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A Guide to the Best Fonts for Your Law Firm

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Readability is fundamental. That means even the font of your law firm's website and legal documents matters.

Whether you're working for a small law firm or BigLaw, using the right font can better engage your target audience and build your firm's credibility and reputation for professionalism. It's an important tool for creating your brand and getting your law firm's name out there. (Just know that the right answer for a law firm font is never Comic Sans.)

As a lawyer, you're regularly drafting. The font you choose, like the case law you research, is another tool to use to your advantage in persuading your audience. The font your firm uses on formal legal briefs and memoranda should differ from the one you use for casual communications. Which font to use for your law firm's logo is an important question that deserves forethought, as is which to use for letterhead, business cards, and your firm's web design. There is an art to it, we promise.

In this blog, we'll discuss the basics of fonts for legal documents, including which to use and why, and then will get into details on different typographies and typefaces. Let's get started.

What message can certain fonts portray?

Your choice of font impacts a potential client's first impression of your firm. Is your firm classic and traditional, with a rich history? Or is your firm more modern and cutting-edge? A smart choice of font can convey seriousness or help build casual rapport. As you know, a solid law firm marketing strategy is key to staying at the top of the legal game, and font selection and consistency are important pieces of the marketing plan puzzle that can showcase your firm's legal services.

There are a couple of overarching important things to keep in mind when choosing a font.

Readability and legibility are the two top priorities when selecting a font. Illegible and "artistic" fonts make your text difficult to read. You don't want clients or prospects laboring to understand your message or read your law firm name. The best way to capture someone scrolling through social media is not by making your content harder to access. So, as more people choose to get work done from their mobile devices, it's important to consider how a selected font reads on all screen sizes. Selecting the right legal font or typeface indicates good judgment, which we know your law firm has in abundance.

Consistency is also important. Your law firm should choose the legal font that can be used consistently across mediums, including on all lawyer websites, practice area pages, letterhead, business cards, and even T-shirts and office supplies. Thinking about your firm's web design is especially important here. A unique and surprising law firm font can help set your firm apart and make it immediately recognizable to clients, a pivotal step in building brand identity.

What's the moral of this story? The best law firm font is a consistent one.

Are there better fonts for certain aspects of your legal work?

The short answer is, of course! The font that you use for formal legal documents (say, in a U.S. Supreme Court brief or an IRS filing) can and should differ from the font used for your law firm logo or in your firm's web design. Let's take a look at which fonts you should use for which purpose.

Legal documents

Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, and Century family fonts are standard for legal documents. When it comes to drafting formal legal documents, your firm cannot go wrong with these typefaces. Many litigators already know that certain courts require them (and often other very specific formatting criteria, like italics over underlining). Check with your local jurisdiction for specific rules on typeface and font size before filing. Here, your firm's style should take a back seat to your judge's preferences.

The following legal document fonts should get you started on brainstorming and help you determine your law firm's distinct style:

- Serif fonts: Baskerville, Georgia, Century Schoolbook, Garamond, and Times New Roman and its alternatives, such as Equity and Verdigris
- Sans serif fonts: Century Gothic, Calibri, Helvetica, and alternatives to Helvetica such as Atlas and Concourse

Marketing materials

When it comes to your firm's marketing materials, you have much more leeway in font selection. We recommend fonts that are clean and professional but still have a bit of edge. As noted above, you'll want the font to be both readable and consistent.

- Website and web design: Your website should be optimized for readability and searchability, and it should feature high-quality content. As you know, search engine optimization (SEO) is also measured by the quality of your law firm's website, so the higher the quality of content, the higher the likelihood of SEO impact. Your website's font is key here. Many law firms choose to work with outside experts to build their brand with web designers and marketing strategists who know the ins and outs of template design and typography for lawyers. Consider how content, like webinars and lawyer bios, will appear on your website when choosing a font.You should select your web fonts carefully. Sans serif fonts are easier to read on screens (especially on cell phones) and can help improve the user experience. We recommend Helvetica, Open Sans, or Roboto to get you started.
- Law firm logo design. Your law firm logo offers the best opportunity for some creativity. Choosing a unique font can set your law firm apart. When picking a font, consider where the

logo might appear and adjust its size and appearance accordingly. Keep in mind how the font will appear on things like business cards, brochures and other advertisements, social media graphics, T-shirts, mugs, and tote bags. Again, readability proves a top priority.

- Email. Email, like legal documents, should have a certain level of professionalism. Consider whether your law firm will choose one particular font for all email communications or whether it will permit individual lawyers and staff some latitude when making the decision.Arial is the most common font used for emailing because it's professional and easy to read. Other fonts popular for emails include Calibri, Georgia, Impact, Garamond, and Times New Roman. What fonts are available might also be limited by your service providers, like Microsoft Outlook or certain Google fonts. You can also download additional fonts to supplement what is available in your software packages.

Which family of fonts should your firm go with: serif or sans serif?

There are two main classes of font styles: serif and sans serif. Which family of fonts should your firm choose? The answer to this question is a lawyer's favorite: it depends.

Generally, serif fonts (think Times New Roman and Garamond) are about lineage and legacy. They're classic and traditional, and we associate them with trustworthiness and reliability. They can also be seen as a little old school and are infrequently used by tech companies and startups.

Sans serif fonts (think Helvetica and Open Sans) convey newness, a modern outlook, and an emphasis on being cutting-edge. These fonts are minimal and simplistic, and we associate them with youth and freshness. Sans serif fonts lack the gravity and history of serif fonts.

Speaking more technically, serif fonts have a decorative flourish at both the beginning and end of the character. Sans serif (which means "without the serif") fonts don't have that flourish.

Which typography and font family to pick is entirely up to your law firm. Is your firm carrying on a family legacy? If so, a serif font might be most fitting. But if your firm is turning its legacy on its head and becoming more modern, a sans serif font might be the right choice.

When choosing a font, consider what image your firm is trying to convey and who you are. We understand that it's a big question (and promise we're not trying to derail your day with existentialism). Hopefully, it's a fun question to consider! Your law firm is unique, and thinking about your clients and business is good for long-term growth and longevity.

This can be a tough decision, especially if you don't have a background in branding and design. We recommend working with branding experts to get your firm started on everything from logo design to local SEO.

Choosing the best font for your law firm

Your brand is important, and the fonts your law firm chooses for each aspect of its professional services create the brand. Remember to prioritize readability, legibility, and consistency.

Finding the right font is a critical step in refining your law firm's brand and voice and executing on its vision. It's time to get creative!

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