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Social Media Will Greatly Strengthen
YOUR WEB CAMPAIGN

Social media is popular, but will it increase your law firm's visibility, traffic and SEO? You hear about social media constantly, including from the media, clients, vendors, friends and relatives. Facebook has more than 600 million users, of which more than 50% log in daily. LinkedIn has more than 100 million users. Twitter users post more than 140 million tweets per day, more than triple the number a year ago.

Dale Tincher, CEO
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There are several reasons social media will greatly strengthen your Web campaign. Referrals generate more cases than any other source. "Word-of-mouth" has evolved and spilled over into social media. People are recommending products and services every day to their friends and family through their Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages. Social media allows you to expand your referral network exponentially. It allows you to build a sense of community; promote your brand, attorneys and achievements; manage your reputation; announce your charitable work; and increase your website exposure and rankings.

Improving Your Web Marketing
BY WATCHING BASKETBALL

Being a native Kentuckian means I was born a citizen of Big Blue Nation and that I am obligated to cancel all non-basketball social activities during March. So, the source of my inspiration for this newsletter article was, of necessity, ESPN. While finding parallels between the NCAA tournament and law firm marketing may seem like a stretch, take a moment to consider:

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Upsets are Always Possible, but... Even the best statisticians would never have laid bets that VCU would reach the Final Four, but they did. Consistency, focus, and determined effort made up for their weaknesses. The same is true for your Web marketing campaign. Create a core strategy based on defined goals and remain focused. A focused, consistent approach should be the game plan for smaller firms that wish to compete successfully.

What Should I Put On The Front Page Of My
LAW FIRM WEBSITE?

Kevin Smith, Director of Design Services
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1. PROVIDE PRACTICE AREA KEYWORDS - Let's say your users are finding you mainly through Google or another Internet search engine. Obviously, a main goal of your website is to attract law firm clients. If you are optimizing your legal website with specific terms in mind, you or your SEO firm should emphasize those terms in the top half of your front page. Usually these terms will be practice areas or ways you can help your potential client. Couple these terms with powerful imagery.

2. PROVIDE LINKS TO YOUR ATTORNEY BIOS - If your users have been referred by a former client, they will be looking for information on a specific lawyer. You should prominently display a link or graphic that allows visitors to become more acquainted with your attorneys and staff. Having a video or picture of the attorney is helpful so that the visitor can make a visual connection to the attorney.

3. PROVIDE CONTACT FORMS FOR RETURN VISITORS - Return visitors are generally looking for a contact method or an office location. Make your contact information easy to see at the top of the page. It should be on every page, both at the top and bottom. Lead the client from the front page to your contact information or contact form. Hold their hand through the process and make it easy.

The Five Internet Search Terms Every Web Marketing Lawyer
NEEDS TO KNOW

Confused by all the SEO jargon? The following are five key terms you need to know— and an explanation of why they are crucial to the success of your law firm's Web marketing.

Guy Loranger, JD, Web Content Editor - gloranger@consultwebs.com

SEO

is short for "search engine optimization." For law firm Web marketing, SEO involves the strategy and effort that goes into writing and designing your law firm's website so it will be easily found on the Internet by potential clients.

SEO involves using the right content, design, coding and linking. Because of constantly changing search engine algorithms, SEO requires constant attention and effort.

SERP

like SEO, is a term commonly used by law firm Web marketing types that may be an unfamiliar term to others. It stands for "search engine results page," or the list of results that appear on screen when a person types a query into a search engine.

KEYWORDS

are the words a search engine user types into a query when looking for a product or service. Generally speaking, law firms want to select keywords that specifically describe the practice areas and geographic markets on which they want to focus. This means you should avoid broad terms, like "attorney," and choose more narrow terms, such as "Chicago attorney" or, better yet, "Chicago personal injury attorney."

BACKLINKS

Backlinks, which are sometimes called "incoming links" or "inbound links," are links from other websites to your site. The more backlinks you have, the higher your site will place in search engine results. An effective SEO campaign will use a variety of ways to create backlinks to your site, including placing your site in directories and using satellite sites, blogs, press releases and professional Twitter and Facebook accounts.

META TAGS

are hidden bits of information about your Web pages. Meta tags normally can't be seen by your site's visitors. However, search engine crawlers seek out meta tags for information that will go into search engine indexes. Like keywords and backlinks, meta tags play a key role in your law firm's SEO strategy, especially your keyword tags and description tags.

The Mobile Revolution: Why Are Mobile Friendly Websites
NECESSARY FOR LAW FIRMS?

Tanner Jones, Marketing Director - tjones@consultwebs.com

By 2013, mobile phones are expected to overtake desktop PCs as the most common Web access device worldwide, according to Gartner Research. Surveys and statistics show a clear trend of mobile device growth. According to eMarketer, over 73 million Americans own a Smartphone today. Nielson studies illustrate a rapid growth of Smartphone users throughout the year 2011 and anticipate that 50% of Americans will own a Smartphone by the end of this year.

With increasing numbers of people accessing the Internet through mobile devices such as iPhones, law firms need to keep pace by offering the formats that best complement the visitor's access device. A website that displays correctly on mobile phones is one of the many ways a law firm can stand out in today's competitive marketplace.

That's why it is important to offer attractive, easy-to-read pages that are specifically designed for the mobile environment. To see an example of a mobile website developed by Consultwebs.com, Inc., please enter www.mesotheliomahelp.net into your mobile web browser.

A law firm's mobile website should provide all of the relevant information found on your main site.

It should be developed in an easily viewable format that is customized to fit smaller screen resolutions. Your firm should include its office location(s), multiple call-to-actions and contact forms.

Nielson studies illustrate a rapid growth of Smartphone users throughout the year 2011 and anticipate that 50% of Americans will own a Smartphone by the end of this year.

ABA Ethics Ruling
USE CAUTION AND CARE ON YOUR WEBSTE CONTENT

Mike Dayton, JD, Manager of Content Services
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Your law firm's website can be an amazing, 24-hour marketing tool. Through your website, your firm can communicate who you are, the scope and quality of your law firm's services, and the results you have accomplished for current and former clients.

However, as a recently issued American Bar Association ethics opinion points out, these benefits can vanish if your law firm's website provides misleading information, creates unrealistic expectations or generates inquiries that are not carefully managed.

We recommend that you read ABA Formal Ethics Opinion 10-457, which addresses ethical obligations related to law firm website content. State Bars often rely on ABA ethics rulings when drafting their own ethics opinions.

1 General compliance with Model Rules 7.1, 8.4(c) and 4.1(a): Read together, these rules prohibit a law firm from making any communication on its website that is a "false, fraudulent or misleading" statement of fact or law. It's wise to regularly check the accuracy of your site's content and keep information updated and current.

2 Information about the law: The best way to draw visitors to your website and keep them there is to provide content that is keyword-rich and compelling. This includes your attorney profiles, practice area descriptions, case summaries and frequently asked questions, or FAQs. However, your site should make it clear to visitors that you are only providing general legal information and that the content should not be relied on as a substitute for personal legal advice.

3 Visitor inquiries: An online form makes it convenient for your website's visitors to contact you. But keep in mind that when a person responds to your request for a submission, it may generate discussion with a prospective client that could include confidential information. Your law firm should feature appropriate warnings about this fact and apply its conflicts-checking system to these website inquiries.

Generally speaking, the ABA ethics opinion stresses the need to include a warning or cautionary statement on your website that effectively limits, conditions or disclaims your firm's obligations to site visitors.

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Consultwebs' Accounting Manager / Admin Specialist today: jhartman@consultwebs.com.

Improving Your Web Marketing By Watching Basketball

One-Trick Ponies Can't Hang – You might have the toughest pressure defense or the biggest players, but without a broad arsenal of weapons your strategy will not have the flexibility to succeed in a dynamic environment. To maximize your potential you need to have a competitive strategy that coordinates websites, social media marketing, blogging, press releases, and other online marketing initiatives.

'One and Done' Won't Cut It – Some colleges recruit players to obtain the best talent in the nation but downplay the importance of athletic development and experience. A one-and-done strategy is a short-sighted approach for both basketball recruiting and law firm marketing. Be choosy and think long term. Select a company with at least 5-10 years of experience with law firm Web marketing and a proven track record. A flash-in-the-pan firm may take you to the Final Four in Year One, but don't expect to win a national championship when the competition starts to heat up.

An analysis of basketball's winners and losers reminds us that success is maximized when your Web marketing campaign remains committed to a focused strategy built around defined goals; your approach to online visibility is multi-faceted; and you execute the plan with experience and long-term vision.

Social Media Will Greatly Strengthen YOUR WEB CAMPAIGN

CNN Tech recently reported that the percentage of social media users 50 and older had increased from 22% to 42% since last year.   The 65 and older age group had a 100% increase in their usage of social media. This illustrates that the fastest growing demographic for social media is people 50 and older. The younger demographic has already saturated the Social Media environment with 86% of 18 to 29 year-olds reporting they regularly use social media.

We have recently redesigned Professional Facebook sites for several clients using Facebook's programming and design capabilities. Munley, Munley & Cartwright's Facebook page, http://www.facebook.com/munley, has 597 "Likes". We also recently redesigned Schwartzapfel Partners' Facebook page.

We invite you to view our Consultwebs Facebook page, http://www.facebook.com/consultwebs.   If you would like for us to review your social sites or goals, please let us know.