

How Much Should Law Firms Spend on Marketing? – 2022 Guide

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A [2020 study](#) found that 65% of law firms spend the majority of their marketing budget on online marketing.

What this statistic doesn't answer, however, is how much they spend on marketing overall and how this money is allocated to different digital platforms.

The reason for this, in short, is that each law firm's marketing budget depends on a variety of factors—from size, to service area, to the number of competitors, and beyond. These factors greatly impact how much money a law firm can expect to spend in order to see results.

In this guide, we'll cover several important details about budgeting and marketing, including what the average budget looks like for several marketing categories. We'll also provide recommendations on how to allocate your own marketing budget more effectively.

Do You Have a Law Firm Marketing Budget?

Many modern law firms don't have a set marketing budget in place. Unfortunately, this contributes to a "DIY" approach that can result in a lackluster, ad hoc strategy that fails to produce beneficial results.

According to [marketing statistics from the ABA](#), "Less than half (46%) of law firms across all sizes have a marketing budget. Among the 46% who said their firm has a budget, 11% said it decreased, 26% said it increased from the previous year, 27% said it remained the same, and 36% said they did not know."

In order to generate significant return on investment, law firms should dedicate appropriate funds to expert level marketing services, which far exceed DIY tactics.

Budgeting for expert level knowledge can produce:

- A highly refined niche or target market

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- Cost-saving adjustments based on marketing performance
 - Selection of the most suitable marketing channels based on specific goals
 - Regular evaluation of KPIs and other metrics

Law Firm Marketing by Category

While it's important to establish the need for an overall marketing budget, that's just step one. Since there are so many unique channels and methods for law firm marketing, it's also crucial to set specific budgets for each marketing category.

Depending on what works best for a particular law firm, these budgeting numbers may differ for certain legal specialties and geographic regions. The goal, however, is to provide a research-based benchmark that law firms can follow when setting budgets for each type of marketing campaign.

Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of optimizing content for search engine results pages (SERP). A [qualified SEO expert](#) can assist law firms with:

- Improving search engine results
- Appearing in more organic and local searches
- Developing a keyword strategy for content marketing
- Optimizing pages and links for maximum performance
- Conducting SEO reporting and analytics

The cost for SEO for lawyers depends on how competitive a market is, with more dense markets requiring greater investment.

Some marketing agencies report that an average SEO budget for law firms is close to \$7,500 monthly. The upper end of SEO investment for highly competitive firms is close to \$25,000 per month.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing involves the creation of content for social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Before investing heavily in any one platform, it's important to know which one resonates with a firm's target market or audience. The decision may depend on demographic data.

Social media is a unique marketing outlet, since many lawyers and attorneys choose to invest in their own pages individually. Data over the past decade shows that [71% of lawyers](#) secure clients through

social media.

Budgeting for social media marketing depends on whether a law firm is paying for profile management or investing in digital ads. In general, costs range from \$1,000-2,000 monthly for social media marketing packages

Website Development

It's incredibly difficult to grow, scale, and leverage other marketing methods without a professional website. As a result, this is a primary area of investment for law firms.

The average cost of a professionally designed WordPress website for law firms ranges from \$7,500 to \$25,000 in total. This budget is typically for a small to mid-size firm that requires a site from scratch.

Website development becomes more expensive with the [addition of tasks](#) related to legacy systems, migrations, and domain consolidations. These extra steps may add another \$1,000 to the total bill, but the benefits are numerous.

Branding

Branding is a broad marketing category that includes both large and small activities. Branding tasks might include:

- Launching a rebranded website
- Developing a law firm logo
- Brand visualization and strategy
- Market research

Some branding agencies charge hourly and can cost a law firm \$150-\$300/hour. Larger projects, such as full rebrands, may cost up to \$5,000. These totals depend on the specific goal, geographic location, and length of the contract.

Paid Advertising

Paid advertising is the use of digital content and advertisements to drive results. In relation to digital marketing, most paid advertising is Pay Per Click, or PPC. Paid advertising also takes place on social media channels where potential clients spend their time.

A realistic budget for paid advertising can range from \$10,000 to \$50,000 per month depending on the practice area. While this amount is high, you get what you pay for with paid advertising services. Investing too little can produce expensive campaigns that yield very few credible leads and prospects.

Email Marketing

Email marketing can be divided into two primary goals—nurturing and sales. While it's important to nurture current clients, it's also critical to generate new business through effective sales tactics. Email marketing professionals can help with tasks like—

- Copywriting
- Performing A/B testing
- Optimizing delivery times
- Audience segmentation

One attorney recommends allocating [\\$10,000/year to email marketing](#). A yearly budget allows law firms to develop strong written copy and to regularly evaluate email performance metrics. According to the ABA, 41% of law firms dedicate the majority of their marketing budgets to email.

Content

Content marketing sets the stage for other marketing campaigns. Activities like email, paid ads, and social media depend on the creation of strong content. A content marketer can be hired to produce:

- SEO-optimized blog posts
- Long form content (eBooks and whitepapers)
- Infographics
- Reports
- Landing pages
- Social media captions

Content creation is an ongoing task and is sometimes included within an SEO budget. Good content moves a potential client from awareness to consideration to conversion, and the consideration phase should make up 20-50% of a firm's marketing budget. Moreover, the average mid-size business (similar in size to most law firms) spends \$2,000-10,000 monthly on content marketing.

Events & Networking

While events and networking are an important piece of the marketing puzzle, they are extremely variable based on the size, budget, and reach of a particular firm. While some large scale firms can afford to devote hundreds of thousands of dollars to professional events, others may rely on organic networking methods to generate results.

Virtual events are another option for law firms who want to host an event and broaden their reach. Analysis reveals that average size [virtual events can range from \\$5,000-15,000](#). Consider the

following expenses when planning to host or network.

- Marketing costs for the event (printed and digital)
- Travel accommodations
- Technology services (video hosting, production, etc.)
- Rental or venue space
- Attendee needs and offerings
- Speaking fees
- Post-event engagement and follow-up

How Much Does an Average Law Firm Spend on Marketing?

It's good practice to allocate anywhere from 2% to 18% of gross revenue to marketing. In 2018, the Legal Marketing Association reported that law firms only allocate an average of 6.7% of their revenue to marketing initiatives. These numbers show that there is room to grow for marketing investment.

Law firms should also consider the total marketing budget as a percentage of target growth. For example, if a firm wants to increase revenue by \$500,000 in one year, it will require more than a few hundred dollars per month on average marketing projects.

To set your own firm's comprehensive marketing budget, consider the following numbers.

- Current revenue
- Realistic revenue goal
- "Stretch" goal
- Current marketing investment
- Available discretionary assets

How to Make the Most of Your Marketing Budget

Although you might spend thousands of dollars a month on marketing, you need a plan for maximizing that investment. Marketing budgets should never go to waste, and there are ways that you can guarantee the best ROI.

1. Hire help when you need it

A professional agency or marketing expert has the experience, tools, software, and insights required

for designing high-yield campaigns. Working with a qualified marketing professional eliminates the guesswork and allows law firms to outsource key tasks to those who understand the logistics. In the end, this saves critical time, resources, and money.

2. Create content assets

Make the most of incoming online traffic by capturing links with ebooks, PDFs, and other opt-in content assets. These resources also help solidify a legal firm as an authority or thought leader in the industry. Creating evergreen content ensures that visitors and prospects always have valuable resources to consult in times of curiosity or need.

3. Measure results and follow success

Observe and evaluate which platforms are working best for your law firm based on the analytics. Data should include performance related to web traffic, incoming leads, engagement, and sales.

Don't be afraid to do more of what's working and to pivot—even when you set out with a certain preference and the data leads you to a different conclusion.

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