



## The Law Firm Website Disconnect

Attorney websites have come a long way in the past few years. Lawyers are catching on to false marketing prophets and looking beyond cheesy and ineffective SEO tricks. Websites are becoming more helpful, more well-designed and more relevant to people seeking legal help. This is a good thing.

However, it is a big Internet, and there are still too many firms that fall victim to the lawyer website disconnect. To demonstrate this problem, Tech4Law created a law firm website Venn diagram. The illustration was published in 2010, but is still relevant today.

There is a mismatch between what firms are providing and what prospects are looking for. People want to know how you can help them, whether they can afford it (although placing this information on a website is not recommended) and how to contact you, while attorneys tend to focus on factual information about the law and the firm. This disconnect often expands beyond textual content to graphics and design in general. It is easy to stick to generalities about the profession that provide no insight into a firm or any sort of memorable impression for visitors.

Visuals are important, but not in the way that many people think. Pictures do not always capture people's attention. Heat mapping studies consistently show that people pay more attention to headlines and links than they do to graphics. (Statistics are different for posts on social media where visuals increase engagement). On a website, pictures and illustrations are a way of communicating with a visitor's non-rational, emotional side – the one that dominates the decision making process – and they should make a statement about the culture of your firm.

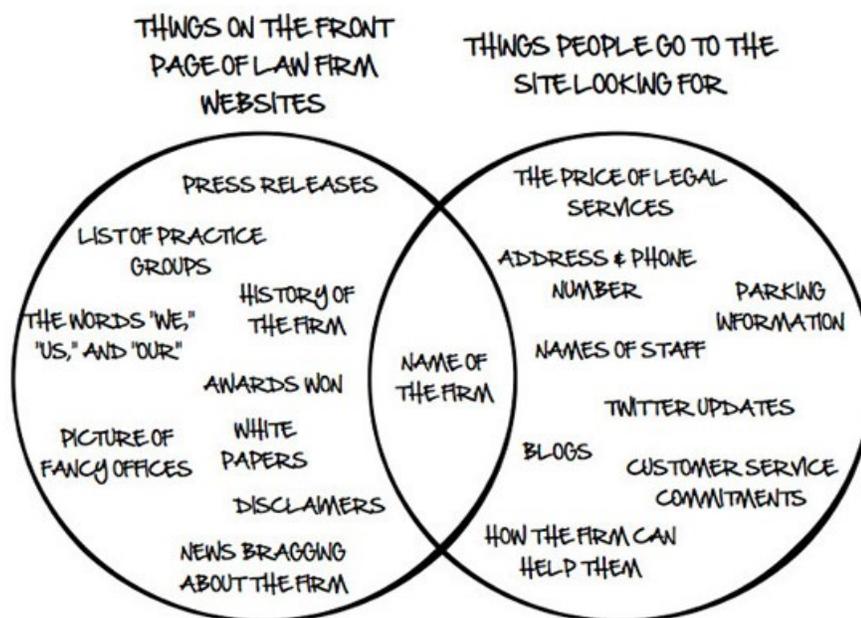


Photo Credit:  
Tech4Law





When SEO | Law Firm™ expanded its services to offer design packages several years ago, the Gavel Free Guarantee was born. This is a pledge to clients that designers will not use clichés to brand and market attorney websites or other materials. There are few things that the majority of the population knows about the law and attorneys, but one of them is that you can generally find a gavel in a courtroom. Others include the fact that attorneys wear suits and have been known at times to shake hands with each other.

Attorney At Work contributor Ruth Carter places using irrelevant photography at number two out of five attorney website turnoffs. Her three worst offenders include gavels, American flags and attorneys standing in front of books. (Also among the pieces of common knowledge about attorneys is the fact that they know how to read). She points out, importantly, that using such pictures will only make you look like every other law firm that uses them. Browsing through site after site with the same stock look and feel wears on prospective clients, making it easy for your site to fade into the background noise.

Therefore, in what is sure to be an uncontroversial move, the “free from” marketing list is officially expanding. The newest inductees include puzzle pieces, flags and people writing things on glass or whiteboards. These items are officially on the branding “Naughty” list. Your firm deserves better.

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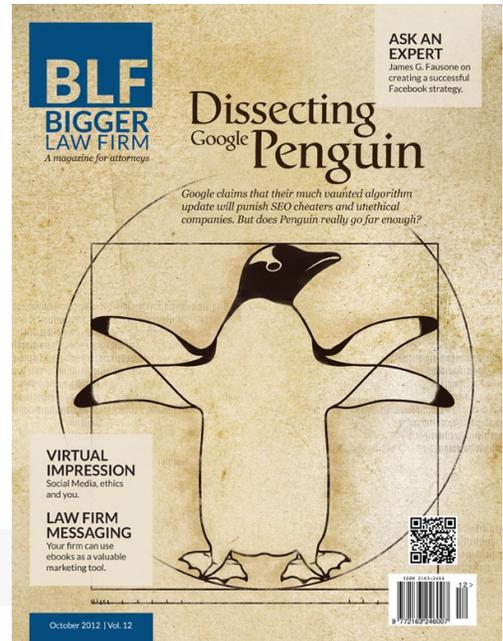
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