

# Living Ratings

The brand and digital intelligence of  
the world's leading law firms 2023

# BRAIN POWER

The search for human intelligence



# RATED 1 INTELLIGENCE

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**Want to know how your firm has scored across each of our key criteria? Please reach out to [Mark Stephenson](#) to arrange a meeting.**

# The search for human intelligence

With the pandemic largely in the rearview mirror, law firms were on solid financial ground heading into 2022, allowing them to view it as a year of investment for long-term success and leverage that financial momentum to buck the trend of stagnation in the area of brand and digital intelligence.

Demand for services began to slow in late 2022, and predictions call for 2023 to be a challenging year for law firms, with larger firms expected to be disproportionately impacted by widespread economic uncertainty. As expenses continue to rise and the competition for talent becomes increasingly fierce, law firms face a difficult landscape. In a sector which often appears homogenous, differentiation is critical to stand out and attract new business.

So, have law firms elevated their game in 2023 to deliver improved content, messaging, and user experience on their websites and social channels or was it more of the same?

## Race to the bottom?

We fully expected to see scores rebound this year; instead, we saw a worrying trend continue – for the third straight year the average scores went down. This year's average score is the lowest since 2019. Even more troubling is the widening gap between the "Determined" (high scores in both Evidence and Engagement) and "Lackluster" (low scores in both Evidence and Engagement) firms. Last year, we warned that standing still would result in falling behind, and that is precisely what is happening.

It's not all bad news. On the bright side, the number of "Determined" firms doubled from four in 2022 to eight in 2023. It's clear that a select few firms are seizing the opportunity and leading the way. They are doing so by ensuring that they deliver an excellent multichannel user experience that starts with a brand-forward home page and strong messaging. They also feature a distinctive visual language with thought leadership content that is curated and focused on what their target audiences want.

## Human touch

Over the past few months, it has been nearly impossible to discuss strategy without the topic of artificial intelligence (AI) playing a feature role. AI seems to be impacting everything and everyone. When OpenAI released ChatGPT in November, it opened new possibilities for virtually every sector and had everyone scrambling to

determine how AI could be used to increase productivity and minimize costs. For the legal sector, workflow automation is expected to have a massive impact on increasing efficiency and reducing expenses, and tools such as Harvey AI and Lexion AI Contract Assist are expected to help automate time-intensive tasks.

It's clear that leading law firms will need to determine how to integrate these new tools into their existing processes. It's also clear that no AI tool can replace a lawyer. Potential clients are still looking for people, not AI tools. With a shift toward a more client-focused approach, firms need to ensure they are putting their people front and center with content that showcases their abilities.

The importance of communicating the quality of people was reflected in our revised metrics. Case studies, client stories, team pages and video biographies received increased emphasis. From an Engagement perspective, use of marketing automation or personalization went down from 55% in 2022 to 40% in 2023, while 8% of firms had a data-driven tool on offer, up from only 5% last year. The Evidence numbers are trending positively with the percentage of firms that have case studies, high-quality biography pages and engaging people landing pages all moving in the right direction. People are still searching for human intelligence; make sure to help them find it.



**Duncan Shaw, Co-founder and Chief Creative Officer**

## Conclusion

In order to provide guidance for law firm marketers in 2023, we have outlined three key opportunities that provide the most compelling areas for growth. These opportunities are focused on the following key themes: identifying and outlining the key features that make your law firm unique and using them to differentiate your firm, highlighting the human intelligence and capabilities of the people at your firm, and developing a clear and consistent multichannel content plan that is client-focused and aligns with your firm's business strategy.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's law firm Ratings and should you have any questions or would like to have a bespoke presentation of our findings, please [email me](#).

# WANT THE GOOD VIEWS OR THE BAD VIEWS

Is your brand's digital intelligence performing optimally?

In addition to our annual Ratings report, we offer an in-depth diagnostic of your brand, website and social media footprint, analyzing your digital intelligence and providing better ways to improve your digital capability.

To find out how we can bring your brand and digital proposition to life, please contact:

[Duncan Shaw](#) in New York

[Greg Hobden](#) in London

[Gigi Yung](#) in Hong Kong



[www.living-group.com](http://www.living-group.com)

# HIGHLY RATED



## About Ratings

Now in its 34<sup>th</sup> edition, Living Ratings benchmarks the brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading financial and professional services brands.

These studies provide our clients with evidence-based insight that continuously enhances their marketing communications and gives us unparalleled knowledge of our specialist sectors.

## Digital diagnostic

In addition to our annual Ratings report, we offer an in-depth diagnostic of your brand, website and social media footprint, analyzing your digital intelligence and comparing your firm against your closest competitors.



Our analysis is the logical first step on the journey to improve your brand and digital intelligence, empowering you with objective evidence and a clear strategy.

## Analysis

To analyze how your brand and digital footprint performs against a set of proven benchmarks.

## Re-alignment

To re-align your brand and digital strategy to ensure that any future-generated content receives the maximum exposure with your target audience.

## Connectivity

To connect your social media strategy with your brand and content strategy.

## Purpose

To ensure that your CMS platform is the right fit for your purposes and goals.

## Implementation

To enable you to implement enhancements and corrections in line with best practice.

## UX

To improve the user experience and information architecture of your website.

## Understanding

To understand what is required to create a better brand and digital experience for all your stakeholders – internal and external (and to gain a higher Ratings score in the next review).

# WHO, WHAT, WHEN & HOW

## Rating and classifying each firm

In January, February and March 2023, our analysts reviewed the brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading law firms – source: The 2022 global 200, ranked by revenue, published by Law.com International and the American Lawyer, September 2022. Each of the 100 firms was rated through the eyes of a law firm's external target audience and measured against 100+ criteria, including several new metrics covering engagement (website functionality and the social media channels used) and evidence (brand and content on website and social media).

## How we calculate our scores

Each firm is allocated an overall percentage score. This is calculated by adding the scores for the individually weighted engagement and evidence criteria. We then use the separate engagement and evidence scores to classify each law firm with one of four definitions of their digital presence – Determined, Energetic, Focused or Lackluster.

Sector averages are based on the full listing of the top 100 firms. The five firms with the highest scores are also reviewed with expanded case studies.

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**1** Website  
functionality

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**2** Website  
content

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**3** Social media  
presence

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**4** Social media  
content

# PUSHING THE CRITERIA

## Challenging the criteria

As technology marches forward, so do law firm target audiences' expectations. We therefore continually adjust the weighting of our criteria to match these needs driven by the insights gleaned through talking to our clients' clients during brand and website projects.

For 2023, here are some of our core areas of analysis:

## ENGAGEMENT

### Helping audiences find what they need

So many law firms present their website navigation as a representation of their internal structure. Endless lists of practice areas and industries are presented in a cluttered and unintuitive manner, with little thought given to what their audiences may be looking for. We reward law firms that take a curated approach to presenting what they do, prioritizing areas of specialism or allowing users to find what they are looking for through a short series of filtered questions.

### Delivering informative landing pages across a website

If a law firm stops to look at its visitor statistics carefully it will see that visitors do not just arrive at the firm's home page, but instead arrive at the website from the people, services or insight landing pages. So, why is so little attention afforded to these critical destinations? We score highly those who try to make these landing pages into information rich data sources, understanding and using analytics to their advantage.

### Finding out what's under the hood

We continue to focus on each firm's SEO, accessibility and site speed score – a strong indication that the website has been coded correctly and is being well maintained from a content perspective. When a new website is launched, it's day one for a law firm's online brand, and those who continue to invest in it from a technical perspective are praised highly in our Ratings.

### Get serious with social

Enough is enough. The same content pushed out across different channels is, quite frankly, lazy marketing, and it's 2023 folks. We celebrate firms that use LinkedIn to the max and really think about the messages and content that they put out across their other channels.

## EVIDENCE

### It's not what you do, but how you do it

It's probably fair to say that most leading global firms offer like-for-like practice areas and work in the same sectors. Homogenous to the core. So, why is little effort given to how a firm does what it does? We reward firms that explain their ways of working, their values and how they are different from their competitors

### Content governance

Newsflash. Websites are not expensive filing cabinets intended to store every solitary piece of communication that a law firm creates. In addition to being an SEO disaster, it makes it incredibly difficult for audiences to find anything of value and can quite easily make a law firm look disjointed, lacking any kind of business strategy. Firms that have a clear content strategy and curate their insights and opinions score well.

### Human intelligence

In a world that's rushing towards artificial intelligence it's important that the human aspect of a law firm is one of the key buying criteria for your audiences. Prospective clients want to know who will be fighting in their corner, and new hires want to know your collective culture and values. Firms that invest in humanizing their digital footprint score well in our analysis.

### Executive communications

A new criterion for 2023 is looking at whether a law firm's Chairperson is active on LinkedIn. For those firms where this key spokesperson is active and posting regularly, it's an opportunity taken, demonstrating leadership, an interest in the firm and a connection to the people who work there.

# HEY! WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

## LAW FIRMS STORY



### What's the story with law firm websites?

How can a law firm better connect with clients through its website? First, think of them as what they are: people. 'Clients' are numbers and lists and spreadsheets. 'People' are an audience.

On your website, you want your brand to connect with your audience – and audiences love stories.

Why should a law firm resort to storytelling when its whole discipline is about facts, evidence and detail? Lawyers no doubt excel at the verbal skills needed to litigate and orate if not pontificate about their capabilities, cases and causes. But to connect with an audience, turn that linguistic dexterity into storytelling prowess by focusing on what your audience needs to know, wants to learn, and enjoys reading (and watching – because video is a powerful storytelling medium!)

### What's in it for me?

Every story you tell should provide relevant information about your firm and the advantages it offers. But the keyword is 'relevant.' Make sure the topic you choose to focus on matters to the audience. And no, not every story will matter to every person, but if they see that you're telling stories about how you serve, provide value, and solve problems, then they'll credit you for understanding what visitors are looking for on a website.

Our recent Living Ratings of Law Firms revealed that less than a third of law firms describe their brand positioning on the home page of their website. What a lost opportunity! Your home page is where you need to begin to tell your story.

When an audience understands who the storyteller is and the perspective to be offered, then they'll choose to lean in and listen up.

### Be characterful not characterless

*"In the legal industry, we find that most firms struggle to differentiate themselves in any shape or form," noted Greg Hobden, Living's Chief Client Officer. "Oftentimes, they treat their websites like legal documents. We help them bring clarity, personality, and authenticity to their digital presence by focusing on telling the story of their brand. We do that with their brand positionings and brand values, and we pay particular attention to the right tone of voice and messaging."*

For marketers, the beauty in storytelling lies in the desire for people not only to hear or read or watch a good story, but to share it. Wouldn't you want a visitor to your website to enjoy learning about your law firm, then turn around and share that information with others? Storytelling leads to brand building because storytelling leads to message amplification.

### Find your voice

If you'd like to learn how we can help you find your voice and tell your story, please contact [Duncan Shaw](#) in New York, [Greg Hobden](#) in London or [Gigi Yung](#) in Hong Kong.

**"For marketers, the beauty in storytelling lies in the desire for people not only to hear or read or watch a good story, but to share it."**



# ARE YOU DETERMINED OR NOT?

By analyzing the individual engagement and evidence scores, we have categorized each of the leading firms' digital intelligence into four areas.



Want to know how your firm has scored across each of our key criteria? Please reach out to [Mark Stephenson](#) to arrange a meeting.

# LAW FIRM RATINGS AND RANKINGS

● Determined 
 ● Energetic 
 ● Focused 
 ● Lackluster

Living Ratings 2023 Ranking	Living Ratings 2022 Ranking	Law.com Global 200 Ranking	Firm name	Score / 1,000	%	Category
1 ↑	4	3	DLA Piper	901	81.91%	●
2 ↑	78	48	Akin	857	77.91%	●
3 ↑	36	12	Hogan Lovells	796	72.36%	●
4 ↓	1	7	White & Case	793	72.09%	●
5 ↑	7	95	Bird & Bird	792	72.00%	●
6 ↓	2	80	Pinsent Masons	787	71.55%	●
7 ↑	8	35	Covington	772	70.18%	●
8 ↓	3	76	Seyfarth Shaw	771	70.09%	●
9 ↑	17	57	Ashurst	766	69.64%	●
10 ↓	6	33	Herbert Smith Freehills	756	68.73%	●
11 ↓	9	78	Slaughter and May	750	68.18%	●
12 ↑	21	92	Simmons & Simmons	737	67.00%	●
13 ↑	37	8	Sidley Austin	734	66.73%	●
14 ↑	27	11	Allen & Overy	733	66.64%	●
15 ↓	5	30	McDermott	728	66.18%	●
16 ↓	13	36	Reed Smith	722	65.64%	●
17 ↑	45	19	Norton Rose Fulbright	718	65.27%	●
18 ↑	72	81	Fenwick	717	65.18%	●
19 ↓	12	71	Clyde & Co	699	63.55%	●
20 ↑	23	17	Freshfields	696	63.27%	●
21 ↑	30	20	CMS	693	63.00%	●
22 ↑	73	2	Latham & Watkins	691	62.82%	●
23 ↓	16	9	Clifford Chance	689	62.64%	●
24 ↓	11	44	Orrick	684	62.18%	●
25 ↑	51	87	Polsinelli	680	61.82%	●
26 ↑	33	54	Squire Patton Boggs	674	61.27%	●
27 ↑	56	51	Proskauer	671	61.00%	●
28 ↑	53	28	King & Spalding	670	60.91%	●
29 ↑	47	59	Troutman Pepper	669	60.82%	●
30 =	N/A	98	Mintz	669	60.82%	●
31 ↓	14	72	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	666	60.55%	●
32 =	32	75	Fragomen	665	60.45%	●
33 ↓	24	69	Vinson & Elkins	663	60.27%	●
34 ↓	25	15	Linklaters	663	60.27%	●
35 ↓	20	23	Goodwin	660	60.00%	●
36 ↓	10	53	Winston & Strawn	649	59.00%	●
37 ↓	22	86	Gowling WLG	648	58.91%	●
38 ↑	62	70	O'Melveny & Myers	645	58.64%	●
39 =	39	91	Fox Rothschild	644	58.55%	●
40 ↓	15	27	Mayer Brown	642	58.36%	●
41 ↑	49	89	Blakes	640	58.18%	●
42 ↑	54	58	Arnold & Porter	638	58.00%	●
43 ↓	19	4	Baker McKenzie	635	57.73%	●
44 ↓	35	13	Morgan Lewis	634	57.64%	●
45 ↑	66	60	Foley & Lardner	632	57.45%	●
46 ↑	89	77	Pillsbury	631	57.36%	●
47 ↑	94	67	Fried Frank	630	57.27%	●
48 =	N/A	103	Barnes & Thornburg	628	57.09%	●
49 ↓	26	25	Weil	627	57.00%	●
50 ↓	48	42	Wilson Sonsini	623	56.64%	●

● Energetic ● Determined ● Focused ● Lackluster

Living Ratings 2023 Ranking	Living Ratings 2022 Ranking	Law.com Global 200 Ranking	Firm name	Score / 1,000	%	Category
51 ↓	41	52	Perkins Coie	621	56.45%	●
52 ↑	28	34	Eversheds Sutherland	619	56.27%	●
53 ↓	77	31	Quinn Emanuel	618	56.18%	●
54 ↓	50	39	Holland & Knight	615	55.91%	●
55 ↑	58	50	K&L Gates	614	55.82%	●
56 ↑	76	100	Cozen O'Connor	609	55.36%	●
57 ↑	82	47	Morrison & Foerster	608	55.27%	●
58 ↑	67	22	Cooley	598	54.36%	●
59 ↓	40	90	Little Mendelson	597	54.27%	●
60 ↓	31	6	Dentons	597	54.27%	●
61 ↓	38	101	McCarthy Tetrault	592	53.82%	●
62 ↓	18	21	Greenberg Traurig	586	53.27%	●
63 =	63	62	Shearman & Sterling	577	52.45%	●
64 ↑	93	1	Kirkland & Ellis	572	52.00%	●
65 ↑	69	24	Davis Polk	571	51.91%	●
66 ↑	71	82	Baker Botts	569	51.73%	●
67 ↓	55	37	King & Wood Mallesons	561	51.00%	●
68 ↓	43	85	Katten	547	49.73%	●
69 ↓	42	84	Venable	545	49.55%	●
70 ↑	87	38	Cleary Gottlieb	545	49.55%	●
71 ↓	65	5	Skadden	544	49.45%	●
72 ↑	81	29	Sullivan & Cromwell	543	49.36%	●
73 ↑	84	99	Ogletree	540	49.09%	●
74 ↓	61	61	Alston & Bird	538	48.91%	●
75 ↓	34	88	Nelson Mullins	536	48.73%	●
76 ↓	46	32	Paul Hastings	532	48.36%	●
77 ↑	86	16	Jones Day	531	48.27%	●
78 —	N/A	102	Taylor Wessing	515	46.82%	●
79 ↓	60	63	Sheppard Mullin	512	46.55%	●
80 ↓	79	73	Baker & Hostetler	510	46.36%	●
81 ↓	75	41	Dechert	507	46.09%	●
82 ↑	95	64	Cravath	506	46.00%	●
83 ↑	85	74	Hunton Andrews Kurth	483	43.91%	●
84 ↓	74	97	Duane Morris	476	43.27%	●
85 ↓	68	65	Faegre Drinker	473	43.00%	●
86 ↑	88	10	Ropes & Gray	470	42.73%	●
87 ↓	29	40	Milbank	469	42.64%	●
88 ↑	90	26	Paul Weiss	466	42.36%	●
89 ↓	57	45	WilmerHale	443	40.27%	●
90 ↓	59	66	McGuireWoods	427	38.82%	●
91 ↑	92	18	Simpson Thacher	424	38.55%	●
92 —	N/A	96	Cadwalader	402	36.55%	●
93 ↑	96	56	Wachtell Lipton	371	33.73%	●
94 ↓	91	14	Gibson Dunn	364	33.09%	●
95 ↓	52	43	Debevoise & Plimpton	362	32.91%	●
96 ↓	93	55	Kim & Chang	329	29.91%	●
97 ↓	80	83	Lewis Brisbois	310	28.18%	●
98 ↓	97	49	Willkie Farr & Gallagher	306	27.82%	●
99 =	99	79	Zhong Lun	296	26.91%	●
100 ↓	98	68	AllBright Law Offices	190	17.27%	●

\*Morrison & Foerster launched a new website in April 2023 that was not analyzed in our Ratings.

# FOLLOW #1 LEADERS

## Engagement and evidence: the leaders

Law firms that take a determined approach to digital engagement have a relentless client focus. Their successful formula balances two key elements:

### ENGAGEMENT

Determined law firms recognize the potential of useful digital functionality backed by a client-focused channel strategy. They can then create appealing and relevant content in a variety of media including graphics, audio, animation and video that captivates, informs and motivates the target audience.

### EVIDENCE

Determined law firms promote a clear purpose. They offer the user informative brand-driven messaging, relevant subject matter and the kind of insight that shows a deep understanding of client issues and interests. This demonstrates the ability to help clients succeed.

## ENGAGEMENT

	Firm name	Engagement score (%)
1	DLA Piper	85.20%
2	Clyde & Co	83.80%
3	Slaughter and May	83.00%
4	Latham & Watkins	82.20%
5	Pinsent Masons	80.40%
6	Gowling WLG	77.60%
7	Sidley Austin	76.80%
8	Eversheds Sutherland	75.80%
9	Norton Rose Fulbright	74.60%
10	Herbert Smith Freehills	74.20%
10=	Greenberg Traurig	74.20%
12	O'Melveny & Myers	73.00%
13=	White & Case	72.60%
13=	Allen & Overy	72.60%
15	Dentons	72.40%
16	Pillsbury	72.20%
17	Fox Rothschild	71.80%
18	Akin	71.40%
19	Perkins Coie	71.20%
20	Baker McKenzie	71.00%

## EVIDENCE

	Firm name	Evidence score (%)
1	Akin	83.33%
2	DLA Piper	79.17%
3	Bird & Bird	75.83%
4=	Hogan Lovells	74.17%
4=	Seyfarth Shaw	74.17%
6	White & Case	71.67%
7	Covington	70.83%
8	Ashurst	70.00%
9	McDermott	69.17%
10	Mintz	65.83%
11	Simmons & Simmons	65.00%
12=	Pinsent Masons	64.17%
12=	Herbert Smith Freehills	64.17%
12=	Reed Smith	64.17%
12=	Fenwick	64.17%
12=	Clifford Chance	64.17%
17	King & Spalding	62.50%
18=	Allen & Overy	61.67%
18=	Freshfields	61.67%
18=	Linklaters	61.67%

# THE NUMBERS THAT DEFINE LAW FIRMS: ENGAGEMENT



of websites provide **strong information architecture (IA)**.  
2022: 55%



of websites deliver **intuitive user experiences**.  
2022: 16%



of websites use **personalization or marketing automation**.  
2022: 55%



of websites have a **data-driven online tool**.  
2022: 5%



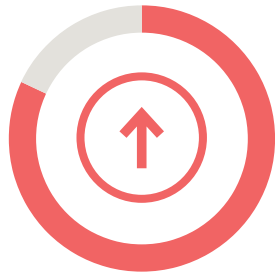
is the **average SEO score across the sector**.  
2022: 82%



is the **average website accessibility score across the sector**.  
2022: 83%

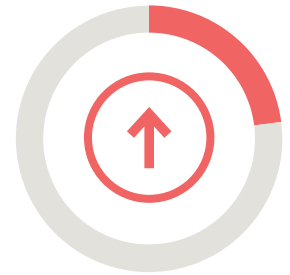
“The emphasis on digital agility should have put enough pressure on law firms to adapt and update their digital presence.”

82%



of websites use **related content**.  
2022: 69%

23%



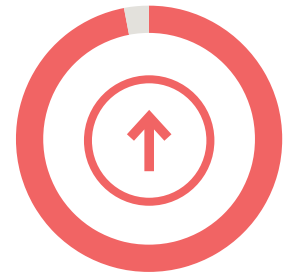
of websites have **high-quality search functionality & results**.  
2022: 11%

31%



of firms **serve content based on their users' geolocation**.  
2022: 41%

97%



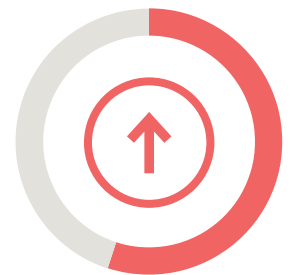
of firms have an **active LinkedIn channel**.  
2022: 96%

85%



of firms have an **active Twitter account**.  
2022: 94%

55%



of firms have an **active Instagram account**.  
2022: 49%

# THE NUMBERS THAT DEFINE LAW FIRMS: EVIDENCE

35%



of firms state their **brand positioning** upfront on their website home page.  
2022: 31%

52%



of firms have **brand values** on their website.  
2022: 60%

36%



of firms provide **case studies** on their websites.  
2022: 32%

12%



of firms have an **engaging people landing page**.  
2022: 4%

45%



of sites have a **distinctive visual language**.  
2022: 46%

20%

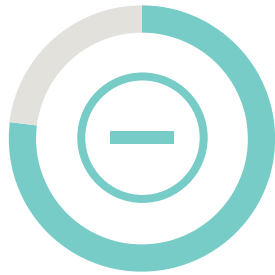


of firms have **high-quality lawyer bio** pages.  
2022: 12%



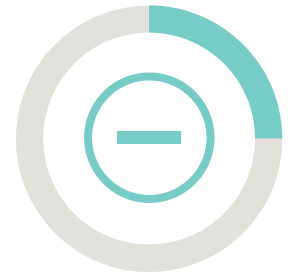
“Case studies and an engaging people landing page are among the most important sections of a firm’s website.”

77%



have **strong engagement** levels on LinkedIn.  
2022: N/A

25%



of law firm Chairs are active on **LinkedIn**.  
2022: N/A

70%



of firms **have ESG content**.  
2022: 53%

71%



of law firm websites have detailed **DEI content**.  
2022: 67%

71%



of firms use **audio** on their websites.  
2022: 73%

74%



of firms use **video** on their websites.  
2022: 70%

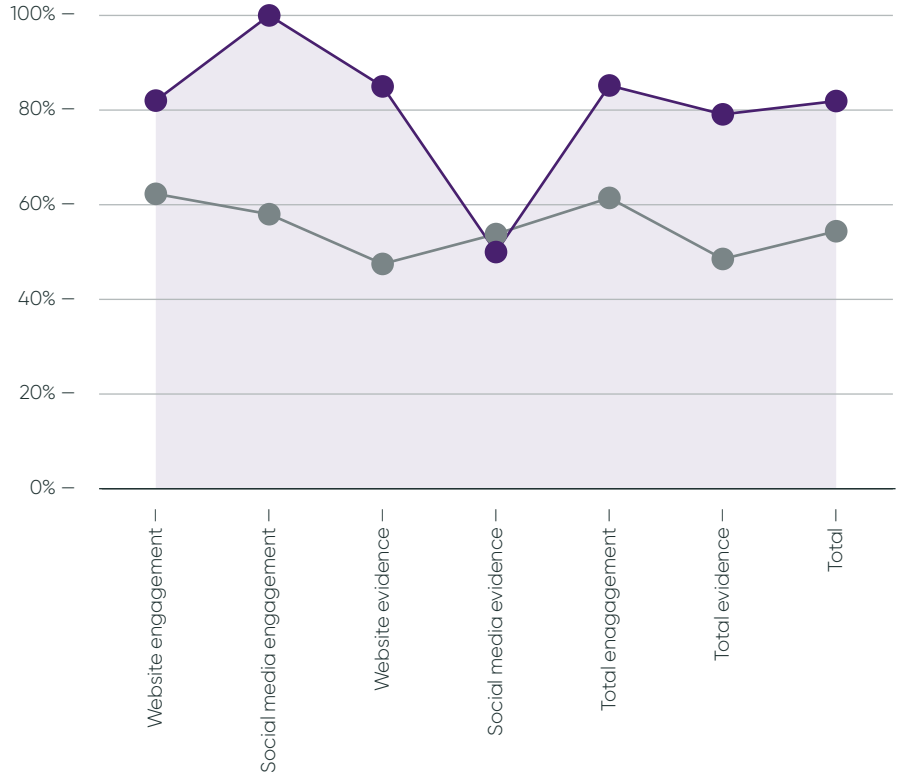
# 1<sup>ST</sup> DLA Piper

dlapiper.com



- DLA Piper
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



DLA Piper was already in the top five of our Living Ratings last year. However, rather than stand still, they raised the bar even higher with their new website. By employing outstanding geolocation functionality, a lengthy list of available languages and simplified navigation that flows from one centralized location, DLA Piper received the highest website functionality score in the sector. Their brand-forward homepage is designed to communicate their brand values and eliminate clutter while enhancing and highlighting content; messaging and structure are client-centric.

The firm's story, value and culture aren't told to the visitor, they are shown, with beautiful use of infographics and an authentic tone of voice. In a sector where we often see user experiences hindered by content overload, DLA Piper has shown that less is more. A brilliantly executed brand and digital strategy that tells the firm's story and presents outstanding thought leadership and human intelligence across all channels makes DLA Piper our new sector leader.

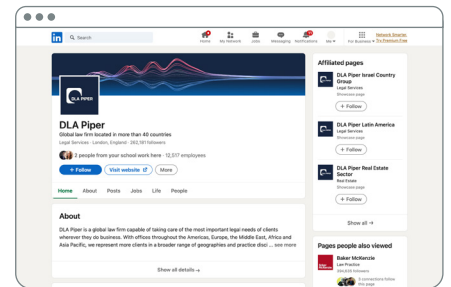
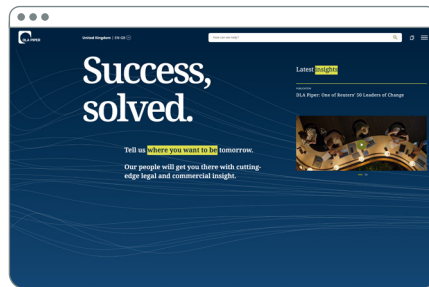
## Key features

### Engagement:

- ▶ Clutter-free and brand-driven home page
- ▶ Excellent use of geolocation, many language options
- ▶ An intuitive and simplified user experience
- ▶ High engagement on all social media channels

### Evidence:

- ▶ Exceptional attorney profiles
- ▶ Firm story, values and culture clearly communicated
- ▶ Clean, well-organized insights hub
- ▶ First-rate sustainability and ESG content supported with infographics



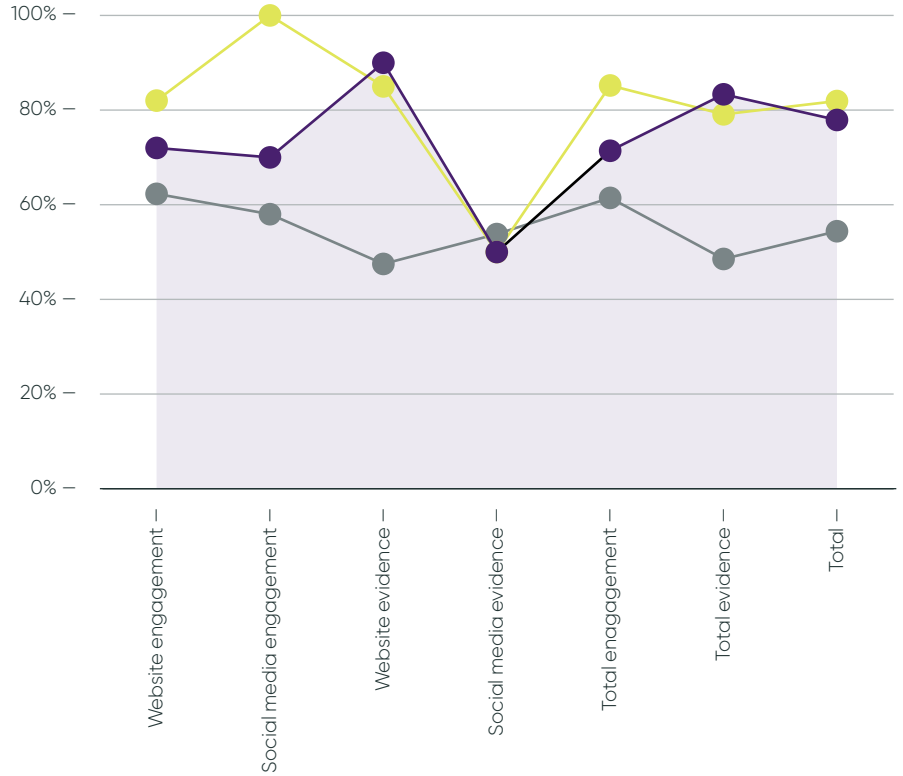
# 2<sup>ND</sup> Akin

akingump.com



- Akin
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



Visitors to Akin's website don't have to spend much time searching for what defines Akin as a law firm. They are immediately greeted by a video in which the firm's chairperson tells the viewer about Akin's values and ethos. The defining features of Akin's culture are detailed on the home page along with the most recent insights. Navigation is easy and intuitive, with a clean primary navigation. Colorful and dynamic, the brand and website are distinctive and set the firm apart.

Perhaps most important, the people at Akin take center stage. Attorney profiles feature striking black and white portraits paired with concise biographies and summaries of experience and areas of focus. Akin leads the way by enhancing select partner profiles with videos that showcase their background, experience and approach. Capping things off are a careers page with outstanding content for laterals and students and a robust alumni hub. All these elements combine to make Akin a worthy newcomer to the top five.

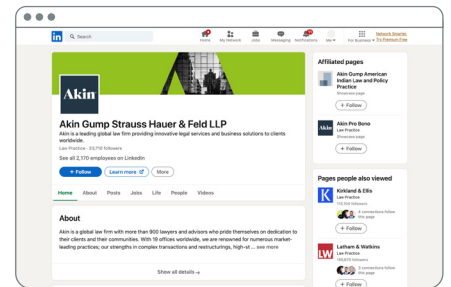
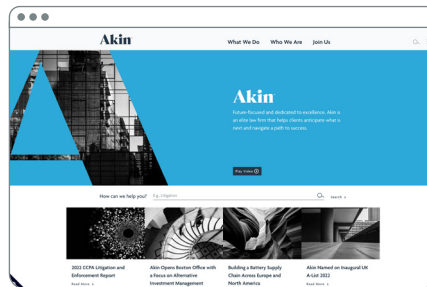
## Key features

### Engagement:

- ▶ Clean and easy site navigation
- ▶ Outstanding user experience
- ▶ Among the best in providing related content
- ▶ Fantastic alumni hub content and design

### Evidence:

- ▶ Brand values and people take center stage
- ▶ Sector-leading attorney profiles
- ▶ Careers page with content for laterals and students
- ▶ Content is enhanced by distinctive design



3<sup>RD</sup>

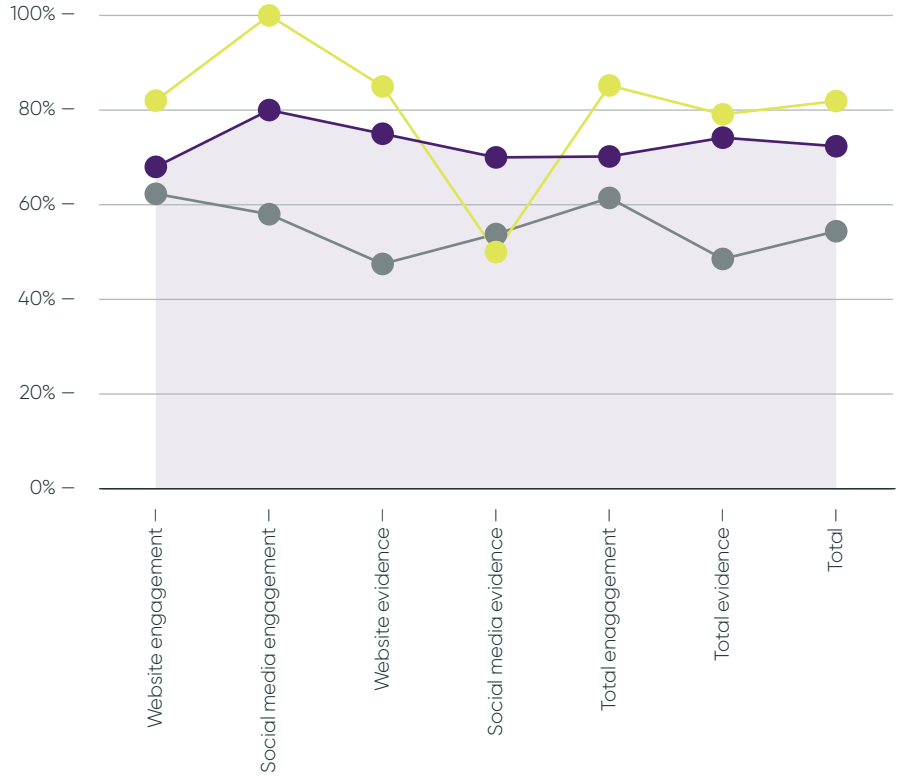
# Hogan Lovells

hoganlovells.com



- Hogan Lovells
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



Another firm joining the top five this year with an updated website, Hogan Lovells has enhanced their site with a more visual and engaging user experience that enhances outstanding content. Every element of the site is well organized and intuitive.

One feature that sets Hogan Lovells' website apart is their use of case studies, which earn a rightful spot on the primary navigation menu. The case studies page contains a lengthy list of examples that highlight the firm's successes and capabilities, including evidence and data related to the cases.

Search functionality is another area where Hogan Lovells is among the best in the sector, with a curated and well-organized list of pictorial results and easy-to-use filters. Finally, the firm has introduced overview pages providing detail of how they can help their clients' 'Grow', 'Protect' or 'Innovate' their business. Supported with case studies and relevant stats, these pages explain the firm's ways of working. Overall, this serves as a perfect example of how a site refresh can set a firm apart.

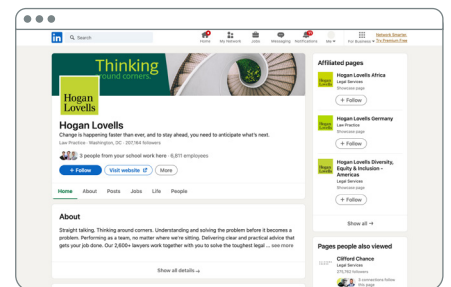
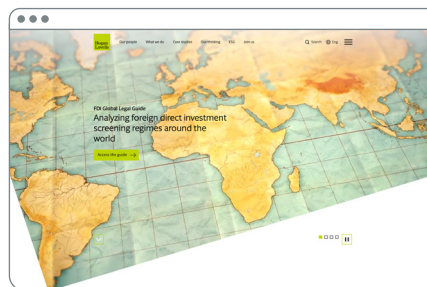
## Key features

### Engagement:

- ▶ Sector-leading search functionality
- ▶ Intuitive and straightforward website navigation
- ▶ Available in multiple languages
- ▶ Strong 'ways of working' content

### Evidence:

- ▶ Detailed and informative case studies
- ▶ Well-organized thought leadership
- ▶ Clear content strategy
- ▶ Tone of voice reflects firm values



Images © Hogan Lovells

4<sup>TH</sup>

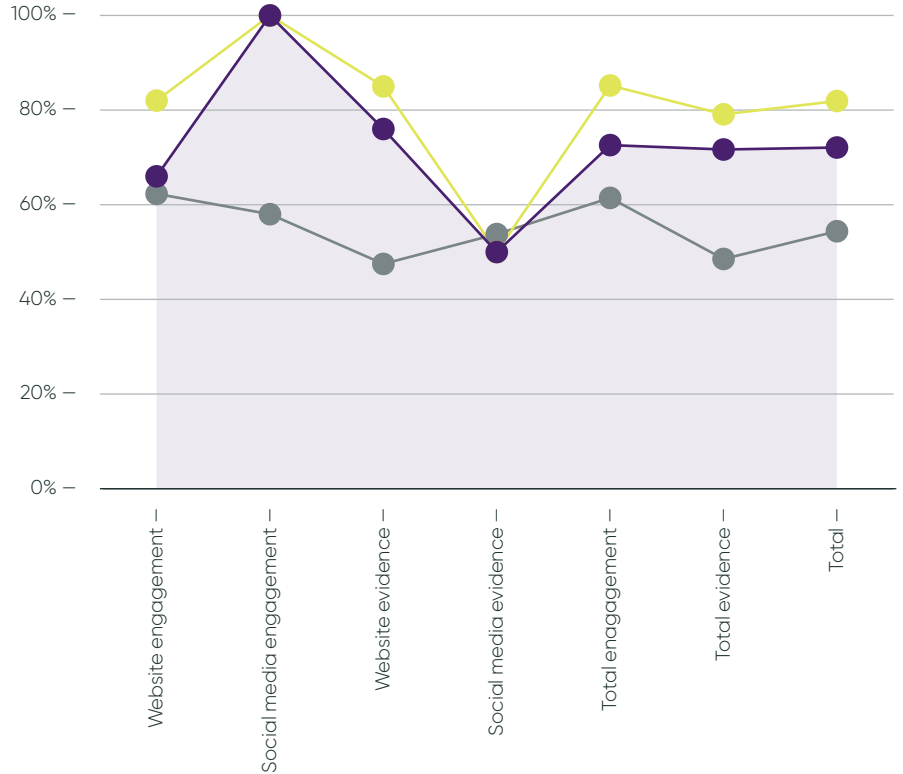
# White & Case

whitecase.com



- White & Case
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



A regular fixture in the Living Ratings top ten, White & Case’s website strikes a perfect blend of design, content and functionality. With a clean, concise navigation philosophy, the website ensures that visitors can find relevant content with ease.

Where the site truly stands apart is in tailoring content to the user. Visitors have access to an unparalleled assortment of online tools that aid in everything from determining which regulations affect a transaction to tracking major bank regulatory developments in key jurisdictions worldwide.

The brand values and people behind White & Case are not forgotten. Attorney profiles provide relevant background information and experience in an easy-to-read format with excellent imagery. Recruiting is also a strength; the careers page is easy to navigate and provides a sense of the firm culture rather than just a list of openings. Finally, a social media strategy is evident with pertinent content curated and distributed across all channels.

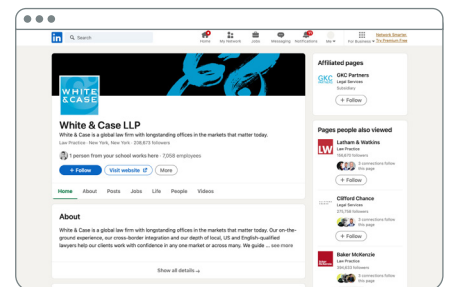
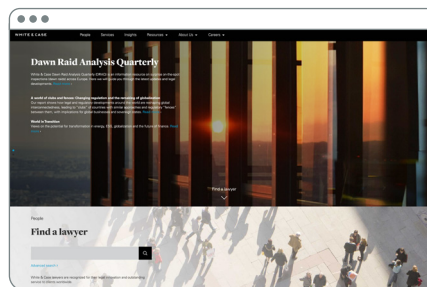
## Key features

### Engagement

- ▶ Sector-leading online tools
- ▶ Streamlined, concise navigation
- ▶ Carefully curated social media channels
- ▶ Excellent user experience

### Evidence

- ▶ Brand values and people are featured, not hidden
- ▶ Use of video in select partner profiles
- ▶ Robust careers page
- ▶ Diverse and easily accessible thought leadership



5<sup>TH</sup>

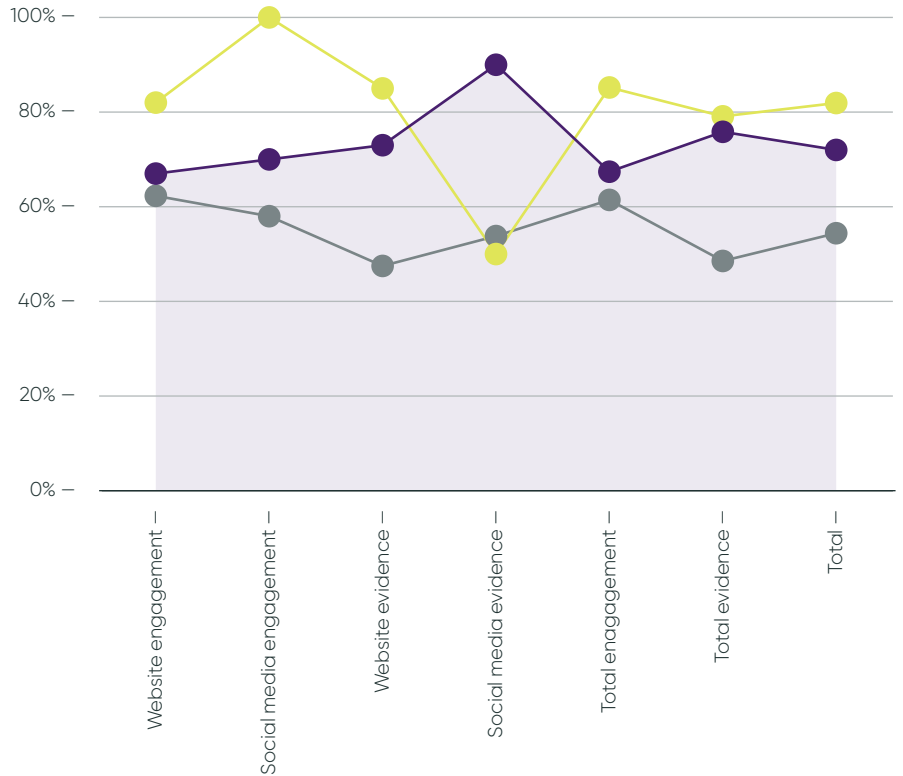
# Bird & Bird

twobirds.com



- Bird & Bird
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



**Bucking the stereotype of the boring, uninspired law firm brand is Bird & Bird. Visitors to the firm’s website are treated to a colorful design that enhances the content and offers a clean, uncomplicated presentation. Finding what you are looking for is quick and easy.**

**Among the highlights is the clever use of video. Instead of burying videos in a cluttered thought leadership section, there is a dedicated page which is easily found in the navigation dropdown and features all the firm’s videos with multiple ways to filter and sort.**

**Bird & Bird also leads the way when it comes to social media content and engagement, particularly on LinkedIn. The strategy is client-focused, showcasing not only the most pertinent news and thought leadership, but also the firm’s people and culture. The people page is also ahead of the curve. Profiles are well organized with the most pertinent information easy to find. Combining a distinctive visual language with excellent content and a purposeful social media strategy vaults Bird & Bird into the final spot in our top five.**

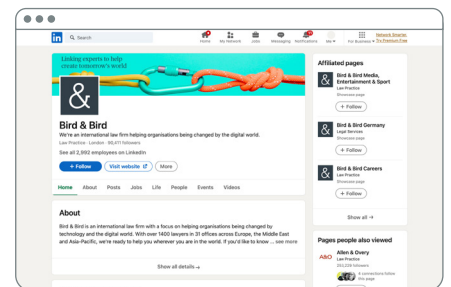
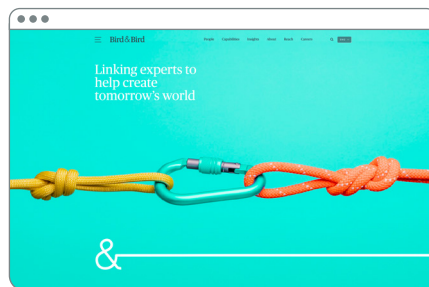
## Key features

### Engagement

- ▶ Sector-leading engagement on LinkedIn
- ▶ Effective blend of form and function
- ▶ Easy switching among a myriad of language options
- ▶ Geolocation functionality

### Evidence

- ▶ Prominent brand purpose on home page
- ▶ Well-designed attorney profiles
- ▶ Colorful and distinctive visual language
- ▶ Excellent use of video in thought leadership



Images © Bird & Bird

6<sup>TH</sup>

**Pinsent Masons**  
pinsentmasons.com



Classification:  
▶ Focused

**Key features**

- ▶ Predictive search with well-presented results
- ▶ Thorough and detailed case studies
- ▶ Focused and clean attorney profiles
- ▶ Thought leadership that leverages all channels

7<sup>TH</sup>

**Covington**  
cov.com



Classification:  
▶ Determined

**Key features**

- ▶ Intuitive navigation and user experience
- ▶ Thoughtful use of data and infographics
- ▶ Prominent DEI and pro bono content
- ▶ Client-first news and insights

8<sup>TH</sup>

**Seyfarth Shaw**  
seyfarth.com



Classification:  
▶ Determined

**Key features**

- ▶ Standout search functionality with relevant, categorized results
- ▶ Excellent accessibility and SEO scores
- ▶ Timely content driven by client needs
- ▶ Prominent brand values supported by evidence

9<sup>TH</sup>

**Ashurst**  
ashurst.com



Classification:  
▶ Determined

**Key features**

- ▶ Client-focused online tools and apps
- ▶ Outstanding and informative careers page
- ▶ News and insights organized into content hubs
- ▶ Thorough "about us" page with informative stats

10<sup>TH</sup>

**Herbert Smith Freehills**  
herbertsmithfreehills.com



Classification:  
▶ Focused

**Key features**

- ▶ Distinctive visual brand that enhances content
- ▶ Seamless navigation and user experience
- ▶ Excellent search functionality and filters
- ▶ Firm values and culture conveyed clearly

**Want to know how your firm has scored across each of our key criteria?**

**Please reach out to Mark Stephenson to arrange a meeting.**

# OPPORTUNITIES TO LEAD



Here are three of the key opportunities that will help you achieve greater brand and digital intelligence.

## 1. Brand & deliver

**Challenge:** Stop us if you've heard this before; many law firm brands and websites look the same, with bland visuals and uninspiring messaging. One of the main reasons is that many firms are still hesitant to do something different. Too often the response to an idea that would make a firm stand out is, "Are any other firms doing this?". This hesitancy is holding back the entire sector. The result is a sea of websites with similar looking drab visuals that list all areas of the firm and so much content that it can be overwhelming to someone who is shopping for legal services.

**Opportunity:** The first step toward differentiating your firm is defining what makes it unique. This comes with certain internal political hurdles, but it is an essential step toward curating your content and reshaping your brand and tone of voice. Once this step has been completed, it will function as the springboard that leads to a more focused approach to branding and delivering content across all digital channels of which, together, will help to make your firm different from the rest.

## 2. Have human intelligence

**Challenge:** Having human intelligence doesn't apply only to attorney biographies and thought leadership pieces. It also applies to careers pages and social media. Far too many law firms have careers pages that function simply as repositories for job openings and social media content that is just a regurgitation of news and thought leadership pieces from the website. When competing for talent, your biggest weapon is the people at your firm. Feature their personalities and accomplishments at every opportunity.

**Opportunity:** Potential clients shopping for legal services want to see the people at your firm. Communicate the quality of your lawyers' expertise and how they do what they do, plus your teams and culture of the firm. There are many ways to achieve this, but perhaps the most impactful is the use of video biographies. Currently only one firm in our top 100 uses video bios. For a visitor to your site, there is perhaps no better way to showcase the people at your firm than by allowing them to speak for themselves.

## 3. Be content smart

**Challenge:** Managing and curating content seems to be a lost art in the legal sector. Navigating a law firm's website can often be an overwhelming experience in which one is bombarded with so much content that it's difficult to remember for what you were searching in the first place. Couple this with inefficient and unintuitive navigation, often a reflection of a firm's internal structure, and it makes for a very convoluted user experience, giving the visitor a poor impression of your firm.

**Opportunity:** It's time to put quality over quantity by putting a content governance framework in place that aligns with your firm's business strategy. The first step is to establish your firm's content goals. What type of content will be created? Who will create it? Where will it be published? Consistent branding, establishment of a style guide, and adherence to an editorial calendar are all essential components. If you aren't vigilant about your content governance, you risk inconsistency in your content quality and delivery. This could cause your target audiences to tune you out and look elsewhere for consistent content.



# Transform your digital strategy with a

# HEADLESS CMS



**In an increasingly digital world, marketers are constantly searching for innovative tools and solutions to gain an edge in the competitive market.**

One such game-changing technology is a headless Content Management System (CMS). This revolutionary system has gained traction across various industries, and it's high time that marketers harness its power to deliver seamless, personalized customer experiences.

But what is a headless CMS, and why should marketers be interested in learning about it? Here are four compelling reasons.

## 1. Future-proof content delivery

A headless CMS separates the content management back-end from the front-end, meaning that content can be pushed to any platform or device through APIs. This decoupled architecture makes it possible for marketers to deliver their content to multiple channels – websites, mobile apps, and even voice assistants – all without altering the underlying content.

As new technologies and platforms emerge, a headless CMS allows for swift adoption without the need for a complete overhaul of the Content Management System. Marketers can stay ahead of the curve and ensure their message reaches their audience through any medium.

## 2. Enhanced personalization

As personalization has become integral to gaining customer satisfaction and loyalty, a headless CMS provides marketers with the flexibility to deliver tailored content to different user segments. By combining data from various sources, marketers can create personalized experiences for their clients and prospects.

For example, a financial services firm can offer targeted advice and product recommendations based on a user's investment preferences, financial goals, and risk tolerance. This level of personalization can significantly improve engagement and conversion rates, leading to better client retention and acquisition.

## 3. Faster load times and better performance

Headless CMS enables developers to use modern front-end technologies to create lightweight, fast-loading, and high-performance websites and applications. With the decoupled architecture, the front-end is no longer bogged down by the limitations of a traditional CMS, leading to better user experiences.

This translates into higher engagement rates, lower bounce rates, and improved search engine rankings – all crucial factors in driving traffic and conversions.

## 4. Streamlined collaboration and workflow

Because headless CMS is modular, it allows for seamless collaboration between developers, content creators, and marketers. Content can be created and managed independently of the front-end, enabling team members to work simultaneously without affecting the user-facing side.

This streamlined workflow translates to increased efficiency and productivity, ensuring that marketers can deliver timely and relevant content without compromising on quality.

### Want to discuss the power of headless CMS?

If you'd like to learn more about the advantages of headless CMS as a powerful tool, we'd be happy to discuss how you can improve your CMS experience with this innovative technology. Please contact [Duncan Shaw](#) in New York, [Greg Hobden](#) in London or [Gigi Yung](#) in Hong Kong.

# KEEPING SCORE

Would you like a more detailed analysis of your firm? Do you feel you could benefit from a new brand and website, relevant content or a more effective social media strategy? If so, we'd love to hear from you.

## GET IN TOUCH...

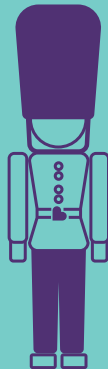


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# CREATING DIFFERENCE

## About Living

At Living we blend our deep sector knowledge, uncompromised thinking and award-winning creativity to help our clients in the financial, professional services and technology sectors create difference through branding expressions that engage, digital experiences that disrupt, and integrated advertising campaigns that drive results.

## What defines us

Our specialists' deep understanding of our clients' sectors means we challenge thinking and perception, inspire excitement and ambition, and help to deliver rewarding outcomes. In a world that is content rich, visually crowded and always changing, we empower our clients to communicate their difference and stay ahead.

## What we do

### Engaging branding

Our creative teams in New York, London and Hong Kong deliver award-winning ideas with proven results, driving your business performance with strategic thinking,

brand creation and enhancement, and stand-out messaging. We fuse these key elements together to generate highly effective visual and verbal expressions of your firm.

### Disruptive digital

Our digital team connects your brand and your audiences. Around the world. Around the clock. We build seamless brand experiences online, using bespoke information architecture, engaging design and cutting-edge technology across multiple devices and platforms.

### Integrated campaigns

We can help transform your brand objectives into tangible business benefits – stimulating dialogue, lifting your profile, prompting consideration,

and spurring action. We research, plan and execute advertising and social media campaigns worldwide, applying distinctive ideas and creative, backed by relevant analytics to measure your success.

### Creating difference for our people and communities

We don't just make a difference for our clients. We also make a difference for the talented people on our teams and the communities where we work. We have an open and collaborative culture that gives our people room to thrive. We encourage passionate, free-thinking ideas that challenge the conventional and celebrate individualism and diversity.

**Want to know how your firm has scored across each of our key criteria?  
Please reach out to [Mark Stephenson](#) to arrange a meeting.**

# BRAIN POWER

The search for human intelligence

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