

# Living Ratings

The brand and digital intelligence of  
the world's leading law firms 2021

# RAISING



# THE BAR



# RATED INTELLIGENCE

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# RAISING THE BAR

The past 12 months have been like no other. After the global pandemic's initial upheaval of 'business as usual', law firms quickly adapted to a new remote-only world, driven by technology and their most valuable asset: their people. Attorneys from around the world mastered new ways of working and, supported by their talented business development and marketing teams, they arguably became more efficient and productive, improving client satisfaction along the way. But at the firm level, did their brand and digital footprint fare as well over the year?

## Diagnosing brand and digital intelligence in a pandemic

To really get a sense of how each of the 100 law firms performed during the pandemic, we went deeper and wider than ever before with our research and analysis, adding numerous new metrics and readjusting the weighting of many criteria. It has been the broadest update to Living Ratings in three years and represents how we think about brand and digital today. The evolution is constant, driven by technology, competition, and the ever-increasing sophistication of clients.

The results of our 'raising the bar' are fascinating. Most firms' scores dropped compared to 2020, with the average across the sector falling by nearly 10%. So, firms that have scored well this year can truly take pride in the fact that they are excelling in both our engagement and evidence metrics – an impressive achievement.

## Bridging the humanity gap

Despite all the remote working and the limited face-to-face time with target audiences or in-person events, on the whole, law firms have been slow to adapt and refresh their brands and content across their websites and social media platforms.

Less than half (48%) of firms present quality attorney biography pages, while only 14% provide anything other than search functionality on their people landing page. This is a huge missed opportunity to get across the culture, ethos and uniqueness of their firm in a largely homogeneous sector.

Attorney biographies continue to be the most visited part of any law firm's website, so why the lack of attention and detail? A law firm's target audience will be looking at these pages with even more scrutiny given the current environment, in order to get a personal insight into the professionals behind the brand.

## Brand. A law firm's 'North Star'

In our last law firm Ratings, we reported on several new rebrands in the legal sector, driving up scores with compelling messaging, engaging visual identities and innovative content. In the past 12 months, this activity has slowed to a trickle and it's probably fair to say that the focus of the majority of firms has been on other challenging matters over this period. We do expect this to change in 2021 and 2022, as law firms finally understand that they need to communicate far harder to the audiences who do not yet know them.

On that point, we have seen a drop in the number of firms stating their brand positioning upfront on their website home page, down from 40% in 2020 to 32% in 2021. Are all law firms that certain their prospective target audiences know who they are, what they do and why they matter? Shouldn't law firms take control of the messaging around what they do and why they're good at it? Prospective clients, potential referral sources and future employees all want to know.

On a more positive note, we have seen the number of law firms that communicate their brand values on



**Duncan Shaw, Co-founder and Executive Creative Director**

their websites rise from 41% in 2020 to 46% in 2021. It's a fantastic way of getting across to a wide target audience what a firm stands for and believes in. We hope this upward trend continues.

## Opportunity knocks right now

Aside from all the data in this information-packed report, on pages 24 and 25, you will find what we feel are the most compelling opportunities for law firm marketers in 2021. Based around four key principles: humanity, authenticity, evidence and purpose, there are some quick wins, plus areas that will require deeper consideration and analysis for successful execution.

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 at:

[duncan.shaw@living-group.com](mailto:duncan.shaw@living-group.com)

# WANT THE GOOD VIEWS OR THE BAD VIEWS?

Is your brand's digital intelligence performing optimally?

In addition to our annual Ratings report, we also 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 ([duncan.shaw@living-group.com](mailto:duncan.shaw@living-group.com))

**Greg Hobden** in London ([greg.hobden@living-group.com](mailto:greg.hobden@living-group.com)) or

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**Living** 

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# HIGHLY RATED



## About Ratings

Now in its 29th 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 also 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 2021, our analysts reviewed the brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading law firms – source: The 2020 global 200, ranked by revenue, published by Law.com and the American Lawyer, September 2020. 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.

1 WEBSITE  
FUNCTIONALITY

2 WEBSITE  
CONTENT

3 SOCIAL MEDIA  
PRESENCE

4 SOCIAL MEDIA  
CONTENT



# RESHARPENING THE CRITERIA

## What's hot and what's not

In our latest report we have significantly raised the bar on what we expect a progressive and global law firm should be delivering from a brand, content and functionality perspective. Here are a few of our key measurement points; some familiar, some new.

## ENGAGEMENT

### Intuitive IA and UX

We continue to reward law firms that take time to create well-thought-out user journeys across their websites, aided by a considered and pared-down primary navigation and an intuitive approach to how content is consumed. These firms show that they care about messaging and content.

### Marketing automation and personalization

New for 2021, firms that use automated or personalization technology to deliver tailored content are at the forefront of the legal sector. They know it's not one size fits all and are rewarded for their time, effort and commitment.

### Online tools

Another new category for 2021, we reward firms that deliver content in different and interesting ways. Online tools are a great example of innovation and allow law firms to publish 'sticky' content that users will keep coming back to.

### High-quality search

We have once again raised the bar in this category as search technology improves each year and becomes more affordable. We celebrate law firms that take time to think about delivering not just filtered results, but how these results are curated and presented.

### Strong social media channels

Law firms that use a range of active social media channels and promote content that is original and authentic can expect high scores. We also look positively on firms that use different channels for each of their different target audiences.

## EVIDENCE

### Brand purpose and values

We reward law firms that prove they're serious about the value of their brand. They're the ones that put their brand positioning on their website's home page and consistently across their social media channels. Plus, they proudly communicate their brand values. Something especially important this year.

### Case studies

Demonstrating how your firm has solved an issue or challenge or helped a client is far more powerful than just pushing practice areas. Today, helping is the new selling.

### Humanity

In a world where law firms continue to be distanced from their clients and where they need to bridge the gap in face-to-face interaction, surfacing the human side of a firm is critical. People landing pages and attorney biographies continue to be the most visited part of any law firm website, so we reward those firms that take time to design these with their target audiences in mind.

### Sustainability

ESG must be more than just a policy and we reward firms that show how this influences their business strategy, process and culture. In 2021, it should be a key part of all law firms' DNA.

### Diversity and gender-related content

It's well publicized that the legal industry has a problem when it comes to diversity and gender balance. We reward firms that deliver content demonstrating how they are actively addressing this issue.

# VIVA THE EVOLUTION. THOUGHT LEADERSHIP GETS SOCIAL

## Partners' new role in executive communications

Gone are the days of firms rolling out tome-like white papers to express their grand view of the world at large. Intellectual engagement with clients today is instantaneous, bite-size, relevant – and personal.

Thought leadership continues to play a key role in brand differentiation and value affirmation. But delivery and distribution have evolved: it's now social, inclusive and ubiquitous. And the spotlight has shifted from the firm to the people who *are* the firm.

With the increased traffic of intellectual capital, the bar has been raised for how law firms can stand out. The answer is found in the new role partners should play in executive communications.

Because the legal sector deals with decision-makers who are individuals, people just like you, they want to know about the people who drive your decisions. Who are the experts who deliver *your* services?

## Tell your story, share your ideas

A winning digital experience for any brand involves a smart balance between content creation and web and social channel functionality. But what will differentiate your brand is how you engage your audience by telling your story – that is, the story of your people.

Law firm partners should each establish a dynamic (though pragmatic) communications strategy to increase their visibility and voice, to be heard by clients and prospects alike, as well as the influential players in their practice areas. While this may include occasional videos and podcasts of staged presentations and conversations, the foundation should be a robust approach to social media posts. Messaging should be targeted, topical and timely, with every expression designed to reflect on the brand equity of the person and the firm they represent.

## Your profiles speak volumes

Building relationships through social communications will drive new visitors to a firm's website where the first view is often the 'People' pages to investigate a partner's bio. All too often, websites fail to offer interesting profile pages, with only cold, sterile search results listing biographies written in the third person. It's a lost opportunity because these sections usually have the highest web traffic of interior pages. It's the place to celebrate your partners as well as their teams – a place to promote your people so they can be recognized by and relatable to the people who want to do business with you and even come work for you.

## The power of your people on center stage

Living helps clients shine a spotlight on their most valuable asset: their people. This begins with developing a brand positioning strategy that aligns with your firm's values and reveals the human relationships that exist within your value proposition. We look to highlight this 'human factor' of your firm by developing full editorial calendars with videos, podcasts, and featured articles; crafting engaging social media posts; writing compelling first-person biographies; helping you plan reader-friendly blogs; and designing webpages that deliver interactive and creative content – all this to draw upon the personalities of your team members.

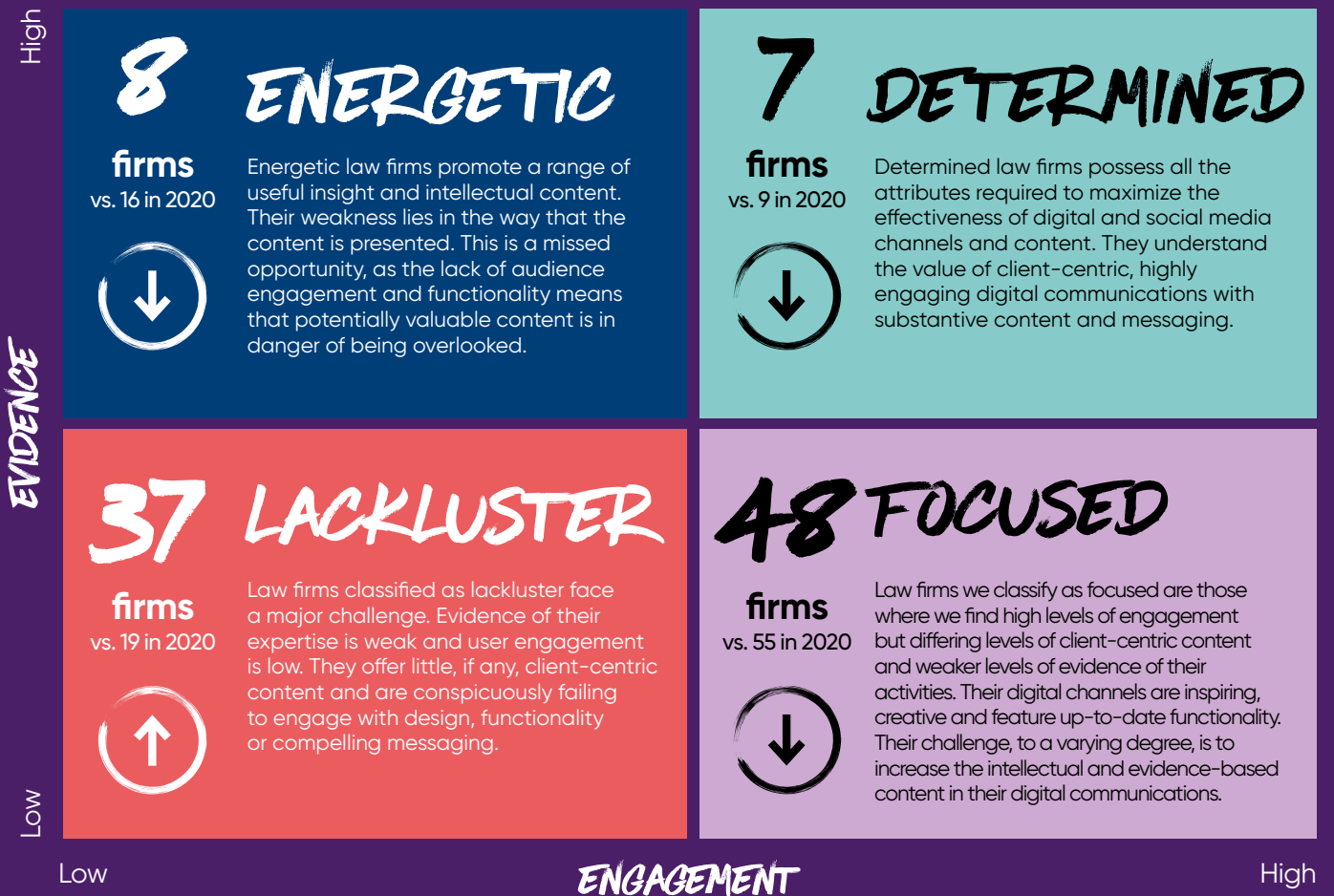


By placing the people behind the brand on center stage, your firm becomes distinctive, its purpose understandable, its message deemed authentic. Brand value, magnified by human capital.



# 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.



# LAW FIRM RATINGS AND RANKINGS

Living Ratings 2021 Ranking	Living Ratings 2020 Ranking	Law.com Global 200 Ranking	Firm name	Score / 1,000	%	Category
1 ↑	2	3	DLA Piper	803	80.30%	●
2 ↑	5	49	Winston & Strawn	801	80.10%	●
3 ↑	9	11	White & Case	773	77.30%	●
4 ↓	1	74	Seyfarth Shaw	763	76.30%	●
5 ↑	8	81	Pinsent Masons	756	75.60%	●
6 =	6	57	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	751	75.10%	●
7 ↓	3	28	Goodwin	720	72.00%	●
8 ↓	4	31	Herbert Smith Freehills	717	71.70%	●
9 ↑	32	38	McDermott	699	69.90%	●
10 ↑	23	16	Freshfields	691	69.10%	●
11 ↓	7	10	Hogan Lovells	689	68.90%	●
12 ↑	19	39	Orrick	686	68.60%	●
13 ↑	21	79	Gowling WLG	685	68.50%	●
14 ↓	12	33	Reed Smith	684	68.40%	●
15 ↓	11	54	Perkins Coie	683	68.30%	●
16 ↓	10	4	Baker McKenzie	682	68.20%	●
17 ↑	20	9	Morgan Lewis	681	68.10%	●
18 ↑	80	44	Millbank	680	68.00%	●
19 ↓	16	41	Dechert	677	67.70%	●
20 ↑	59	8	Clifford Chance	676	67.60%	●
21 ↑	31	46	Squire Patton Boggs	675	67.50%	●
22 ↑	60	40	Morrison & Foerster	674	67.40%	●
23 ↑	58	30	Paul Hastings	673	67.30%	●
24 ↑	43	17	Norton Rose Fulbright	672	67.20%	●
25 ↑	44	75	Fragomen	667	66.70%	●
26 ↓	17	63	Ashurst	667	66.70%	●
27 ↑	29	21	CMS	666	66.60%	●
28 ↑	34	95	Nixon Peabody	663	66.30%	●
29 ↓	27	62	O'Melveny & Myers	660	66.00%	●
30 ↑	49	77	Katten	659	65.90%	●
31 —	N/A	96	McCarthy Tetrault	658	65.80%	●
32 ↑	73	72	Slaughter and May	655	65.50%	●
33 ↑	38	97	Simmons & Simmons	652	65.20%	●
34 ↓	18	37	WilmerHale	639	63.90%	●
35 ↑	67	23	Mayer Brown	636	63.60%	●
36 ↓	30	64	Clyde & Co	635	63.50%	●
37 ↑	47	19	Greenberg Traurig	634	63.40%	●
38 ↓	26	35	Eversheds Sutherland	632	63.20%	●
39 ↑	86	18	Ropes & Gray	629	62.90%	●
40 ↑	56	14	Jones Day	628	62.80%	●
41 ↑	45	22	Weil	626	62.60%	●
42 ↓	13	67	Vinson & Elkins	625	62.50%	●
43 ↑	66	29	Cooley	619	61.90%	●
44 ↑	52	100	Bird & Bird	617	61.70%	●
45 ↑	53	71	Baker Botts	615	61.50%	●
46 ↑	72	50	Proskauer Rose	610	61.00%	●
47 ↓	22	70	Hunton Andrews Kurth	603	60.30%	●
48 ↓	15	13	Linklaters	596	59.60%	●
49 ↑	74	43	King & Wood Mallesons	593	59.30%	●
50 ↓	40	98	Locke Lord	589	58.90%	●

● Energetic 
 ● Determined 
 ● Focused 
 ● Lackluster

Living Ratings 2021 Ranking	Living Ratings 2020 Ranking	Law.com Global 200 Ranking	Firm name	Score / 1,000	%	Category	
51	↑	54	51	Shearman & Sterling	581	58.10%	●
52	↓	14	47	Holland & Knight	580	58.00%	●
53	↓	36	61	Alston & Bird	574	57.40%	●
54	↓	24	27	King & Spalding	573	57.30%	●
55	↓	48	42	Akin Gump	572	57.20%	●
56	↓	51	7	Sidley Austin	567	56.70%	●
57	↑	61	78	Venable	565	56.50%	●
58	↑	68	83	Little Mendelson	563	56.30%	●
59	↑	70	48	K&L Gates	560	56.00%	●
60	↓	50	66	Sheppard Mullin	558	55.80%	●
61	↓	35	91	Ogletree	555	55.50%	●
62	↓	33	90	Faegre Drinker	551	55.10%	●
63	↓	55	85	Nelson Mullins	548	54.80%	●
64	↑	89	6	Skadden	545	54.50%	●
65	↓	57	99	Jackson Lewis	533	53.30%	●
66	↓	64	5	Dentons	526	52.60%	●
67	↓	28	76	Pillsbury	524	52.40%	●
68	↑	83	73	Baker & Hostetler	519	51.90%	●
69	↑	81	84	Polsinelli	515	51.50%	●
70	↑	71	2	Latham & Watkins	513	51.30%	●
71	↑	76	12	Allen & Overy	505	50.50%	●
72	↓	42	87	Troutman Pepper	503	50.30%	●
73	↓	46	59	McGuireWoods	498	49.80%	●
74	—	N/A	89	Blakes	497	49.70%	●
75	=	75	53	Arnold & Porter	496	49.60%	●
76	↑	91	68	Fried Frank	495	49.50%	●
77	↑	87	45	Debevoise & Plimpton	490	49.00%	●
78	—	N/A	82	Osler	489	48.90%	●
79	↓	41	52	Wilson Sonsini	486	48.60%	●
80	↑	84	32	Quinn Emanuel	485	48.50%	●
81	↑	90	26	Paul Weiss	478	47.80%	●
82	↓	37	34	Cleary Gottlieb	451	45.10%	●
83	↓	69	92	Cozen O'Connor	447	44.70%	●
84	↑	96	15	Gibson Dunn	445	44.50%	●
85	↓	62	86	Fox Rothschild	439	43.90%	●
86	↓	78	36	Covington	429	42.90%	●
87	↓	39	55	Foley & Lardner	425	42.50%	●
88	=	88	24	Sullivan & Cromwell	412	41.20%	●
89	↓	82	93	Duane Morris	385	38.50%	●
90	↑	93	25	Davis Polk	380	38.00%	●
91	↑	97	20	Simpson Thacher	376	37.60%	●
92	↑	94	58	Willkie Farr & Gallagher	367	36.70%	●
93	↓	79	1	Kirkland & Ellis	358	35.80%	●
94	↓	77	80	Lewis Brisbois	357	35.70%	●
95	=	95	65	Cravath	353	35.30%	●
96	—	N/A	60	Kim & Chang	343	34.30%	●
97	↑	99	69	Yingke	332	33.20%	●
98	—	N/A	94	AllBright Law Offices	240	24.00%	●
99	—	N/A	88	Zhong Lun	201	20.10%	●
100	↓	98	56	Wachtell Lipton	189	18.90%	●

# FOLLOW THE #1 LEADERS

## Engagement and evidence: the leaders

Law firms who 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 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	86.60%
2	Winston & Strawn	84.20%
3	White & Case	80.60%
4	Gowling WLG	79.00%
5	Baker McKenzie	78.40%
6	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	78.20%
7	McDermott	77.80%
8	Morrison & Foerster	76.80%
9	Freshfields	76.20%
10	O'Melveny & Myers	76.00%
11	Hogan Lovells	75.80%
12	Pinsent Masons	75.20%
13	Seyfarth Shaw	74.60%
14	Eversheds Sutherland	74.40%
15	Milbank	74.00%
16	WilmerHale	73.80%
17	Simmons & Simmons	72.40%
18=	Morgan Lewis	72.20%
18=	Shearman & Sterling	72.20%
20	Goodwin	72.00%

## EVIDENCE

	Firm name	Evidence score (%)
1	Seyfarth Shaw	78.00%
2=	Winston & Strawn	76.00%
2=	Pinsent Masons	76.00%
2=	Herbert Smith Freehills	76.00%
5=	DLA Piper	74.00%
5=	White & Case	74.00%
7=	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	72.00%
7=	Goodwin	72.00%
7=	Katten	72.00%
10	Squire Patton Boggs	70.00%
11=	Paul Hastings	68.00%
11=	Fragomen	68.00%
11=	Nixon Peabody	68.00%
14=	Orrick	66.00%
14=	Reed Smith	66.00%
14=	Perkins Coie	66.00%
14=	Clifford Chance	66.00%
14=	Ashurst	66.00%
14=	Slaughter and May	66.00%
20	Morgan Lewis	64.00%

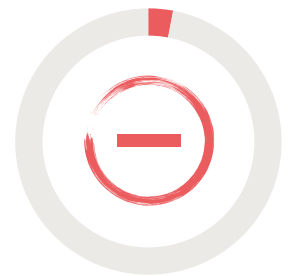
# THE NUMBERS THAT DEFINE LAW FIRMS: **ENGAGEMENT**

21%



of websites have a **high quality search functionality**.  
2020: 24%

3%



of firms **employ voice activated search**.  
2020: N/A

50%



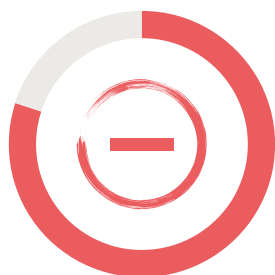
of websites are **available in multiple languages**.  
2020: 45%

32%



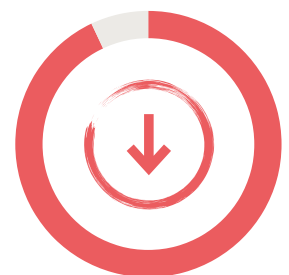
of firms **serve content based on their users' geolocation**.  
2020: 25%

80%



is the **average accessibility score across the sector**.  
2020: N/A

93%



of firms are **actively using Twitter**.  
2020: 97%

# GG LAW FIRMS CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE WITH SEARCH FUNCTIONALITY, WITH ONLY 21% PROVIDING A HIGH QUALITY EXPERIENCE

51%



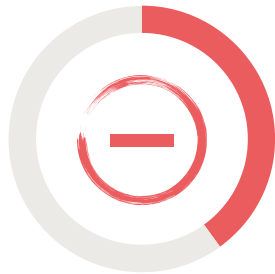
of websites provide **strong information architecture**.  
2020: 49%

27%



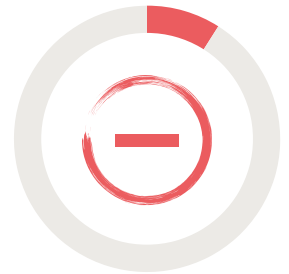
of websites provide a **high quality user experience**.  
2020: 37%

40%



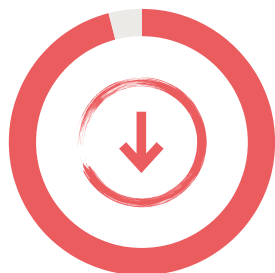
of websites use **personalization or marketing automation**.  
2020: N/A

9%



of websites have an **online data tool**  
2020: N/A

96%



of firms have an **active LinkedIn channel**.  
2020: 99%

59%



of firms are now **active on Instagram**.  
2020: 54%

# THE NUMBERS THAT DEFINE LAW FIRMS: EVIDENCE

32%



of firms state their **brand positioning upfront on their website home page.**  
2020: 40%

46%



of firms **communicate their brand values on their website.**  
2020: 41%

14%



of firms have a **high quality people landing page.**  
2020: 5%

48%



of firms have **enhanced attorney biography pages.**  
2020: 45%

59%



of firms have **specific gender-related content.**  
2020: 67%

78%



of firms **use blogs to deliver thought leadership.**  
2020: 79%



GG THE LEGAL INDUSTRY STANDS APART FROM OTHER SECTORS WITH ITS RELUCTANCE TO TELL WEBSITE VISITORS WHO THEY ARE AND WHY THEY MATTER ON THEIR HOME PAGES

52%



of firms have a **distinctive visual language on their website.**  
2020: 54%

17%



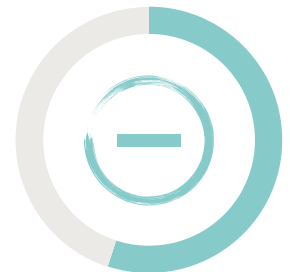
of firms **provide case studies on their websites.**  
2020: 22%

91%



of firms have a **prominent diversity proposition.**  
2020: 91%

55%



of firms have **sustainability content.**  
2020: N/A

73%



of firms **use podcasts and audio to deliver content on their websites.**  
2020: 46%

58%



of firms **use film or animation to deliver content on their websites.**  
2020: 71%

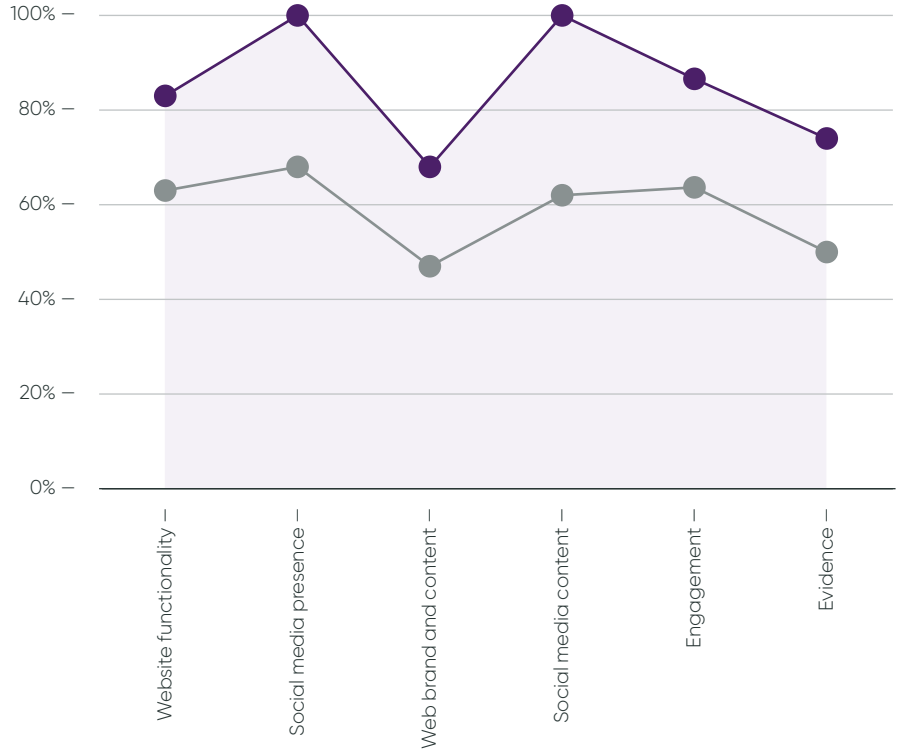
# 1 DLA Piper

dlapiper.com/en/uk



- DLA Piper
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



Year-on-year since 2019, DLA Piper's website and social media presence have grown and evolved to become our sector leader. The website leads with strong information architecture and a user experience that makes finding content easy and intuitive. And content is where so many law firms fail, but not with DLA Piper where the website delivers from the landing page right through to sustainability, D&I and careers pages. The firm's social media presence and content also score top marks, evidenced through an array of different channels for each of DLA Pipers' audiences. To sum up DLA Piper's digital presence in one word, we say 'thoughtful.'

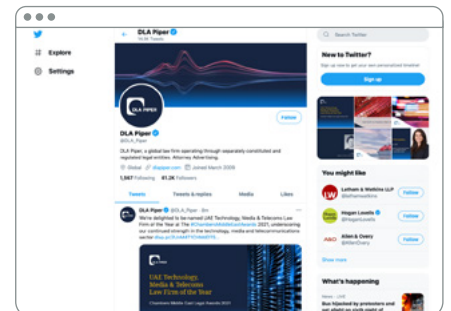
## KEY FEATURES

### Engagement:

- ▶ Clear and intuitive navigation and user experience
- ▶ Strong use of geolocation functionality
- ▶ High SEO score
- ▶ Sector-leading social media presence.

### Evidence:

- ▶ Brand values communicate clearly what DLA Piper stands for
- ▶ Client case studies provide evidence of how the firm helps its clients
- ▶ A good use of different media across the website including blogs, podcasts and video.
- ▶ A firm that takes D&I, gender equality and sustainability issues seriously.



Images © DLA Piper

# 2 Winston & Strawn

winston.com/en



- Winston & Strawn
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



**Winston & Strawn has been in our Top 5 for a number of years with a distinctly different digital brand that aligns with well-curated content across its website and social media channels. The website user experience is assisted with cleverly-edited content that's been designed in easy-to-consume bite-size pieces. We also continue to enjoy the simple 'who, what and where' approach to the website navigation and the firm's attorney biographies. Across Winston & Strawn's social media, the attention to detail continues with information-rich channels that support the firm's content strategy.**

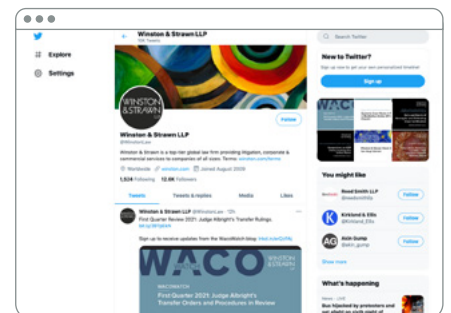
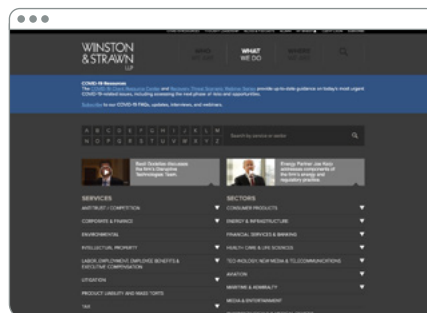
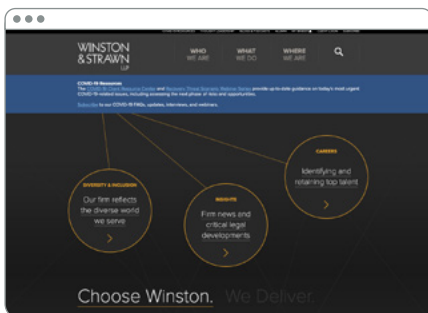
## KEY FEATURES

### Engagement:

- ▶ Efficient website navigation and well thought through information architecture
- ▶ Fast search functionality that delivers useful results
- ▶ Strong LinkedIn presence that is rich in up-to-date content
- ▶ High SEO score.

### Evidence:

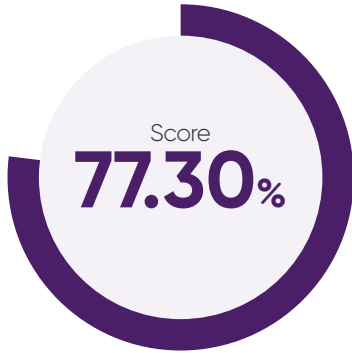
- ▶ Distinctive and confident brand presence across the firm's digital footprint
- ▶ Well-curated attorney biographies that deliver the right amount of content
- ▶ Design is used to enhance the consumption of content
- ▶ Effective use of blogs, podcasts and video to aid storytelling across the website and social media channels.



Images © Winston & Strawn

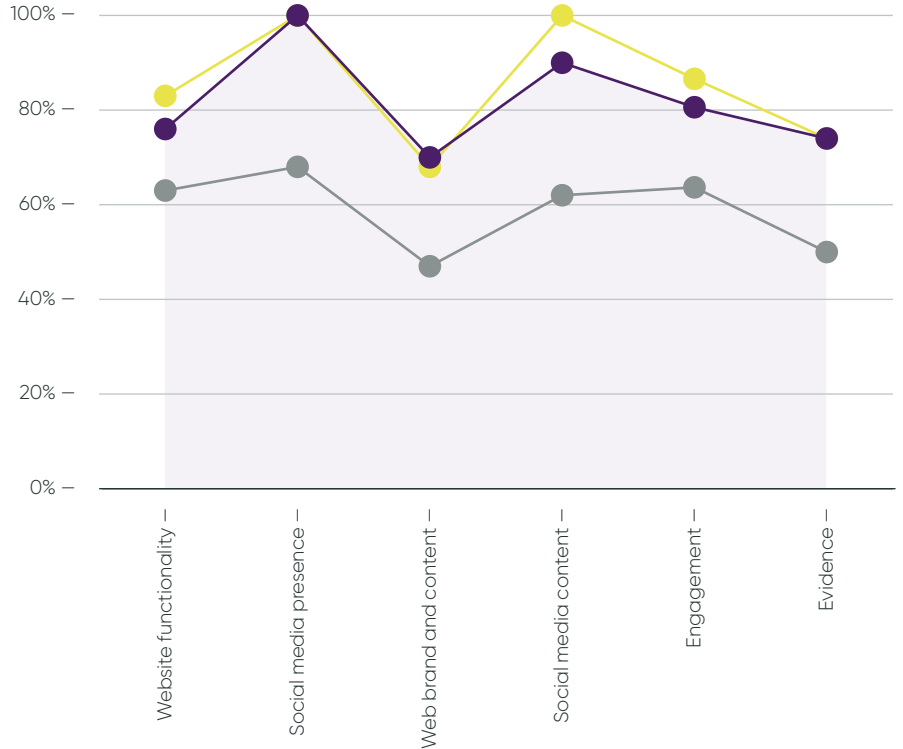
# 3 White & Case

whitecase.com



- White & Case
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



White & Case is our 'champion of online tools' and is using technology to deliver smart thought leadership that drives repeat visits to their website and supports their sector specialisms. The online experience is easy to navigate and the firm is clear from the very outset about who they are and the value they bring to their clients. There's also a wide range of active social media channels each using different content, demonstrating that White & Case understands their target audiences.

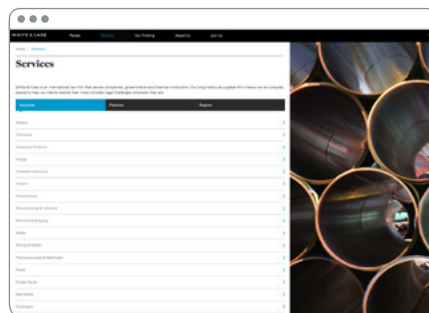
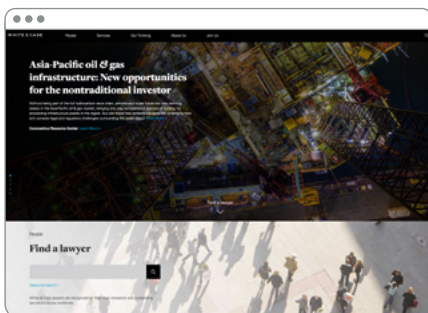
## KEY FEATURES

### Engagement:

- ▶ Market-leading use of online tools to deliver insight and sector expertise
- ▶ Clear and easy-to-use navigation
- ▶ High website accessibility and SEO scores
- ▶ Considered use of social media channels.

### Evidence:

- ▶ Taking a data-driven approach to thought leadership that stands out
- ▶ Clear brand positioning up front on the firm's landing page
- ▶ Six client principles demonstrate a strong service culture
- ▶ Beautifully curated Instagram channel.



Images © White & Case

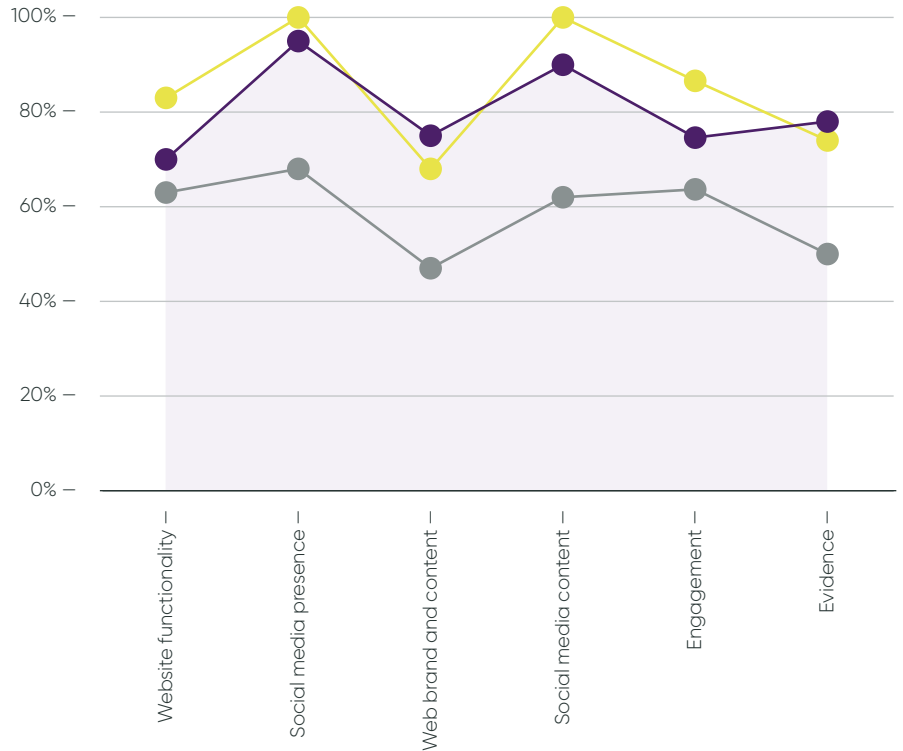
# 4 Seyfarth Shaw

seyfarth.com



- Seyfarth Shaw
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



Last year's leader scores strongly again, serving up a high quality and distinctive digital presence across its website and social media presence. The user interface design stands out in the sector and Seyfarth is not afraid to use white space to create a confident look and feel. The attorney bios are particularly impressive – less is certainly more. Across the firm's social media channels content is professionally presented delivering a consistent brand experience.

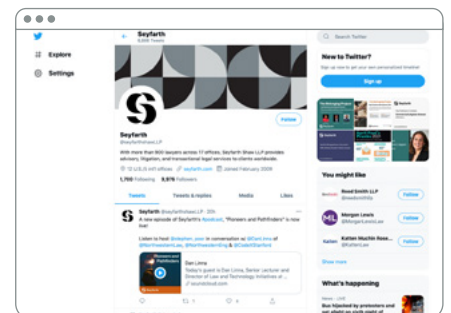
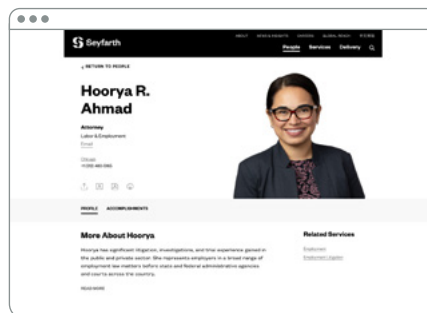
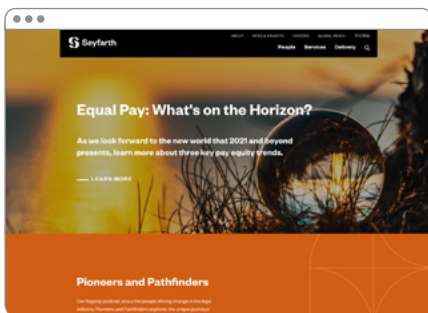
## KEY FEATURES

### Engagement

- ▶ Strong user experience and information architecture
- ▶ High quality search functionality that serves up pre-filtered and relevant content
- ▶ Very high SEO score – evidence that the site is well coded and maintained
- ▶ One of our social media leaders.

### Evidence

- ▶ A highly distinctive digital brand in place across all channels
- ▶ Brand values show evidence of the firm's culture and client-first ethos
- ▶ Purposeful use of podcasts to support the firm's business strategy
- ▶ Content hubs demonstrate a clear understanding of client issues.



Images © Seyfarth Shaw

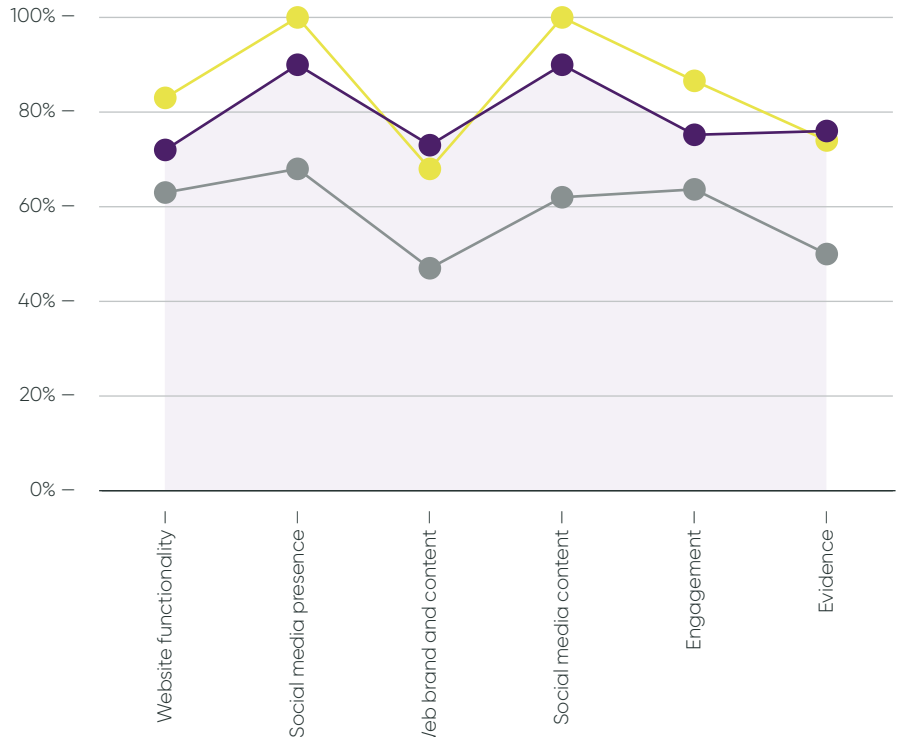
# 5 Pinsent Masons

pinsentmasons.com



- Pinsent Masons
- Sector leader
- Sector average

Classification:  
▶ Determined



We love the publisher-style approach taken to Pinsent Masons' website. For example, article headlines are short and descriptive making the user want to click and find out more. Design is used to assist content, which is such a rarity across the legal sector and making the website such a different experience to the norm. The iconic persistent navigation is simple, clear and effective. Finally the firm employs a good range of social media channels matched by equally impressive content.

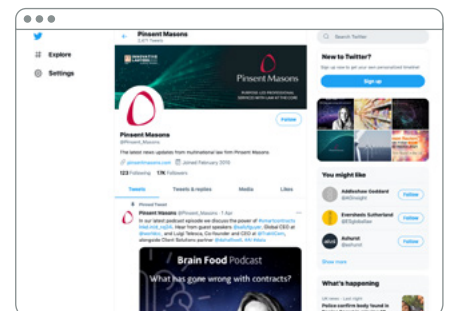
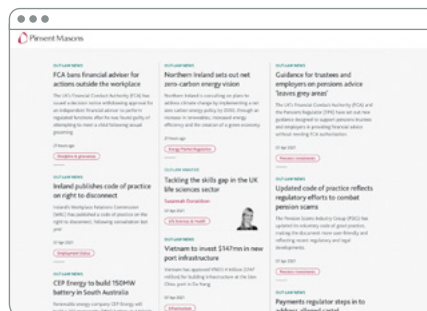
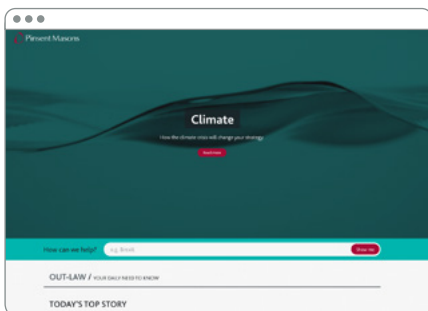
## KEY FEATURES

### Engagement

- ▶ Stand out search functionality that delivers pictorial and curated results
- ▶ Imitative user experience that encourages visitors to read on
- ▶ Clever and thoughtful use of personalization
- ▶ Strong social media footprint.

### Evidence

- ▶ A firm that is taking sustainability content seriously
- ▶ The magazine approach to delivering content stands out in the sector
- ▶ The mix of content across the firm's website provides a healthy change of pace
- ▶ Podcasts play an important part of the firm's content strategy.



Images © Pinsent Masons

6

**Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner**

bclplaw.com



Classification:  
 ▶ Determined

**Key features**

- ▶ Brand purpose up front on the home page
- ▶ Concise and clear navigation
- ▶ High website accessibility score
- ▶ Purposeful use of social media

7

**Goodwin**

goodwinlaw.com



Classification:  
 ▶ Determined

**Key features**

- ▶ Sector-leading case studies
- ▶ Client-first approach to content
- ▶ Design used to aid content consumption
- ▶ Multi-language website experience

8

**Herbert Smith Freehills**

herbertsmithfreehills.com



Classification:  
 ▶ Energetic

**Key features**

- ▶ Sector-leading user experience
- ▶ Impactful use of the firm's visual brand
- ▶ Thoughtful use of content hubs
- ▶ Clear vision and values evident

9

**McDermott**

mwe.com



Classification:  
 ▶ Focused

**Key features**

- ▶ Innovative user interface
- ▶ Bold digital presence with well curated images
- ▶ High SEO score
- ▶ Strong social media content

10

**Freshfields**

freshfields.com



Classification:  
 ▶ Focused

**Key features**

- ▶ Geolocation functionality
- ▶ Client case studies
- ▶ Content enhanced by design
- ▶ Broad use of social media channels

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

**Please get in touch to arrange a meeting.**



# OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS RIGHT NOW



As a legal marketer, you may never have a better opportunity to rebrand, develop a new website or improve your content creation. The events of the past 12+ months have demonstrated that all the elements of your brand and digital intelligence need to be at their very best. Your audience remains remote – and maybe commercially distant – but they are becoming increasingly interested in your firm: what you stand for, what you're famous for and why you should matter to them.

When you think about the budgets left untapped for canceled in-person events and grounded travel plans, shouldn't these funds be invested in creating difference?

**The time is now.**



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



### 1. HUMANITY

The goal of any law firm should be to surface the organisation's intellectual capital, expertise and culture. People, not shiny offices, are the single most important manifestation of what a law firm does and relationships are now being created in a completely different environment. So, it's time to up your game online and create a more human experience.

Start with your firm's people landing page. This should not just be search functionality, as that approach just screams 'silo' and you are missing a huge opportunity to share culture-based content... diversity and inclusion, pro bono projects, gender pay policies and sustainability, to name just a few. Mix up the content on your attorney biographies, keep them short and well-curated, and consider succinct video biographies.

Finally, isn't it time to consider writing the biographies in the first-person? Life has changed and the slightly stuffy corporate third-person approach is probably past its sell-by date.



### 2. AUTHENTICITY

2020 was arguably the year of authenticity as the planet shifted on its axis and we all had to change and adapt. We've seen the interior of all our colleagues and clients' homes, met their children and pets and politely told everyone that they are on mute at some point.

Our point is that it's now time for law firms to align their brands and digital presence with the new world and there's a great opportunity to create something that's genuine and real without being contrived. Start with your firm's brand values and check whether they are still valid and relevant. If not, refine and develop them and let them become the foundation for your new brand.

When it comes to content, it's time to get real. For example, ESG content (environmental, social and governance) is prevalent in so many other corporate sectors and has a relatively low presence in the legal industry (55%). Through our research we know that your clients are looking for this content and potentially will not do business with you if you don't demonstrate how this influences your business strategy, process and culture. The same goes for diversity and inclusion and gender-related content.



### 3. EVIDENCE

In a sector obsessed with evidence, there's a surprising lack of evidence on the majority of law firm websites. The endless client alerts are fine, but they give your firm little or no stand out from your competitors.

Let's start with case studies. In any other sector, demonstrating what you've done for other clients is a given. However, in the legal sector only 17% of firms have case studies. And we know you have them, hidden away in pitches and proposals. So work with the partnership and your business development teams to develop a series of client stories that can be published externally. These can be redacted or made generic for confidentiality reasons, but still the story can shine through – the challenge, the solution and most importantly, the result.

This content, along with the thought leadership, whether they are opinion pieces, newsletters, reports, blogs, podcast or videos, then becomes a crucial part of an evidence-based content strategy. In short, content that helps define why your law firm is better than the next.



### 4. PURPOSE

Brand purpose are two words that have floated around for years with few people really understanding what they mean. Well, 2020 changed all that and brands that demonstrated actionable brand purpose came to the fore – the likes of Amazon, Zoom and numerous other tech-based platforms.

These firms are all very clear what they stand for and have clarity in delivering their brand positioning, values and culture to their target audiences. Why should a law firm be any different? As we have said before, your brand continues to be your firm's North Star, especially in turbulent and changeable times.

Continue to review and assess your firm's brand and don't be afraid to ask it tough questions or, even better, ask your clients and colleagues what they think. Brands no longer stand still or stand in isolation. They are living and breathing organisms, ones that flex and change with their target audiences' needs and critically, distinguish your firm from the others. Don't be afraid to stand out and develop a brand with teeth. After all if you don't, someone else will.

# 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.



# RAISING

# THE BAR

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