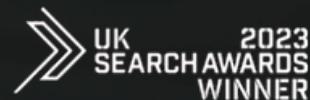




## LEGAL SECTOR REPORT MARKETING INSIGHTS



# Welcome to Embryo's Legal sector report

Our award-winning team understands the importance of truly knowing the intricacies of different industries; it's how we help our clients achieve the extraordinary.

That's why **we've combined our powerful in-house Supertools with extensive research** to bring you this report, filled with valuable insights and expert analysis.

We hope you find this report useful, and if you want to learn more about how Embryo can help you stay ahead in this competitive field, then we would love to talk.

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## DISCOVER MORE EXPERT INSIGHTS

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 [info@embryo.com](mailto:info@embryo.com)





“

If your usual marketing tactics aren't working like they used to, you're not alone. The past year brought massive changes to how people search for legal services online, completely shifting what potential clients expect.

We wrote this report because we kept hearing: "We're doing everything we used to do, but the leads aren't coming." What worked 18 months ago often falls flat today. We've analysed the data to reveal what's currently working for legal practices.

We wanted to cut through the noise and give you clear, practical strategies that make sense for law firms, not generic business advice. If anything resonates or raises questions, feel free to let me know.

**Jess Atkinson, Head of Organic**

”

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# Current state of the legal market

In 2025, it is projected that over **60% of law firms** will adopt AI technologies for research and case management. Furthermore, the demand for legal services is **expected to grow by 15% annually**, driven by increasing regulatory complexities and corporate legal needs. The rise of remote work and virtual consultations has also reshaped client interactions, making legal services more accessible.

As the landscape shifts, firms able to embrace technology will likely emerge as leaders in the field.



## KEY STATISTICS

- The market reached a new high of **£51.9 billion**, a **10.1% increase from 2023** (UK Legal Services Market Report 2025).
- 97% of the Top 100 firms reported fee income growth, and **81% saw profit increases** (Annual Law Firms' Survey 2024 - PwC UK).
- The UK remains the **largest legal market** in Europe and the second-largest globally (UK legal services 2024 - London - TheCityUK).

## The productivity and cash crisis

The impressive industry profit growth unfortunately is not a story of operational excellence, but one propped up by unsustainable interest income - masking a severe productivity crisis. Fee earners are working below their targets, costs are spiralling, and firms are taking longer than ever to get paid.



### HOURLY FEES

Changes in working hours



### SALARY COSTS

Changes in legal policies



### CASH FLOW

Changes in payments

Average fee earner records just 773 chargeable hours against 1,100 target = Only 50-63% chargeable time.

Salary costs have climbed to 63.5% of fee income. For every £133.01 a fee earner generates per hour, £123.40 (93%) is consumed by cost.

It now takes firms an average of 146 days, almost five months, to convert work into cash.

## Consolidation and the talent war

Private Equity is causing aggressive consolidation, creating a new class of scaled-up, professionally managed competitors. Also, the influx of high-paying US firms has created a war for talent, driving unsustainable salary inflation.

**Nearly 1,100 law firms have vanished since 2019, while solicitor numbers have grown by 14%, increasing competition.**



## Flexibility, culture and AI

Firms are realising they cannot compete on salary alone, making work-life balance and culture critical for retention.

Simultaneously, an AI divide is emerging, separating firms investing in future efficiency from those fearful of its impact.

**62% of legal professionals plan to change roles in the next year. For 60%, the top motivator is not pay, but work-life balance.**

# From market pressure to marketing action

## KEY STATISTICS

The pressures on law firms are mirrored in their clients. Facing their own budget constraints, clients are demanding more value and are using digital channels to find it. This has fundamentally changed the role of legal marketing from promotion to demonstrating tangible, commercial value.

- **Two-thirds of UK** General Counsel report direct pressure to control legal costs (Thomson Reuters - State of the UK Legal Market 2024).
- **65% of UK** corporate legal departments now use Alternative Legal Service Providers (ALSPs) to drive efficiency (Thomson Reuters - State of the UK Legal Market in 2025).
- **Over 70% of people** start their search for legal services online, with some reports suggesting as many as 96% (Law News - UK Guide for Solicitors; Inter Legal - Marketing Challenges & Solutions).

## High spend, ineffective execution

Firms have correctly identified the need to be online, with the majority now directing most of their marketing budget to digital channels. However, this investment is frequently wasted due to poor strategy and flawed execution.

**65% of law firms now spend most of their marketing budget online, with the average budget rising to 3.1% of turnover.**  
**Despite this spend, 74% of firms believe they have wasted money on marketing that failed to deliver ROI.**

## Why marketing spend fails

The greatest cause of wasted marketing spend is not the marketing itself, but a failure in the firm's internal processes. Firms are paying to generate leads, only to lose them through a complete breakdown in basic lead tracking, response, and data capture.



### INBOUND MANAGEMENT

**26% of law firms** do not track their incoming leads at all (Clio - Key Legal Marketing Statistics).



### SLOW RESPONSES

**42% of firms** take three or more days to respond to a new web enquiry - by which time the prospect is long gone (Clio - Key Legal Marketing Statistics).



### KEY DETAILS

On initial calls, firms fail to get an email address **86% of the time** and a phone number 45% of the time, making follow-up impossible (Clio - Key Legal Marketing Statistics).

## The outsourcing trap and the path to maturity

For firms that outsource, the high cost of paid advertising leaves no room for error, yet traffic is often wasted on generic web pages. The key to marketing success lies in moving from a scattergun approach to a strategic one: choosing a niche, building long-term assets like SEO, and understanding that not all channels deliver equal returns.

## The way forward

### A unified framework for growth

Firms must stop seeing marketing as a separate function and instead adopt a unified framework that aligns Strategy (your niche), Technology (your website/CRM), and Client Experience (your intake process). The biggest gains are often the least glamorous.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

##### Fix the leaky bucket first

The most profitable marketing action you can take is to fix your internal lead management. Implement tracking and mandate a rapid response protocol. This improves ROI without increasing spend.

##### Move from tactics to assets

Stop the scattergun approach. Invest in building a fast, modern website and high-quality, SEO-optimised content that serves as a permanent lead-generation asset.

##### Demand business metrics

Hold all marketing efforts, especially agencies, accountable for business outcomes (Cost Per Lead, Cost Per Client), not vanity metrics (clicks, impressions).

##### Embrace the AI revolution

The future is coming. Start planning now by exploring how AI can enhance your marketing, starting with CRM and data analytics. 50% of firms already plan to budget over £500,000 for AI tools in the next year (Passle - Cross-selling AI in Legal - Marketing Survey 2025).

# Supertools®

To understand the legal landscape, **we analysed more than 800 UK firms**, from industry giants to emerging boutiques.

This report was built using our proprietary **Supertools®** technology to process hundreds of thousands of data points from leading industry sources. Our in-house team's expertise and research then translated that data into the comprehensive insights you see here in this report.

## NEEDLE

The organic search insights tool

Needle is a revolutionary organic search insights tool that doesn't just monitor your website but maps your entire industry. It's the difference between one moment and the full story.

## INTERMINGLE

The strategic SERP compass

With a single-page overview of multiple SERPs, you get a real-time understanding of what's appearing for your most valuable keywords across different intent types and locations.

# What it takes to stand out

We will begin by outlining **five pivotal metrics** that are critical drivers of overall online visibility. Based on a comprehensive analysis of hundreds of UK firms, these statistics serve as the essential benchmark for success in the market.

## Legal market: The digital divide

### Big firms dominate online

- 5.5x more indexed pages
- 3.8x more keywords than smaller practices

### Quality beats quantity

- Top firms capture higher-value, commercial searches that convert better despite modest traffic differences

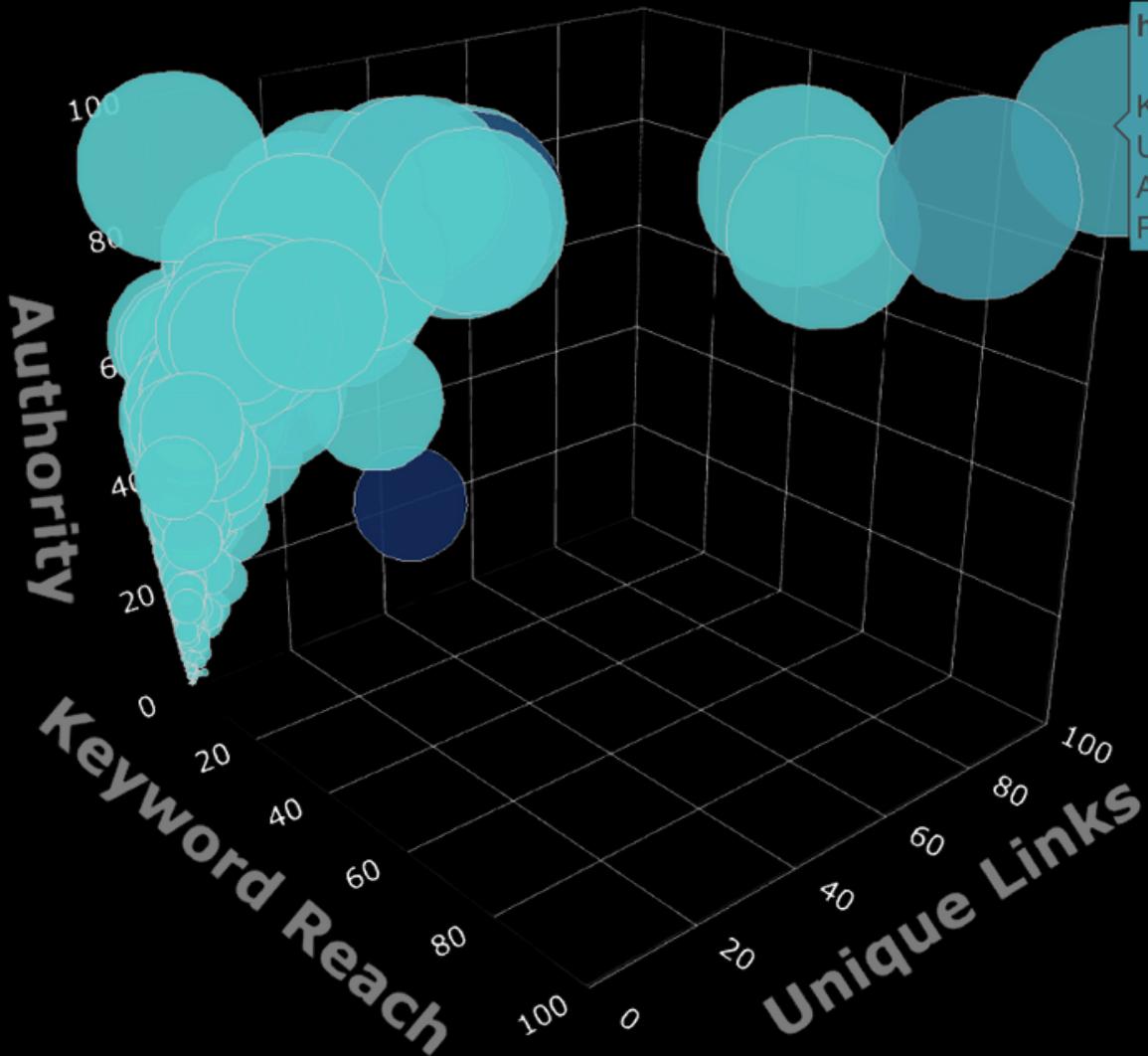
### The gap is widening

- Sustained content production and superior backlink profiles create unassailable advantages

	Average	Top 25%
<b>Domain authority</b>	17	50
<b>Organic traffic (pm)</b>	3,299	11,298
<b>Keywords</b>	2,298	8,752
<b>Links</b>	273	1,255
<b>Pages indexed</b>	1,585	8,752

(Source: Needle)

# What it takes to stand out



(Source: Needle)

<https://dlapiper.com>  
Keyword Reach: 99.43%  
Unique Links: 100%  
Authority: 100%  
Pages: 22.69%

How to read a Needle graph:

Each sphere on the three-dimensional axis represents a law firm. The size of the sphere is determined by how much visibility the site has online. The darker the sphere, the more pages it has indexed by Google.

The aim for any business is to grow from bottom left (aspirational) to top right (industry leader). This arch shape seen within the legal industry is common for every industry - it's actually known as Network Science.

Whilst this single image tells us part of the story, what really brings Needle to life is its interactive capabilities. That's not something we can recreate in report form, and is why the following pages will go into the detail we can see from within the tool.

If you're interested in seeing this data natively though, get in touch and we'd love to dive into it and where you play specifically.

# Overachievers

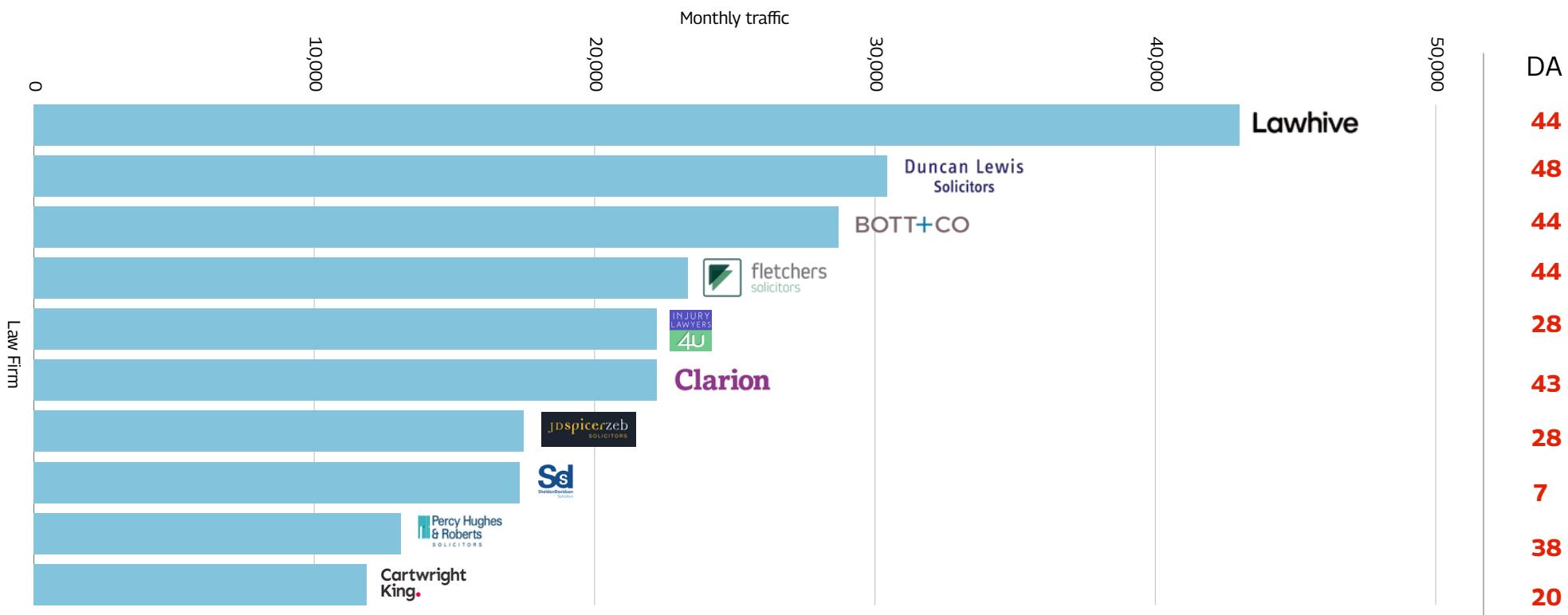
Firms with **high traffic**, but low **domain authority (DA)**

## Authority gap

These sub-industry-leading DA scores reveal missed opportunities in mastering on-page and technical SEO, an absence of high-quality backlinks, and/or the execution of a strategic content plan.

## Content beats backlinks

Firms are generating 11K-43K visits with low DA's (7-48), proving that strong keyword targeting can succeed traditional link strength.



(Source: Needle)

# Sleeping giants

Firms with low **traffic**, but high **domain authority (DA)**

## B2B focus limits volume

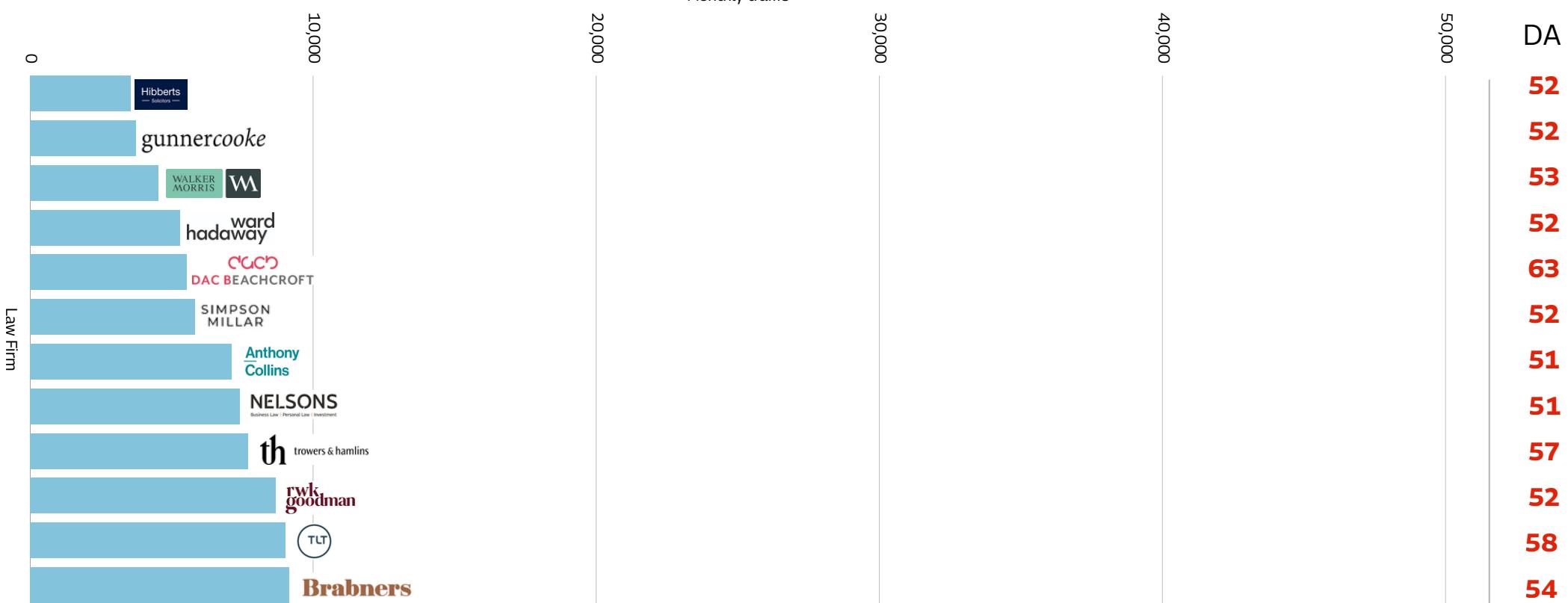
Given the nature of the specialisms of the firms below, low traffic is a reflection of targeting high-value corporate clients rather than consumer searches with higher volumes.

## Missing the execution

An opportunity to turn popular content into 'linkable assets' such as free interactive tools, original research reports, or ultimate guides to convert DA into organic visibility.

## High authority, low traffic

Strong DA (51-74) but surprisingly low organic visits (389-11K), revealing underutilised SEO potential.



(Source: Needle)

# Overall leaderboard

## International elite command top tier

DLA Piper, Pinsent Masons and CMS Law dominate through combining high domain authority with strategic content marketing across multiple practice areas.

## A balanced formula wins

Top 20 represents firms successfully balancing domain strength with traffic generation, as pure traffic leaders like National Accident Helpline fall out while authority-strong firms like Eversheds Sutherland climb higher.

## Diverse business models succeed

Major consolidators (DWF Group #14), established consumer brands (Co-op Legal #18), and traditional partnerships prove that different approaches can achieve visibility through varying content volume, brand recognition, and technical optimisation combinations.

## Consumer vs corporate ranking patterns

Consumer-focused firms (Irwin Mitchell #7, Slater Gordon #11, Co-op Legal #18) punch above DA weight through high-volume content, while corporate practices leverage authority for sustained visibility.

#	Law Firm	Organic Traffic	Keywords	DR	Pages Indexed	Backlinks
1	<b>DLA Piper</b>	160,744	79,007	82	83,500	14,557
2	<b>Pinsent Masons</b>	79,049	82,057	79	63,100	9,874
3	<b>CMS Law</b>	75,438	63,433	78	6,260	8,170
4	<b>Latham &amp; Watkins</b>	91,371	70,298	75	21400	7,642
5	<b>Eversheds Sutherland</b>	24,514	36,632	74	243,000	3,542
6	<b>Womble Bond Dickinson</b>	34,833	34,886	72	5,230	3,592
7	<b>Irwin Mitchell</b>	199,329	36,310	72	22,300	3,318
8	<b>Clyde &amp; Co</b>	25,576	30,625	73	20,400	4,121
9	<b>Squire Patton Boggs</b>	20,247	27,289	73	19,600	3,629
10	<b>Fieldfisher</b>	32,571	27,520	74	20,100	3,142
11	<b>Slater Gordon</b>	95,351	29,566	65	2,010	2,280
12	<b>Leigh Day</b>	31,054	14,184	70	5,870	2,963
13	<b>Kennedys</b>	14,324	24,675	64	6,300	2,240
14	<b>DWF Group</b>	18,329	16,471	67	6,030	2,093
15	<b>JMW</b>	50,257	25,820	61	4,390	1,668
16	<b>Legal Vision</b>	27,835	35,888	53	3,570	1,144
17	<b>Law Hive</b>	43,009	45,029	44	289,000	760
18	<b>Co-op Legal Services</b>	99,806	23,371	61	1,370	1028
19	<b>Weightmans</b>	47,230	22,627	59	3,140	1375
20	<b>Thompsons Law</b>	88,979	12,955	53	3,660	1095

# Authority

# Domain authority- Top 10

## Top 10 law firms with highest domain authority

72-82 DA defines the industry elite

DLA Piper and Latham & Watkins leverage their global presence and decades of online credibility to dominate authority metrics.

The corporate law authority advantage

The magic circle and top-tier commercial firms consistently outrank consumer-focused practices through extensive professional networks, media coverage, and business publication backlinks.

Authority-traffic disconnect revealed

Traffic leader Irwin Mitchell ranks 10th in DA (72) while authority leader DLA Piper ranks 2nd in traffic, proving domain strength doesn't guarantee organic visibility in legal services.



# Traffic

# Traffic overall

## Top 20 law firms on search engine results pages

### Brand power wins

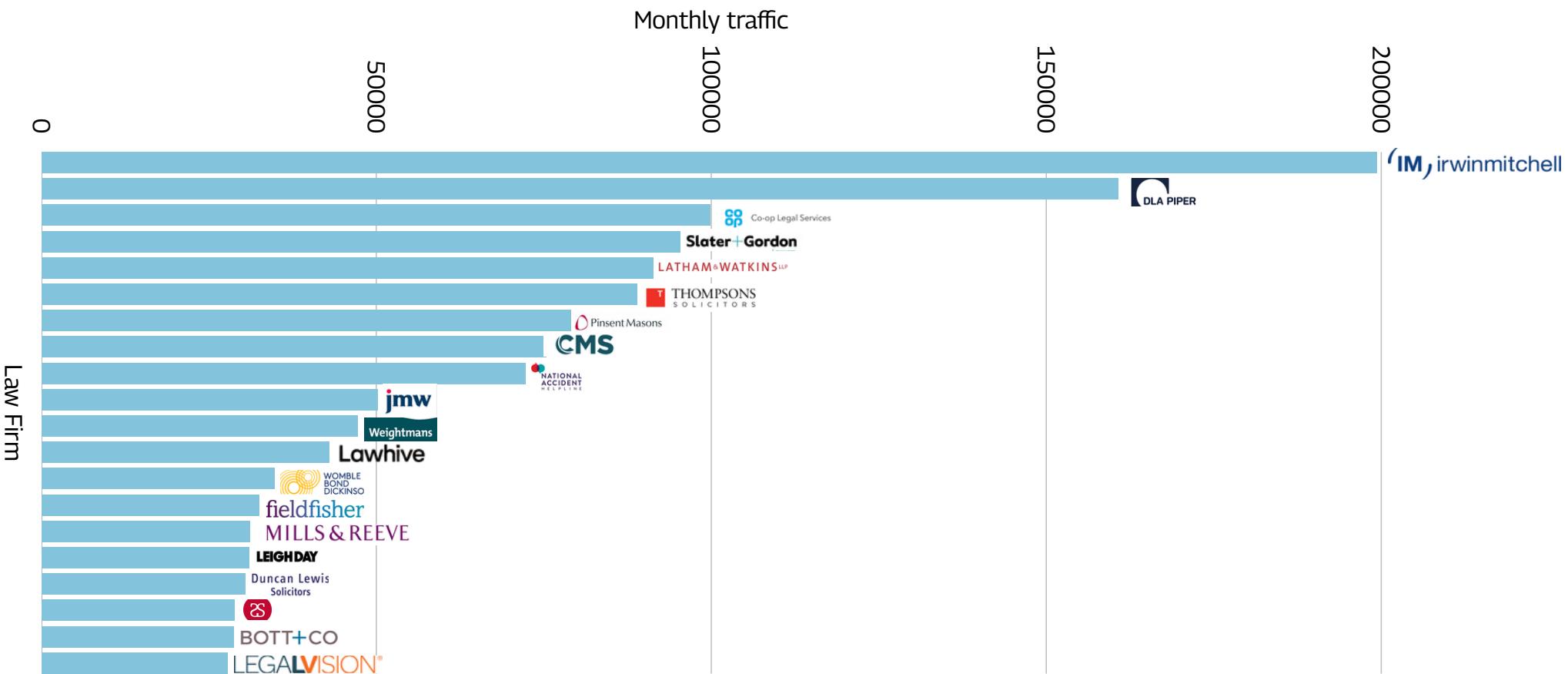
Irwin Mitchell and DLA Piper dominate with 160K+ visits, showing effective leverage of their full-service offerings and industry brand recognition.

### Consumer focus competes

Personal injury and accessible legal services (Co-op Legal, National Accident Helpline) effectively challenge elite corporate firms.

### Steep visibility cliff

Traffic drops from 199K (#1) to 28K (#20), proving that top-tier visibility requires either premium brand equity or high-volume specialisation.



(Source: Needle)

# Top pages by traffic

## Top 100 Pages:

### Hierarchy and performance

The Big Five take 38 of the top 100 spots

Irwin Mitchell and Slater & Gordon (9 each), Co-op Legal (8), Thompsons (7) and National Accident Helpline (5) control 38% of elite traffic with distinct strategic positioning.

Traffic concentration is extreme

The Top 100 pages generate 257,937 monthly visits worth £1,040,789 in PPC equivalent spend, averaging £10,408 per page - ranging from £1,333 (family law) to £70,557 (car finance claims).

Private client #2 practice area

11 pages generate 33,027 visits (£63,912 value) at £5,810 average per page, with Co-op Legal's will writing service alone capturing 10,302 monthly visits.

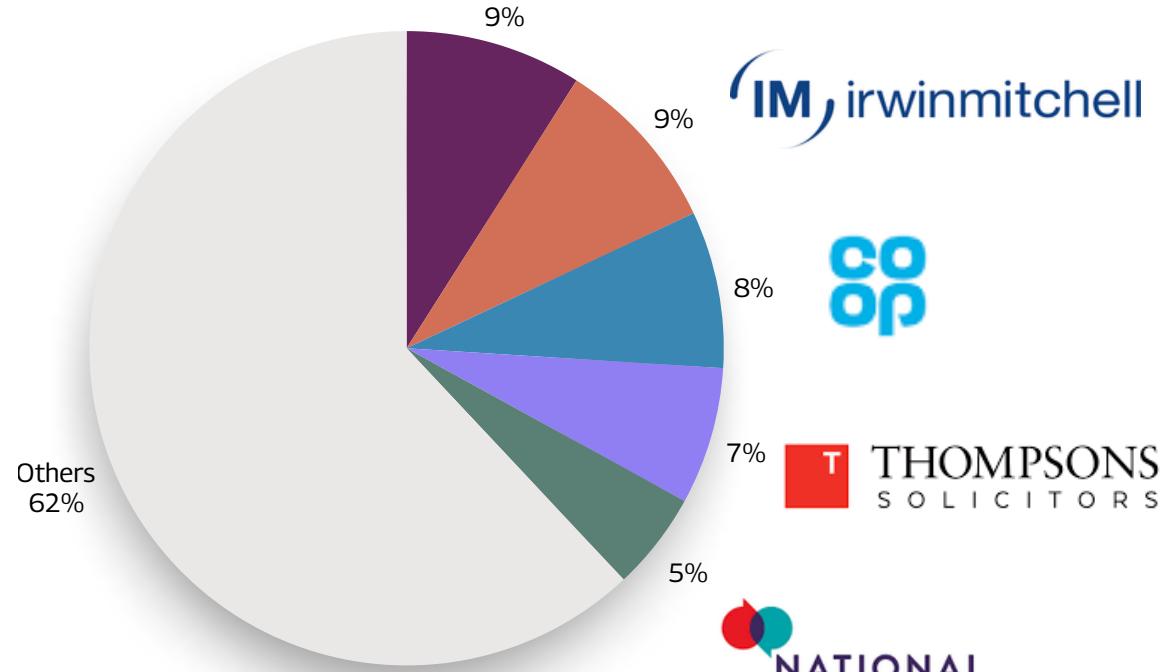
**Slater + Gordon**  
Lawyers

**Irwin Mitchell**

**Co-op**

**THOMPSONS**  
SOLICITORS

**NATIONAL**  
**ACCIDENT**  
HELPLINE



**257,937**  
monthly visits

**£1,040,789**

In PPC equivalent spend

**£10,408**

Average per page

# Top pages by traffic

## Practice area value breakdown

### Personal injury dominates volume and value

40 pages (40% of list) drive 123,024 visits worth £794,221, averaging £19,856 per page across road traffic accidents, medical negligence, and workplace accidents.

### Group litigation delivers the highest ROI

Only 4 pages, but £115,182 total value at £28,796 average per page, with car finance claims and emissions cases leading the digital gold rush.

### Employment law punches above its weight

4 pages generate £10,805 value, with Asda Equal Pay case proving group employment actions drive significant traffic.

The **£50,000+** elite keywords

**£368,000**

**x3.5**

**£15,000**

The top six pages worth £368k+ pm PPC equivalent: Car finance claims (£70k), medical malpractice attorney (£65k and £54k), no win no fee (£62k and £60k), accident at work solicitors (£54k).

Keywords containing 'claims,' 'solicitors,' 'attorney,' and 'no win no fee' show 3-5x higher per-visit values than informational queries.

Pages targeting 'solicitors' or 'attorney' terms command average £15k+ monthly values vs £3k for general advice content.

# Top pages by traffic

## Digital **strategies**

### Content that works

- M&A announcements, firm growth stories, and people moves generate significant traffic alongside legal analysis.
- Sites with 404 pages and server errors represent missed opportunities and poor user experience for potential clients.

### Building authority

- Authoritative resources become reference points for news outlets, blogs, and institutions.
- Backlinks signal credibility to Google, driving higher positions for competitive terms.
- First-page visibility for competitive queries directly converts to the high traffic numbers in leading firms.

### Top 100 pages: Content strategy

- Specialised content on specific legal topics attracts highly targeted audiences, with Pinsent Masons' "Out-Law" platform leading through consistent, authoritative legal news.
- Cross-border content (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Africa) drives major traffic, positioning international firms as global legal experts.
- Boutique practices like Stowe Family Law prove that focused expertise can match large full-service firms online.



### Proactive content

DWF Group's "minimum wage 2025" positioned months ahead of implementation and Duncan Lewis's "Lucy Connolly case" commentary shows real-time newsjacking effectiveness.



### Conversion tool integration

National Accident Helpline's injury calculator and Bott & Co's whiplash compensation calculator combine traffic capture with direct lead generation.



### Funnel architecture

Bott & Co deploys broad "car finance claims" entry page plus specific "PCP claims" deeper funnel content, capturing users across the awareness spectrum.

# Search intent

# Search Intel

## Legal **search behaviour** insights

Intent type	What does this mean?	Top 15 firms	All firms
Informational	The user is looking for information and knowledge. The query is often formed as a question	70%	74%
Commercial	The user is doing more research and is in the consideration phase. The query is often a comparison or review	11%	10%
Local	The user is looking for products and services in close proximity. The query often includes 'near me'	14%	12%
Transactional	The user is ready to make a purchase. The query often includes action phrases like 'Buy'	4%	3%
Navigational	The user is often looking for a specific site. The query is often a brand name or product	1%	1%

Over 70% of searches are research-driven

The firms winning today understand the full customer journey, from curious researcher to paying client.

### Develop a content-first strategy

Create helpful guides, FAQs, and explainers – this is where the majority of traffic lives.

### Invest efforts in local SEO

Regional firms must nail "lawyer near me" searches (c14% of market intent).

### Optimise your conversion rate

High-intent visitors need frictionless enquiry forms and clear CTAs.

### 'Word of mouth' still pays off online

Strong brands get direct searches, continue to develop your market recognition and reputation.

# Top 15 domains by combined intent scores

Lawhive

IM irwinmitchell

marsdens  
LAW GROUP

PinSENT Masons

co  
op

## Content powerhouse

- 20,781 informational
- 3,004 local

## Full-funnel leader

- 3,438 commercial
- 1,256 transactional
- 17,427 informational

## Conversion-heavy visibility

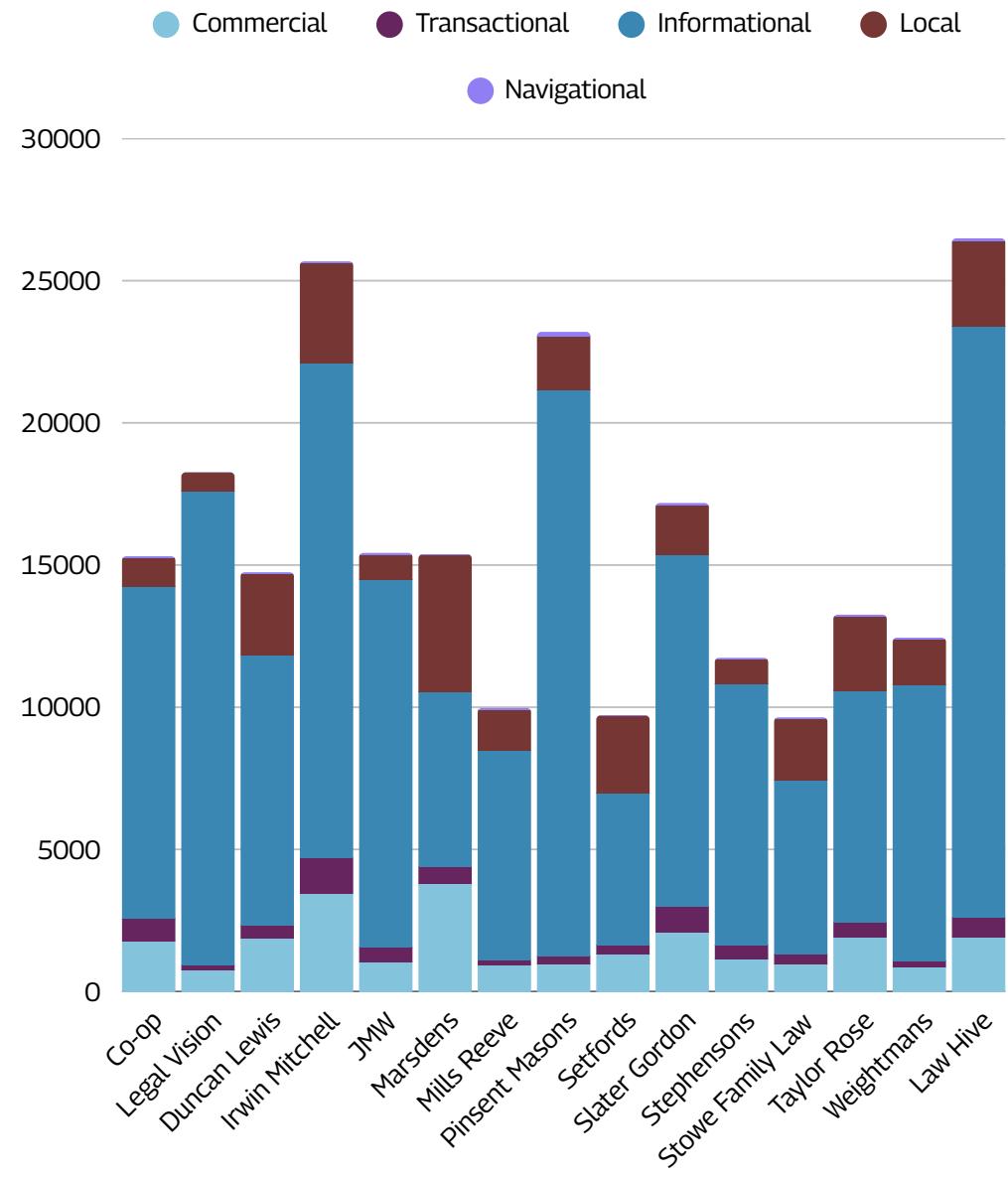
- 3,796 commercial
- 4,811 local
- 6,152 informational (opportunity to optimise through more top-of-funnel)

## Brand-driven and authority-led visibility

- 19,897 informational
- 167 navigational

## Balanced research and conversion appeal

- 11,676 informational
- 795 transactional



# Search intel

## Legal search behaviour insights

### Cross-device research

Mobile (48.5%) vs desktop (51.5%)

Desktop is slightly favoured for complex document review and service comparison.

### Organic dominance

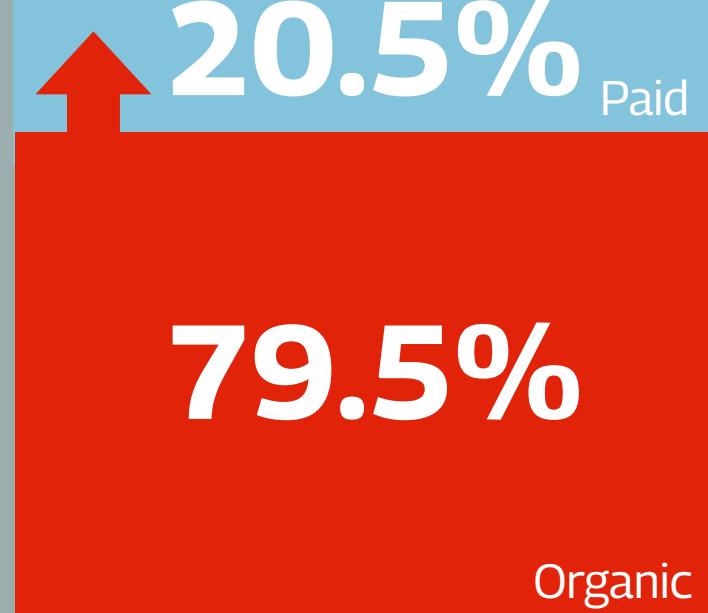
79.5% organic vs 20.5% paid clicks

Shows strong trust in natural rankings, proving SEO delivers higher ROI than paid advertising.

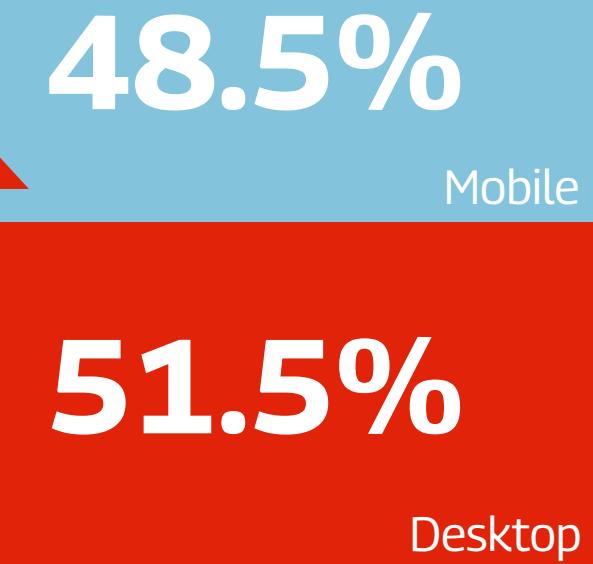
### Info-first approach

Low-paid click share indicates searches are primarily informational, with users researching organically before making contact decisions.

Clicks



Searches



# Brand vs non-brand search

Every firm's digital strategy is a balancing act between two key areas.

- **Brand keywords:** People searching for YOU.
- **Non-brand keywords:** People searching for a SERVICE.

The Goal: You need both. Relying only on your brand means you miss new clients. Relying only on SEO means you're a commodity.

Your biggest digital competitor isn't who you think it is.

Specialist legal marketing companies often outrank traditional law firms for high-value search terms. They intercept your potential clients and sell them back to you as leads.

Key players:

**Lawhive**

31,000 non-brand keywords

**LEGALVISION**

33,000 non-brand keywords

**NATIONAL  
ACCIDENT  
HELPLINE**

10,800 non-brand keywords

You're not just competing on legal expertise; you're competing against the digital natives, too.

Our data shows a massive, underserved market at the local level.

Hundreds of firms in our data rank for fewer than 20 non-brand keywords.

- The opportunity: A small, focused investment in local SEO and niche content can deliver huge returns.
- While the top players fight for "personal injury lawyer," you can win "commercial property solicitor in Bury."

Three steps to take, no matter your firm's size:

**1**

Perfect your Google Business Profile. Target keywords that include your town or city. Get client reviews.

**2**

Don't try to rank for everything. Choose one profitable service area and create the best content online for it. Answer every possible client question.

**3**

Study the non-brand winners like Stowe Family Law or the lead-gen legal sites. What are they doing right? Learn from their content strategy and apply it to your niche.

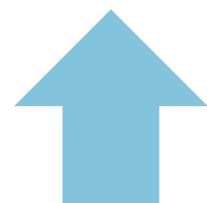
# Legal keyword research

# Legal areas of interest

**Emerging** and **declining** search terms

## **Biggest battlegrounds (highest volume)**

Property (1.34m),  
Probate (1.19m),  
Contracts (970k),  
Employment law  
(630k)



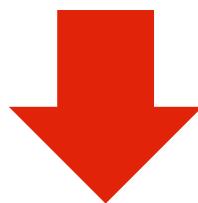
## **Areas with the biggest growth**

Residential property  
(10%),  
Wills/probate (8.2%),  
Dispute resolution  
(13.4%),  
Immigration/visas  
(21.8%)



## **Emerging niches**

M&A (34k),  
Medical negligence  
(42k), Environmental  
law (160k)  
Transport/ aviation  
(72k)

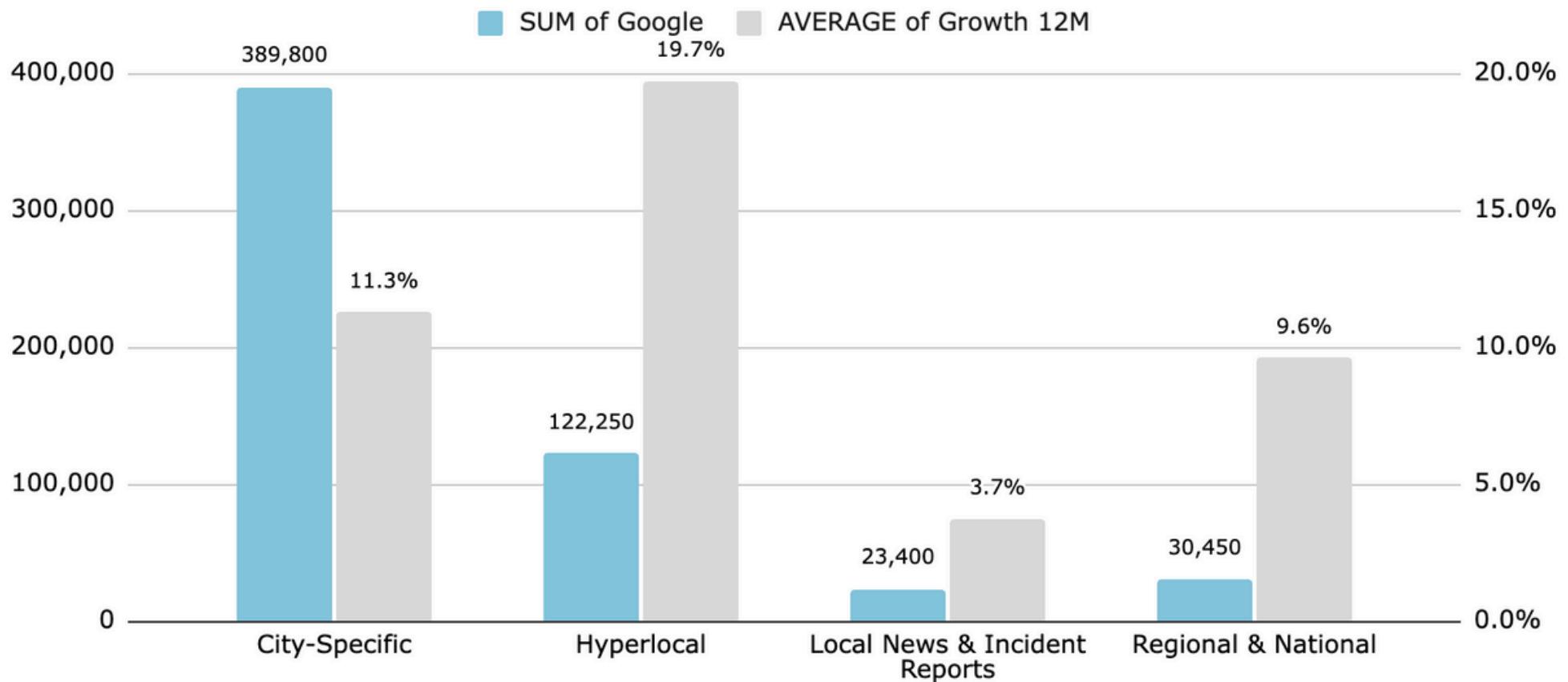


## **Declining search interest**

Intellectual property  
(-2.5%)

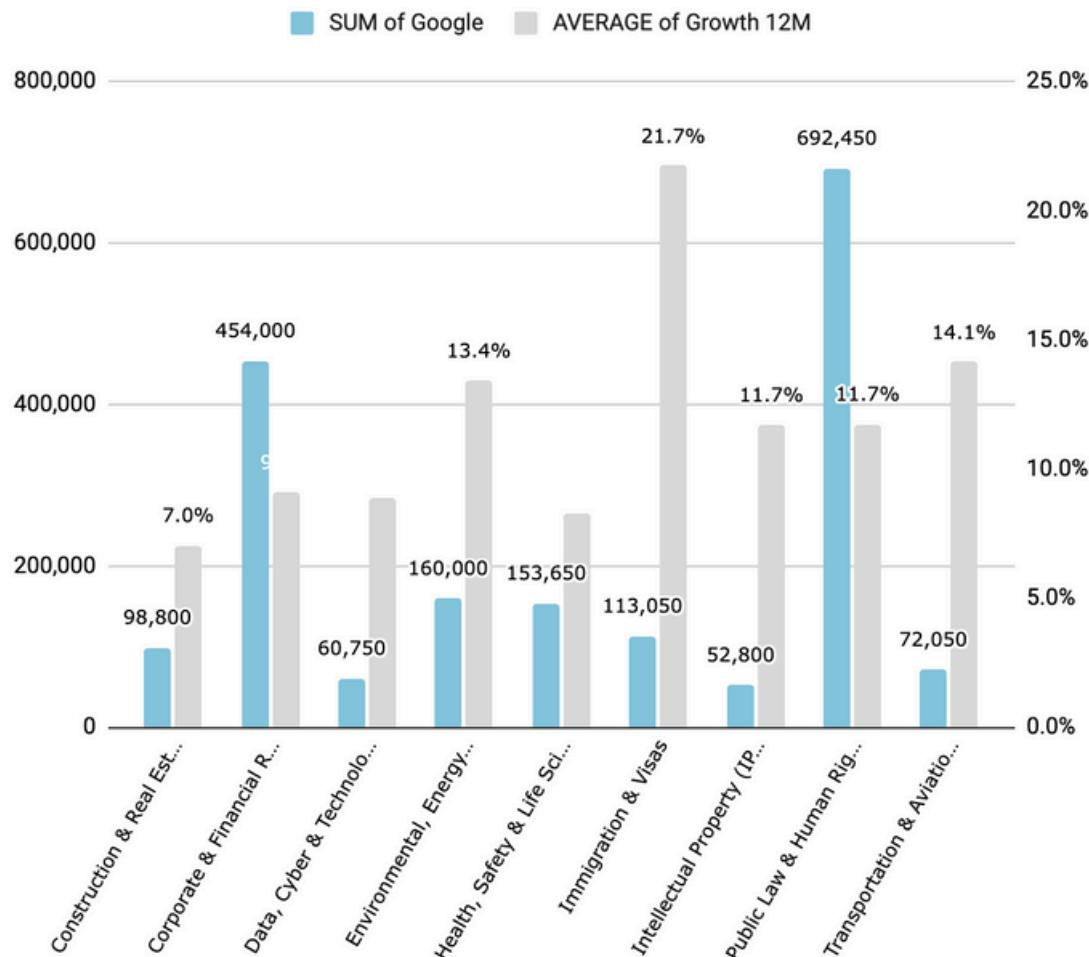
# Location-based searches

- City-Specific and Hyperlocal terms show solid to fast YoY growth (11-20%), with ~500k+ total monthly volume, strong local intent, especially valuable for firms with regional presence.
- Local News & Incident Reports are small but steady, niche visibility plays here could differentiate firms in local crises/events.
- Regional & National demand is modest, signalling most opportunity sits at city and hyperlocal level.



# Specialist legal areas

Specialist legal areas are seeing outsized growth and while they don't always command the biggest volumes, they often reflect wider societal, regulatory, and economic shifts, which makes them high-opportunity spaces for firms that can build authority early.



## Environmental, energy and planning law

- Climate agenda, net-zero targets, planning disputes.
- Own the sustainability conversation and position as go-to experts in this rapidly evolving space.

## Corporate and financial regulation

- Compliance challenges, economic turbulence.
- Use evergreen guides and regulatory updates for long-term visibility.

## Transportation and aviation law

- Post-pandemic travel recovery, delay/cancellation disputes.
- Target consumer pain points with accessible guides on claims, compensation, and passenger rights.

## Immigration and visas

- International mobility, policy shifts, labour shortages.
- Create timely policy content and establish thought leadership on new visa routes.

## Public law and human rights

- Focus on equality, protests, and legal protections.
- Position through trust, credibility, and advocacy - clients want firms that "stand for something."

# Personal and legal

## Core consumer drivers

'Residential property & housing law' and 'wills & probate' dominate the landscape.

These are evergreen, high-value categories with the biggest share of search demand.

For firms, they represent the most consistent pipeline of enquiries and will likely remain the foundation of consumer-facing legal work.

## Everyday consumer needs

Beyond the big evergreen drivers, categories like 'Immigration & Citizenship' and 'Family & Divorce' continue to show stable, double-digit growth.

These reflect real-life, recurring consumer challenges that drive regular demand. They are also emotionally charged areas, where brand trust and authority can heavily influence who wins.

## Fast growing niches

Smaller categories such as 'Medical Negligence' and 'Personal Injury' are seeing 15-16% YoY growth.

While not as high in absolute volume, they are rapidly expanding areas of opportunity.

Early movers can build strong visibility and establish authority before competition intensifies.

## Lower priority areas

'Motoring & Consumer Rights' and Individual Rights have modest growth and lower volume.

These niches may be worth targeting only for specialist positioning.

For most firms, investment here should be secondary to higher-growth clusters.

# Business and commercial

## Commercial cornerstones

'Commercial Contracts & Agreements' (969k volume) and 'Company Formation & Structure' (853k volume) dominate demand.

These are the bread-and-butter drivers of business legal searches. They represent consistent, high-volume intent, making them the foundation for B2B client acquisition.

## High stakes battlegrounds

'Dispute Resolution & Litigation' is not only very high in demand (643k volume) but also growing strongly (13% YoY).

This is a competitive, high-value arena where winning visibility directly translates to major casework.

Firms need authoritative positioning to stand out here.

## Growth niches

Certain categories are smaller in scale but expanding rapidly:

'Mergers & Acquisitions' (16% growth), fast-growing, high-value cases where authority can create a first-mover edge.

'Corporate Crime & Fraud' is a niche, but part of the growing risk/regulation trend that firms should monitor.

## Lower priority areas

Not every category is moving upward. 'Intellectual Property' (IP) is one of the few in decline (-2.5% YoY).

This suggests either market maturity (demand stabilising) or competition shifting to different keywords.

It's still strategically important, but firms may need to rethink positioning and approach.



## Market reality Where **NOT TO** compete

'Probate'  
(42k searches/month, KD: 78)

- GOV.UK holds top spot with 5 sitelinks
- KD of 78 makes this commercially unviable
- Chasing volume without considering difficulty = failure

## Smart alternative: High-intent niches

- 'How long does probate take?' - 9k searches, KD: 49
- 'Probate fees' - 3k searches, KD: 12

Evidence of opportunity: Proving low authority can outrank larger competitors and win...

- BBE Law (DA 19)
- GN Law (DA 24)
- Kingsford Solicitors (DA 21)

## Winning strategy Where **TO** compete

'Wills'  
(39k searches/month, KD: 64)

- Local Pack advantage - Bypass national competition
- Co-op: Even big spenders cover <10% of SERP despite heavy PPC investment - so gaps exist
- Create problem-solving content: 'Probate Costs 2025' and 'Probate Timeline Guide''

## New SERP landscape opportunities

- AI Overviews - Structure content to influence top results
- People Also Ask boxes - Direct pipeline to other user questions (less competitive terms)

'The strategic SERP compass'

# Keyword: Medical negligence

High-opportunity strategy

Keyword	Volume	KD	Strategic value
"No win no fee medical negligence"	1,900	12	High - Low competition, high intent
"Medical negligence solicitors"	4,000	17	High - Strong volume, manageable
"Medical negligence solicitors near me"	1,100	12	High - Local intent, low barrier

## Slater Gordon, Thompsons Law, Hugh James & Irwin Mitchell

- High domain authority + comprehensive content hubs
- Featured snippet dominance (Thompson's Law leading)
- Location-specific sitelinks for dual capture

## Patient Claim Line (DA 31)

- Heavy PPC investment but weak organic foundation
- Strategic vulnerability: <10% organic SERP share despite high spend
- Long-term susceptible to SEO-focused competitors

## Cooper Hall Solicitors (DA 7) & Medical Solicitors (DA 25)

- Proof point: Low authority firms achieving high rankings
- Specialised content + efficient resource allocation = disproportionate visibility



(Source: Intermingle)

'The strategic SERP compass'

# Keyword: Employment law



## Market advantages to exploit

- Minimal paid advertising = organic SEO battle
- Google Business profile optimisation
- Build commercial service pages answering "People Also Ask" questions
- Explore video content for SERP feature capture
- Examples: McCabe and Co, & DPH Legal winning through local signals, not budgets

## Gatekeeper problem vs. commercial opportunity

### Commercial keywords

Where smaller firms win:

- "Employment lawyer" (2.6k searches, KD: 21)
- "Employment solicitors near me" (1.5k searches, KD: 5)

Proof points - Low DA firms ranking page 1:

- Martin and Co Solicitors (DA 4) - ranking for "employment lawyer"
- The Employment Law Solicitors (DA 12) - "employment solicitors near me"
- Castle Associates (DA 9) - "free employment law advice"

Keyword	Volume	KD	Strategic value
"Employment solicitors near me"	1,500	5	Immediate target - lowest barrier
"Employment lawyer"	2,600	21	High-value commercial focus

### Informational keywords

- "Citizens advice" - 530k searches/month
- "Employment law" - KD 72
- "Unfair dismissal" - KD 64
  - Owned by: Acas, GOV.UK, Citizens Advice
- SERP Complexity: Answer boxes, "People Also Ask," Top Stories push organic results down

# AI and your digital future...

Search Reimagined:  
The New Organic Playbook

The topic of AI is vast. Rather than providing a brief summary here, we've consolidated our stance and actionable advice into a dedicated guide: **Optimising for AEO and GEO**. We encourage you to explore it to learn how to manage your search visibility in an AI-driven world.

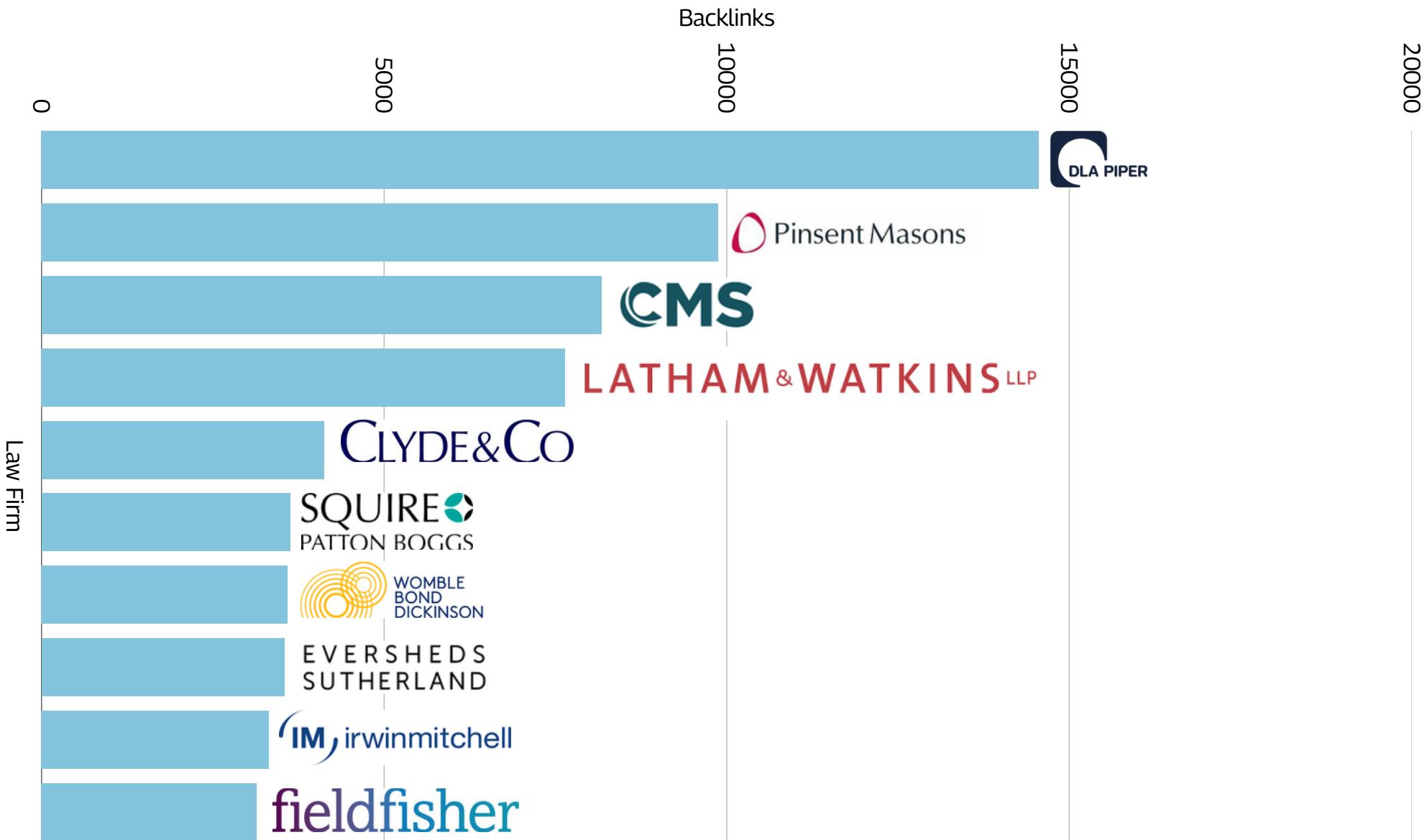
Scan here



# Digital PR

# Backlink analysis

Top 10 law firms with highest **quantity** backlinks



# Backlink analysis

Risk assessment across **800 firms**

## Quality vs quantity

### The elite few

DLA Piper (14,557), Pinsent Masons (9,874), CMS Law (8,170) command massive referring domain counts, while many competitors are relying on dangerous, low-quality tactics.

### Toxic link epidemic

Analysis of 800 legal sites reveals widespread reliance on PBNs, spam domains, and irrelevant foreign sites, creating catastrophic Google penalty risk.

### Link imbalance is extreme

A single lawsociety.org.uk link (11 appearances) vastly outweighs 444 links from reviewsolicitors.co.uk, yet firms chase volume over editorial value.

## Link profile risk categories

### The rare but powerful

Wikipedia (DA 98), Guardian (DA 95), BBC (DA 95), gov.uk (DA 93) represent tiny fraction of the total but deliver genuine authority signals.

### Directory sea creates noise

reviewsolicitors.co.uk (444 links), thegoodsolicitorguide.com (365 links), lawyers-and-solicitors.com (237 links) dominate profiles, but yield minimal ranking impact.

### Toxic PBN contamination is widespread

rank-fast.agency (204 links), prolinkbox.com (173 links), great-choice-for-pbn-domains.co.uk (93 links) represent active Google guideline violations.

## High-risk, toxic examples

### Blatant manipulation attempts

thebestbacklinksavailable.click (61 links), worldclasspbnlinks.biz (37 links), domains-links-backlinks-all-for-purchase.homes (19 links) with domain names confessing their purpose.

### Brand-damaging associations

athens-escorts.info (61 links), katmoviehd.wf illegal streaming (53 links), cocoqatar.com (119 links) create reputational damage beyond SEO penalties.

### Foreign spam infiltration

alenews.pl Polish site (92 links) indicates an international spam network targeting the UK legal sector.

# Top pages by links

## Competitive intelligence

### Elite few dominate earned media

DLA Piper, CMS, Latham & Watkins, Clyde & Co, and Leigh Day secure links from DA 90+ sites, including:

- New York Times (DA 94)
- Guardian (DA 93)
- BBC (DA 93)

### Repeatable success formula

Top performers pair expert commentary with trending news, earning multiple high-value placements rather than one-off wins.

### Quality over quantity focus

Significant concentration on premier global sources with DA 90+ represents gold standard for SEO authority building.

## High-value link acquisition strategies

### Current affairs commentary wins

Hudgell Solicitors (PBS, DA 91) on the Post Office scandal, and Leigh Day (CNN, DA 93) on AstraZeneca vaccine demonstrate reactive PR effectiveness.

### Niche expertise attracts authority sites

Addleshaw Goddard (Investopedia, DA 92) Islamic finance guide, and Fieldfisher (World Economic Forum, DA 91) crypto regulation show power of definitive complex content.

### Engaging content drives engagement

CMS and DLA Piper's Roll on Friday links (DA 53) achieved the highest page rating score of 37, proving relevance trumps pure DA metrics.

## Cross-practice opportunities

### Family law media appeal

Co-op Legal and Ashtons Legal earned BBC Worklife (DA 93) coverage on "birdnesting" divorce trend.

### Personal injury health connections

Irwin Mitchell secured health services directory link (DA 81) for mesothelioma compensation expertise.

### Employment law academic interest

Banner Jones attracted Thai university forum link (DA 72) on settlement agreements, showing global expertise demand.

# What's working now in digital PR

## A **content analysis** across law firms

### Seasonal hooks

Link legal advice to the calendar for timely, relatable content that lands lifestyle coverage.

- Summer: Austin Lafferty Solicitors on rules for flying with a child with a different surname: [Daily Record](#).
- Christmas: Advice on co-parenting and child arrangements: [UK News Group](#).

### Niche explainer content

Target specific verticals (e.g. motoring, business) with simple, problem-solving advice to widen your backlink profile beyond the legal publications.

- Motoring example: A lawyer explains UK speeding and tailgating laws: [The Express](#)
- Small business example: A campaign guide on common payroll errors for SMEs: [Simply Business](#).

### Data-led storytelling

Use your firm's internal data (e.g. a rise in enquiries) to create a unique news hook. Combining data with a seasonal event is a powerful formula.

- Example: A lawyer uses a rise in prenup interest to create a timely story for the wedding season: [Law News](#).

## Three-stream approach to PR in the legal sector

### Raise awareness and manage reputation

#### Founder profiling

Leverage and create a platform for founders and key spokespeople in your firm to build awareness and credibility. Topics to focus on could include:

- Leadership journey
- Innovation in the space
- Business growth / entrepreneurial success
- Any impact on DEI or society

#### Trade titles, e.g: Legal Week

Focus on business move announcements, thought leadership and unique data to land placements in trade titles.

Pitch commentary on legal developments, regulations.

#### Mainstream media

Support SEO gains by focusing efforts on National and Regional media titles.

This will help to support the visibility of key areas/niches you offer.

# Future opportunities

## **Evolving** your digital PR strategy



### **Cost-of-living advice**

Frame legal guidance around saving money, avoiding fines, and protecting financial rights. This topic has a persistent appeal to media (e.g. advice on tenancy deposit disputes, consumer rights).



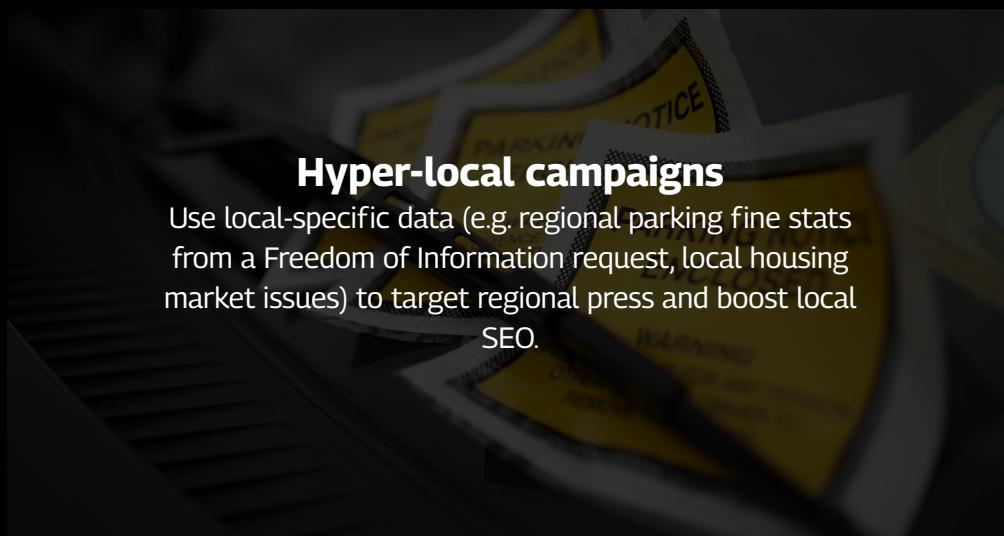
### **Digital and AI legal guidance**

Become an expert commentator on emerging tech issues like AI in the workplace, data privacy, or online consumer protection.



### **Create a data barometer**

Go beyond one-off stories by regularly releasing your firm's data on key trends (e.g. quarterly divorce enquiries, conveyancing delays) to become a go-to source for journalists.



### **Hyper-local campaigns**

Use local-specific data (e.g. regional parking fine stats from a Freedom of Information request, local housing market issues) to target regional press and boost local SEO.

# A digital **PR checklist**

Raise awareness and manage reputation

Setting up an 'always-on' PR approach is key to helping raise awareness and managing reputation.

- Jump on reactive opportunities, trends, and thought-leadership opportunities.
- Identify key spokespeople for opportunities.
- Provide commentary on high-profile cases.
- Identify key topics to comment on in the news - USPs, expertise, SEO focus areas.
- Build media contacts with key publications and titles.





PPC

# PPC landscape

## Who's playing?

Around **20 of the top 50 largest law firms** in the UK are actively using Google Ads.

They invest in PPC not just to grow their digital footprint but to stay competitive and connect with two crucial audience types:

### In-market audiences

- People actively searching for legal services right now (e.g., "personal injury solicitor near me").
- These are high-intent and often have higher conversion rates.

### Affinity audiences

- People who have shown interest in related topics but aren't actively looking to hire a solicitor... yet.
- Building trust early with this group is vital for future conversions.

The legal sector is one of the most expensive and competitive industries in PPC. Fierce competition for high-intent keywords drives up auction prices, making a disciplined strategy essential.

## High stakes and higher costs

Cost-Per-Click (CPC) can range from £4 to over £150 for a single click.

### Lead quality:

- PPC can generate a high volume of leads who are just "shopping around" for free advice rather than committing to a case.
- Without proper qualification, this can drain your budget on low-quality prospects.

### Conversion rates:

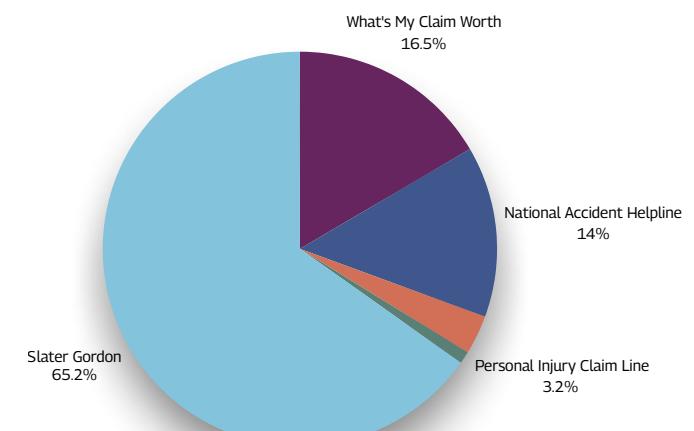
- Industry averages hover around 2-7% for search ads
- This is even lower for display ads (0.5-1.8%). Therefore, every click needs to count.

	<b>Slater + Gordon</b> Lawyers	<b>WHAT'S MY CLAIM WORTH</b>	<b>NATIONAL ACCIDENT HELPLINE</b>	<b>PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMLINE</b>	<b>WGA</b> solicitors
<b>Ad spend</b>	144k	36.6k	31.2k	7k	1.8k

### Traffic share

A look at the market shows major players like Slater and Gordon dominating traffic share, with monthly budgets in the legal space ranging from £2,000 to over £150,000.

(Source: SpyFu)



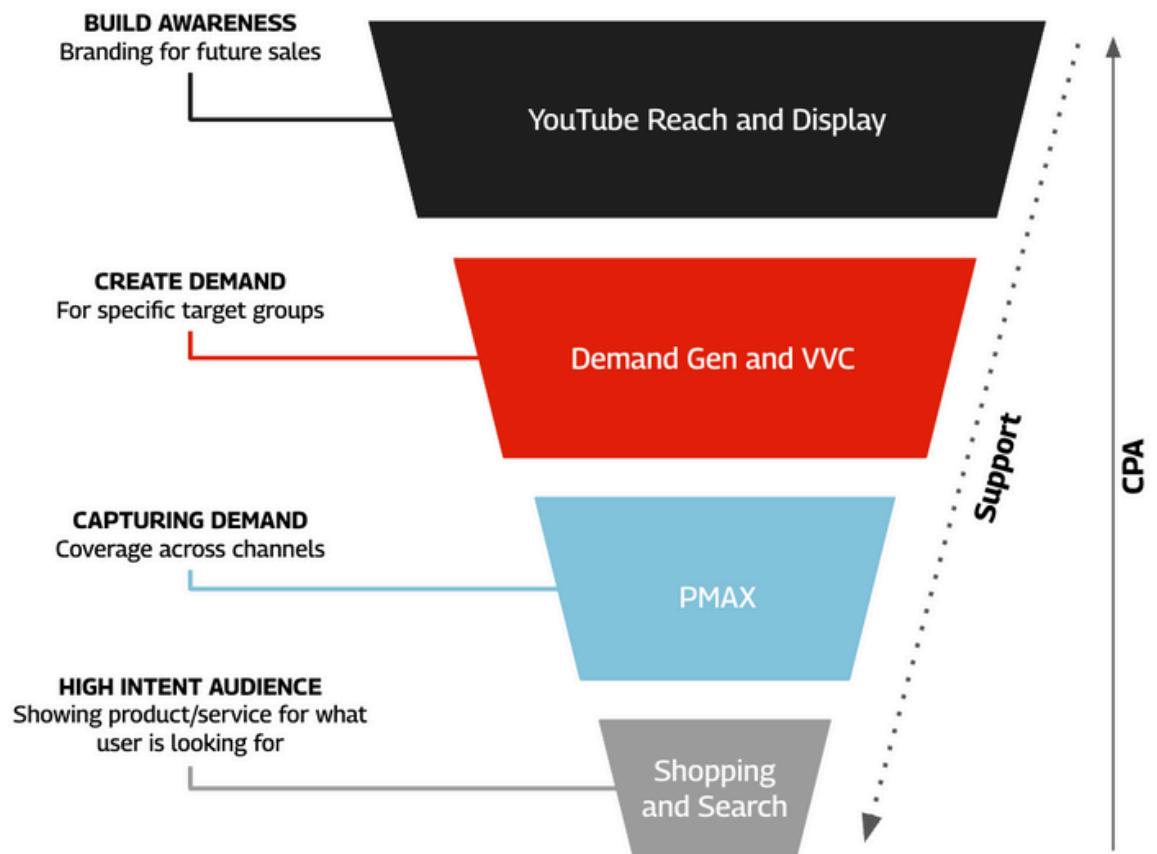
# Opportunities to win

How can firms thrive in such a competitive environment?

By moving beyond the obvious and adopting a smarter, full-funnel approach.

## Go beyond the bottom of the funnel

Many firms make the mistake of only targeting "hire now" keywords (bottom of funnel). While valuable, these are the most expensive. The key is to engage potential clients earlier in their journey.



### Strategy:

Use Performance Max and Demand Gen campaigns to reach broader audiences at a lower cost. These campaign types build brand awareness and create audience pools that can be nurtured into high-value leads later. This allows you to position your brand in a consumer's mind long before they make that high-intent search.

### Benefit:

This approach reduces your overall cost to acquire a client because you're not just competing in the most expensive part of the auction.

### Strategy:

Focus your budget on specific city hubs or catchment areas first. Prove your Return on Investment (ROI) in key local markets before scaling to wider areas.

### Benefit:

This phased approach enables precise budget control, stronger local positioning, and higher-quality leads. Clients who view your firm as a local expert are more likely to convert.

# Data and user experience

The most successful PPC campaigns don't stop at the click. They are powered by advanced data tracking and a seamless user experience.

## Use offline conversion tracking

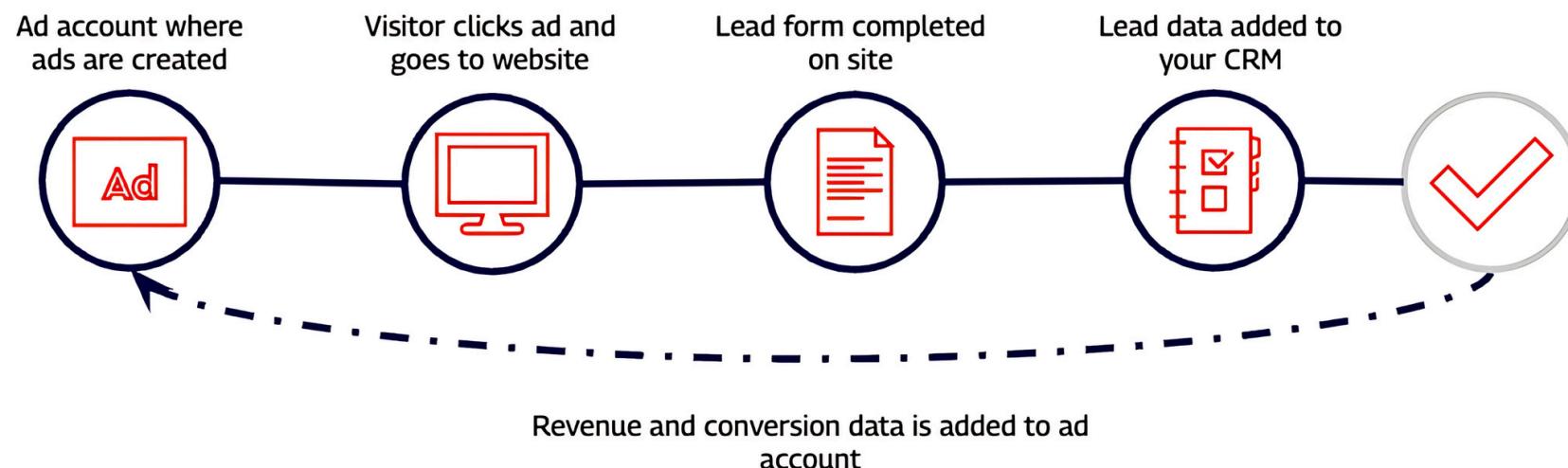
The typical lead tracking process stops when a form is filled out on your website. But not all leads are created equal.

### Advanced strategy:

Implement offline tracking to re-import actual sales and revenue data back into Google Ads. This turns your PPC account from a simple lead generator into a powerful revenue-driving machine.

### Benefit:

This allows Google's bidding algorithms to optimise for high-value cases, not just a high volume of leads.



## Nail the landing page experience

Driving traffic to a generic homepage is a huge mistake. The job of PPC is to get the right traffic to your site; the job of your landing page is to convert it.

### The problem

A poor landing page experience: slow load times, generic content, and lack of clarity, leads to high bounce rates and wasted ad spend. In the legal field, where trust is paramount, a weak online presence will send potential clients straight to your competitors.

### The solution

Create tailored, high-quality landing pages for each specific service or campaign. Potential clients need clarity, reassurance, and proof of expertise before they'll make contact. A dedicated page that matches the ad's promise drastically improves conversion rates.



# Social (organic and paid)

# People trust people, not logos

**Authenticity** and **personal expertise** will exceed polished corporate messaging.

- Individual lawyers consistently outperform corporate brand accounts.
- Posts from individual lawyers receive, on average, 8x more engagement than when the same content is shared from a firm's page.
- Jen Shipley (Fieldfisher) and David James Lister (Knights) generate more engagement than most corporate firm accounts combined.
- Emma-Jane Taylor-Moran (LinkedIn), Chrissie Wolfe (Instagram) and Tracey Moloney (TikTok) consistently outperform their firms' corporate communications.
- Proof of strategy: Higgs LLP achieved success by having 6 team members in the top 100 rankings for their sector.



## 25%

of legal marketing budgets (on average) are allocated to social media.

## 77%

of firms report their social media efforts fail to generate measurable ROI.

## 23%

of partners view it as a "waste of time."

# A platform for every practice

Having a **platform-specific strategy** is essential to reach the right legal markets.

Platform	UK active users	Target audience	Primary legal use	Strategic priority
	45M	In-house counsel, C-Suite, HR Directors	B2B and thought leadership: Essential for expert analysis, as exemplified by Mishcon de Reya.	Essential
	38.3M	Local communities, families, individuals	B2C and community engagement: For Family, Wills, & Conveyancing.	Highly recommended
	33.4M	Prospective employees, younger demographics	Brand, culture and recruitment: Showcase firm life, see Bird & Bird.	Strategic
	24.8M	Students and graduates	Graduate recruitment: Engage future talent, pioneered by Shoosmiths.	Emerging
	22.9M	Journalists, commentators	PR and real-time commentary: For building media presence.	Niche*

\*A Note on X (Twitter): Due to significant changes in content moderation and a rise in brand safety concerns, many firms are re-evaluating or pausing their activity on this platform. We advise a cautious approach and a careful assessment of reputational risk.

# Why generic content fails

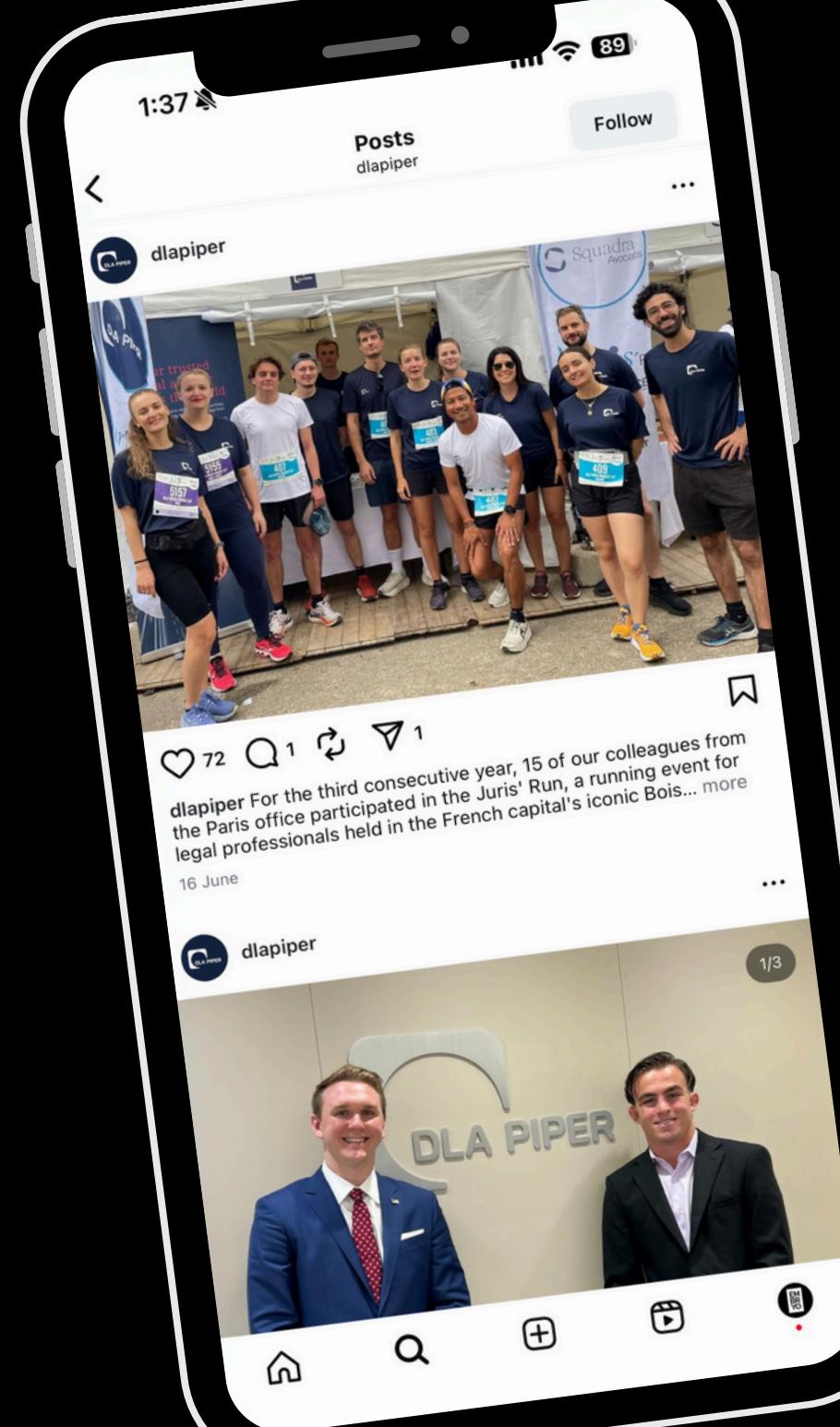
Embracing a **value-first approach**

## What works

- Culture and employer branding: DLA Piper use Instagram to attract top talent.
- Targeted recruitment: Shoosmiths use TikTok to build a direct pipeline for graduate recruitment.
- Value-first thought leadership: Firms like RPC use platforms to distribute high-value legal analysis, building a reputation for expertise.
- Video content: Generates 1,200% more shares than text and image content combined. (Source: WordStream)

## What does not work

- A "broadcast mentality" that talks at an audience instead of engaging with them.
- Stock images and generic firm news generate low engagement.



# A predictable pipeline with paid social

Highly targeted, **measurable ROI**

## Targeting capabilities

### LinkedIn

- Target by job title, company size, and seniority to reach key decision-makers like In-house Counsel or CFOs.

### Meta

- Target by life events, interests, and precise local geography to find relevant consumer audiences.

### Website data:

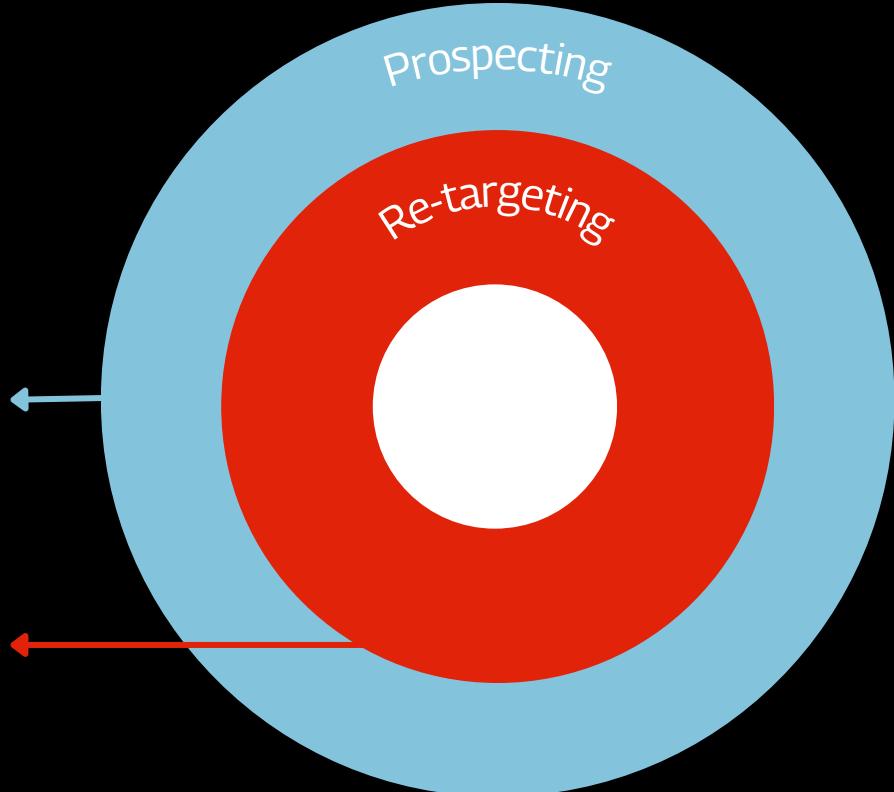
- Show ads to people who have visited specific pages on your site.

### Engagement data:

- Reconnect with users who have watched your videos, liked your posts, or followed your page.

## Example outcomes

- B2C - Family Law: A campaign targeting users with 'Engaged' or 'New Parent' life events generated new client inquiries for £7.74 per lead form submission.
- B2B - Employment Law: A LinkedIn campaign targeting Heads of HR at FTSE 500 companies with a whitepaper generated high-value leads for £60-£90 per lead.
- Retargeting - Conveyancing: A campaign re-engaging website visitors from the conveyancing pages generated new instructions at a 40% lower cost-per-acquisition than prospecting campaigns.



# What you can expect to pay for success

**LinkedIn** and **Meta**

Platform and objectives	Estimated UK legal benchmark
 LinkedIn Cost Per Lead (guide/report)	£60-120
 Meta CPM - Cost per 1,000 impressions (brand awareness)	£7-15, up to £25+

## LinkedIn

### Targeting high-value leads

- The goal - To capture contact information from a specific professional audience in exchange for a valuable resource (e.g., a legal guide).
- Cost Per Lead (CPL) of £60-£120 means you pay for each high-quality, relevant contact you acquire.

## Meta

### Building brand recognition

- The goal - To increase public conversation about your brand, rather than capturing direct leads.
- A Cost Per Thousand (CPM) impressions of £7-£25+ means you pay for each time your ad successfully reaches 1,000 people, helping to drive brand awareness.

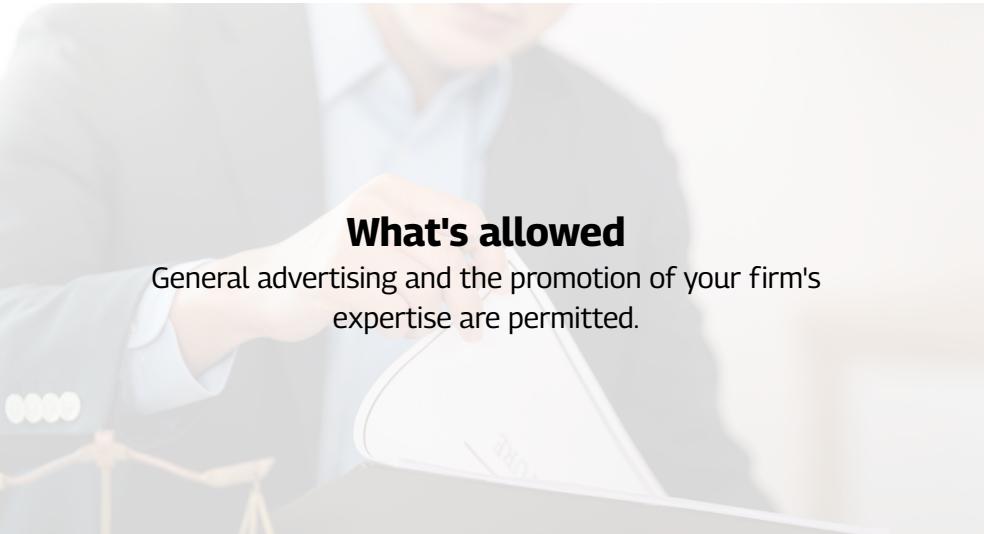
Note to consider: While PPC (costing £70+ per click typically) can target active searchers, social media builds trust with future clients before and after their search (retargeting) - potentially offering a more cost-effective pipeline.

# SRA compliance isn't a barrier

Compliance is manageable, not prohibitive. A **clear policy** is the key.

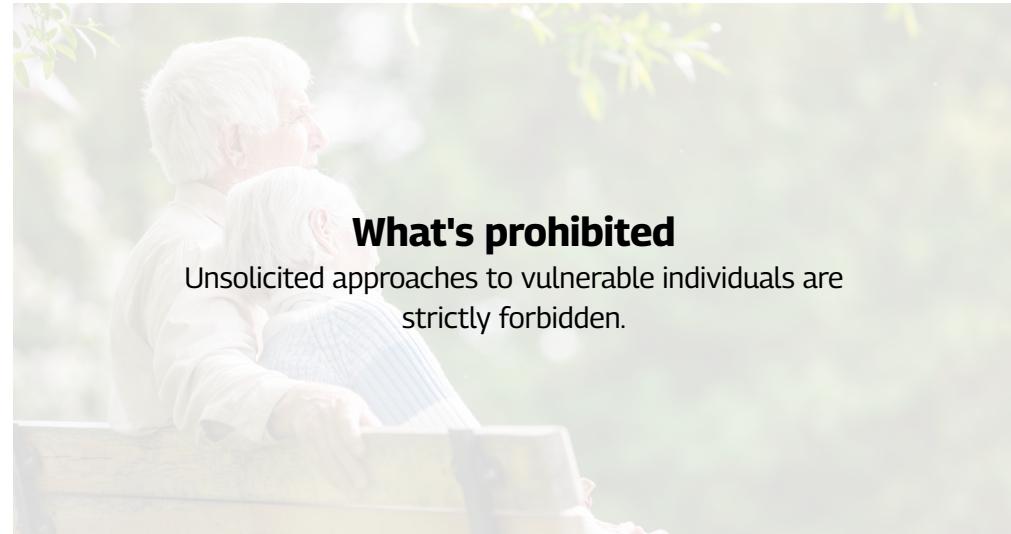
## What's allowed

General advertising and the promotion of your firm's expertise are permitted.



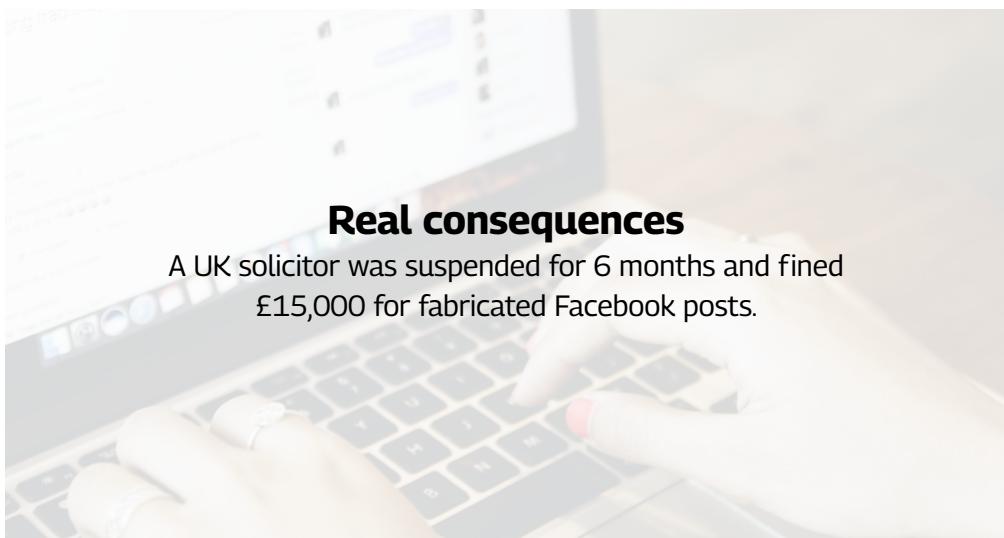
## What's prohibited

Unsolicited approaches to vulnerable individuals are strictly forbidden.



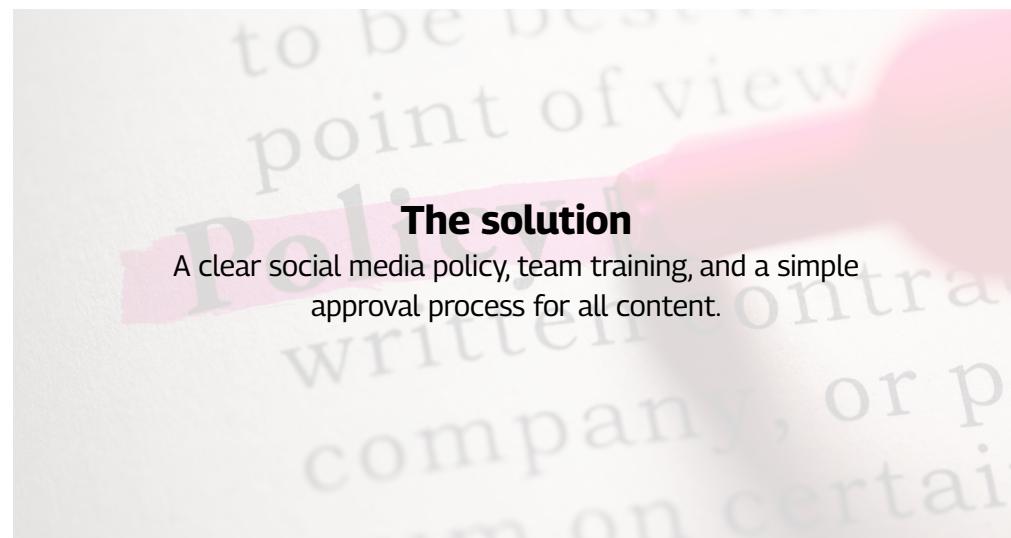
## Real consequences

A UK solicitor was suspended for 6 months and fined £15,000 for fabricated Facebook posts.



## The solution

A clear social media policy, team training, and a simple approval process for all content.



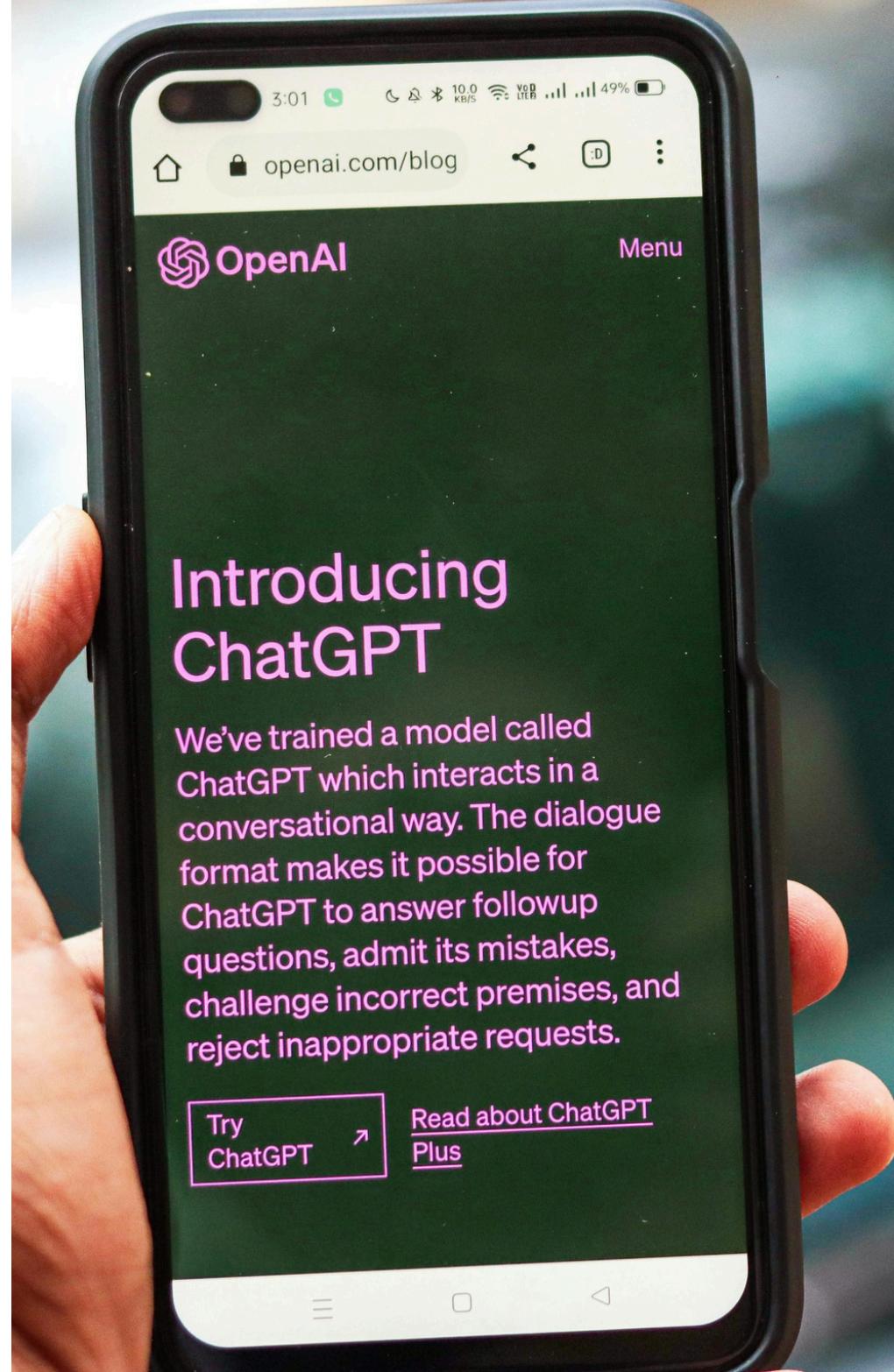
# AI

## Your team's new superpower?

AI should be used as an enhancement tool, not a replacement, to make your team more efficient and effective.

- Content ideation: Brainstorming relevant topics and angles based on audience data.
- First drafts: Using tools to accelerate content creation.
- Content repurposing: Turning webinars and articles into dozens of social media assets.
- Competitor analysis: Using AI features within analytics platforms to analyse competitor strategy.

The critical human element: All AI-generated content is reviewed by an in-house expert before it is published - don't trust it knows everything.



# Email marketing (CRM)

# Email marketing for law firms

## Why CRM and email marketing are critical

Many firms lack the resources for a consistent email strategy, but this marketing tactic provides a key advantage for those who invest in it.

## Best practices for email marketing

- Use segmentation for targeted, relevant content.
- Personalise subject lines to boost open rates.
- Optimise all emails for mobile viewing.
- Maintain a consistent send schedule to build trust.
- Provide valuable, helpful content, not just promos.
- Automate workflows for key client touchpoints.
- Use A/B testing to refine your strategy.

## Best practices in action

### **Deliver expertise, not promotions**

Ward Hadaway builds authority by offering practical, client-focused legal updates, not sales pitches.



### **Segment for relevance**

Brabners targets specific sectors like sport and tech with tailored content, increasing engagement by speaking directly to their clients' needs.



**~75%**

Law firms see 70-80% repeat client rates; email is essential for nurturing these long-term relationships.

**35x ROI**

Email marketing averages a return of £35 for every £1 spent.

**~23%**

The legal sector enjoys high email open rates of 22-27%, showing clients are receptive to communication.

# Automation

## Your relationship engine

By setting up automated workflows, your firm can consistently deliver personalised communication to clients at key moments in their journey.

### 1 Welcome and onboarding

Automatically welcome new clients with a series that introduces your team and explains the next steps.

3

### Post-case follow-up

After a case, automate a review request, followed by a check-in months later to suggest a related service.

2

### Lead nurturing

When a user downloads a guide, trigger a follow-up email series that offers more helpful content and a soft call-to-action.

4

### Area-specific updates

Send targeted monthly newsletters to clients interested in specific practice areas, such as Family or Employment Law.

# Amplifying your strategy across channels

A strong email and CRM strategy doesn't exist in a silo - it enhances and fuels your other marketing channels.

## Strategic retargeting

Use your CRM data to re-engage past clients and prospects on platforms like LinkedIn with relevant ads.

## Precision lookalike audiences

Find new clients by creating advertising audiences based on the characteristics of your best existing ones.

(Note: This must be done in compliance with GDPR and be clearly stated in your firm's privacy policy.)

## Cross-channel consistency

Ensure your message of trust and expertise is aligned across email, social media, and paid advertising for maximum impact.



# Analytics and reporting

# Are you making decisions with incomplete data?

Traditional methods for tracking website visitors are now unreliable.

A combination of technology and regulation is creating significant gaps in your data:

- Ad blockers: Many potential clients use software that actively stops tracking codes from Google or Meta from ever running.
- Browser privacy: Modern browsers like Safari and Firefox have built-in privacy features that automatically limit data collection.
- User choice: A growing number of users simply decline cookie consent, meaning their entire journey on your website goes unrecorded.

These technical issues have direct consequences on your marketing budget and ability to generate new business.

- **Misleading ad reports**
- **Weaker social media campaigns**
- **An incomplete view of your client journey**



## 26%

Research shows 26% of legal firms aren't tracking their incoming leads at all.

## 3 days

Firms that do track leads take, on average, more than three days to respond to an enquiry - too slow for today's consumer expectations.

## 74%

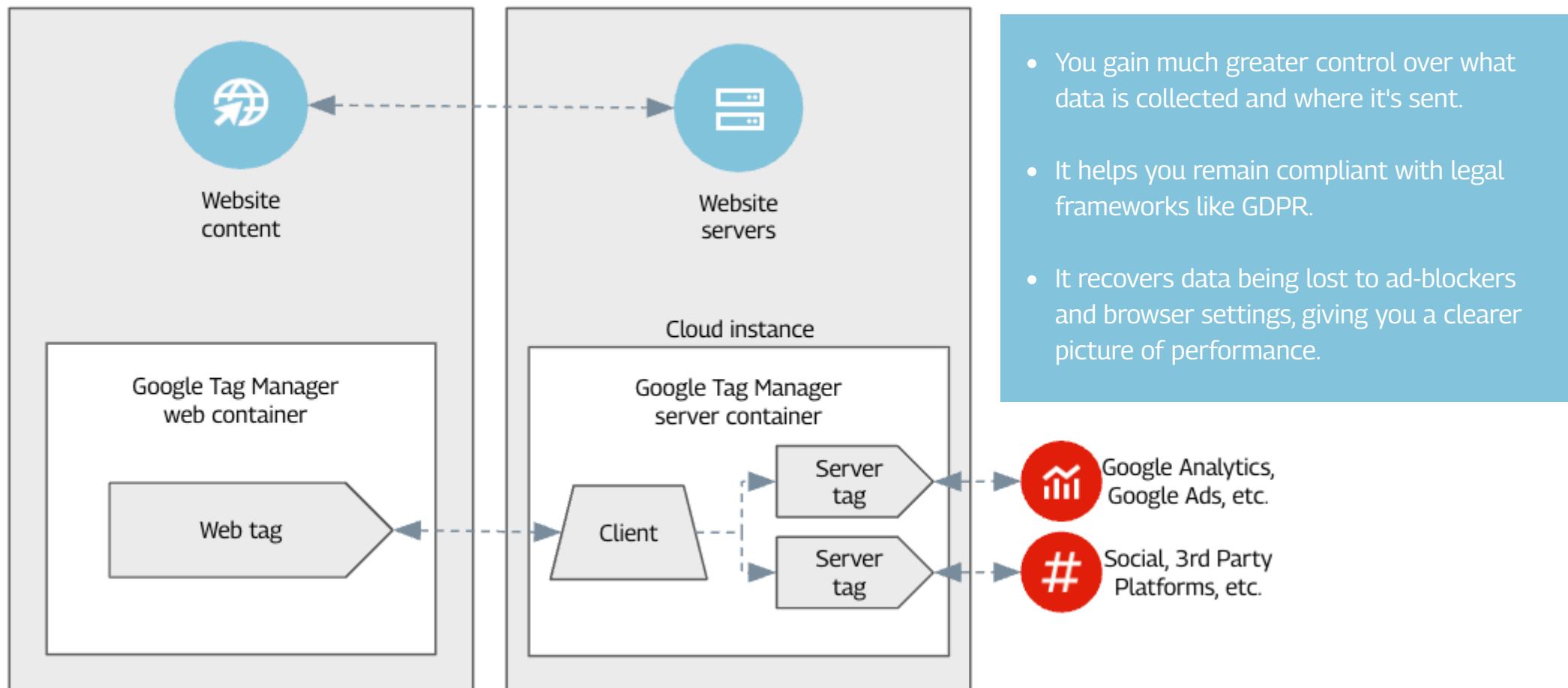
74% of firms believe they have wasted money on marketing campaigns that failed to produce results. A primary cause of this is making decisions based on faulty or incomplete data.

# A modern, future-proof framework

## Server-side tracking

### The new, server-side way

All visitor actions are first sent to a secure server that you control. This server acts like a central post office, sorting the data and sending it reliably to each platform (Google, Meta, etc.).



# Additional marketing strategies to consider

# Podcasts and video

Many firms have ventured into media production in an attempt to build further authority online and to humanise their brand.

## Podcasting

- Clyde & Co: Produces multiple, sector-focused series like Risky Business and Climate Change, featuring lawyers from their global network discussing key trends and developments for a corporate audience.
- 1 Crown Office Row (Law Pod UK): Focuses on deep legal analysis of UK civil and public law, building a reputation for intellectual excellence among legal peers and referrers.
- Herrington Carmichael (The Legal Room UK): Offers practical expertise on employment and corporate law, positioning the firm as an accessible resource for regional SMEs.

## Segmented video strategy

- Clifford Chance's Dual YouTube Channels: The firm runs a main corporate channel with over 450 videos for clients and a separate, highly active careers channel with over 150 videos to attract top talent. This segmented approach delivers highly relevant content to distinct key audiences.



# Events and alliances

The focus is shifting from one-off briefings to creating high-value, memorable brand experiences.

## Deep-dive webinar series:

- Simmons & Simmons: Offers an on-demand, eight-part "Contract Masterclass webinar series" covering critical aspects of English contract law, positioning the firm as a long-term educational resource.
- Clifford Chance: Runs multiple ongoing "Perspectives Series" with dedicated programs for different regions and hot topics like ESG and Tech.

## Community-building/ strategic sponsorships:

- DWF: Hosts informal "Meet Up" events like fitness classes and run clubs, designed to build a genuine community with the next generation of industry leaders.
- Addleshaw Goddard: A three-year partnership as the official legal partner of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, hosting over 500 clients at the prestigious event.
- Hill Dickinson: Acquired the naming rights for Everton F.C.'s new stadium, a "once-in-a-generation opportunity" for brand visibility.

The collage includes the following elements:

- Clifford Chance:** A screenshot of the firm's website showing their "Seminars, training and events" section, which includes a sub-section for "Events & webinars library".
- Hill Dickinson:** A news article headline from the Everton FC website: "HILL DICKINSON NAMED AS OFFICIAL STADIUM NAMING RIGHTS PARTNER". It includes a photo of the stadium and a quote from Everton's CEO.
- DWF:** A screenshot of the DWF website showing their "Seminars, training and events" section, which includes a sub-section for "Events & webinars library".
- Addleshaw Goddard:** A screenshot of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show website featuring a photo of a man and a woman holding certificates, with the text "Addleshaw Goddard: Freedom To Flourish Garden".

# The role of industry awards

## Key awarding bodies

Prestigious awards from organisations like The Legal Business Awards, The British Legal Awards, and The Legal 500 are highly sought after.



## Spotlight on marketing excellence:

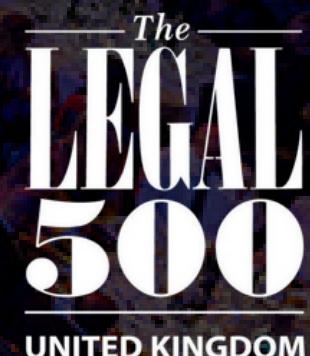
RPC: Won 'Marketing Initiative of the Year' at the Legal Business Awards 2024 for a suite of innovative digital platforms, including the "Tax Take+" educational hub and the "Raid Response" app for businesses facing dawn raids.

Shoosmiths: Awarded 'Marketing Team of the Year' at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards, demonstrating consistent excellence in brand promotion.

Gunnercooke: Named 'UK Law Firm of the Year' at the British Legal Awards 2023, a testament to its overall market leadership and strategic success.

## Showcasing Success

Firms prominently feature awards on their websites and within legal directories like Chambers & Partners to validate their expertise and market position.



# AI and client-centric platforms

Technology is no longer just an internal tool; it is a core part of the client service and marketing message.

## AI-powered client intake

- 67% of legal clients base their hiring decision on the speed of a firm's response.
- One personal injury firm saw a 40% increase in case retention after implementing an AI-driven intake system that reduced response times from 45 minutes to under 30 seconds.
- Major firms like A&O Shearman and PwC publicly promote their use of advanced AI platforms like Harvey AI to signal efficiency and innovation.

## The digital client journey

- Client Portals: Secure portals offering 24/7 access to case files, document sharing, and progress tracking are becoming standard. Providers like Clio and The Access Group offer powerful, brandable solutions.
- Bespoke Mobile Apps (Case Study): Walker Morris, a Top 100 UK firm, developed a client-facing mobile app to digitise its knowledge-sharing materials for company directors, enhancing client experience and saving costs.

## Key considerations

The most progressive UK law firms are no longer just marketing legal services; they are marketing a superior, technology-enabled, and deeply integrated client experience.

- Move beyond simple updates to become a niche broadcaster and educator.
- Create unique events and strategic alliances that build lasting brand affinity.
- A seamless digital client journey, powered by AI and on-demand platforms, is the new baseline for client service.

Hi, I'm DeepSeek.

## The goal

How can I help you today?

Shift from being a legal advisor to an indispensable commercial partner.

# Report summary

# Report summary

The legal sector faces a significant productivity crisis, masked by unsustainable interest income, alongside intense competition for talent and clients. While firms are increasing their digital marketing spend, a majority believe these investments are wasted due to flawed strategy and execution.

The central theme of this report is that marketing success is contingent on fixing internal processes before increasing external spend - achieved through unifying your firm's strategy, technology, and client experience to achieve sustainable growth.

## Key takeaways and actions

### 1 Fix the "leaky bucket" first

The most significant cause of wasted marketing spend is a failure in basic lead management. Before investing further in marketing, you must address these internal inefficiencies.

- Problem: 26% of firms do not track incoming leads at all.
- Problem: 42% of firms take three or more days to respond to a new web enquiry.
- Problem: On initial calls, firms frequently fail to capture an email address (86% of the time) or a phone number (45% of the time), making follow-up impossible.

Action: Implement robust lead tracking systems and mandate a rapid response protocol to improve ROI without increasing spend.



### 2 Adopt a strategic, asset-based SEO approach

Firms must move from a scattergun approach to a strategic one, focusing on building long-term digital assets.

- Understand search intent: Over 70% of legal-related searches are informational, not transactional. Firms must create helpful, problem-solving content like guides and FAQs to capture this traffic.
- Target high-opportunity keywords: Avoid competing for broad, high-difficulty keywords like "probate" (dominated by GOV.UK). Instead, target specific, high-intent niches with lower competition, such as "how long does probate take?" or "no win no fee medical negligence".
- Win at a local level: There is a massive, underserved market for local searches. Optimise your Google Business Profile and target keywords that include your town or city (e.g., "commercial property solicitor in Bury"). City-specific and hyperlocal search terms have a combined monthly volume of over 500,000 and are growing at 11-20% year-on-year.
- Build real authority: Earn backlinks from high-quality, authoritative sources like news outlets and academic institutions. Widespread reliance on low-quality or "toxic" links creates a catastrophic risk of Google penalties.

## 3 Leverage a full-funnel PPC strategy

The legal sector is one of the most expensive for Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising, with single clicks costing from £4 to over £150. Success requires a smarter, full-funnel approach.

- Go beyond the bottom of the funnel: Don't just target expensive, high-intent "hire now" keywords. Use YouTube, Display, Performance Max, and Demand Gen campaigns to build brand awareness with broader audiences at a lower cost, nurturing them for the future.
- Track what matters: Implement offline conversion tracking to feed actual revenue data back into Google Ads. This allows algorithms to optimise for high-value cases, not just a high volume of low-quality leads.
- Nail the landing page: Drive traffic to tailored, high-quality landing pages for each specific service or campaign, not a generic homepage. A page that matches the ad's promise drastically improves conversion rates.

## 4 Empower individuals on social media

People trust people, not logos. The data shows that individual lawyers consistently outperform corporate brand accounts.

- The 8x engagement rule: Posts from individual lawyers receive, on average, eight times more engagement than the same content shared from a firm's page.

**Action:** Encourage and support key spokespeople to build their personal brands on platforms like LinkedIn, which is essential for B2B thought leadership. Focus on providing value and showcasing expertise rather than generic firm news.

## 5 Utilise CRM and email marketing for growth

Email marketing provides a significant advantage, delivering an average return of £35 for every £1 spent.

**Action:** Use segmentation to send targeted, relevant content to specific client groups.

**Action:** Set up automated workflows for key touchpoints like client onboarding, post-case follow-ups, and lead nurturing. This helps nurture the 70-80% of clients who are repeat customers.

## 6 Demand business metrics/brace technology

- Measure business outcomes: Hold all marketing efforts and agencies accountable for business results like Cost Per Lead and Cost Per Client, not vanity metrics like clicks and impressions.
- Adopt modern analytics: Use server-side tracking to get a more accurate picture of performance in a world of ad-blockers and browser privacy restrictions.
- Embrace AI: Use AI as an enhancement tool for content ideation, drafting, and competitor analysis, but ensure all output is reviewed by a human expert.



# Embryo x Dental Law

Working together, we transformed DLP's digital strategy across search, social, content, and conversion, with one goal in mind - to connect them with more people who needed their help, more efficiently than ever before...



the dental law  
partnership

↑ **44%**  
increase in accepted cases

↑ **54%**  
increase in organic conversions

↑ **120%**  
increase in leads from social

“

After our digital results started to stagnate, we were looking for an agency to help push us to the next level and achieve the results we wanted.

Embryo didn't just deliver more leads, they helped us connect digital to business results. Their focus on accepted cases made all the difference.

”



**Kate Easdown,**  
Marketing and Business  
Development Manager

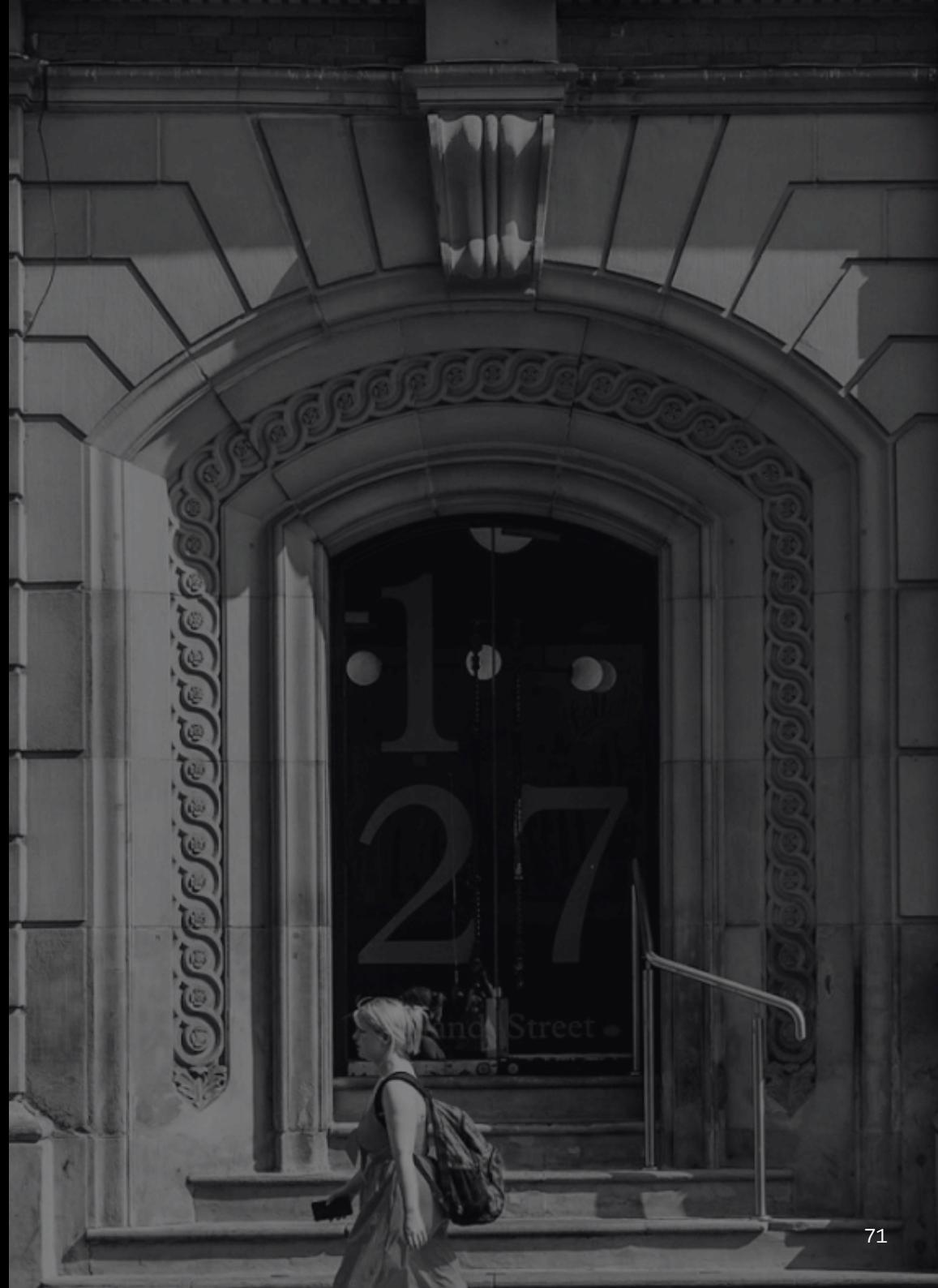
# Want a free bespoke **Supertools** report?

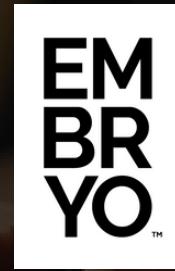
While this report provides a valuable industry benchmark, true strategic advantage is found in the granular detail of your specific market. It is at this level that we can uncover the actionable insights needed to execute a winning strategy.

To understand your firm's unique position and discover your key growth opportunities, request your complimentary, personalised report today.

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