7 Basic Skills to Look for When Hiring A Law Firm Marketing Consultant

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Finding a reliable law firm marketing consultant or external agency can be challenging. Regardless of what their portfolio shows, you won't get an accurate sense of how effective their services are until you start paying them. The reality is some lawyers find themselves working with someone who provides little value in return.

To hire a good marketing consultant, you must understand what the job involves and what skills they need to succeed. That way, you can ask the right questions and find a trusted and qualified candidate. This blog post includes a list of required skills your future law firm marketing consultant should possess.

There are many different law firm marketing strategies you could adopt. The right approach for your firm will depend on your practice area and target clients.

If you have a particular strategy in mind that requires specific marketing skills, you may seek out a consultant who specializes in those areas. However, generally, you should look for a well-rounded law firm marketing consultant with a wide variety of marketing skills to get the most value for your money. Read on for a list of skills to keep top of mind during your search for an outstanding marketing consultant.

Get the most out of your interviews with law firm marketing consultants by utilizing these small law firm interview questions.

Required skills for a law firm marketing consultant

Proficient in WordPress

For online marketing to work well for your law firm, you need to have a good website. Think of your website as the virtual version of your law office. It's where prospective clients will go when they engage with your law firm brand online. Your site needs to look professional, be well-designed, and have in-depth, valuable content to convert visitors to potential clients.

Unsurprisingly, law firm website marketing is critical for lead generation. With this in mind, working with a law firm marketing consultant proficient in WordPress will support your firm's website marketing initiatives.

Given the importance of a website to your marketing plan, look for marketing consultant experienced in working with websites. There are a variety of DIY website platforms available, but WordPress is the most common for blogs and marketing websites due to its ease of use and powerful customization options.

Any marketing consultant you hire should be well-versed in WordPress software. They should understand how to structure a marketing website or blog, use categories and tags, create pages and posts, install plugins and themes, and more.

Learn more about website content management in our Complete Guide to Law Firm Website Content.

Graphic design capabilities

The most effective marketing messages always contain visual content. Studies have shown that webpages, online ads, and even Facebook posts will have much higher engagement rates when they include an image or video when compared to just plain text.

For these reasons, you should look to hire a marketing consultant capable of producing engaging graphics for marketing materials.. They don't have to be a professional designer, but basic photo editing and design skills are necessary.

Photoshop is typically the most common software program used for photo editing and basic graphic design. Find out if the marketing candidate has experience working with Photoshop or something similar. Also, be sure to ask to see some examples of their past design work.

Compelling copywriting

One of the most fundamental skills that every marketing consultant needs is a knack for writing captivating legal content and marketing copy. It may seem simple, but crafting the right language is one of the most challenging parts of marketing. It's also one of the most important skills because using clear, compelling language will encourage prospective clients to read your articles, click your links, open your emails, and otherwise engage with your marketing messages.

The best way to assess someone's copywriting ability is to request a short writing sample. Have them write a 500-word blog post, an email newsletter, or even just a headline for your website. It's crucial to pay attention to their writing style and grammar. In particular, notice their voice and tone—are they consistent with how you want to portray your law firm? If not, point this out and ask to see styles closer to your firm's brand. It's critical to work with someone who understands your firm's audience and brand.

Learn more about brand building via our Lawyer's Guide to Online Marketing.

Well-versed in Google Analytics

Marketing is by no means a set-it-and-forget-it activity. You need to be analyzing results regularly and updating your strategy accordingly.

There are many options for analytics tools, but one of the most popular and powerful is Google Analytics. It analyzes all kinds of details about your web traffic. You can find out:

- How many people are visiting your website
- Where they're coming from (search engine, social media, etc.).
- Which pages they're visiting most.
- How much time they spend on each page.
- The pages they last visit (before leaving your website).
- And which pages are converting (i.e., when someone fills out a contact form).

This data is vital for understanding the most engaging content and determining what improvements you can make to grow traffic and convert more visitors into clients. Make sure your marketing consultant has a solid understanding of Google Analytics, including how to install it on your website.

Basic SEO knowledge

SEO, or search engine optimization, is the process of making your website more easily discoverable in search engines. It's a highly technical field, and most marketing people won't be true SEO experts. But it is nonetheless essential for a marketing consultant to have a basic understanding SEO.

You can take some fundamental steps to get more website traffic from Google. Successful law firm marketing consultants should be familiar with these. For example, using essential keywords in page titles and URLs, linking related blog posts and pages, building backlinks from other high-ranking websites, etc.

Ask law firm marketing consultant candidates what SEO experience they have. Ensure they have foundational knowledge so your website and content will be optimized for search engine discovery. Read our SEO guide for law firms to learn more.

Social media marketing skills

Social media marketing should be a key component of your firm's marketing strategy. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn have massive reach, with users numbering hundreds of millions or billions. Odds are, your prospective clients are on at least one of these platforms.

Social media networks enable your law firm to build an audience, share content, and engage directly with prospective clients. There are very few other ways of reaching so many people with targeted content and marketing messages. Not having a presence on major social networks is a big mistake from a marketing standpoint.

Ensure any law firm marketing consultant you hire is experienced with the major social media channels, especially those relevant to your firm. They should also have experience in creating engaging posts and content to share across these networks. See our guide to social media for law firms to learn more.

Proven success with email marketing

Networking will always be one of the best free marketing strategies for law firms. Email marketing is a great way to keep up-to-date with your extensive network of contacts. Additionally, email marketing for law firms is one of the most fundamental digital marketing strategies.

A skilled marketing consultant should be familiar with at least one major email marketing software—such as MailChimp, Constant Contact, AWeber, Emma, Mad Mimi, etc. Ask about their experience using these applications to create email campaigns, manage email lists, and track engagement metrics. How have they grown client lists by using email marketing? They should be able to present a success story with conversion rates, email template examples, and additional metrics.

Learn more about the art and science of email marketing by reading 6 Email Marketing Tips for Lawyers.

Bonus skills to look for when hiring a marketing consultant

Want to hire a true marketing superstar? While not critical, the additional skills below will help you get the most out of your marketing budget. These skills separate the best marketers from the rest of the crowd.

Look for experience and knowledge in these additional areas if you have a particular marketing strategy in mind:

Frontend Web Development (HTML/CSS/Javascript)

Basic web development skills are instrumental when customizing a website and adding more powerful functionality to it.

Google Advertising

Pay-per-click (PPC) ads are expensive, but they can work well for certain volume-based legal practices, such as personal injury, criminal, or employment.

Facebook Ads

Facebook advertising is rapidly becoming a favorite choice for online advertisers due to its incredible targeting capabilities. If you're a law firm whose target clients tend to be Facebook users, you can also benefit from Facebook advertising.

Video Editing

Videos have been shown to have the highest engagement of any online content and can be an excellent add-on to your firm's marketing strategy.

Zapier

Zapier is a popular tool that can add superpowers to your marketing by connecting your marketing apps and automating tasks and data entry behind the scenes.

The right law firm marketing consultant is out there

No matter your practice area, finding a good law firm marketing consultant is not easy. Thankfully, it's easier when you know what skills marketing consultants need to succeed—and why these marketing skills are essential to achieve optimal return on investment (ROI). Hopefully, this blog post will support you in asking the optimal interview questions—getting a true representation of any law firm marketing consultant's qualifications. And, ultimately, finding the best law firm marketing consultant for you and your unique business needs.

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