



The 2018 Law Firm Digital Marketing Survey

LEGALMARKETINGASSOCIATION



THE AUTHORITY FOR LEGAL MARKETING



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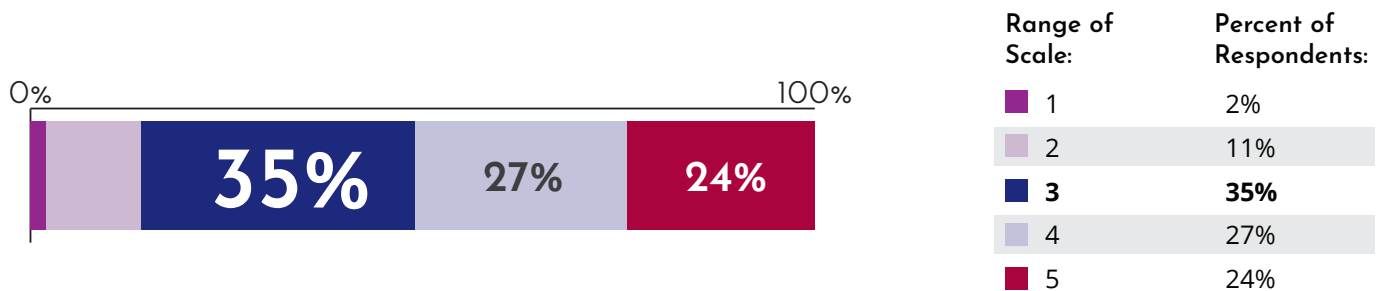
1. INTRODUCTION

Good2bSocial and the Legal Marketing Association (LMA) jointly conducted a survey in September 2018 to discover trends and best practices in law firms' use of digital marketing.

The survey, the first of its kind, asked legal marketers at law firms to indicate how their firms are using digital marketing to raise awareness of their firm and its practice groups, as well as how they are using digital marketing to generate new business opportunities from prospects or existing clients. Although most law firms still employ traditional marketing techniques to market their firms and lawyers, the growing importance of digital marketing was evident throughout our survey.

One of the key findings in the survey is the level of importance law firms place on digital marketing. More than half of the firms surveyed rated the importance of digital marketing as a 4 on a scale of 1 to 5. However, when respondents were asked what percentage of their overall marketing budget is allocated to digital marketing, nearly 50 percent of respondents indicated that they allocated 15 percent or less of their marketing budget to digital marketing. That number was extremely surprising considering that a recent [CMO survey](#) conducted by Deloitte, Duke, and the American Marketing Association of B2B services companies indicated that CMO's of B2B services companies allocate close to 80 percent of their marketing budget to digital marketing initiatives, such as social media and digital marketing analytics.

How important is digital marketing?



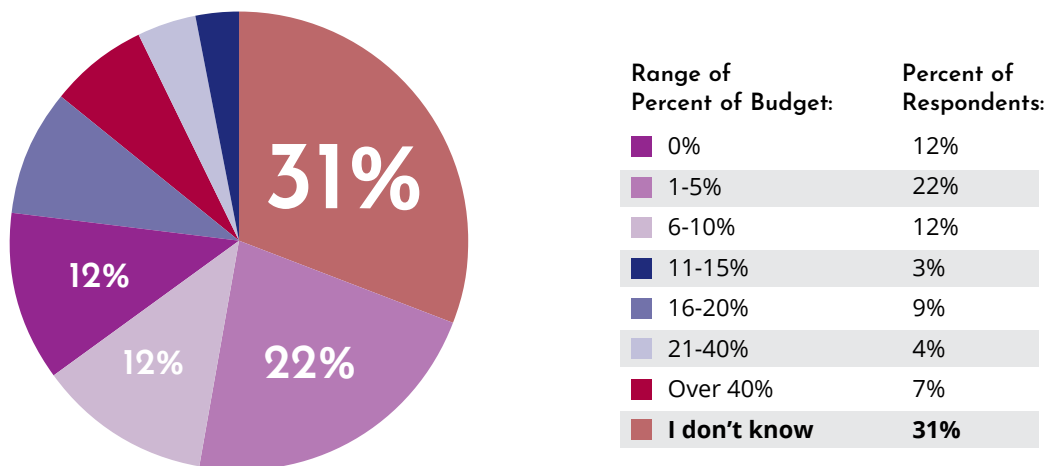
Another key finding in the survey revealed the challenges that many legal marketers are facing when it comes to investing in digital marketing. One of the major challenges identified as a major challenge is getting the "buy in" from firm leadership when it comes to investing time and resources for digital marketing. The main issue seems to be that most law firm leaders do not have a good understanding of the value of digital marketing and how it can be used to enhance thought leadership positioning and generate new business opportunities. This is further complicated by perceived inability for law firms to properly measure the return on investment of their digital marketing efforts.

The survey also indicated that most respondents lack the knowledge or understanding of digital analytics such as open rates, click through rates, engagement, and reach, which are foundational to dissecting the impact of digital marketing tactics. This inability to gather data and extract meaningful insights from the data makes it more difficult to prove the value of digital marketing to firm leaders.

Finally, survey respondents indicated that another challenge they face when it comes to planning and executing digital marketing campaigns is a lack of resources– both time and budget. This lack of resources prevents marketing departments from effectively marketing their firms online.

Based on the importance that many participants place on digital marketing and the number of challenges that they face, it's clear that there are more opportunities than ever for law firms to increase their investment in digital marketing to achieve their marketing and business development objectives.

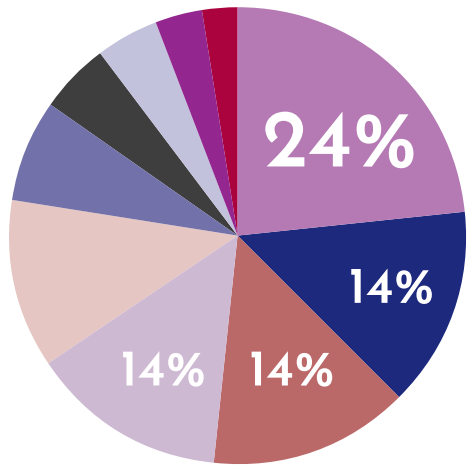
What percentage of your firm's marketing budget is allocated to digital marketing?



2. METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

We received 190 responses from firms that ranged in size from small boutique firms to large, global law firms.

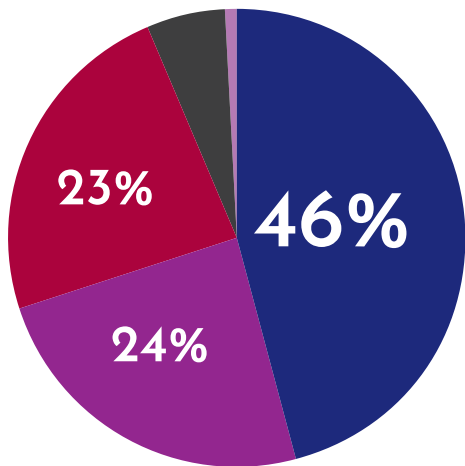
Number of Lawyers:



Range of Lawyers:	Percent of Respondents:
1-5	3%
6-49	24%
50-99	14%
100-199	14%
200-299	14%
300-399	4%
400-499	2%
500-999	14%
1000+	12%
Don't work at a law firm	5%

The number of offices was also well represented in our sample: about a quarter of responding firms have a single location, while nearly half have between two and ten offices. Nearly a quarter of respondents have between 11 and 25 locations.

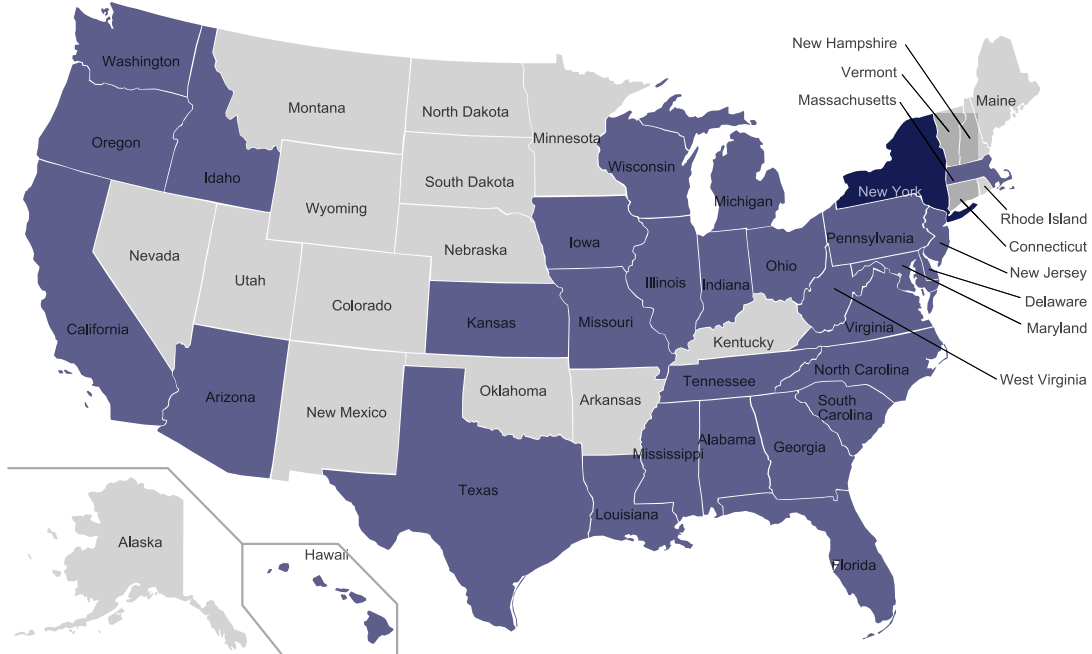
Number of Offices:



Range of Offices:	Percent of Respondents:
1	24%
2-10	46%
11-25	23%
26-50	6%
50+	1%

The largest concentration of firms are headquartered in New York, but there was participation from firms across the United States.

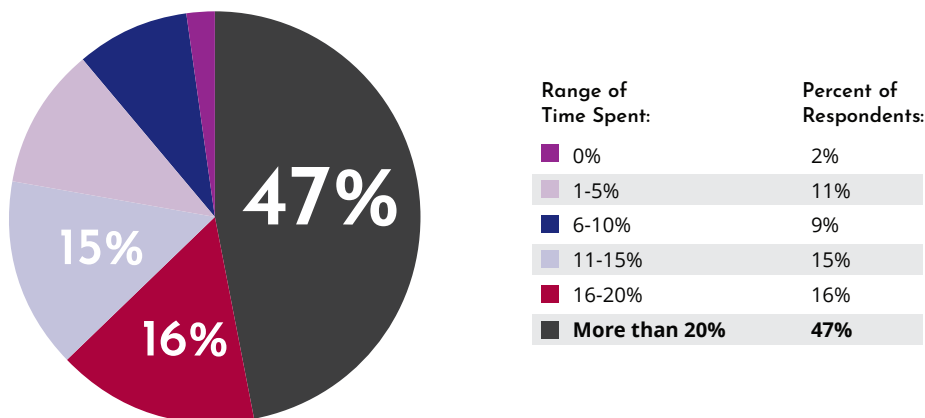
Firm Headquarters:



Alabama	1.69%	Kansas	0.56%	Oregon	2.81%
Arizona	0.56%	Louisiana	1.69%	Pennsylvania	3.93%
Arkansas	0.00%	Maryland	1.69%	South Carolina	1.12%
California	7.30%	Massachusetts	2.25%	Tennessee	0.56%
Delaware	0.56%	Michigan	2.25%	Texas	6.18%
Florida	3.37%	Minnesota	1.69%	Virginia	1.12%
Georgia	3.37%	Mississippi	0.56%	Washington	3.93%
Hawaii	0.56%	Missouri	2.81%	Washington D.C.	1.12%
Idaho	0.56%	New Jersey	2.25%	West Virginia	1.12%
Illinois	6.18%	New York	14.04%	Wisconsin	0.56%
Indiana	1.69%	North Carolina	1.69%	No Headquarters in U.S.	7.87%
Iowa	3.37%	Ohio	2.25%	N/A	6.74%

Respondents were specifically involved in setting, executing, and/or supervising others who executed digital marketing strategies at their firm - and nearly half of respondents spend more than 20 percent of their time on digital marketing.

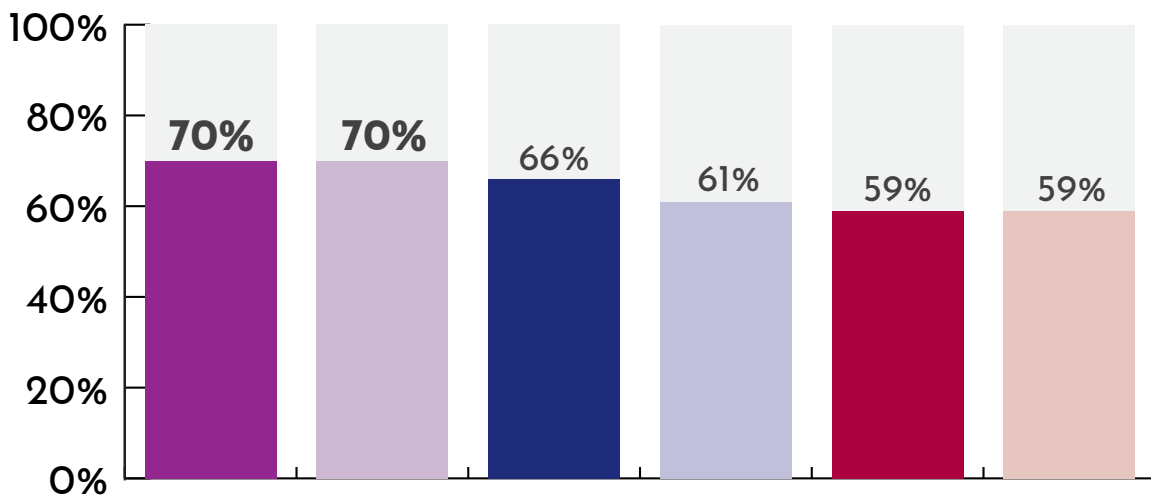
Time Spent on Digital Marketing at Law Firms:



3. OPPORTUNITIES

Most firms see the value of digital marketing strategies and the opportunities that it provides in terms of strengthening their firm. The survey results show that the biggest opportunities for digital marketing to make an impact are:

- **Improving brand awareness**
- **Enhancing thought leadership**
- Distinguishing the firm from competitors
- Generating more qualified leads
- Providing more value to existing clients
- Improving the ROI of marketing and business development efforts



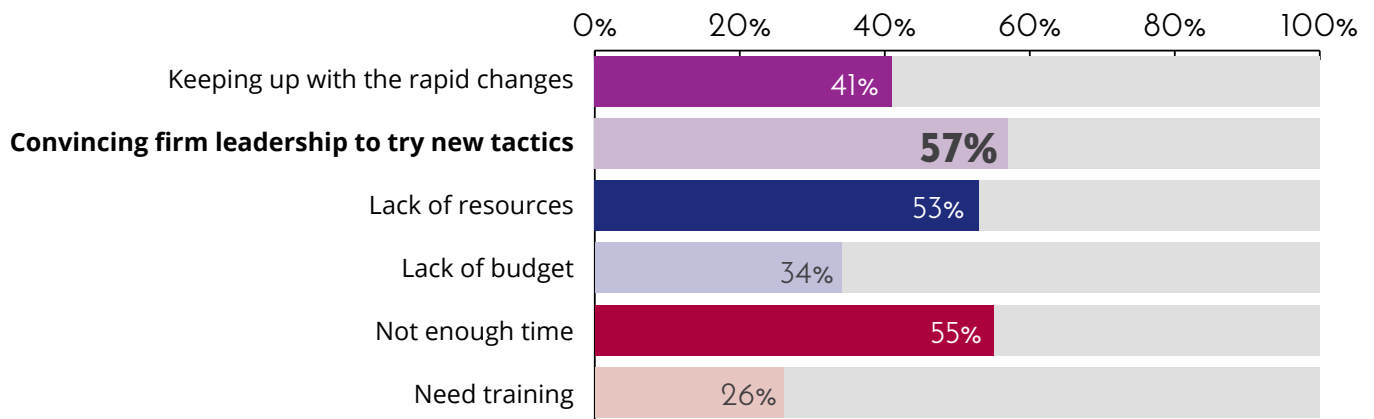
From these responses, we can confirm that digital marketing is essential across all stages of business development. From videos that improve brand awareness, to reports that enhance thought leadership, to case studies and webinars that generate more qualified leads and distinguish firms from competitors, digital marketing offers a variety of ways for law firms to grow their practice.

(Note: Responses add up to over 100 percent because multiple responses were allowed.)

4. CHALLENGES

Adoption and implementation of digital marketing strategies within a law firm has challenges. The biggest roadblock is convincing firm leadership to try new tactics, with 57 percent of firms citing this as an obstacle. Also, just over half of respondents said that there is not enough time to expand digital efforts with 53 percent of firms noting that a lack of resources is an obstacle.

Obstacles Law Firms find in Implementing Digital Marketing Strategies:



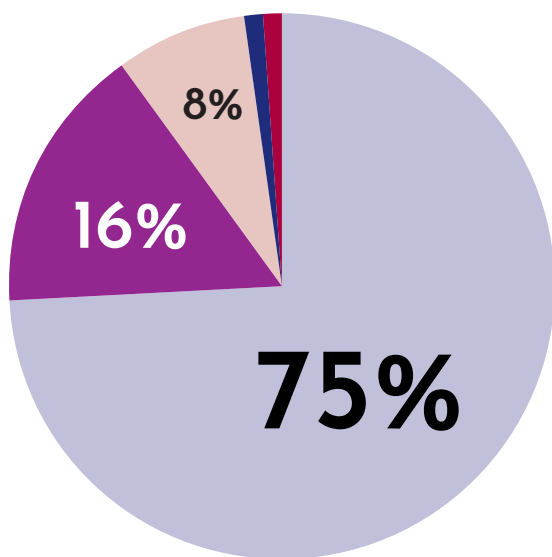
Forty-one percent of respondents reported another challenge: keeping up with the rapid changes in the digital marketing (i.e., new algorithms, platforms, and technologies offered by established players and start-ups). Just over a third of respondents reported that lack of budget was a big issue blocking them from moving forward, and one in four respondents said that they needed training.

5. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

When it comes to which social media platforms that law firms find valuable, it doesn't follow the popular social media trends among consumers. Seventy-five percent of firms cited LinkedIn as having the most value, with Facebook coming in a very distant second at 15 percent. This year's Social Law Firm Index confirms these results.

In our research, we found that many firms (especially those targeting corporations) are abandoning Facebook in favor of LinkedIn, which allows for deeper targeting and connections with businesses. Twitter came in third, with 8 percent of the vote, and Instagram got only a single vote. The majority of firms reported limited engagement with their posts – receiving less than 10 likes per post. Despite an increasing importance of digital marketing, half of the firms don't have a presence on one of the primary social media platforms listed below.

Social Media Platforms that Law Firms Find Value:



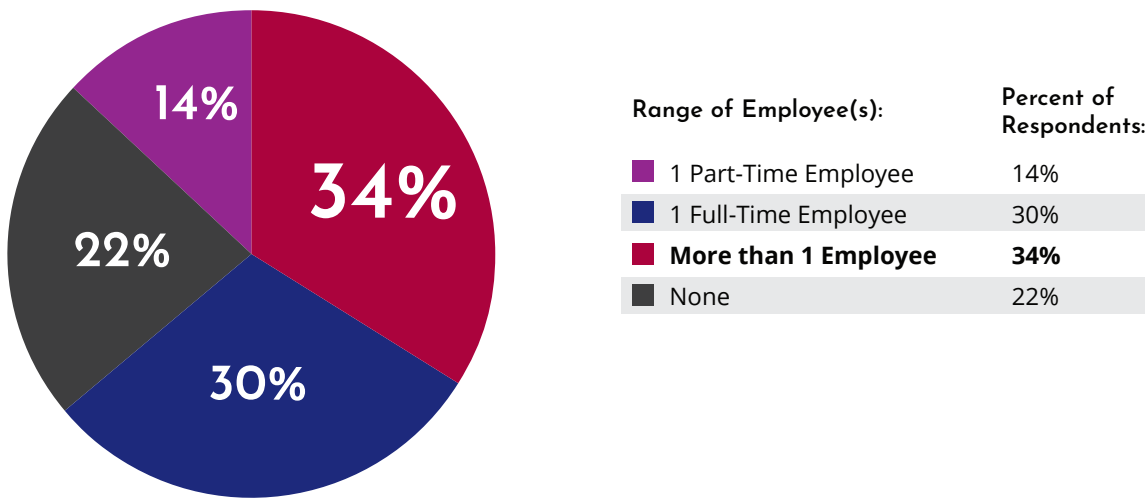
Range of Social Media Platforms:	Percent of Respondents:
Facebook	16%
Google+	0%
Instagram	1%
LinkedIn	75%
Medium	1%
Twitter	8%
YouTube	0%

Avg. Number of Shares	LinkedIn	Facebook	Twitter
Less than 5	19%	23%	49%
5 -10	49%	24%	26%
11-20	20%	13%	8%
More than 20	7%	8%	3%
N/A	5%	31%	14%

6. STAFF AND TRAINING

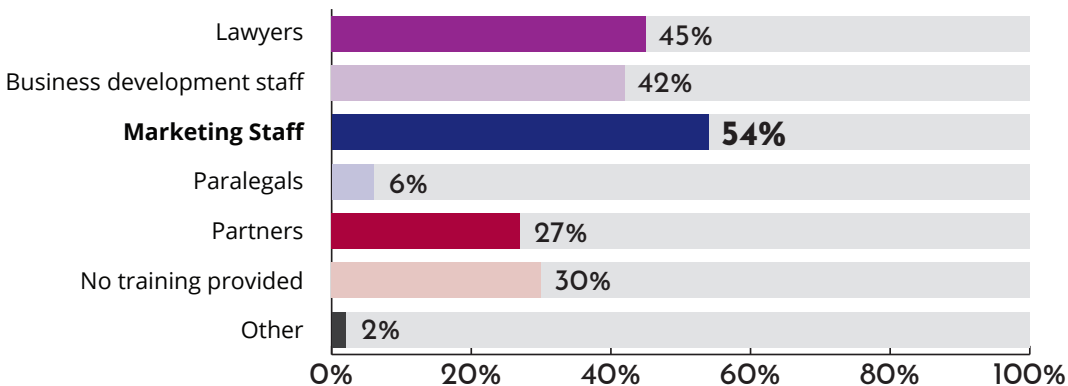
Most law firms do recognize the need for dedicating staff to their digital marketing efforts. Two-thirds of firms reporting have one or more employees dedicated to digital marketing, and nearly 14 percent said that they have a part-time employee focused on digital marketing. Yet, nearly a quarter of firms have not recognized the need and have no staff specifically for those efforts.

Law Firm Employees Dedicated to Digital Marketing:



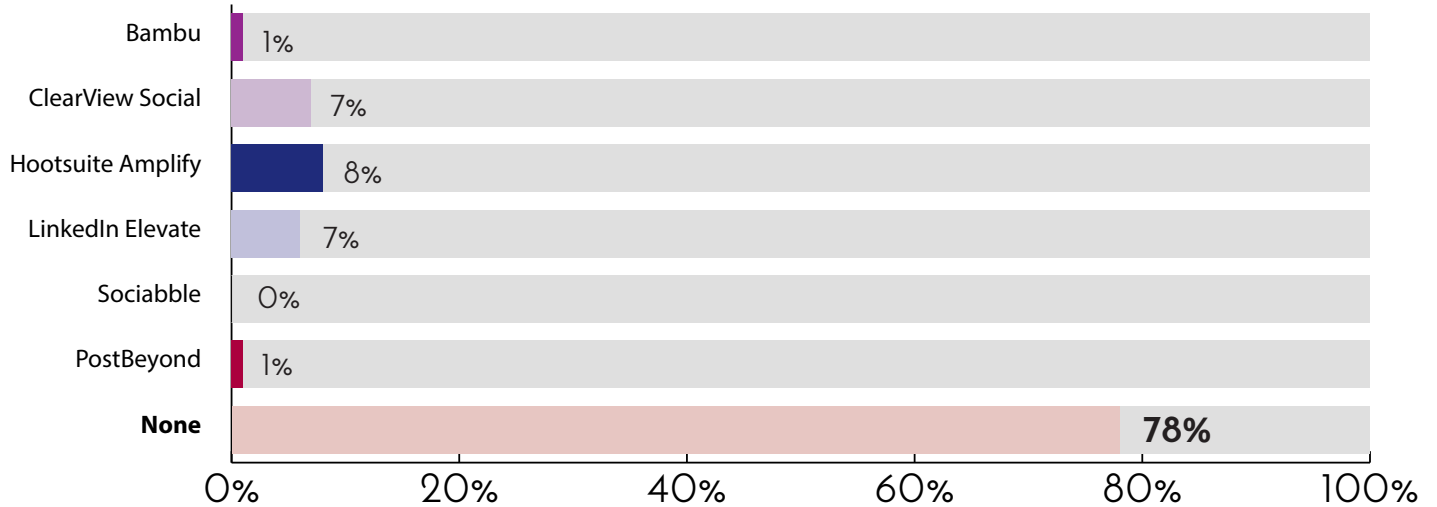
The good news is that the majority of firms indicated that the marketing staff is trained in digital marketing techniques – with just over 40 percent indicating that they trained lawyers and business development staff. However, only 27 percent reported training partners, and, surprisingly, nearly 30 percent said that they did no training on the topic at all.

Who does your firm provide marketing training to?



A report from PostBeyond deemed 2018 the year of Employee Advocacy, a form of internal marketing that encourages employees to share their firm's thought leadership content. In this survey, we found that law firms have been slow to adopt this marketing trend. Employee advocacy tools are used to promote content on social media by just over 20 percent of firms. Hootsuite Amplify is the most common one cited by 8 percent of respondents followed by LinkedIn Elevate and ClearView Social at 7 percent of respondents each.

Employee Advocates Tools that Firms are Using:

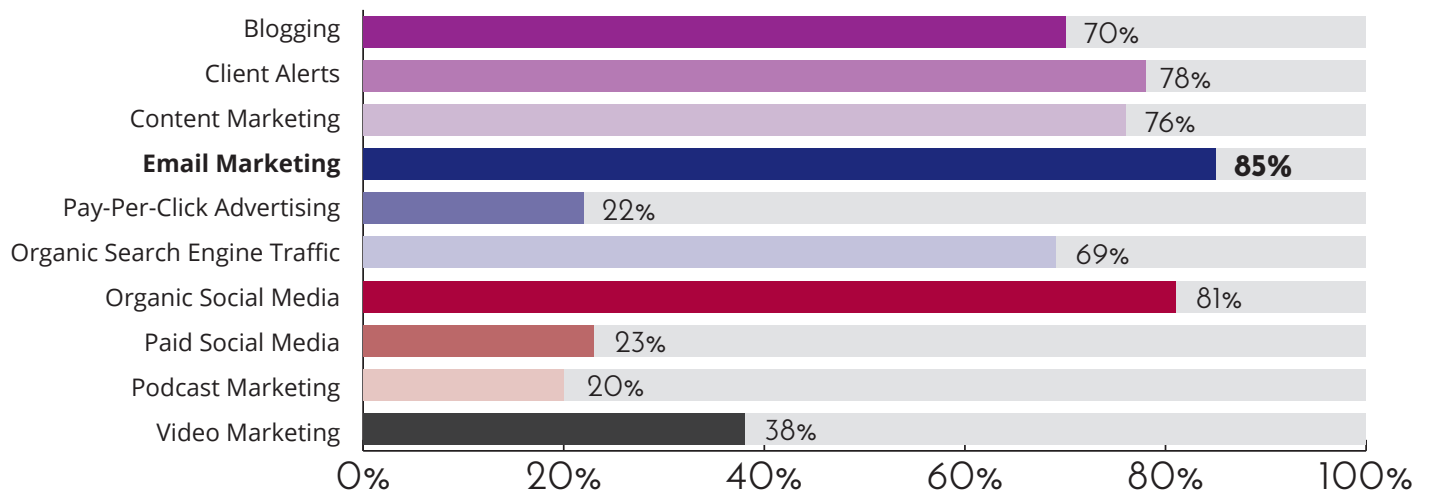


7. DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

Social media marketing is by far the most adopted digital promotion method currently. Nearly all law firms (97 percent) share content and curate other relevant content for social media.

Additionally, more than three-quarters of firms report employing the following digital marketing strategies. Email marketing is the most popular method, with 85 percent using this channel to get their marketing message out. Client alerts (78 percent), content marketing (76 percent), and blogging (70 percent) are also popular digital marketing methods. Organic social media and search engine optimization are also being used to boost efforts by 81 percent and 69 percent of respondents, respectively.

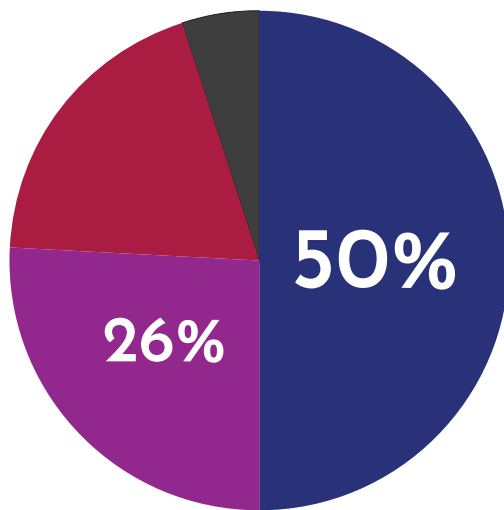
Digital Marketing Strategies that Law Firms Employ:



8. OPTIMIZATION AND PAID PROMOTION

A quarter respondents said that they have a comprehensive search optimization strategy for their firm's website in place. Half of the firms optimize for some keywords, but not the entire site, while nearly 20 percent admitted that they do not optimize.

Law Firm's SEO Efforts:



Responses:	Percent of Respondents:
Yes, we have a comprehensive SEO strategy in place	26%
We optimize for some keywords, but not the entire site	50%
We do not optimize our website for SEO	19%
I don't know	5%

Less than a quarter of surveyed firms have used methods like pay-per-click advertising, such as Google Ads (22 percent) and paid social media (23 percent). Firms that employ social media as a paid advertising channel use Facebook and LinkedIn equally (21 percent). Nine percent paid for ads on Twitter, while only 4 percent used Instagram as a vehicle. Seventy percent of firms surveyed indicated that they have never used paid social media.

Google Ads is not as popular among the participating law firms. Most firms that use Google Ads have minor budgets allocated to the effort, in just the hundreds of dollars, with a few in the thousands. There are a limited number of firms with \$25,000+ budgets for Google Ads.

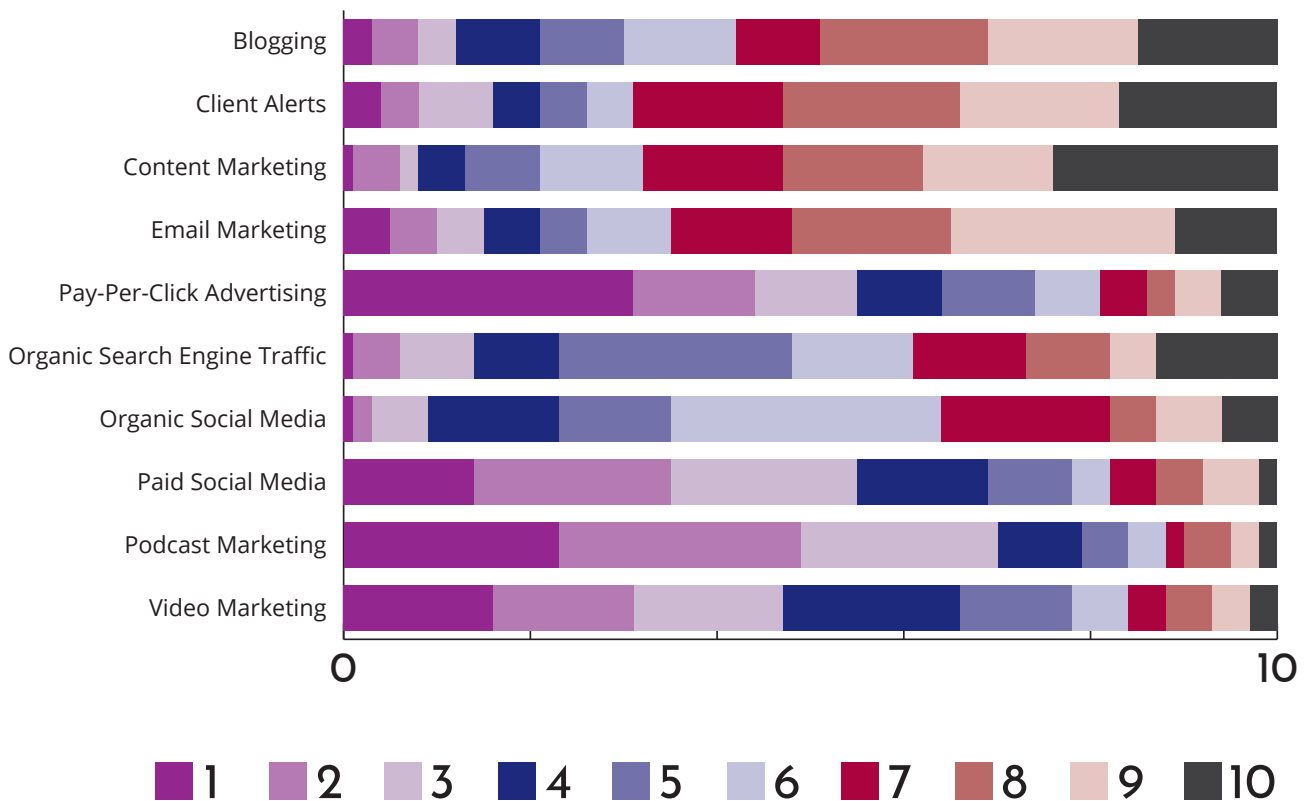
Video marketing and podcasts are in play as well, but only 20 percent of firms are using podcasts, while nearly twice as many (37 percent) are opting for video.

9. EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL CHANNELS

Firms rank content marketing as most effective for meeting digital marketing goals (7.38 on a scale of 1 to 10), followed by client alerts and blogging:

Content Marketing	7.38	Organic Search Engine Traffic	6.01
Client Alerts	6.96	Video Marketing	3.98
Blogging	6.86	Paid Social Media	3.86
Email Marketing	6.85	Pay-Per-Click Advertising	3.84
Organic Social Media	6.05	Podcast Marketing	3.20

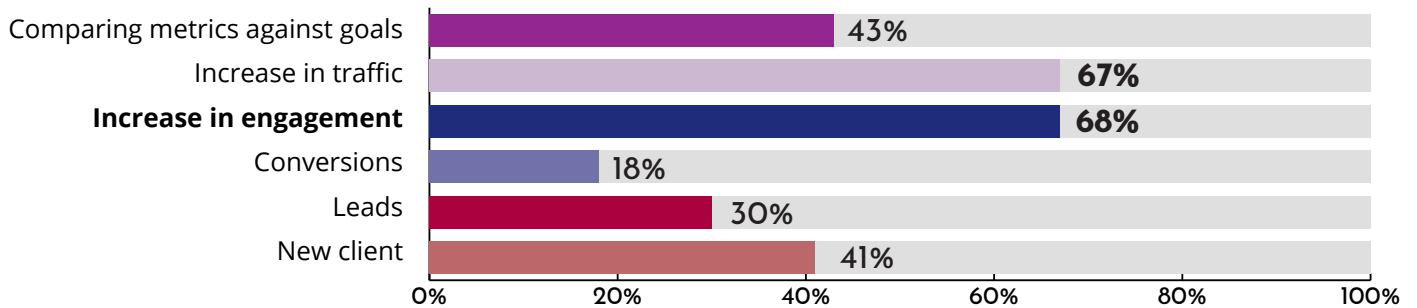
Effectiveness of digital channels, according to law firms in meeting their digital marketing goals. (1=Least Effective 10=Most Effective)



10. WHAT'S WORKING

Two-thirds of firms measure the success of digital marketing initiatives by increased engagement (68 percent) and traffic (67percent). Forty-three percent of firms compare metrics against goals to gauge effectiveness. When it comes to new business, 41 percent evaluate a campaign's effectiveness by the number of new clients it generated, while 30 percent look at the number of leads identified. Eighteen percent measure success in terms of conversions.

How Law Firms Measure Success in Digital marketing:



(Note: Responses add up to over 100 percent because multiple responses were allowed.)

So which methods are working? Email is not only a popular method, but successful for many. A third of respondents report an open rate of 21 to 30 percent, but more could be paying attention to the click-through rate, which us a stronger indicator of engagement and potential for new business.

What is your firm's average open rate for marketing emails?

RANGE	RESPONSES
0-5%	6%
6-10%	4%
11-20%	19%
21-30%	34%
31-40%	12%
41-50%	6%
More than 50%	2%
I don't know	13%
N/A	4%

What is your firm's average click-through rate for marketing emails?

ANSWERS	RESPONSES
.1-.9%	2%
1-2%	9%
2.1-3%	9%
3.1-4%	15%
4.1-5%	9%
5.1-10%	14%
10.1-15%	8%
More than 15%	8%
I don't know	19%
N/A	7%

11. Keeping Up With the Competition

So how does a firm keep up with its competition? A good tip: Follow others that are doing it well. Here is a list of firms that respondents thought did a good job in digital marketing.

Top Voted Law Firms:

1. DLA Piper
2. White & Case
- 3*. Latham & Watkins
- 3*. Baker McKenzie
- 4*. Cooley
- 4*. K&L Gates
- 4*. Tarter Krinsky & Drogin
- 4*. Nexsen Pruet

*tied

Staying up to date on the latest trends will also help keep your firm ahead of the curve. Reading newsletters and blogs are at the top of the list, according to respondents. Here's how digital marketing experts who responded stay tuned in to the latest trends and developments in digital marketing.

Email newsletters	75%
Blogs	72%
Social media	63%
Industry events	58%
LMA's Social and Digital Media Shared Interest Group	55%
Industry publications	52%
Industry influencers	48%

(Note: Responses add up to over 100 percent because multiple responses were allowed.)

12. CONCLUSION

We are firmly in the digital age. Blogs and other types of online content are taking the place of traditional publishing, and social media is quickly becoming the new medium for public relations and advertising efforts. Digital marketing will continue to grow in importance with all types of organizations, including law firms. However, as this survey revealed, there are several obstacles for implementing digital marketing strategies at law firms:

- Over half of firms name firm “buy-in” as a challenge when it comes to digital marketing.
- Partners are not willing to invest in content marketing or paid advertising if they don’t see a measurable return on investment.
- Law firm marketers need to use data to encourage firm partners to invest in digital marketing programs.
- The lack of resources – both time and budget – also prevent marketing departments from effectively marketing their firms online.

This is unsurprising due to the previously mentioned lack of partner support and the shockingly low digital marketing budgets also reported in this survey. The firms that invest their budget and time in digital marketing for business development will reap the benefits in terms of brand recognition, new business, and the firm’s profits.

ABOUT GOOD2BSOCIAL

Good2bSocial works with law firms and companies in the legal industry who are serious about growth, but who are often frustrated that the time, money, and effort they've spent on their websites and digital marketing haven't yielded the results they desire. Good2bSocial offers a full suite of inbound marketing services including Digital Strategy, Social Media Management and Monitoring, Online Advertising, SEO, Content Marketing, Email Marketing, and Video and Podcast Production.

ABOUT LMA

The Legal Marketing Association (LMA) is the universal voice of the legal marketing and business development profession, a community that brings together CMOs to entry-level specialists from firms of all sizes, consultants and vendors, lawyers, marketers from other professions and marketing students to share their collective knowledge. Members at every stage in their career development benefit from participating in LMA's broad array of programs and services. The LMA Social and Digital Marketing Shared Interest Group (SIG) is a forum for LMA members to share resources, ask questions and share their experience on these topics. To learn more about the conversation, please visit: <https://www.legalmarketing.org/page/social-&-digital-media-sig>

To learn more about legal marketing, visit:

www.legalmarketing.org & www.good2bsocial.com

