



PAYING FOR LAW FIRM SEO AND NOT SEEING RESULTS?

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In the marketplace of search engines and social media, where algorithm updates hold us captive, clicks can be purchased, results are hyper-tailored, and the page rank is the status symbol dujour, how can lawyers use search engine optimization (SEO) to help grow their law firms and establish their brands online?

As we've discussed in our [Legal Marketing Nutrition Guide](#), just like a bunch of sugar can give you a tremendous burst of energy in a short amount of time, you can pay to get to the top of the heap in digital, which in legal is massively expensive. But could you make the energy last?

There are a million shades of [SEO techniques](#) to get a site to the top, ranging from standard white hat to spammy black hat. However, the true benefit of search marketing is typically enjoyed by law firm marketers with a balanced understanding of long-term and short-term strategy, and the strongest command of their brand.

What do we mean by that?

Here is 18 months of growth from an anonymized client of ours.



Taken as a whole, the picture is good. However, experiencing those dips and rises as the algorithms were updated, and then deploying our corrections or fixes, and then waiting to see if it all took hold, is not for the faint of heart.

Thankfully, we don't rely on bravery with our digital advertising budgets.

With every Google Update, every piece of content, every link, every performance metric associated with your law firm's web property, there is the potential for success and failure.

Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, SEO can have a varying degree of success with businesses that choose to invest in search engine marketing.

Sometimes, a law firm paying for SEO is invested in moving up the search results, but they aren't seeing the traffic, or the investments, converting into cases.

WHAT COULD BE THE PROBLEM?

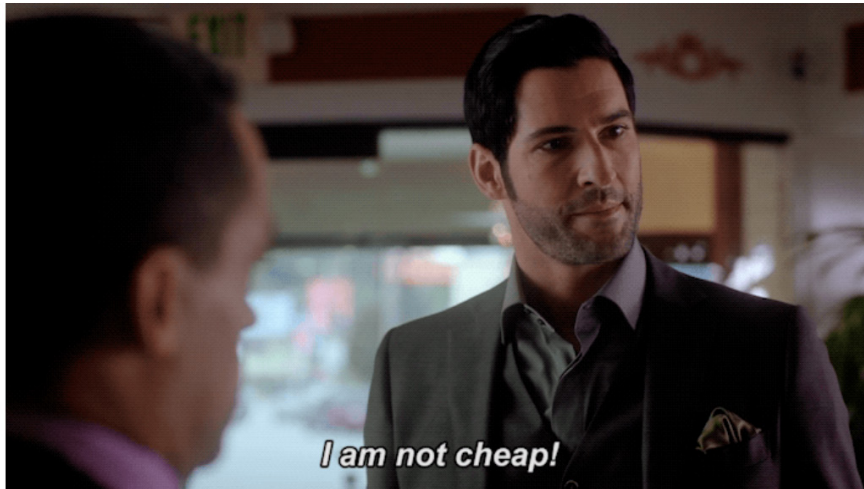
Since we've been working with law firms exclusively since 1999, we have collected a ton of experience around SEO, and we've discovered eight factors that can impact a law firm's rankings and performance on the search engines.

Here, our in-house SEO technical experts, [Joel Morrison](#) and [Grant Brott](#), explain these eight common factors negatively impacting law firm SEO.



BUDGET

If you are being outspent on resources, compared to your competition, it's going to be very tough to keep up and overcome. Content, links, traffic, and on-page expertise are not cheap.



But the more you have of it, the faster you can generally see results. [It takes time](#) to publish content, promote content, obtain links, and build your brand and reputation online, so these important factors have to be included in the scope and budget for your law firm's SEO efforts.

COMPETITION

If you're new to the search engine marketing game, especially in a competitive area, you have a lot of ground to make up. The amount of content, links, and local signals that are needed to compete are usually substantial.

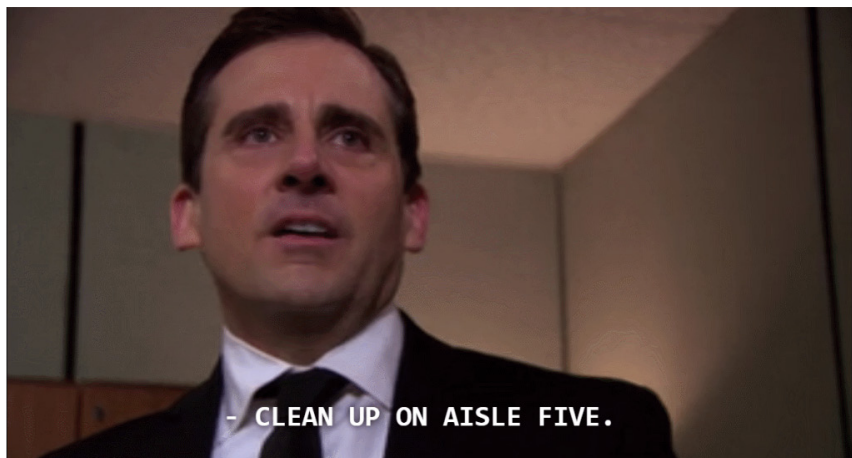
Budget also plays into competition heavily. We call this “*picking fights you can’t win.*”

If you only have a limited small budget and are trying to compete with massive firms in highly competitive markets where the competition is spending 10 to 20 times what you are investing, that’s a short round of boxing.

In addition to comparing budgets, a comprehensive analysis of your competition can also reveal insights into SEO strategy. Interested in a competitive analysis for your website and your top competitors? [Get in touch with us here.](#)

PAST SEO WORK

If you’ve worked with other vendors in the past, there is no doubt a slew of different techniques and strategies have been deployed. Some may have been harmful. It takes time to undo or make up for bad SEO work.



Cleanup from old SEO vendors can take time. Setting a law firm's local SEO signals straight can take upwards of six months depending on the mess. More importantly, once the fixes are in, there has to be a grace period built in to monitor and optimize the adjustments.

WEAK BRAND

You must have a multi-channel approach to SEO. Be everywhere, and not just online. Getting ranked nowadays requires [both an online and offline presence](#).

If your law firm's website is brand new and no one knows about you, it's going to make it tougher to rank. Google rewards sites that are established and have people searching for the brand, visiting directly, and coming from social media.

If you are lacking in the [branding department](#), work on beefing up your community involvement and gaining local media coverage. Donate, volunteer, host events, etc. It helps with brand signals and getting you out in the community.

TECHNICAL ROADBLOCKS

[There are several technical factors that go into law firm SEO](#). These factors include, but are not limited to, things like schema, mobile performance, speed, coding, internal linking, etc., any of which could be holding your site back. These issues take time to investigate, diagnose, and repair.

WEAK LOCAL SIGNALS

Are you listed in all possible local and niche directories?

Do you have a steady stream of reviews coming into your Google, Yelp, and Facebook page?

Do you have [locally themed content and local links](#) pointing to your site?

If not, this also takes time to get the ball rolling.

The relationship with your SEO team is a partnership. Law firms have to maintain their [online reputation](#), and push clients to leave reviews on Google, Facebook, Yelp, Lawyers.com, etc. If your firm doesn't do the work on your end, it impacts what your SEO team can do and may end up wasting your money. Local is a battle we can win together, but only if we work as partners.

BACKLINKS

Even though Google is looking for ways to continue to devalue links as a primary ranking factor, they are still important and you need to be more careful about the kinds of links being built. If you've had a ton of low-quality links in the past, it takes time to remove and replace with better signals.

COMMUNICATION

It takes your SEO team time to create content, send it to you for approval, publish it, then promote it. If your firm is slow to provide feedback on content and other requests, it slows down your results. The longer your SEO team has to spend chasing down your approval, the longer it takes to see improvement in your campaign.

IN CONCLUSION

The work of search engine optimization and digital marketing can be as complicated, or as simple, as we want it to be.

Sure, there were over 3,000 updates to the Google algorithm in 2018 alone. Yes, obtaining backlinks from trusted publishing sites can take time, and of course, creating great content that helps your law firm grow and expand online is a labor of love. However, SEO and digital marketing for lawyers is something we've been perfecting for over 20 years, and we're proud of our expertise and accomplishments. Hopefully the information above can help guide your law firm back on track to seeing results with your SEO.

If you'd like to learn more about SEO services for your law firm, or if you want to get in touch with us and chat, [we're here](#).

