



AttorneySync's Guide On Building Links To Your Law Firm Website



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Building Links?

In the world of search engines, links **TO** a web page equal votes for that page. But not all link-votes are created equal. A link from CNN.com is much stronger than a link from a site that you just set up today. In this sense, they are the “currency” of the web.

The purpose of this short guide is to share some of the most common ways to get links and some important considerations for building links to your law firm website.

Common Strategies

So link building includes all the strategies you can do to get more links to your website. Here are some of the most common ways to attract links to your website:

“Write Great Content”

You will probably hear this one frequently. The idea is that if you write something interesting, controversial, or insightful, people will link to the content. This is the most natural way of obtaining links and the one most favored by search engines. However, there are many limitations to this method.

First, it assumes that you are able to “write great content”. Not all lawyers are great writers. Further, writing takes time. Busy lawyers may find it difficult to find time to publish content to their website.

However, there is another often overlooked limitation to the “write great content” approach. You see, even if your content is “great” it might not be “linkable”. In other words, is it written in a way that encourages “linkerati” (people that have websites and the ability to link out) to link to it? Too many legal professionals (and their consultants) take this “if you write it, they will come” philosophy.

The truth is, writing great content is an essential component to building links. However, content must be written with linking in mind. It must reach “linkerati” and give them some incentive to link to it.

Requesting links

Requesting links is pretty straight forward. You simply ask people to link to your website. You may also decide to exchange a reciprocal link.

Many lawyers overlook this simple strategy. If you have friends or colleagues with legal websites, simply asking or exchanging links with them can be a great way to get some quality relevant links.



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Keep in mind that inbound links are more valuable than reciprocal links. If too great a percentage of your total links are solely reciprocal links, they may be ineffective or even result in a penalty from the search engines.

Try to avoid “spamming for links”. In other words, don’t send out mass emails to people you don’t know.

Tailoring a link request campaign can take on many forms. Like all other forms of link building, the key is to give the “linkerati” a reason to link to your website.

Sometimes, simply asking for a link is one of the simplest ways to get new links to your site from very authoritative and relevant websites.

Press Releases

Press releases for your law firm can be another great way to generate new links to your law firm website. There are many press release companies/services online that will publish and distribute your firm’s press releases. Some are free, others can be quite expensive.

The trick is to figuring out which ones are producing results in terms of quantity and quality of links back to your websites.

“Buying links”

The subject of buying links is highly controversial. In many instances, the reason for the controversy is failing to articulate what specifically is meant by “buying links”. We include any monetary payment that includes or implies a link back to your site as a “bought link”. Under this definition, there many ways to permissibly “buy links” and many that are impermissible.

A great example of a permissible link buying strategy is the Yahoo paid inclusion directory. For a fee, Yahoo will **review** a listing that you submit to its directory with a link back to your website. Search engines view this paid editorial review process permissible.

There are a variety of quality legal websites that offer paid inclusion directories. These sites are typically relevant, and on very strong domains. Paying for a listing may make a lot of sense for your law firm.

On the other hand, “quid pro quo” buying of links is frowned upon by search engines and may even result in a penalty. For example, services that advertise that they sell links for a fee should generally be avoided.



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One of the most effective ways to “pay for links” is to join a legal content platform. These sites will allow you publish articles on their domains with links back to your website. Getting contextual links from authoritative and relevant legal content platforms are some of the best links around.

Factors To Consider

When targeting different websites from which to build links back to your site, there are several factors that need to be considered. Consideration of these various factors will play a large role in the effectiveness of your link building campaign. As I stated above, not all links are created equal. Here are the major factors that contribute to a link’s quality.

Relevance

A site’s relevance is a measure of how similar the site’s subject matter is to your site. For example, if you’re a criminal defense lawyer in Los Angeles, then other Los Angeles criminal defense websites are highly relevant to yours.

Generally speaking, the more relevant the site, the better the links from that site will be for your site. Typically, if you stick to getting links from legally-related sites, their relevance will be sufficient.

Avoid getting a high volume of completely irrelevant links. These links will be generally worthless and may even subject your site to a penalty.

Authority

Authority is the measure of how important a site is to a particular topic measured by how it is linked by most of the sites relevant to the particular topic.

Authority can be a difficult thing to measure without the proper tools or help of a law firm SEO professional. In general, look for sites that seem to rank well for many keywords on a particular subject.

Trust

The trust of a web site considers the site’s link profile and measures the number other trusted sites link to it. While links from trusted sites improve trust, having a lot of links from sites with low trust may hurt it.

Anchor Text

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Anchor text is the actual words that make up a link to another site. Here's an example of a hyperlink tag:

```
<a href=http://www.mydomain.com>This is the anchor text.</a>
```

The "This is the anchor text." is the anchor text portion of the tag. Having keywords in the anchor text, is very important to the quality of that link for a particular keyword or phrase.

Diversity

Like your investments, the more diverse your link profile, the better results it will produce. Getting links from a variety of different sites is important to building a strong link profiles. Here are some considerations for ensuring that you are diversifying your link profile:

Strong Links from Authoritative Domains

Getting links from authoritative domains is one of the most difficult aspects to link building. Typically, getting links from these domains will require some patience, persistence, and creativity.

To get started, you want to build a list of some of the most authoritative domains, or "hubs", on your subject matter. While there are a variety of ways to find hubs, perhaps one of the simplest is to perform searches with various competitive keywords on your topic.

Lots of Links from different Domains

In addition to getting quality links from authoritative domains, you want to get links from a wide variety of domains. Loading up on more links from the same domains over and over again (like on a blog roll), produces diminishing returns. You need to diversify the number of domains from which you receive links.

Links to Internal Pages

While it's ok (and even recommended) that most of your links point to your homepage or root domain, you also want to get links to other pages of your site. Getting these "deep links" will build authority and trust to your website.

Local Links

When it comes to marketing your law firm, think like a local business. If your practice is limited to a city, county, or state, target domains that are relevant to those geographic areas. This will help you rank for terms that contain a geo-modifier.



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