



The Top 25 Law Marketing Clichés to Avoid

As a whole, lawyers are very literal, often too literal for good marketing. As a result, many firms simply opt for the obvious icons that represent the general concept of "Law," just like most of their closest competitors. The logical rationale seems to be, "Well, if everyone else is doing it this way, it must be right." But that's wrong.

As a whole, lawyers are very literal. Often too literal for good marketing. Firms that don't know any better, opt for the obvious icons that represent the general concept of "Law," just like most of their closest competitors. **Your marketing should set you apart, help you stand above the crowd.** And doing exactly what they do buries you in the anonymous middle. Sure it's safe, but **"safe" doesn't help generate revenue.**

That is, if your website home page shows a skyline or column, you've immediately convinced me that your firm is mediocre, and there's nothing worth reading inside. If you want to claim to be a high-end, A-tier firm, then you must *look* like it, and a photo of a handshake, map, or pen resting on a document won't cut it. No exceptions, unless you're, say, Wachtell or Cravath.



So here they are, the 25 most typical and tedious clichés law firms use -- and what they *actually* convey to the average reader:

The Image (What it means.)

1. **Globe/Map** (We did a deal in *Toronto* once)
2. **Shaking hands** (We're your *partner*.)
3. **Building/Architectural detail** (We work in a *building!*)
4. **Skylines** (We work in a *city!*)
5. **Columns/Courthouse** (We're *lawyers!*)
6. **Gavel** (Yup, we're *lawyers*.)
7. **Light bulbs** (We have good *ideas*.)
8. **Chess pieces** (We're *strategic*.)
9. **Diverse conference room** (Stock photo)
10. **Smiling lawyers** (*People* work here!)



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11. **Scales of justice** (Still just lawyers.)
12. **Dart boards** (We're on *target*.)
13. **DNA/Test tube/beaker/gears/CD** (We have an *IP* practice.)
14. **Male/Female couple walking, wearing suits** (That's our profession's *action* shot.)
15. **Vacant lobby/Conference room** (We go home at 5:00.)
16. **Books** (This might be 2011, but we still use *books*.)
17. **Laptop/Computer** (Look! We use *computers*!)
18. **Eyeglasses or pen on a document** (Our lawyers work on *documents*.)
19. **Boxing gloves** (We're *tough*.)
20. **Rowing/Musicians** (We work as a *team*!)
21. **Crayons/Flags/Circle of hands** (*Diversity*!)
22. **Grinning PI or divorce lawyer** (Lost a limb? Wife left you? Good for *me*!)
23. **Cheetah** (We move *fast*.)
24. **Maze** (We solve *puzzles*.)
25. **Blurry person running up steps** (Out of my way! I'm late for court!)

The fact that you immediately recognized all or most of these, and perhaps laughed uncomfortably at a few of them, proves that these images have lost their impact. So, if you are using any of these in your marketing materials, from website or blog to print ads or brochures, *stop immediately*.

Either change your tag line to "Average skills. Average price.TM" or, preferably, come up with something that really sets you apart. Create something else, something great. Something that helps you stand out in a way that helps generate real revenue. If you can't do it, hire someone who can. But you have to do it, it's important.

Figure out who you really are, then build your marketing around that.

