

The Ultimate Local SEO Checklist for Law Firms

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While you may have heard of search engine optimization (SEO), there's [more than one type of SEO](#). Local SEO is the process of [optimizing your online presence](#) to increase local traffic, visibility and brand awareness. Breaking audience targeting down to the local level is extremely important for law firms because of the location-based nature inherently attached with most legal clients. Without local SEO for lawyers, your law firm may be lost in the background of other firms and businesses that have seen the benefits of local SEO and implemented them into their firm's digital presence.

Think of searching for a coffee shop, "coffee shops near me" or "best iced lattes in my area." Any time someone searches for a business, service, or item with a location-specific qualifier, a list of potential options pop up with the location and reviews.

While this looks like a normal Google search result, it's actually a system called Google Business Profile, previously Google My Business (GMB), and it can be tailored to increase the likelihood that it appears in relevant searches. We'll get into how to accomplish this later, but in general, GBP listings provide a business's information, an overview of their offerings, as well as some extra insights such as reviews, pictures and even a map right in the search results. With a well-optimized Google Business Profile, and a few more website SEO tips and tricks, your law firm can start to rise in the search ranks.

If you're looking for a way to get your law firm found online by potential clients in your area, local SEO is the first step in improving your firm's chances of being organically found. In this blog and accompanying checklist, you'll learn the basics of local SEO, how to implement SEO best practices and strategies, find resources to help you along the way, and understand how to review and monitor your progress after implementation.

Understanding Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for Lawyers

[Search engine optimization](#) is vital to any business, especially those relying on their digital footprint to attract new leads. Having a strong understanding and implementation of SEO on your firm's website can help ideal clients find your practice.

Finding out too late that you're working with someone looking for an immigration firm when your practice specializes in worker's compensation can be easily avoided when your firm has a strong

online presence with correct information. Using this to your law firm's advantage can dramatically increase your client intake rate, growing your firm by finding clients near you that are looking for the expertise you can provide.

Key Elements of SEO for Law Firm Websites

Keyword Research

Keywords are the building blocks for your local SEO strategy. Keywords are the terms that searchers will enter when looking for legal services and lawyers in your area. For example, if your firm specializes in immigration law, you may use keywords like "immigration lawyers", "DOJ attorney", etc.

Find those keywords and implement them into your website's page structure and content. If you have services, find a keyword for each service provided and create a page that is optimized for that specific keyword.

[Ahrefs](#) and [Semrush](#) both provide keyword research that could help guide you in the right direction. Once you find keywords that best suit your firm, place those within the copy of pages on your website. Use those keywords as launching point ideas for blogs (as this [Ahrefs article explains](#)) and other content pieces. Be sure to follow best practices to make the most of your keywords.

On-Page Optimization

On-page optimization is like a micro view of SEO — it focuses on the optimizations of each individual page on your firm's website to improve its position in search engine results. It can seem granular, but you can start it now to have a solid base in the future. Making sure each page is optimized for your chosen keywords and local search area (whether it be a city, county, or state) helps your search engine ranking.

Allow your firm time to optimize current pages, but remember as you add content and new pages to your website, make sure they are built with the SEO best practices mentioned in this blog in mind to get that first-page ranking result.

Technical SEO

Optimize your website for it to be efficiently crawled and indexed by search engines. Making your firm's website easy to navigate and pull information will allow search engines to get the information they need faster, contributing to a higher search ranking.

You can improve your website's technical SEO by [submitting your sitemap to Google](#), making your site structure SEO-friendly, improving your site's loading speed, avoiding duplicate content, and more. All of these contribute to a healthy technical SEO that search engines will favor and therefore improve your SEO ranking. You can speed up the indexing process by submitting any new pages to [Google Search Console](#). This will give google time to crawl the page and properly index it among the rest of the content on the web.

What to keep in mind for technical SEO:

- Don't duplicate content! It's perfectly fine to update or reframe a blog you've published, but one of the worst things you can do is posting the same content verbatim on your website.

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- Make sure your [site structure](#) is optimized for search engines.
 - Improve your [site's loading speed](#).

Content Creation and Optimization

Creating content that showcases your law firm's expertise will increase the chances of potential clients finding your law firm's website, but also take advantage of the [knowledge your firm has to share](#). Posting blogs, [creating a firm newsletter](#), and providing free resources to your audience with focused keywords can increase law firms' search ranking — while also pulling in new potential clients.

Once your page has a good amount of content to share, it's time to start cross-linking the content within each page. This will create a larger network of backlinks to improve SEO on your website. You should also have other websites link to your firm's website, especially sites that are locally-based. This is local link building, and it's the next step in our Local SEO Checklist.

Link Building

When your website is shared via hyperlinks on other websites, it essentially tells the search engines that your law firm website is important and should be ranked higher. When those websites are location-specific, like a chamber of commerce or local charity or organization, this will increase your website's local SEO and raise the chance of potential clients finding your law firm online.

Cross-promote your firm's content and resources within the website. Linking other pages with relevant content will build a network of backlinks to improve your firm's SEO — and keep potential clients on your page.

Local SEO for Lawyers

In addition to a solid [law firm marketing strategy](#), local SEO holds a high priority with law firms because of the importance of clients being able to find firms online that are in their area. Local SEO can also help you weed out unfit clients. Scheduling a consultation with someone looking for a firm in Rhode Island when your firm practices in Texas can be easily avoided when your firm has [optimized for your area](#).

There are tactics that are vital to local SEO. Location-specific landing pages, Google Business Profile, local directory listings, and online client reviews all greatly increase the chance of your law firm being found online simply from creating more places where your law firm is online.

Include Location-Specific Landing Pages

Building [location-specific landing pages](#) on your firm's website to increase local digital traffic can be especially useful. For example, if your firm is in a location-specific practice area that requires extensive knowledge of laws at a regional, state, or practice-specific level, having a "Texas Immigration Law Firm" page can help increase organic traffic to your website from clients that match your firm's legal services.

Google Business Profile for Law Firms

[Google Business Profile](#) is your firm's best digital tool for local SEO and making sure your business is found organically online in tandem with on-page SEO updates. Google Business Profile allows

your firm to have its address listed with your website and other contact information, generally referred to as NAP (name, phone and address) information. Having this information verified in one place makes it easier for potential clients to find your firm online by giving potential clients a quick preview of your firm, what you specialize in, and how to get in contact with you.

Making sure your firm's Google Business Profile page is up-to-date, easy to read, and accessible is a great way to improve your firm's local SEO. Keeping this page updated allows your firm to be found online in those location-specific searches we discussed earlier. This could be one of the first places potential clients find when researching law firms. You'll want to make sure it leaves a good impression, has up-to-date information, and shows your firm's positive reputation.

While Google Business Profile is a large part of local SEO, there are other ways your firm can ensure it's reaching potential local clients through local directories online.

Local Law Firm Directory Listings

Firms can increase their local client intake by making sure they're listed on high-traffic, trusted, and feature-heavy law firm directories. When potential clients go to these directories to find a law firm to work with they can search by location and practice area.

Use [reliable and trusted law firm directories](#) to boost your firm's online presence. Sites like [Avvo](#) can allow your firm to be found by location and practice area, increasing the chance your firm is found by potential clients. You can also use local directories and [business journals](#) to have your firm listed under legal practices.

Once potential clients find your firm online, you'll want to make sure they have a good first impression. This is where online reviews become crucial.

Reputation Management for Law Firms

Business reviews from clients play a pivotal role in increasing a law firm's online reputation. Reviews are likely one of the first places potential clients look into when choosing a law firm. Popular search engines like Google take reviews into account (the higher your business's rating, the better your ranking) when ranking for local search results, making healthy and abundant reviews essential for law firms looking to enhance their online reputation and improve their local SEO efforts. This is why it's important to have a solid review process in place.

The key to obtaining more reviews is to always [ask your clients for reviews](#) on your business's listings ([GBP](#), social media, [Yelp](#), [Avvo](#), etc.) shortly after completing cases with them. This will increase your firm's reputation and raise the likelihood of potential clients contacting your firm. Asking can be as simple as sending a short email — especially to those clients that have been open about their positive experience with your firm — to help provide future clients with honest feedback on your firm.

To bolster your reviews further, respond professionally to all your law firm's reviews — both positive and negative. This will allow searchers to see that your firm is attentive and values the word of customers and your reputation.

Tracking Marketing Data and Analytics

Periodically monitor your keywords and page rankings to ensure your firm grows its online presence. Adding new keywords or removing others on your website can help adjust your firm's local SEO as it changes in the future. Back this with the proper tracking of your firm's online performance, taking note of key metrics, and utilizing free or affordable analytics tools for data-driven decision-making. This is why maintaining a strong SEO monitoring strategy is important.

Once your strategy is in place and your website is optimized, take a step back to see what works and what doesn't. There are a ton of great resources out there to help you monitor and analyze your law firm's local SEO. [Google Analytics](#) is a popular tracking tool. [Yoast](#) has a SEO content analysis tool you can use to ensure your blogs and website content are optimized for your chosen keywords. Once you see where you can improve, make those adjustments and take a step back again. This is an ongoing process that will be a great part of monthly or quarterly website maintenance.

It's important to get the most out of your work by regularly reviewing and updating your efforts to maintain a strong online presence and attract local clients. Tracking those key metrics and adapting when needed will result in the best local SEO for your law firm.

Key Metrics to Monitor

Keyword Rankings

Watch the ranking of your chosen keywords to monitor any changes in your SEO. If one or more keywords rank lower than before, it may be time to optimize your on-page SEO for that specific keyword or create more content related to that keyword. [Ahrefs](#) and [Semrush](#) provide monitoring for your chosen keywords, while also providing resources for researching those keywords to add or remove any to help your ranking.

[Organic Traffic](#)

This is how many users have visited your website without going through a paid ad. As your SEO ranking improves, so should your organic traffic. [Google Analytics](#) provides the platform to do this, as shown in the image below.

Load Time

You'll want the load time on your website to be as quick as possible. Quicker page load times make it easier for visitors to navigate and also contribute to ranking higher on search engine result pages (SERP).

Conversion Rate

If you have a contact page on your website for clients, you'll likely want to track conversions for this, making sure your site is optimized for potential clients to get in contact with you. To track conversions, you can use [Google Analytics](#), [SEM Rush](#), [Adobe Analytics](#), [MonsterInsights](#), or even a law practice management software like PracticePanther.

Bounce Rate

This is the percentage of website visitors who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page. A high bounce rate is an indication that a specific page of your website needs to be adjusted to

better capture the audience's attention and be relevant to their needs.

Stay Updated

Local SEO is an ongoing process. As with all other digital marketing strategies, local SEO best practices can shift and adapt when platforms are updated or changed. While some of the best strategies can be implemented easily, it could be detrimental to your ranking if they aren't maintained. [Google Analytics offers a free certification](#) for their software, but you can also reference their [help articles](#) and [YouTube channel](#) when you run into an obstacle.

How to Get Started With Local SEO

Now that you have a general understanding of local SEO and its usefulness, it's time to start implementing these practices this week, this month, and quarterly to continually analyze performance.

This article was authored by Carole Poster.

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