



Time to think “Mobile”

Take the time to consider your firm’s mobile strategy a little broader than just a conversation about “responsiveness.”

by Dan Toombs, Multi-Award Winning Lawyer, Director of the law firm marketing company, Fast Firms and Digital Strategist for Erin Brockovich.

In working with law firms both nationally and internationally, I can announce that the profession and the industry at large has now conceded that they need to be online. No, really! In the last 6 months I've noticed a significant paradigm shift where firms now wish to engage in a conversation not on why they need to be thinking "online" as a primary client acquisition platform, but rather how do they drive better conversion rates through inbound marketing methodology and dare I say it, innovative ways of creating deeper online engagement between the firm and past, current and potential clients.

In embellishing the shift, mobile can't be ignored.

Mobility is having such a transformative impact on every facet of our lives. How we shop, bank, entertain, travel, learn, make decisions, relax and even work, is being revolutionized by mobile.

The exponential use of such devices has of course driven a plethora of service orientated start-ups who enter the market not with a legacy desk-top platform, but rather solely mobile. For example, the legal document start-up Shake Legal is not only deconstructing the drafting and provision of legal documents, but it is also driven by the fact that day by day there is an massive increase of people wanting to squeeze more out of their mobile devices, enhancing both their usability and amenability to undertake tasks that were once landlocked on a desktop.

What does all this mean for a law firm of small to large dimensions?

Firstly and foremostly it means that in considering your firm's positioning, mobile has to be a prominent feature. The mobile responsiveness of your website is now a given and if you haven't addressed this, you must as a matter of urgency. In fact, Google recently instigated a campaign, of which you may already be a recipient, by which they're notifying and strongly encouraging owners of websites that are not mobile friendly, to do something about it or potentially suffer in the organic search rankings.

Will it be enough to simply tweak the HTML and CSS of your website to ensure compliance with mobile browsers? Probably not, because in thinking "mobile" you're also re-considering both the design and content hierarchy. What do I mean? For example, in our work with the firm, Attwood Marshall, the strategy was to significantly enhance accessibility across multiple mediums for mobile

users. In other words, the rapid response feature allows the user to quickly and conveniently enter their phone number for an immediate return phone call, the prominent phone number allows ready call access and the email pop up, allows users to explain their situation.

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The strategy underpinning this, of course needed to be considered at the outset prior to the whole design phase. We wanted a design hierarchy that was squarely focused on the mobile user. From a content perspective, you're also striving to achieve its enhanced availability, coupled with the front-loading of it so what matters most is given priority.

From a content perspective, Slater & Gordon do also do this well. Rather than adopt the construction of content from other firms, it's been dialled down to make sense to legal consumers and not legal professionals, and the content isn't a monologue you have to wrestle through. This approach works well on mobile!

The take home message, is that if your firm hasn't a mobile responsive website, address the issue as a matter of urgency, but don't waste the opportunity of thinking more broadly about mobile usability and looking at the recalibration of your website's design aesthetics, content hierarchy and of course, the content itself.

Key takeaways:

1. In considering your firm's online positioning, mobile has to be a prominent feature.
2. The mobile responsiveness of your website is now a given and if you haven't addressed this, you must as a matter of urgency.
3. When thinking "mobile" you're also re-considering both the design and content hierarchy.

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