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A Lawyer's Guide to Lead Generation

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Lead generation: it's the lifeblood of your law firm, whether you have a solo practice or are part of a major global firm. We understand that this might be a strange concept. After all, you didn't go to law school to run a marketing agency on the side. And you certainly don't specialize in sales tactics.

But hear us out. The only way to serve clients is to first recruit them, and lead generation is your firm's best bet to acquire new clients.

Like most other aspects of modern life, [law firm marketing](#) happens online now. To compete in and win the legal marketing game, your firm needs to know how to generate leads from online sources. A reliable lead generation pipeline is as important to your firm's growth as expanding its legal expertise.

Having a business development plan that includes digital marketing strategies to generate and capitalize on leads is how you can set your firm on a path that leads to sustainable growth. The good news is that lead generation is something that [technology and the right team](#) can help you with — without blowing your marketing budget.

Let's get started by discussing what we mean when we say "lead generation."

What is a lead? What is lead generation?

In the simplest terms, a lead is a potential client. A lead is a person or a business that can benefit from your firm's legal services and that is willing to pay for those services.

The way the definition of lead narrows from there will be specific to your law firm and its needs. Maybe it's someone who clicks on your paid advertisement, a company that signs up for your firm's monthly newsletters, or traffic to a legal blog post showcasing your firm's expertise.

When we use the term "generate a lead," we simply mean catching a potential client's attention. The next steps of turning that attention into actualization and a brand-new client for your firm is where the growth happens. But don't put the cart before the horse. Knowing how to generate leads and creating a concrete strategy comes first.

We'll start with common lead generation strategies for lawyers, then we'll get into the nitty-gritty of how you can apply these strategies.

How does lead generation apply to the legal industry?

The application of lead generation to the legal industry isn't that different from other industries. It all starts with awareness and relies on high-quality content to reel in potential clients.

Lead generation is the process of piquing interest and finding potential clients — and it all begins at the top of the sales funnel. The sales funnel guides your firm's leads through their decision-making process before they select a law firm (and hopefully it guides them right to your office).

There are some basic phrases in a sales funnel and lead generation pipeline, which we break down below.

Awareness

This is more existential than we usually get, but the world needs to know you exist. Brand awareness is key, and unfortunately, it's not as simple as just yelling into the void.

Building awareness involves [improving your law firm's search rankings through search engine optimization](#), developing an interesting and user-friendly website design, [having a social media presence](#), and [creating content](#). By maximizing the ways that your firm can be discovered by internet searchers, either organically or through [paid advertisements](#), you'll also start to optimize the number of leads that you generate.

Intrigue and interest

Now that your lead is aware of your law firm, the second step is to keep their interest. Accessibility and content are critical here. The longer website visitors stay on your firm's website, the more they learn about what your firm can offer, and the more likely they are to contact you.

We recommend having a well-structured, welcoming website and regular blog posts showcasing your firm's expertise to attract your target audience.

Decision

Congratulations, you now have your lead's attention! This is the part of the sales funnel where your prospective client decides whether to use your firm's services.

Your part in the decision-making process is demonstrating everything your law firm has to offer, including your first-class lawyers, subject area expertise, and client-oriented service. Your website should include all of this information and more to coax your lead into saying a resounding "yes."

Action and success

This is the part of the sales funnel where new leads initiate contact. This initial contact might look different for each law firm. However, it usually includes the lead filling out an online form with their information, calling to schedule a free consultation, or reaching out for more information about your firm's services. Make sure your website offers different options for initiating contact; some people prefer an online form to a phone call or vice versa.

Lead generation protects your firm's financial health, ensuring that the sales funnel is regularly replenished with new inquiries and therefore potential for growth. Your firm has a lot that it can

actively do to make sure it's putting its best foot forward with lead generation.

What are some common lead generation strategies lawyers can use?

Without a lead generation strategy, your firm will likely rely on referrals and word-of-mouth to grow. You can do better! Below are some common lead strategies that your firm can use to get started.

Build a comprehensive website

We cannot stress how important your firm's website is to generating leads and converting those leads into paying clients. As discussed above, your website is pivotal to establishing your firm's brand. You want your website to be polished, professional, and user-friendly. It should also be compatible with both mobile devices and desktops.

Your firm's website must be personal. Potential clients love to review attorney bios, so make sure those are drafted consistently and highlight the expertise and experience of your lawyers. We also recommend including positive case results and client testimonials on your website so leads can better understand what makes your law firm stand out.

Your website should include high-resolution and high-quality photos, and the headshots of your lawyers should be consistent and professional. Your firm is unique, and your website should showcase that.

Implement email marketing

Email marketing is another useful tool to help your firm generate quality leads. To begin, your law firm will need to build an emailing list. We recommend that you start in one of two ways (or both!).

The first is to offer a weekly or monthly newsletter free of charge. You'll collect email addresses from prospective clients this way while getting the opportunity to directly share your firm's expertise and wins with those clients.

The second is to build lead magnets that visitors can download directly from your firm's website. Lead magnets are a free item or service given away to gather a web visitor's contact information, including their email address and phone number. Popular resources that are worth exchanging emails and digits for include white papers, guidebooks, and access to webinars. The lead gets the valuable resource, while you get their contact information.

Once your firm has built a solid email list, you can follow up with current and prospective legal clients. The emails to your mailing list should be targeted and focus on the services your firm can offer and how those services solve problems for your clients.

Expand your reach through social media marketing campaigns

Your law firm must also have a polished and engaging portfolio on social media, particularly on Facebook, Google Business Profile, and LinkedIn. Contacting a lawyer can be intimidating for a prospective client, and social media can help you close that gap. In addition, [with a solid social](#)

media presence, your law firm can market its expertise while building stronger community relationships by engaging directly with leads or current clients.

Your firm can purchase paid advertisements (discussed in more detail below) or use organic advertisements posted to your firm's own page. Social media is the best way to show how unique and personal your law firm is, a key component in building reputation and trust with your audience. Social media posts should be interesting, visually appealing, and link directly to your firm's website to capture any leads. Social media is also the place where your law firm can have a bit of fun — for example, you can conduct polls or host Q&As with the community. It's the ideal platform for community engagement and the humanization of your lawyers and firm.

Follow a robust content strategy

To build a long-lasting online presence, your firm needs to integrate content marketing into its overall business strategy. A sound content marketing strategy will generate leads and boost your law firm's search engine rankings.

The best way to start is by asking what questions your legal leads may have. Then create regular content addressing those questions for your target audience, such as blog posts on subject matter where your firm has expertise or a webinar on a developing area of law. As discussed above, these lead magnets are a great resource for growing your firm's contact list and reputation.

You'll also want to build landing pages, which are web pages created for specific marketing campaigns. Landing pages have a single goal: converting visitors into prospects. A visitor arrives at a landing page most often after they click on a link in an email or in an ad from a search engine or social media.

To be effective, your landing page copy has to be persuasive and centered around getting your visitor to take a specific action. Say, for example, that you want to set up a landing page promoting a particular practice area. You could advertise your lawyers' personal injury expertise by offering a downloadable guide explaining the steps a plaintiff should take if they've been involved in a car accident.

The content your firm produces should, of course, be legally sound and helpful, but it should also be optimized for search engines. Creating a content generation strategy that answers clients' common questions ensures that prospects find your website. Including dynamic, relevant call-to-action (CTA) buttons like "contact us now" or "click here for more information on how to file" make it easy for visitors to follow through to the next step and contact your firm.

Optimize your website for search engines

Search engine optimization (SEO) improves your firm's website to boost its online visibility in search engines. Google and other search engine result pages show the top results of a user's search based on the content of your webpage. The more relevant your content is to the Google search, the more likely that your content will appear at the top of a Google search page.

SEO is also measured by the quality of your law firm's website. Quality takes into consideration things like your site's layout, accessibility, keywords, the quality and quantity of web traffic to your website, backlinks, and even the quality of your content. Yes, that means that Google, like your high school English teacher, is judging your grammar and syntax and assigning you a grade.

Considering and improving these SEO components will increase your firm's overall SEO, leading to increased searchability and visibility and therefore increasing the quality of your leads.

Local SEO is also an essential marketing strategy. Your law firm likely has an ideal geographical area that it wants to generate leads from. Optimizing your firm's Google Maps and Google My Business presence can help establish your firm as the reputable, go-to law firm in the community.

Employ pay-per-click advertising, pay-per-lead advertising, and Google advertising

Paid search campaigns are a great tool to enhance your law firm's visibility. There are three main types of paid advertising: pay per click, pay per lead, and Google's Local Services ads.

Pay per click (PPC)

With PPC advertising, your law firm pays for the number of clicks it receives. Your ad pops up on the platform (search engine, social media, or another website), someone clicks the ad, and then your firm pays for the click.

It seems simple, but getting the best results requires a sound strategy and regular re-evaluation of that strategy. You'll need to research and pick the right keywords and platform to host your ad, organize those keywords into ad groups, and then link to the right portions of your website to hook the lead quickly. As with your website, ad design and copy are also important.

Pay per lead (PPL)

As the name suggests, with PPL advertising, the amount your law firm pays for an ad depends on the number of leads acquired. Usually, with a PPL agreement, your law firm will set the parameters of what constitutes a lead and only pay when those specific requirements are met.

PPL is generally quantified by the number of leads who provide their contact information — think of the call to action, lead magnets, or newsletters discussed throughout this article. PPL advertising is a particularly good option for solo practitioners or small law firms that want to grow their law practice but don't yet have the capacity to open the floodgates to many new clients.

Google's Local Services ads

Local Services ads are Google's first PPL program. With Local Services ads, your law firm can connect with people who search on Google for the services your firm offers. Your firm's ad will show up for these customers in your geographic area. Similar to standard PPL, your law firm will only pay if the lead calls or messages directly through the advertisement.

These Google ads are relatively new and require multi-step verification. As with other advertisement strategies, Local Services ads should be optimized to showcase your law firm's expertise.

Start generating more qualified leads for your law firm today

The legal market is booming. To stay at the top of the heap, your law firm needs an online advertising strategy complete with a well-considered lead generation process. By implementing tactics to improve your firm's visibility, including building out your website using SEO and

stepping up your social media and content marketing efforts, you can start getting the word out on just how great your law firm is and begin attracting more qualified leads.

The prospect of taking on lead generation can be daunting. But you don't have to be an online marketing expert to build a pipeline of leads. [The right tools and solutions, including lead generation services](#), will help you get off to a fast start and accelerate your lead conversion rate in no time.

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