

From the Great Jakes Blog

The content marketing boom. 8 reasons why lawyers are creating all of this stuff.



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In my last piece, I predicted that law firm websites would grow dramatically in the coming years, due to the proliferation of attorney-created thought leadership content. In that post, I referred to the market forces behind this trend. I figured that it would be helpful if I compiled a list of these trends (many of which I've written about previously). So, here they are — 8 market forces pushing attorneys to generate more thought leadership content:



1. **Skepticism toward Marketing** – Our society has become increasingly numb to marketing messages. As a result, it's no longer enough to simply claim that you're the best – you have to demonstrate it.
2. **A Trend toward Specialization** – Routine matters are increasingly being handled by in-house legal departments. This means that the work given to outside counsel tends to concern highly specialized, bet-the-company matters. Content marketing is simply the best way for attorneys to demonstrate their specialized expertise.
3. **A Wider Market** – Geography is becoming less of a consideration when hiring outside legal counsel, especially if the client is looking for highly specialized expertise. As more and more work is pitched long distance – with fewer face-to-face meetings – the importance of insightful website content increases.
4. **Increased Meritocracy** – The “old boys’ club” is diminishing in importance as the playing field widens and there is increased specialization. In short, a person with a reputation as the “leading authority” will win out

against “the familiar.” Attorneys will be looking for ways to demonstrate that they are a leading authority.

5. **The Emergence of Social Media** – As attorneys embrace social media marketing, they are realizing that it’s not sufficient to simply “be social.” Increasingly, it’s becoming clear that an effective social media marketing campaign is about driving people to read your cutting-edge thought leadership content.
6. **Increased Competitiveness** – Right now, there are more lawyers than there is work – and it looks like the market will remain competitive into the foreseeable future. This means that attorneys need to work harder to win business – and that they have more time to create content like articles and blog posts.
7. **Increased Reliance on Websites** – A 2009 survey conducted by the Wicker Park Group showed that nearly all general counsel visited attorney bios on a firm’s website when considering hiring them. Attorneys and firms are now recognizing this reality – and beefing up their bios with reputation-enhancing content like articles, case studies and blog posts.
8. **A Realization that Content Marketing Works** – A recent study by The Brand Research Company found that 53% of executives surveyed have put a firm on their short list based on the information found on the firm’s website. Data like this indicate that attorneys offering the highest-quality content are best positioned to reap the benefits.

Am I missing any? I look forward to hearing your thoughts.