DIY Local SEO for Lawyers

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Why is local SEO for lawyers so important? According to Martindale-Avvo's 2019 research, up to 46.5% of prospective clients use Google search when researching which law firm to choose. This is up from 2017, where Clio's*Legal Trends Report* found the 37% of legal clients who found their lawyers through search engines.

This finding proves that clients still value word of mouth and referrals from family, friends, and other attorneys. However, **online research is becoming increasingly relevant** for people looking for legal help.

Any law firm that has started its SEO journey understands that local **search engine optimization (local SEO) plays an enormous role in clients finding and recommending them online**. Google is constantly preaching about the growing importance of local searches, evidenced by how the number of people searching for services"near them" are growing faster than other terms.

But what we are talking about when we say local SEO for lawyers? More importantly, how can lawyers make the most of local SEO to get new clients and make sure their existing local clients and prospects get the best experience possible? This guide to local SEO for lawyers will give you the answers.

What is local SEO for lawyers?

Local SEO is the search engine optimization area focused on queries that have local intent. Queries refer to what people type into search engines like Google when looking for answers to their questions. Local people use these searches to look for local products, services, or information. Think about the number of times you've typed "gas station near me" or "restaurant near me." These are all considered local search engine searches.

Local searchers can also trigger specific local results, such as **local maps**. All these can be crucial for attorneys and legal practices that serve a particular geographical area. In relation to local seo for lawyers, searches can range from "immigration lawyers near me" to "lawyers Seattle" and an unlimited number of variations in between.

Google's Local Search Pack

Another example of local SEO for lawyers would be when searching for "family lawyers in Vancouver":

The image shows how search results for family law practices in specific locations usually trigger the **local search pack**. You've probably already been using Google's Local Pack regularly—it's the feature that appears at the top of search results for local searches. For example, if you type "family lawyers near me" or "family lawyers in Vancouver," the results that show up at the top will be in your local area.

Proximity to the user location, reviews, and relevance to the specific query affect how legal practitioners rank on Google's local pack. While the local search pack is relevant, there's more to local SEO. You need to ensure:

- You optimize yourlaw firm's website for local queries.
- Your presence across local websites and directories is cohesive.
- You focus on legal websites that have a presence for your particular practice area and location.

The above points are all elements of local search that we will cover in this guide.

DIY Local SEO for law firms

To make the most of local SEO for lawyers, firms should start with their Google Business Profile listing.

1. Google Business Profile and Google's Local Pack

Google Business Profile (GBP) is the main tool where local businesses, including law firms, can outline information about themselves to Google and get featured in Google Maps and Google Search. A GPB listing is a business page that includes business name, address, and phone number so Google can show that information to people searching for local lawyers. You can check the fullguide to representing your business on Google.

When it comes to local SEO for lawyers, Google uses the information from your GBP listing for Google Maps and its local pack, as well as local search results for local queries to serve.

Google states that to improve your local ranking locally, you need to be the most **relevant, prominent, and close in distance** to the searcher. While there's not much you can do about the distance from someone who just entered a search for a lawyer, you can definitely affect **relevance and prominence**.

How to be relevant in Google Business Profile

A big part of local SEO for lawyers is your firm needing to serve content relevant to what the searcher is looking for.

If your legal practice specializes in personal injury cases, you need to make sure your GBP listing title and business description contains information like “personal injury lawyer.” Also, it’s best to include things like:

- The content of the reviews and your website.
- Consistent descriptions, address, and phone number across local directories.

Note that what others are saying about you (for example, through Google reviews) might influence your relevance to someone looking for a local attorney. Positive reviews can have a winning impact on local SEO for lawyers.

How to be prominent in Google Business Profile

Ensuring that your practice has as many positive reviews as possible. Make sure these reviews are relevant across the web across articles, directories, and even offline. Doing so can all push your law firm’s listing to the top of the search engine results.

2. Get reviews

Reviews will define whether people can find you online or not: **More reviews equal more prominence and higher rankings**. The usefulness of reviews goes even further—it’s often one of the main things people will look for when searching for a lawyer.

But how do you get more reviews to improve local SEO for lawyers?

There isn’t any “best” way to improve your local SEO rankings. Most legal practices will have to go through a process of trial and error. But generally, you need to provide a greatclient-centered experience to every client**.** You should ask for reviews from clients who are happy with your legal services. If you see your clients in your firm’s office, you can also print small cards asking for a Google review.

However, if it’s easy for clients to leave you Google reviews, you could potentially receive bad reviews if the client has a bad experience with your firm. Be sure to focus your attention on always providing the best possible client-centered experience. This will inevitably support your strategy for local SEO for lawyers.

Ultimately, responding to positive and negative reviews shows you care about your clients.

3. Engagement: Social media and Google Business Profile posts

While social media won't directly improve your search rankings, having a healthy online presence on relevant social media channels is an easy way to increase awareness and therefore supports local SEO for lawyers. By increasing awareness about your law firm among potential clients you can positively impact your firm's prominence on local rankings.

You can also add blog posts to your GBP listing to keep your community engaged. Sharing posts also increases the potential for your business to appear in searches. You can learn more about posts for local businesses by reading the full Google support article.

4. Optimize your website

Your law firm website's content also influences local SEO for lawyers. A law firm website with information about its practice area and a specific page with local content will inform Google's decision on how to rank the website.

Beyond that, not all potential clients will be clicking on the local search result. Some will scroll and click on non-local search results. If you want to have the most chances of outranking competitor law firms in your area, make sure you're optimizing your website for queries that include your practice areas and locations.

You can add content with information about your specific practice area and location on your homepage. Or, if you focus on several areas of law and geographies, you can create specific landing pages for each practice area and geography. If you don't know where to start, you can check our lawyer SEO guide with some SEO best practices on getting started.

5. Optimize local and legal directories

Although the majority of people search on Google— some people use apps and directories like Yellow Pages or Yelp. Sometimes, these sites will also come up on local search results.

Ensure you cover all major local and legal directories. This way, you're making your website as visible as possible for potential clients. Make sure your law firm address, phone number, email address, and other relevant information stay consistent across listings. Search engines favor consistent address information, thereby making this a crucial step in local SEO for lawyers.

Examples of business listings for local SEO firms include Yelp, Yellow Pages, Apple Maps, Bing Places for Business, etc. You can also find a lot of legal-specific directories—check our articles on the best directories for lawyers and the bestlead generation services for lawyers.

6. Leverage Google's Screened Results

Local SEO for lawyers is similar to optimizing local SEO for any other business, but screened results are one of the things setting it apart.

Screened results are a way for Google to provide direct reviews and results for attorneys by bypassing other services like Avvo, Justia. Screened results are a key tool in any local SEO campaign.

Even if you don't pay forGoogle advertising, you can still appear in organic results when searchers click on "more lawyers" under the first screened results, opening a new search vertical for your legal practice.

If you want to get started with Google Screened, you can checkGoogle's information page and theirrequirements page. This process will take more time and effort than setting up a GBP profile or creating search ads.

7. Leverage Google's Local Services Ads

In short, Google's Local Services Ads are pay-per-lead ads offered through Google that appear at the top of search engine results. They match prospective customers searching for a service with relevant businesses in the same area. The result? Customers get reliable suggestions, while companies see a better return on investment with more qualified leads.

Even better, with Google's Local Services Ads for Clio, you can sign up for and manage a Local Services Ads account, set up and run ad campaigns, capture new leads, and measure campaign performance all within a single platform.

Here are some of the additional benefits:

- **Build client trust:** Earn a "Google Screened" badge verifying your business is qualified to offer legal services.
- **Control your budget:** Set your weekly budget and pause your ad at any time.
- **Pay for results:** Only pay when a potential lead contacts you through the ad, resulting in higher quality leads and cases. Plus, new Google Ads users will receive $500 in ad credits when they spend $500.

Learn more here, or book a live demonstration with a Clio expert.

Finding local SEO services for law firms

Local SEO for lawyers can be confusing and complex, but this guide will help you get started. You can also work with a wide range of agencies andSEO professionals to help you work out what's the best approach for your firm. Read more on ourguide to finding SEO partners andhow to know if your SEO partner sucks.

Frequently asked questions

Do law firms need SEO?

Lawyers and law firms need SEO. Local SEO for lawyers is especially important. 46.5% of users rely on search engines as part of their journey finding an attorney or qualifying recommendations from other channels. If prospective clients cannot find lawyers on Google or if their client reviews and images are not up there, it might impact a practice's capacity to acquire new clients.

How does SEO help law firms?

SEO makes law firms easier to find on Google and other search engines, including Google maps.

Can you pay Google to rank higher?

No. You can bid for search ads that will appear on top of organic results, but there's no way to pay Google to rank higher on organic search results.

About Clio

Clio is the global leader in legal AI, powering legal work across the profession, from law firms of every size to corporate legal teams, government agencies, and courts. Its Intelligent Legal Work Platform unites the business and practice of law, connecting the

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