should show up as often as possible. Local directories are important touch points in this process. Also, the pendulum today has shifted dramatically back to an emphasis on local businesses and clients want to find attorneys with the right expertise but also in specific locales. Many directories by nature are location-based and even those that are not always include location data, helping firms to show up in appropriate searches.

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4. Usability Matters

The algorithms used to determine ultimate search ranking placements puts a heavy emphasis on the usability of information that is found online about a particular business. Directories offer nothing but usable information—name, address, phone number, areas of practice and directions just for starters. Giving information that clients and potential clients can really use will come back to help in many ways.

5. Penalties Hurt

This may be the one fact that people don't want to hear but it is true—incomplete or inaccurate information about a business can hurt SEO efforts as much or more than complete, accurate information can help. Your law firm no doubt shows up on some directories already but if you are not taking ownership of those listings, you risk having the wrong information published. It can take several months to recover from penalties associated with this.

When making the commitment to focus on local and niche directory listings, perhaps the cardinal rule is to ensure consistency. Wherever a client looks and wherever a search engine looks, your information should tell the same story at all times.

Claiming directory listings, completing them in full and managing them on an ongoing basis can often feel like a tedious and unnecessary task. While tedious it may be at times, unnecessary it never is. Law firms that take the time to control their directory listings will be glad they did.

Why Law Firms Cannot Afford to Ignore Mobile

Increasing exposure to potential clients is a top concern for most law firms. Establishing a strong online presence to improve visibility and generate leads is generally an effective strategy for these firms. However, to meet this goal, firms need to go beyond building an optimized, informative and easily navigable website. To drive conversion and retention, attorneys also must appeal to mobile users. BusinessCreator helps firms reach and attract this growing base of clients by developing mobile responsive websites and strong mobile marketing strategies.

Marked Mobile Growth

It is critical for law firms to reach mobile users more effectively because mobile device use and mobile search are only increasing. According to the Pew Research Center, as of January 2014, 90 percent of Americans owned cell phones. In October 2014, the same source reported that 64 percent of Americans owned smart phones. Most consumers use these devices to conduct online searches. Pew Research data from May 2012 shows that one in three smart phone owners performs most Internet searches via phone. Over one in twenty smart phone users depend exclusively on their smart phones for Internet access.

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Given these figures, it is not surprising that the number of mobile searches that consumers perform has grown remarkably. From the first half of 2012 to the first half of 2013, mobile traffic grew 125 percent, or at more than 10 times the rate that desktop traffic did, according to Forbes. The growth of mobile advertising also reflects the increase in mobile searches. Recently, Business Insider reported that mobile advertising is growing faster than any other form of digital advertising. Mobile users represent an increasingly large and influential market for most businesses, including law firms.

Impact on Attorneys

Limited data indicates that the shift toward mobile search is changing the way that clients find attorneys. According to the American Bar Association, a 2012 Lexis Nexis survey found that 21 percent of clients used smartphones to find attorneys, while another 12 percent conducted their searches from tablets. Cumulatively, this represents nearly one in three people who used their mobile devices to search for attorneys.

Since that survey was conducted, smart phone ownership and mobile search rates have only increased. As a result, these figures likely underrepresent the proportion of potential clients who now use mobile devices when they look for attorneys. Unfortunately, law firms that lack mobile responsive websites and effective mobile strategies may lose the business of many of these clients. Websites that are mobile responsive, or designed specifically to support mobile users, can encourage these visitors to take immediate action. In contrast, websites that are not optimized to support mobile device users can drive these potential clients away.

Importance of Responsiveness

Compared to other websites, mobile responsive websites generate higher conversion rates among mobile users. According to Forbes, one online retail publication reports that mobile visitors make 160 percent more conversions on websites that are mobile responsive. This high conversion rate may occur for a few reasons. A mobile responsive website may be easier for these potential clients to find, since Google is more likely to give better rankings to websites that support mobile users. Additionally, mobile users may be less inclined to convert after struggling to navigate a website that is not mobile responsive.

Websites that are not mobile responsive do not just reduce conversion; they can also actively push customers away. Forbes states that 43 percent of mobile users will not attempt to revisit a website that loads slowly, which is a common problem among websites that are not optimized for mobile users. When faced with slow load times, 40 percent of mobile users will visit the websites of competitors. Mobile users may also be less likely to recommend websites that are not mobile responsive. In short, websites

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that do not properly support mobile users often create harmful first impressions that have far-reaching effects.

Converting to Mobile

These findings underscore the benefits that mobile responsive websites offer for law firms. A firm can significantly improve leads and conversions with a website that provides the growing base of mobile clients with a simple, streamlined experience.

What sets mobile responsive websites apart? These websites feature fast load times, minimal clutter and easily legible text. These websites also enables mobile users to navigate or find information easily, through features such as buttons that are easy to press, pages that require minimal scrolling and readily accessible links that lead to key pages. Law firms with existing websites can typically choose between updating those websites and building entirely new websites to better support mobile users. BusinessCreator often builds new websites to ensure full responsiveness and optimization.

Mobile User Marketing

In addition to appealing to mobile users, law firms with mobile responsive websites can increase their exposure in numerous ways. For example, BusinessCreator lists every client in its mobile directory and in a mobile app called iSeekLaw. These measures help firms increase contact with local clients who conduct mobile searches. BusinessCreator also creates branded mobile apps that let firms connect with new clients and improve retention. Firms with mobile responsive websites can also employ various mobile marketing strategies. These include text marketing, which generates leads among existing clients, and mobile display advertisements, which identify nearby potential clients and offer deals that drive conversion.

All of these marketing strategies are technically available to law firms with websites that are not mobile responsive. However, given the tendency of mobile users to reject websites that do not offer a convenient browsing experience, these methods are less likely to benefit these firms. BusinessCreator can assist these firms in becoming more appealing to mobile users and tapping into any of these marketing strategies.

Investing in Mobile

Marketing to mobile users allows a law firm to keep up with competitors and bring in more business. With a mobile responsive website, a law firm can reach a growing segment of potential clients, improve conversion of those clients and take advantage of new marketing strategies that are geared primarily toward mobile users. These

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measures can pay off noticeably in the short run while offering a substantial long-term return on investment.

Four Top Mobile Marketing Tips for Law Firms

The legal industry can be highly competitive, making marketing one of the most critical elements of success for your law firm. What that marketing should entail has evolved greatly over the years. Today's legal marketing programs must integrate activities specifically targeted to reach and accommodate mobile users. This includes people on tablets as well as smartphones. Ignoring these audiences will lead to disappointing results.

So, what exactly is mobile marketing and what makes sense for your firm? Following are four recommended mobile marketing activities that we think fit that bill.

1. Ensure Responsive Site Design

First and foremost, you must ensure that your website displays and operates seamlessly and fully on any mobile device. Do not force visitors to scroll side to side or show them flash elements that cannot play on their phones. These experiences will create quick results for sure but those results will not be the ones you want—people will simply leave your site and move on to your competitor's site.

2. Optimize Your Site for Local Search

You know that location matters to your clients when they are seeking legal representation. You must ensure that your site and SEO efforts are set up to capitalize on your location. This encompasses simple things like adding your location to H1, H2 or title tags as well as scattering location keywords in your copy without making your content unreadable.

One important note must be made here: do not overstate your geographical reach. If your firm is in Riverside, California list that rather than the more generic Southern California. The more relevant and direct your content is, the better chance you have of being returned in a search appropriately. Some other activities may be a bit more involved but can pay off such as creating a Schema markup.

3. Target Mobile Users with Paid Ads

Because people commonly search for your services while on mobile devices, consider increasing your bids on specific keywords for mobile searches. This can help you target mobile clients more directly and compare your analytics to see the level of traffic generated from mobile more clearly to help guide your ongoing efforts.

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4. Create a Useful Mobile App

There has been a lot of discussion about the pros and cons of developing a mobile app for a law firm. The bottom line is that these pros and cons are no different than the pros and cons for any industry. The best mobile app is one that can be useful to the end consumer. That is the most inherent difference between a mobile app and a website—the app must provide a specific function.

One example would be an app that offers a calculator to determine child support payments. Another could offer a way for people to determine estimated blood alcohol content. Apps can also be used to facilitate the submission of some documentation or forms. In addition to the primary use of the app, you can provide directions to your office, news about your practice and details about your firm's attorneys.

These are just some of the ways that you can leverage the importance of mobile devices in the everyday lives of your clients.

Mobile phones and tablets have become virtually necessities for most people today and that trend is not likely to change. This delivers you new opportunities to reach potential clients and stay engaged with existing ones.

Developing Video Content Geared Towards New Clients

When it comes to building up your firm's reputation and reaching out to a new client base, it's much better to be seen than it is to be heard. While statistics have shown that online and mobile marketing efforts have drastically increased your ability to generate more traffic to both your website as well as your office, many clients still need to be able to look you in the eye before committing to your services. Trust us when we say that quality video ads are the key to sealing the deal with new customers.

TV vs. Online

This fact may easily lead you to believe that leasing TV ad space is the best way to connect with new clients. Yet recent market trends seem to offer up contradicting facts regarding TV ad content. The costs of advertising across television airwaves have steadily increased over the last few years. Yet during that same period, fewer and fewer people have recognized this form of advertising as the sole reason behind their decisions to choose a certain firm. In fact, when asked to pinpoint what manner of advertising content most influenced their decision, most respondents cited online ads.

So, this many leave you wondering why focus on developing video content when online marketing seems to be generating the most success. The answer is simple: why not do

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both together? Incorporating video content into your online advertising efforts offers you the chance to enjoy the best benefits of both mediums.

Online Video Benefits

The ability to create a following: Studies have shown that those firms willing to give out advice without obligating people to join them as clients are viewed as being more trustworthy. Some keen firms have taken this fact to heart and used online videos to create their own niche channels through which they offer general advice to viewers accompanied by an invitation to learn more.

The chance to better incorporate testimonials into marketing: We've all heard stories of companies fabricating expert testimony in order to promote a particular product or service. This leaves many prospective clients skeptical of those testimonials that they read. However, if you're able to get past clients in front of a camera to recount the positive experiences of that they had with your firm, viewers are much more likely to accept the authenticity of their claims.

Your Firm's Reputation is a Valuable Business Asset

A business's reputation is arguably its most important intangible asset. Without a strong reputation, new customers will not choose to patronize your organization and existing customers will drift away. A reputation that is tarnished with negative associations has the potential to actively repel customers. Even the best run law firms can suffer from a damaged reputation as a result of action taken by former employees, association with a complex situation, or through a periphery connection with unfavorable circumstances. Reputation marketing services help law firms put their best face forward in order to provide current and potential clients with information that relevant and helpful. BusinessCreator specializes in conducting reputation marketing for law firms that need assistance with this facet of marketing and outreach.

What Your Clients Really Want to Know

When clients use search engines to look for your law firm, they want to find a few pieces of fundamental information, such as:

- What kind of law your firm specializes in
- Hours of operation and days when appointments are scheduled
- Contact information, including phone number
- Quick and accurate legal advice
- A way to speak with an attorney in an emergency or outside of business hours
- Information that will help them evaluate their legal choices

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A law firm with a poorly managed reputation will not have this kind of relevant information appearing on search engine results pages. Instead, a variety of tangential reviews, biased write-ups, and peripheral connections will come up first. Your clients are not interested in these things; if they are looking for your law firm, they want to find information that is specifically related to your organization, what it does, and how it can help them.

Applying Marketing Strategies to Reputation marketing

Today it is possible to deploy a range of marketing strategies with the specific aim of managing your company's reputation. In the case of law firms, these strategies prioritize the cultivation of online content that speaks directly to the concerns of your current and potential clients. Expanding the online real estate that is in your direct control will go a long way towards ensuring that clients and community members are going to find information that is accurate and relevant to their concerns.

Our team will evaluate the particular reputation concerns affecting your law firm and can develop a targeted approach using proven marketing strategies to manage and rehabilitate your reputation on the Internet.

Your Reputation Will Drive Business

People are relying on search engines, social media accounts, and other online outlets to make purchasing choices; without a good reputation, business will suffer. Reputation marketing services are intended to help your law firm thrive by raising the visibility of the online profiles that you control. Providing accurate, relevant, and helpful information on the social media accounts, blogs, and other online outlets connected with your law firm's website will help customers discover your organization. These strategies are also great for making your firm more visible to local searches so that you can cultivate greater community connections and a more robust regional client base.

Helping Law Firms Do More

BusinessCreator specializes in helping organizations like yours remain competitive and visible. Our reputation marketing services are going to help your business thrive, so contact us today to get started.

The opportunity to improve upon your SEO rankings:

One guaranteed method to improve your rankings in organic web searches is to post video content on your firm's website. That's because search engines are designed to place such content that meets the criteria of a keyword search ahead of sites that only meet it with their landing pages.

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An old saying goes that “In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.” Well, amidst a sea of competing law firms all advertising their services online, if you’re the one that prospective clients are actually able to engage with through video, you can imagine in whom they’ll be more likely to entrust with their legal protection. With years of collective experience between us, our team knows what people are looking for when it comes to advertising video content. We can help ensure that not only will your video get in front of as many eyes as possible, but that it will convey the correct message when viewed.

The questions of whether or not you should spend your marketing dollars to be found on local search and mobile are no longer relevant; rather it has become when are you going to do it. You could be missing out on access to an ever-expanding virtual stream of clients that needs the legal protection that you can provide in this very instant.

Keeping Your Firm Competitive

No matter how many walk-ins or referrals your law firm receives, ignoring the power of local and mobile search marketing can be costly. With successful local search and mobile marketing strategies, you can position your firm more strongly in the market that matters most. You can also tap into one of the most targeted, economical and effective forms of marketing currently available.

Don’t let your firm miss out on this exciting opportunity for growth. Call us or visit our website today to learn more about the local search marketing strategies that can help your law firm thrive.

Fortunately, BusinessCreator has the tools and expertise needed to optimize your online content for the local and mobile environments. Let us help you take full advantage of all that local and mobile marketing has to offer your law firm with our **Power Practice Builder** solutions.

How would you like to see how your top 3 competitors are stealing business from you online? For more information and to set up a free consultation and website evaluation, visit www.forlawfirmsonly.com and www.businesscreatorplus.com or call 1-855-943-8736.

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