



CONTENT PILOT.

AMLAW 100 WEB SITES 2006

AN ANALYSIS OF TEN FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

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WHITE PAPER

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Research commissioned by Content Pilot LLC

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2005 White Paper set precedent by identifying Ten Foundational Best Practices for law firm Web sites. It was the first full-scale report on how the legal industry was faring with its online marketing efforts, based on an objective analysis of the AmLaw 100 Web sites. The 2006 White Paper reports on what is being done well by the nation’s largest firms and what can be done better. Building on the benchmarks that were established in the 2005 analysis, the 2006 White Paper is a must-read for anyone wishing to learn how to maximize the usability and memorability of a law firm Web site.

2006

The AmLaw 100 firms are at the top of the legal industry. Are their Web sites reflective of the excellence they’ve achieved in other areas?

OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

We have several objectives in commissioning this Web site analysis each year: **1)** give senior marketers and lawyers objective data to help them justify planning time, expense and “against the grain” recommendations; **2)** give senior marketers an unemotional, foundational basis for analyzing their current sites; **3)** provide specifics to marketers so they can hold their design/development teams accountable; and **4)** give marketers a framework for measurable improvement in searchability, content writing, creating an intuitive visitor experience, and satisfying what clients/prospects want in law firm sites.

WHY SHOULD LAW FIRMS CARE ABOUT THIS ANALYSIS?

Beyond enhancement of specific features and functionality, law firms now have **1)** access to useful data on how to enrich the Web site experience for their visitors, and **2)** motivation to view their Web sites more strategically and take their Web site investments more seriously.

If law firms follow the guidelines within the Ten Foundational Best Practices, visitors to their Web sites will:

- Quickly find the information they want and need
- Easily see the differences in strategy, values, scope, reach and strength from one firm to the next
- Return to find out more

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TO PURCHASE:

Copies of the 2006 White Paper will be available for immediate download in PDF Sept. 1, 2006 at deborahmcmurray.com/amlaw100.

1. The 2006 AmLaw 100 Ten Foundational Best Practices White Paper: **U.S. \$1,200**

2. Individual Web site reports: **U.S. \$595 each**

3. A Ten Foundational Best Practices Review of your Web site: **U.S. \$3,500**

By understanding the components of the Ten Foundational Best Practices, law firms will:

- Increase visitor traffic to and within their sites
- Gain more visibility among their target audiences
- Communicate more effectively to their target audiences
- Improve their potential return on this often costly investment
- Have a rational basis for decision-making relative to further Web site development and investment

WHY THE AMLAW 100?

Law firms within the AmLaw 100 are among the top firms in the world. They have reputations that are built on decades of important client representation and advocacy. The firms at the top of the list are the closest the legal industry has to “brand name” firms.

All of these firms set the standard in the legal industry against which others are judged and evaluated. In 2005, we wanted to determine if the Web site presence of these firms was reflective of the excellence they achieve in other areas. In 2006, we are asking the same questions—but also comparing the results to how they fared in 2005.

PRESENTED IN THE 2006 WHITE PAPER ARE:

- Ten Foundational Best Practices for law firm Web sites, along with descriptions of the attributes that define each one
- Charts that clearly show the AmLaw 100 group results, including the percentage of firms that scored “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” “poor” and “unacceptable” for each of the Ten Foundational Best Practices
- The AmLaw 100 firms that ranked the highest and/or set the standards for each of the Ten Foundational Best Practices
- Additional observations, trends and surprises revealed during the course of the 2006 analysis
- Suggestions for those firms wanting to move to the next level of online effectiveness

The findings present a learning opportunity for all law firms, global or local. Whether you bring the perspective of a practicing attorney, a marketer, an executive director or COO, a business development professional or a technologist, this analysis will stimulate you to analyze your own Web site with a more critical eye. It will prompt you, with data and ideas, to discover how to effectively meet expectations and respond to the needs of all visitors to your site—clients, prospects, law students, laterals, the media and others.

ABOUT THIS ANALYSIS

The Ten Foundational Best Practices were derived from industry standards for Web sites in general, and then applied to law firms in particular.

Following a methodology that measures a stream of objective and observable data, the findings culminate in a wealth of useful information.

The analysis was conducted May 2006.

THE 2006 TEN FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICES ARE:

1 COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE

How well are firms communicating strategy, strengths and geographic reach?

2 GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

This isn't about branding or the attractiveness of the design—that's too subjective. This is about consistency, simplicity of communication, minimal distractions, information hierarchy, browser compatibility and so on.

3 NAVIGATION

Are the sites easy to navigate on the home page and inside? Is the navigation protocol consistent from section to section? Are there several ways to get around the sites? Is the information one to two clicks from anywhere in the site?

4 NARRATIVE CONTENT

This section takes a broad look at all narrative content on the site. Is the language visitor- and client-focused? Is the content organized intuitively? What about spelling and grammar?

5 LAWYER BIOGRAPHIES

How well do the bios communicate the lawyers' strengths? Are they consistent one to another and are they current? Can a visitor get more information easily? Are the photos current?

6 PRACTICE/INDUSTRY DESCRIPTIONS

Practice and industry descriptions should answer the questions: a) What have you done, b) for whom have you done it, and c) what can you do for me? Do they include specifics and case studies?

7 CONTACT INFORMATION

Visitors should be able to access complete contact information for every firm office in one click from the home page, and have contact information for key individuals in each office.

8 SITE SEARCH

How easy is it to search the site? How comprehensive are a) the lawyer search, b) articles/publications searches and c) the advanced search?

9 SITE OPTIMIZATION FOR ONLINE SEARCH

Have the firms taken the basic steps necessary to maximize their chances of being found by the most popular search engines? Are the site maps current? How do the sites fare in terms of online awareness?

10 SITE "HYGIENE"

Firms may do well with strategy or design, but if links are broken, the site is down or it isn't easy to access using up-and-comer browsers, visitors will get annoyed and not return. In Web site design and maintenance, the little details are as important as the big picture issues.

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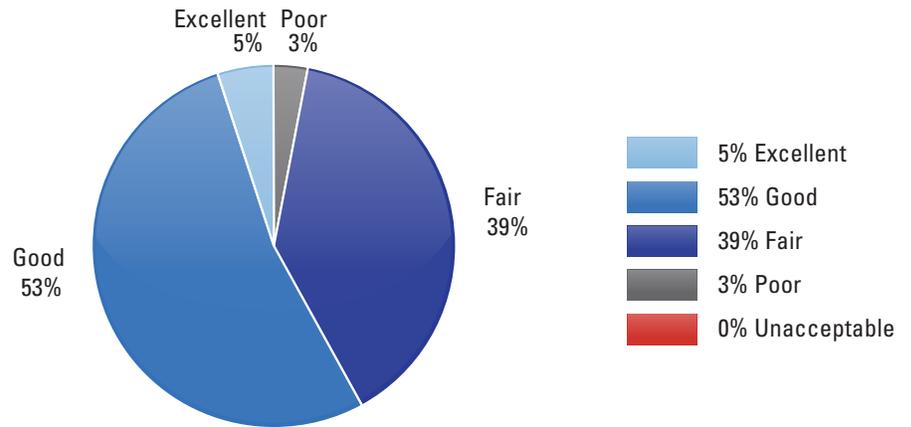
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RESULTS. The 2006 big picture result is surprising. Of the 100 top law firms in America—and arguably in the world—42% of the Web sites ranked “fair” or below. And, only 5% of the firms are doing enough of the right things to merit a ranking of “excellent.” In 2005, 52% of the sites ranked “fair” or below. This deviation from 2005 to 2006 may be due to several factors, including the launch of new sites by several firms since the 2005 research was conducted.

2006 AmLaw 100 Total Firm Rankings



AMLAW 100 WEB SITE SNAP SHOT

The scoring breakdown for each best practice and each attribute within a best practice is as follows:

86 — 100	EXCELLENT
71 — 85	GOOD
51 — 70	FAIR
26 — 50	POOR
0 — 25	UNACCEPTABLE

It’s likely that some of the AmLaw 100 are in the middle of Web site redesigns, or will budget for one in 2007. Because an overhaul of this critical communication tool is one of the most expensive budget items for a law firm, now is the time to focus on the Ten Foundational Best Practices and ensure that firms maximize their investment.



INTRODUCTION

Organizations have multiple goals for their Web sites. Depending on the type of company or business, the goals include sales generation and transactions, dissemination of information about products and services, recruiting of talent, visitor education, and a host of other subsidiary objectives. Businesses' primary goals drive the choices they make with regard to design, navigation, usability and communication.

For a business to business law firm, the over-arching goal should be to simply and directly communicate what you do and how you do it. Plan and design your Web site so it informs, proves any claims you make about your experience and expertise, is easy to use and gives a snapshot of what it's like to do business with your firm. That sounds easy—but the 2006 AmLaw 100 Web sites research results will show that there is much room for improvement.

Law firm leaders generally don't spend enough time thinking about their Web sites. This is a mistake. Web sites are very often the source of the first impression a law firm conveys. Web sites—good, compelling Web sites—are expensive to properly plan, design and develop. It is typically one of the top marketing expenditures in any given year. They are time-consuming on the front end, but shouldn't bog down once the planning is done.

Law firm leaders don't spend enough time thinking about their Web sites. Many partners have never visited their firm Web site, let alone the sites of their top competitors.

■ THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

There are several objectives we hope to achieve in conducting this research:

- 1. Give senior marketers, lawyers and Web site committees objective data to help them:**
 - a. Justify the expense of this critical communications initiative—both the hard cost and the soft cost
 - b. Make fact-driven, not emotion-driven, choices about design, content, features and functionality
 - c. Justify the planning time. Great Web sites require a lot of up-front planning, both strategic and tactical, to keep the project focused and within budget
 - d. Justify “against the grain” recommendations. The Chief Marketing Officer or Marketing Director's role is to say “yes” only to features and functionality that make sense for the firm. This research will provide data to support the marketers' decision to say both “yes” and “no”



For smaller firms that compete with the AmLaw 100 firms, use the analysis of their sites to determine what you can do to more effectively compete online. The Internet is a great equalizer, and superior firms of any size can compete in this medium at the highest level.

2. Give senior marketers an unemotional, foundational basis for analyzing their current Web sites.

A Web site is an emotional beast, often because the current iteration of the site was political during development, had a shifting and creeping scope that resulted in a sky-rocketing budget and made no one happy, but everyone defends the effort, decisions and expense. Or, they point fingers at the decision-making culprits.

Let that go. It doesn't serve you or your firm going forward. Don't point fingers, or be overly-or under-critical. **Simply be factual.** Approach your current site with fresh objectivity.

3. Give senior marketers a roadmap for improving their sites in a redesign.

The individual law firm reports are a report card for the AmLaw 100 firms. They are graded on the broad Web industry best practices, as well as legal industry best practices.

Every site in the AmLaw 100 population needs improvement. Use the data as your roadmap for upgrading and enhancing your site.

For mid-sized to large firms competing with the AmLaw 100, review the individual reports of your top competitors in your key markets. See what they are doing well, and not well, and improve your Web site so that you can strike a measurable advantage in this medium.

4. Provide specifics to all marketers so they can hold their design/development teams accountable for making smart choices and recommendations.

Some of the researchers' biggest complaints related to poor design. Many design or development firms aren't focused on the building blocks of what makes a good or great law firm Web site. This data can help you hold their feet to the fire.

5. Give marketers a framework for *measurable* improvement in searchability, content creation, creating an intuitive visitor experience, satisfying what clients/prospects want in law firm sites.

All marketers are seeking ways to measure return on investment (ROI). If an AmLaw 100 firm received a 49 on its Navigation, the marketers for that firm know exactly what to do during the next Web site redesign to improve the score to 100 in subsequent analyses.

And the real bonus of improving your score? Your visitors will be much happier with your site—and they'll return. And that is also measurable.

6. Suggest ways to improve how your firm “gets found” via Google®, and recommend other ways to optimize your Web site and improve its online awareness.

“Getting found” is something of great interest to partners in a law firm. Corporate counsel readily admit to using Google to hunt for lawyers and firms—often before they visit martindale.com. They are curious as to what they’ll find out about your firm and your individual lawyers.

A large majority of the AmLaw 100 aren’t paying attention to the basics of online awareness for their law firms and lawyers. Much more about this later—under Foundational Best Practice 9—*Site Optimization for Online Search*.

BEST PRACTICES — **WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR A LAW FIRM WEB SITE?**

Law firms must be more attentive to broad Internet and Web site best practices, because those standards are the ones by which your site is being measured.

Law firms have had a presence on the Internet for 10+ years, and for the first decade, there weren’t any standards set—for design (“look and feel”), functionality or technology. But the law firm marketing, business development and management practices have come so far, especially since 2000, it was finally time for law firms to catch up to visitor expectations of this important medium. It was time to give firms a roadmap for future Web site development, and frankly, build accountability into Web site design and development. It was time for best practices to emerge.

Law firms must continue to invest in this medium, as the Internet continues to become increasingly important in the lives of business executives, owners and corporate counsel. But law firms must also be more attentive to broad Internet and Web site best practices, because those standards are the ones by which your site is being measured. A general counsel has the same ease-of-use and information delivery expectations for your site as she does for amazon.com or aa.com. If you aren’t quickly and easily providing what she needs, she’ll leave and not return. If she’s a current client, there goes your leverage with her, and perhaps your opportunity to cross-sell other services.

From a recruiting standpoint, your site must be easy to search, browse and navigate. It must be search engine friendly, and you must rapidly convey what you offer new hires—laterals, law students and other key personnel. If it’s not easy to communicate with you online, a potential hire may wonder how easy communication will be after they’ve decided to join you.

■ TEN FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICES—WHAT ARE THEY?

The broad list noted above was adapted and customized to reflect the world of law and the special needs of both buyers of legal services and law firms. The resulting list of legal industry Ten Foundational Best Practices is:

1. COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE
2. GRAPHICS AND DESIGN
3. NAVIGATION
4. NARRATIVE CONTENT
5. LAWYER BIOGRAPHIES
6. PRACTICE / INDUSTRY DESCRIPTIONS
7. CONTACT INFORMATION
8. SITE SEARCH
9. SITE OPTIMIZATION FOR ONLINE SEARCH
10. SITE “HYGIENE”

Web site visitors want to learn about a firm to make informed decisions about their choice of legal counsel. Does your firm deserve to be on their “short list” of preferred counsel? At a minimum, these business executives and corporate counsel want quick and easy access to certain types of information. And they want this information delivered using the prevailing standards of technological proficiency and usability.

So—the question law firm leaders and marketing department personnel should ask is: how do we determine if the time and money invested in our Web site are meeting visitors’ needs and paying off for the firm, its current and future employees, and clientele?

Focusing on doing well on all the attributes within the Ten Foundational Best Practices is the best way to start.

■ WHY ANALYZE THE AMLAW 100?

The firms on the *American Lawyer’s* AmLaw 100 list are the nation’s largest law firms based on 2005 gross revenues. By anyone’s definition, they are also among the top firms in the world. In almost all cases, the Web sites of these firms are their most accessible and visible communications tool. It’s not surprising that we would want to know if the Web sites of these top firms are operating at their highest potential—and if not, determine what they could do better.

For the thousands of non-AmLaw 100 law firms around the globe, understanding the current stage of development for the AmLaw 100 firms will provide useful data, points of learning and benchmarks. The Ten Foundational Best Practices and the expectations visitors have for your Web site are the same regardless of firm size, profitability, practice mix or geography—only the scale might be different.

OUR METHODOLOGY

With the Ten Foundational Best Practices identified, we needed to determine a methodology that would enable us to analyze how well each AmLaw 100 site did in applying them. The objective is to arrive at a cumulative score that would reflect the strengths or weaknesses of each firm's Web site.

Three to five objective and observable attributes were identified for each of the 2006 Ten Foundational Best Practices. As mentioned earlier, these attributes are slightly different than those for 2005. Each attribute received a score ranging from 0 to 100 to indicate how well or poorly the attribute was reflected in the Web site. Delineation of scores was based on the following scale:

86 — 100	EXCELLENT
71 — 85	GOOD
51 — 70	FAIR
26 — 50	POOR
0 — 25	UNACCEPTABLE

The individual AmLaw 100 reports are available for immediate download at deborahmcmurray.com/amlaw100

We developed an online research tool for collecting and housing the data from the analysis, then commissioned six researchers to analyze either the entire or various aspects of the Web sites, depending on their areas of expertise. Scores for each attribute, by firm, were averaged to produce a score for each of the Ten Foundational Best Practices. The resulting Ten Foundational Best Practice scores were averaged to produce a single score for each AmLaw 100 Web site.

Each law firm report includes the attribute and Ten Foundational Best Practice scores as defined above, the total score, and aggregated commentary by the various researchers. The individual law firm reports are sold separately, and available for immediate download at deborahmcmurray.com/amlaw100.

Averaging all the AmLaw 100 attribute grades across best practice lines produced total percentages that benchmarked how well these firms fared as a group for each best practice. The results are visually represented in the form of pie charts later in this White Paper. Examples of Web sites that ranked highly are also presented for each Foundational Best Practice.

WITH THANKS

This project is a huge undertaking, start to finish. It requires a level of technology, legal industry, usability, design and content sophistication that is difficult to find. I am grateful to my colleagues, friends, researchers and Content Pilot team for their advice, support, professional rigor, analysis and for assistance in synthesizing the results.

This is the second year for this Ten Foundational Best Practices analysis and White Paper. We hope that it makes your Web site planning more strategic, directed and worthwhile, and that it helps you focus on the most important features and functionality. Please email me with your reactions, thoughts and questions—mcmurray@contentpilot.net. Also, please contact me if you want to be on the list for future White Papers and reports.



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THE ANALYSIS

THE KEY TO THE FINDINGS FOR EACH FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

For each Foundational Best Practice you will find:

- A list of the attributes that constitute the Foundational Best Practice
- A detailed description of what this really means
- A pie chart indicating the results in percentages for the entire AmLaw 100 population
- Results based on the following range of scores:

86 — 100	EXCELLENT
71 — 85	GOOD
51 — 70	FAIR
26 — 50	POOR
0 — 25	UNACCEPTABLE

- Examples of firms that have done an exemplary job of applying that Foundational Best Practice, plus commentary and screen shots of the examples
- A list of the firms that received the highest scores for each best practice.
- How the AmLaw 100 firms break down by quartile (Appendix A).

1 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE

- Logo, firm name and strategy copy stand out
- Practice and industry focus are apparent
- Geographic reach is apparent (one office or 40 offices, etc.)
- Site features or links to foreign language translations

This continues to be about the first impression your site makes. At a glance, what does your site say about you? What can a visitor learn about your firm? In other words, how hard is your home page working for you in the first 30 seconds of a visit?

When reviewing and planning the information hierarchy of your home page, you should ask, “*What is the most important bit of information on this site? What is the next most important? Third most important? What is the least important?*” Then use the real estate of this page so it adheres to this hierarchy.

The plight of the “Three Bears” is also the quandary of some law firms when attaching their logos to their Web sites. Many are too large, dozens are too small—and only a few size them so they are “just right.” Your logo is designed to aid the memorability of your firm name, and it should visually anchor your site. In addition, it should have the very practical function of being a link back to your home page from anywhere in the site. (This is addressed later under Foundational Best Practice 3—*Navigation*.)

“Strategy copy” is simply a compelling and short description of your firm, one that reflects your positioning strategy. It carries your branding message, distinguishes your firm and succinctly offers differentiating benefits or features. It is both your “welcome mat” and your chance to invite visitors to spend time with your site. Don’t be afraid to show personality here. Your firm is unique and special, so let that come through.

Show some personality on your home page—in how the site is designed and what you say. Too many of the top firms come across as undifferentiated and sterile.

Your practice and industry focus should be apparent to visitors. After all, aren’t your experience, problem-solving skill and talent what you are selling? There are several industry-accepted ways to show your technical depth so that visitors can get a snapshot of what’s inside. Cascading navigation from the practices and industries global navigation is one way—spotlighting certain practice/industry groups or teams on the home page is another.

Geographic reach and foreign languages. I think it’s safe to say that all the AmLaw 100 firms represent clients around the world. They brag about their global reach in their various descriptions. Yet many firms who have global offices bury them in general parts of the site, such as “About the Firm.” Still more do not translate the Web site into the native languages of some of their International offices. We know it’s very expensive to translate the entire site, but there are ways to offer translations more cost-effectively. It just requires some extra homework and a robust content management system and development team.

In a March 20, 2006 *Jakob Nielsen’s Alertbox* online newsletter, Nielsen writes about “Growing a Business Website: Fix the Basics First.” He highlights the top three design priorities (which are closer to our “*Communicating our Message*” than it is to “*Graphics and Design*.”) They are:

- **“Communicating clearly so that users understand you.** Users allocate minimal time to initial Web site visits, so you must quickly convince them that the site’s worthwhile.”

Law firm Web sites aren’t destination sites, so assume that with one’s first visit to your site, they are also visiting two to four others, which might be on a short list of choices. They will quickly get a first impression of your site and move on.

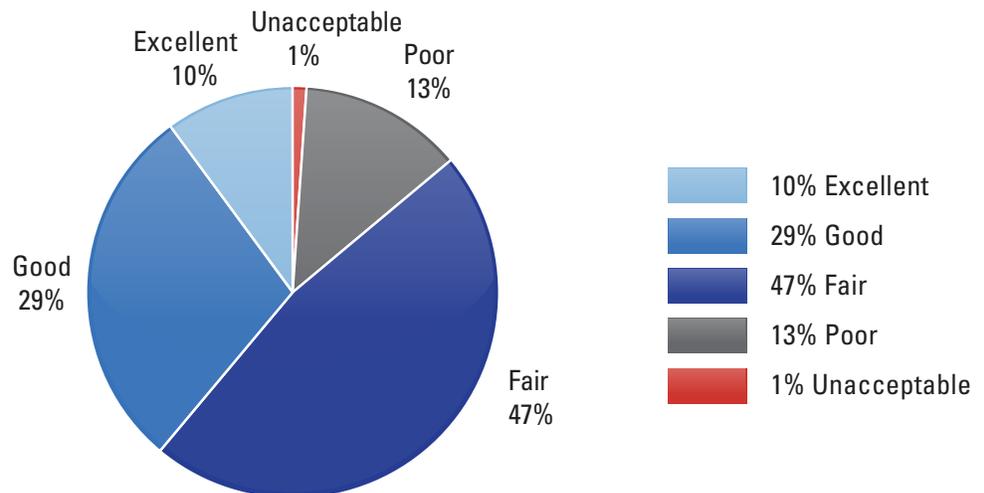
- **“Providing information users want.** Users must be able to easily determine whether your services meet their needs and why they should do business with you.”
- **“Offering simple, consistent page design, clear navigation, and an information architecture that puts things where users expect to find them.”**

If law firms focused on these three things, plus the attributes in this Foundational Best Practice, they will surely enhance the credibility of their Web sites. And, as Nielsen concludes, “...ease a user’s way through the site and thus do far more for the site’s business value than a JavaScript trick.”

The results show that there is room for a lot of improvement in this important area. Too many AmLaw 100 firms aren’t maximizing their valuable home page real estate. Focus on communicating more effectively the *minute* your home page loads.

NOTE: Many firms scored highly in the first three attributes, but if they didn’t have foreign language translations, this decreased the total score. This is a difference from the 2005 research, where we didn’t include the foreign translations as an attribute.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 1 *Communicating Your Message*



example - No. 1

“Communicating Your Message”

Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
cgsh.com



Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP

Home Page

What’s especially notable about this Web site is that virtually every page on the site has a “click here for language” option that allows a visitor to view the page in any of the eleven options. International visitors can view pages in their native language or English, or if multi-lingual, switch from language to language—all while staying on the same page.

One-click takes you to firm information and practices, but no strategy copy is visible from the home page, and they don’t break out industries. We’d like to see a high-impact summary paragraph about what they do well. Offices appear on the home page, as do eleven language options.

Cleary Gottlieb scored a **91** in Foundational Best Practice 1—*Communicating your Message*.

NOTABLE: Through text and menus, the entire firm of **DLA Piper** is accessible via the home page. The copy under the “Welcome” banner functions as the strategy copy, although it speaks more of features than it does of benefits. Practice groups are listed under services, offices are linked at the bottom. The site is translated into seven languages other than English, with these links ever-present in the top right corner of the screen.

The footer navigation offers “accessibility” for PDAs and hand-held devices, as well as RSS feeds. There is still room for improvement here, with the firm scoring a **91** out of 100. But if geographic reach and depth is a primary focus of this firm (and the Welcome message states that it is), they have done a fine job communicating it.



DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary
dlapiper.com



McGuireWoods LLP
mcguirewoods.com

ALSO NOTABLE: McGuireWoods is one of the law firms who scored well on everything, but didn't have foreign translations, so the overall score wasn't as high. However, there are two notable features on the home page that we want to highlight. The home page includes a handsome photo and notice about "mourning the loss of a favorite partner, Mark L. Gordon." Every law firm faces this sad and unfortunate stage of life, and some handle it well, others ignore it and some border on the maudlin.

McGuireWoods handles it perfectly—acknowledging the sadness of this loss (he was only 49 years old), his value to the firm and leadership of his practice. But they take it one step further, and name the two lawyers who have stepped in to lead the practice going forward. Smart, and respectful.

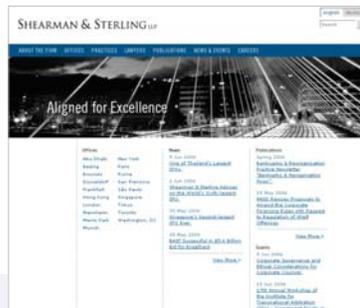
Worth highlighting is the extranet link on the McGuireWoods site, and the demo and narrated movie that walks a visitor through the advantages of this as a client benefit. The movie/demo has navigation, so if a visitor is only interested in the database aspect of this, he can click and hear/watch only that.



McGuireWoods LLP
Extranet Demonstration

Nixon Peabody also features an easily viewable demo with its extranet link.

ALSO NOTABLE: Shearman & Sterling's new Web site received an **89** for this Foundational Best Practice, and Jones Day received an **88**.



Shearman & Sterling LLP
shearman.com



Jones Day LLP
jonesday.com

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 1 “Communicating Your Message”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
94	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hhlaw.com
91	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	cgsh.com
91	DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary	dlapiper.com
90	Fulbright & Jaworski LLP	fulbright.com
90	McDermott, Will & Emery LLP	mwe.com
90	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
89	Heller Ehrman LLP	hewm.com
89	Morrison & Foerster LLP	mofo.com
88	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
86	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP	morganlewis.com
85	Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP	paulhastings.com
85	Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP	smrh.com
81	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
81	Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP	wemed.com
80	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	pillsburylaw.com
80	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
78	Dechert LLP	dechert.com
77	Bingham McCutchen LLP	bingham.com
77	Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP	gibsondunn.com
77	O'Melveny & Myers LLP	omm.com
76	Baker Botts LLP	bakerbotts.com
76	Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	orrick.com
76	Vinson & Elkins LLP	velaw.com
75	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
75	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
75	Duane Morris LLP	duanemorris.com
75	Howrey LLP	howrey.com

2 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

- There is a minimal use of flash, graphics, splash page
- Web site has a consistent look and feel
- Site and page load times are minimal (including using dial-up access)
- Site design adapts to different screen resolutions
- Site is compatible with the most popular browsers (Internet Explorer [IE], Firefox, AOL, Netscape)

This Foundational Best Practice, once again, has nothing to do with branding or how attractive the Web site is. Several firms scored high in this category, even though the researchers didn't care for the design, color palette, font use, etc.

As important as great design is to a branding initiative, and as much as I believe in the value of these programs in a law firm, this best practice is focusing **ONLY** on what could be objectively measured. Whether design is attractive is too subjective to be included in this study. (The individual law firm reports do offer our opinions and commentary, however, even if they aren't recorded numerically.)

We expanded the attributes in this category significantly over 2005. We added the last two bullets—about the design adapting to different screen resolutions and being compatible with browsers other than IE. Browser compatibility is important for several reasons, and designers **MUST** design to accommodate the most popular and up-and-comer browsers. We still include AOL, because this is what many buyers of legal services use at home.

It's surprising how many AmLaw 100 firm sites were designed only to perform well using IE, and how navigation, links, and other elements were unavailable (or worse) using Firefox.

Screen resolution. This continues to be a hot issue for designers, developers, and law firm marketers and IT staff. The burning question is: should you design your site so that it is optimized at a screen resolution of 800x600—or the newer and increasingly popular 1024x768?

We can argue that most business users have their computer monitors set at 1024x768 and above. This doesn't mean that users don't change the resolution to 800x600 (especially the over-45 crowd) or to a much higher resolution of 1280x1024, or even higher.

Simply, the higher the resolution setting of your monitor, the smaller the Web site pages look on your screen. In today's business environment, it is common for us to have several browser windows open at once. We shift from window to window, frequently viewing and scrolling within the various browser frames. It *isn't* common behavior to maximize all these browser windows as we view them—rather, we keep them minimized so we can quickly, and with fewer clicks, scan the multiple pages in front of us.

Many Web site users have their monitors set at 800x600—the number of pages accessed by this browser setting varies from study to study, from 12% to about 20%. The percentage of pages accessed for the 1024x768 setting ranges from 78% and higher.

For this reason, in 2006 we recommend that site designs be resolution-independent—so that the design doesn't specify widths in absolute units (such as pixels) unless a width is that of a fixed-width object (such as a GIF, JPG or PNG image). More and more AmLaw 100 firms are designing their sites so they are resolution-independent, and this is a welcome trend. This means that the Web site user interface will adapt to fill the window of your browser, regardless of your screen settings.

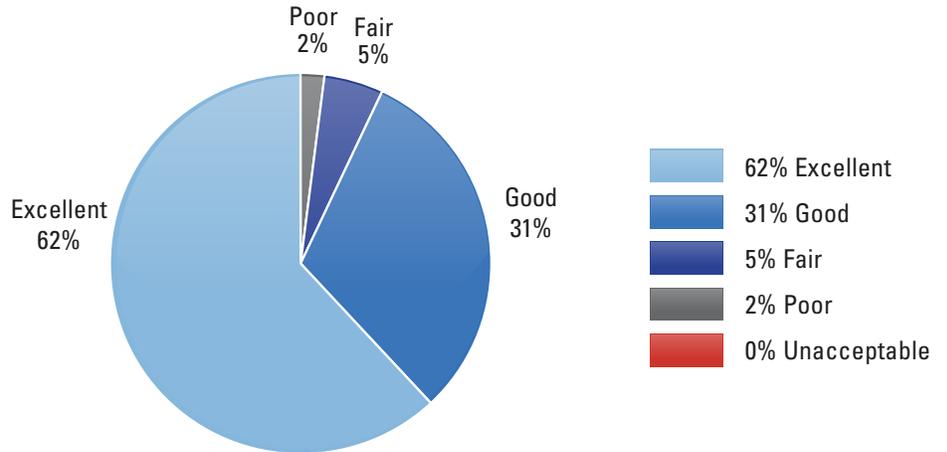
Sixteen of the AmLaw 100 firms redesigned their Web sites since the 2005 analysis. In almost all cases, these firms' total scores were much higher for their new sites.

■ **Web site/page load time.** Some may wonder why Web site page load time is still a best practice attribute in 2006. The reason is simple. As stated earlier, the AmLaw 100 boast global reach, clients and work. Many have foreign offices throughout the world. There are many bustling foreign business centers that still operate with low-speed Internet access. If you aren't designing a site that is easily accessible to your foreign lawyers, future hires and clients, you are missing an important opportunity.

■ **A final note and pet peeve of mine.** Watch the line length of your text. A wall of text is deadly for an online experience, and too many AmLaw 100 firm practice descriptions and biographies are written in long paragraphs with 100+ characters per line (cpl). This is as much a design issue as it is a content issue. While Internet studies about line length and reader comprehension are inconclusive, we do know that business users are scanners. Design/write your text so that it can be easily scanned by your online readers.

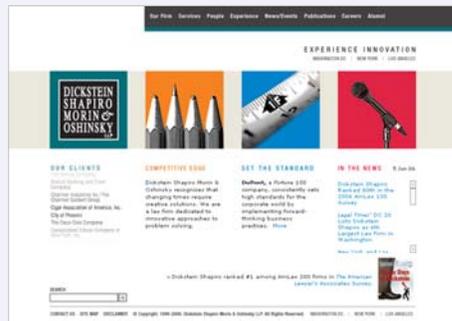
Sixteen of the AmLaw 100 firms redesigned their Web sites since the 2005 late summer analysis. In almost all cases, these firms' total scores were markedly higher for their new sites. In the 2006 study, most AmLaw 100 firms are ranking good or excellent in Foundational Best Practice 2—*Graphics and Design*.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 2 Graphics and Design



example - No. 2 “Graphics and Design”

**Dickstein Shapiro
Morin & Oshinsky LLP**
dicksteinshapiro.com



Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP

Design

Dickstein Shapiro is new to the AmLaw 100 this year, so this was the first year the Web site was evaluated. The firm received a score of **91** for this Foundational Best Practice, with a design that is clean and crisp, but not sterile. The illustrations are colorful and simple. There are minimal flash touches—a home page scrolling client list, animated list of firm values—but they aren’t intrusive, and they don’t slow the site load time. Cascading navigation from the global navigation bar is easy to read. Information on the interior pages is organized well and presented intuitively.

NOTABLE: **Andrews Kurth’s** home page design (with a score of **93**) works hard to communicate the firm’s positioning strategy (Straight Talk is Good Business®) and communicate firm news and third party rankings, such as the Thomson League Table results and Chambers USA ratings. The design accommodates an advanced search feature, which could have added a visual clunkiness to the appearance, but it’s set off in the left hand blue bar, so it doesn’t interfere with the main design. The illustrations randomly rotate along with various “straight talk rules.”



Andrews Kurth LLP
andrewskurth.com



Dorsey & Whitney LLP
dorsey.com

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 2 “Graphics and Design”

ALSO NOTABLE: Dorsey & Whitney has a text-heavy home page design with a “portal” feel to it. Portals are often unattractive and hard to navigate, because the information hierarchy isn’t well-delineated. However, the organization of this home page is well-done.

The navigation structure is clear, and the firm gives visitors multiple pathways into the site. The score was **93**.

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
98	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
97	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP	willkie.com
96	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
95	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
95	Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	orrick.com
94	Cooley Godward LLP	cooley.com
94	Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	drinkerbiddle.com
94	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
94	LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP	llgm.com
94	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP & Affiliates	skadden.com
93	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
93	Baker Botts L.L.P.	bakerbotts.com
93	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
93	Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft LLP	cadwalader.com
93	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
93	Heller Ehrman LLP	hewm.com
93	Howrey LLP	howrey.com
93	Hunton & Williams LLP	hunton.com
93	Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	kattenlaw.com
93	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com
93	Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCoy LLP	milbank.com
93	Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP	paulweiss.com
93	Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP	smrh.com
93	Vinson & Elkins LLP	velaw.com
92	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
92	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP	morganlewis.com
92	O’Melveny & Myers LLP	omm.com
92	Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP	srz.com
92	Venable LLP	venable.com
92	White & Case LLP	whitecase.com
92	Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, PC	wsgr.com

3 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE NAVIGATION

- Global navigation is apparent on the home page
- Global navigation is linear, allowing the users to find what they are seeking in 1-2 clicks
- Global and local navigation are consistent—users are not required to relearn navigation in different areas of the Web site
- It's easy to travel horizontally through the site (go from one practice area to another—go from practice to related lawyers' bios, publications, events and articles)
- Logo on each interior page links back to home page

The three fundamental questions for navigation are:

- Are you creating multiple pathways through your Web site?
- Are you designing the site so visitors know EXACTLY where they are at any given time?
- Are you enabling them to return to the last page visited, without having to resort to the >>back button on the browser?

Superior navigation should be intuitive, and so easy to use that visitors forget that you are guiding them through your Web site. There are three types of visitors: searchers, navigators and browsers. While you want to design your site to accommodate the behaviors of all three, navigation is the first way visitors seek to find what they want.

For the 2006 Foundational Best Practices analysis, we refined the attributes included under navigation. In 2005, we used three clicks as the standard for finding what visitors want (even though we acknowledged that fewer is better). In 2006, we reduced the number of clicks to one or two.

■ **“Horizontal travel.”** This occurs when a visitor is on a practice description page, and there are links to related information—lawyers, events, newsletters, publications and articles. You might also link to pages of representative experience for the practice, although consider including this in the primary description (unless the most salient representations go on for pages).

■ **Consistency.** Navigation consistency from page to page is a fundamental, foundational must-have. Too many firms have too many navigation choices: global, left, right, jump-down links, inside text, bread crumb and footer. This is confusing to visitors—and it typically lacks an obvious hierarchy. It's easy to get lost.

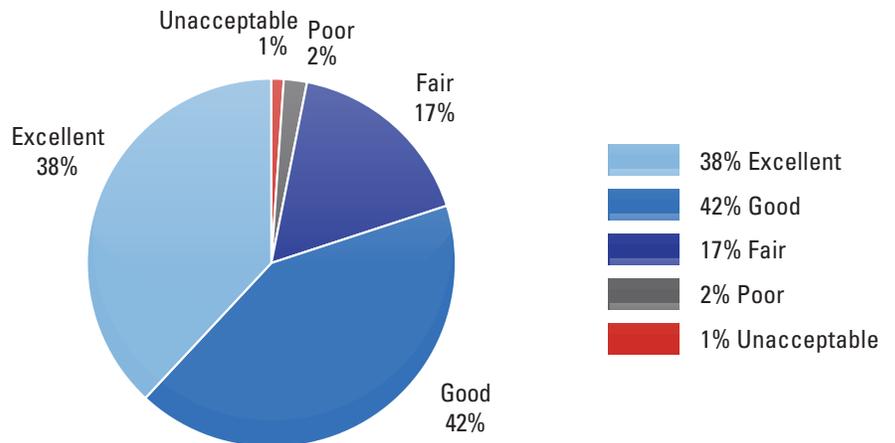
Consistency in navigation is a foundational “must have.” Your visitors will reward you with more frequent and longer visits.

Jakob Nielsen states, “Consistency is one of the most powerful usability principles: when things always behave the same, users don’t have to worry about what will happen. Instead, they *know* what will happen based on earlier experience. Every time you release an apple over Sir Isaac Newton, it will drop on his head. That’s *good*.”

He points out that giving visitors what they expect raises their confidence in their online abilities and their feelings of control about your Web site. The more that navigation and other things about your Web site break their expectations, the more insecure they feel. This may translate into them feeling insecure about you.

Navigation can always be improved. Keep rethinking it to ensure that it is intuitive.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 3 *Navigation*



example – No. 3
“Navigation”

Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris
Glovsky and Popeo PC
mintzlevin.com



Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky
and Popeo PC

Cascading Navigation

Mintz Levin scored **100** for this Foundational Best Practice. There are four layers of navigation on the “masthead” of the home page, which *could* be confusing, but it’s not. The firm has done an excellent job of delineating the global navigation from the horizontal listing of cities/offices and the site tools listing (search, login, press room, site map), and finally the “Mintz Employee Access.”

The global navigation bar has one or two-levels of mouseover cascading menus, which gives a snapshot and links to the inside pages. It also enables the visitor to go deep into areas of interest in one-click from the home page. No visitor time wasted here.

The cascading menu navigation is repeated on the relevant interior pages—so the practice area pages show and link to the other practice areas in the right “local” navigation. We call this the “one-click cross-sell.” The interior pages also include bread crumb navigation and links to related information.

This is an excellent example of how one firm has mastered the concept of “horizontal travel.”

NOTABLE: **Baker Hostetler** received a score of **99** for Navigation, and does an equally fine job of guiding visitors through this deep and rich Web site. The site has a global navigation bar with mouseover cascading menus offering one or two levels of page options. This again enables a visitor to access material deep inside the site in one-click. A list of the ten cities is on the bottom of the screen, and the footer navigation is below that.



Baker & Hostetler LLP
bakerlaw.com

The home page also links to various client “Solutions,” as well as news stories. The interior pages give buyers of legal services exactly what they want—easy access to more detailed and related information, a listing and link to all the other practices (and sub-practices), plus various page tools (email, print, print to PDF).



Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
srz.com

ALSO NOTABLE: Schulte Roth & Zabel scored a **95** on its navigation. The site and content are intuitively organized, and navigation employs cascading menus and offers several layers of detail. Visitors can stay at the top level or easily scan across the page to determine how much deeper they want to go. The visitor never gets lost.

Schulte Roth has “Clients” in the global navigation, with two cascading choices, “Representations” and “Clients A to Z.” Clicking on “Representations” takes a visitor to a listing of clients, which are hyperlinked to a description of the work done for that client, plus links to the associated practices. This is a fine way to gently direct visitors to dig deeper into your site.

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 3 “Navigation”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
100	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com
99	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
98	Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, LLP	wlrk.com
96	Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	kramerlevin.com
96	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP	debevoise.com
96	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
96	Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	orrick.com
95	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
95	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
95	Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP	srz.com
95	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
94	Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.	ssd.com
93	Hunton & Williams LLP	hunton.com
92	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
92	Jenner & Block LLP	jenner.com
92	Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP	smrh.com
91	Finnegan Henderson Farabow Garrett & Dunner LLP	finnegan.com
91	King & Spalding LLP	kslaw.com
91	Venable LLP	venable.com
90	Baker & McKenzie	bakernet.com
90	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com
90	Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, PC	wmgr.com
89	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
89	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
88	Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	kattenlaw.com
88	Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCoy LLP	milbank.com

4 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE NARRATIVE CONTENT

- Visitor/client-focused content has consistent language use and is specific
- All content was checked for spelling and grammar
- Content is organized intuitively, by area of expertise not by how the firm happens to be organized

This Foundational Best Practice was adjusted from the 2005 study. Last year, it was called “*Copy and Content*,” which included the three attributes above, plus some that in 2006 we moved to Foundational Best Practice 6—*Practice and Industry Descriptions*.

For this Foundational Best Practice, researchers broadly evaluated all the content, practice and industry overviews, presentation of publications/articles, etc., careers and recruiting.

Writing for the Web and effectively communicating with your Web site visitors is different than the writing that lawyers do in their professional lives. This statement seems overly obvious, but it’s surprising how the majority of AmLaw 100 firms aren’t presenting information as effectively as they could.

In a nutshell, think of having a discussion with a client about a topic, as opposed to giving a speech about the material. Your delivery in conversation is typically more client-focused than the voice and tone you’d use when presenting to an audience.

Be daring enough to be unique. Your content and copy must *speak* to your visitors. Break out of the brochure-ware mold and tell interesting stories about your firm and the work you do. Keep the stories current and make them memorable. The work you do for specific clients is what distinguishes your law firm and truly differentiates it. The narrative content of your site must be compelling, be rigidly honest and factual, reflect your unique style of doing business and reflect your specific areas of expertise. A tall order!

In addition, in certain states, including Texas and Florida, your content has to comply with the cumbersome state bar advertising rules. State bar committees continue to evaluate and scrutinize claims made by law firms and lawyers in their advertising, print materials, etc. The New Jersey bar recently prohibited lawyers from including third party “Super Lawyer” designations in their biographies and information. However, this prohibition may not hold.

You may be surprised that several AmLaw 100 firms had spelling and grammar errors in their Web sites. Another best practice is to hire outside proofreaders who regularly scour every page of your site. It’s difficult to proof your own work—leave it to professionals who can approach your content with a fresh eye.

If you hire an outside copywriter to assist your firm with Web site content, ensure that you hire someone with substantial legal industry experience. This will make the creation and review process infinitely easier, and will save you time, money and compliance headaches.

Lawyer v. Attorney. Here is a question for you: On your site, do you call your lawyers, “lawyers” or “attorneys?” Or, do you use both terms? The population is split on this issue—many firms use attorneys, and many others use lawyers. Which one is correct or preferred?

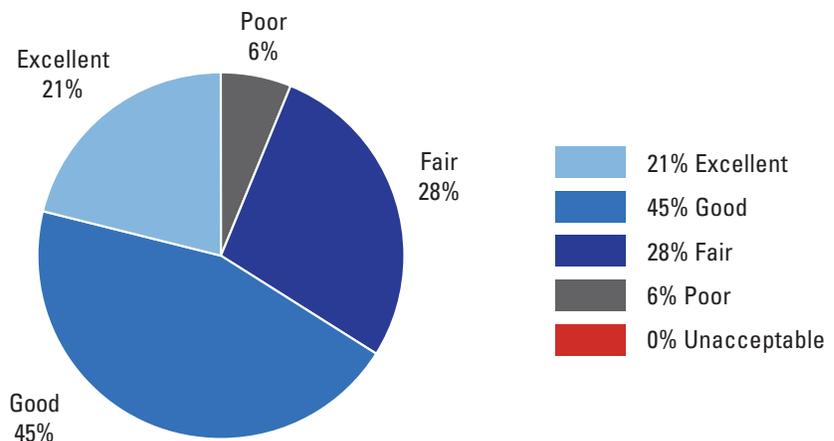
In common usage, the words are interchangeable. Both mean the same thing in the U.S. However, according to legal practitioners abroad, “lawyer” is the preferred and more relevant term in many foreign countries. If your firm is conducting significant business around the globe, and is marketing itself as “international,” we recommend using the term “lawyer.”

A final note about narrative content: Many AmLaw 100 firms publish alerts, articles, publications and newsletters ONLY in PDFs on their Web sites. This is problematic for countless reasons—two being, most are not keyword searchable documents and they aren’t search engine friendly.

Another reason is that they break the browsing flow of your visitors. Standard browser commands don’t work in the PDFs, and layouts are optimized for a sheet of 8.5 x 11 piece of paper, which rarely matches the size of a browser window. This results in lots of scrolling. Plus, a visitor can’t navigate a PDF. Reserve pre-made PDFs ONLY for online manuals and other huge documents. Otherwise, use your content management system and create text pages.

Too many law firms rely on visitor-unfriendly PDFs for articles and news. PDFs are problematic for many reasons—include them if you insist, but also include keyword searchable text versions of your content.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 4 Narrative Content



example – No. 4

“Narrative Content”

**Wilmer Cutler Pickering
Hale and Dorr LLP**
wilmerhale.com



Wilmer Cutler Pickering
Hale and Dorr LLP

Narrative Content

WilmerHale scored a **97** for Foundational Best Practice 4—*Narrative Content*. The copy is clearly written, the content client-focused and detailed. Under “About the Firm,” there is a page of “Guiding Principles.” While several firms include mission statements, the WilmerHale paragraphs about quality, client service, diversity, entrepreneurial spirit, and more, are short enough to invite reading, and give visitors a flavor of this firm. They tell in very certain terms what clients can expect from this firm. These principles also tell laterals and law students what the firm expects from them.

WilmerHale’s industry organization and focus are also exceptional. They added a clever feature that researchers highlighted in their report. For every event in the EVENTS section of the site, they have an “Add to Outlook” link. Smart addition that makes it easier for clients (and lawyers!!) to remember to attend an event.

NOTABLE: While a handful of firms scored higher than **Foley & Lardner** on *Narrative Content*, Foley, with its **92** score was worth highlighting in this White Paper for a couple of reasons. First, the copy is informal and very client-focused. It either speaks about client concerns or addresses the client/visitor directly.

Foley also offers site personalization via the “Briefcase” feature. Briefcase is a link in the footer navigation, plus there is a “Register” link on the left of the home page. After registering, a visitor’s preferences and link to areas of interest appear on the home page.

The firm could have taken registration a step or two further, by including “select lawyer team,” as Thacher Proffitt & Wood, a non-AmLaw 100 firm, has done. Personalizing tpw.com puts the favorite lawyer contact info (email, phone, office link) on the home page in addition to links to current news, articles, practice information and events.



Foley & Lardner LLP
foley.com

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 4 “Narrative Content”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
97	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
97	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
93	Finnegan Henderson Farabow Garrett & Dunner LLP	finnegan.com
93	Fish & Richardson PC	fr.com
93	Nixon Peabody LLP	nixonpeabody.com
93	Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP	srz.com
92	Bingham McCutchen LLP	bingham.com
92	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
92	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
92	Hunton & Williams LLP	hunton.com
90	Bryan Cave LLP	bryancave.com
90	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
90	Perkins Coie LLP	perkinscoie.com
90	Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, PC	wsg.com
88	Howrey LLP	howrey.com
88	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
88	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
88	Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP	weil.com
87	Baker Botts L.L.P.	bakerbotts.com
87	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
87	Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP	paulweiss.com
85	Dechert LLP	dechert.com
85	Duane Morris LLP	duanemorris.com
85	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com
85	Skadden, Arps Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP & Affiliates	skadden.com

5 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE LAWYER BIOGRAPHIES

- Lawyers have a current photo
- Bios have most recent specific experience “above the fold”
- Separate out contact info so it is easy to find
- Bios list and link to areas of practice and industries
- Bios list and link to articles/news/publications
- Bios list foreign languages
- Bios have v-card links and downloadability

We know that lawyers care a great deal about the quality of their biographies. Or do they? As much as they say they care, it’s surprising how few firms have consistently excellent lawyer biographies. Corporate counsel say they use law firm Web sites a lot to look up lawyers—professionals they have short-listed or to whom they have been referred, opposing counsel, others whom they are simply considering as an outside resource. Lawyer biographies are typically the most frequently visited area of a law firm Web site. Your Web site analytics program will prove this. Then why are lawyer bios so shallow and poor?

Photos. Most of us want to look ten years younger and a few pounds thinner. However, having a Web site photo that is clearly from the 1980s, or even the 1990s, doesn’t put your best foot forward. It’s expensive to re-shoot lawyer photos for the huge and geographically diverse firms, however, it is an investment that should pay off over time. Photo consistency—the same background, all black and white or color, uniform style (suits and ties, open collar shirts)—matters. Consistency suggests planning and preparation, and that you are a cohesive group of professionals who work well together.

Many New York-headquartered firms still do not include associate photos or any bio info other than contact and education. But these firms charge clients hundreds of dollars an hour for these professionals. If they are a part of client teams, don’t they deserve a formal biography? I think they do.

Cross-linking. This is a critical part of horizontal navigation through a Web site, and further highlights the strengths of your lawyers and practices. Most firms are cross-linking back and forth to practices, industries, etc., but many can improve. This is a fundamental part of enhancing the appeal of your site to a visitor. Give them easy pathways to dig deeper.

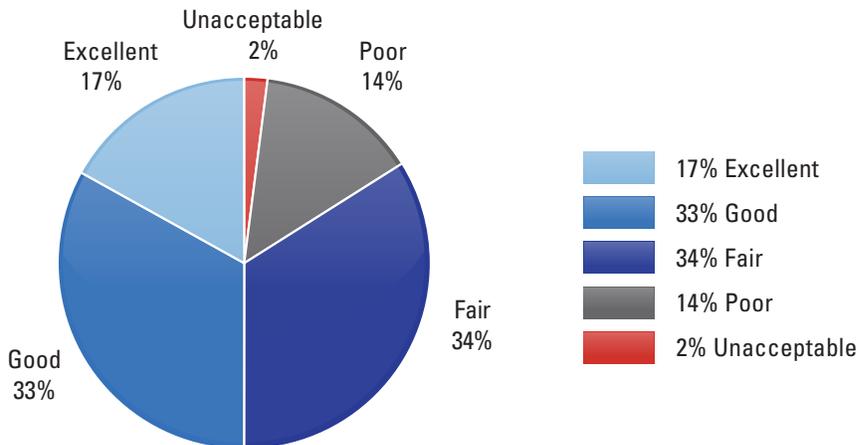
Summary Bios. There is a troubling trend among America’s largest law firms—the “short bio” page. Firms are offering these summary bios, presumably for the reason that visitors are only seeking a phone number or email address. Or, at least that’s what I assume. But there are better ways to give easy access to contact info; in the lawyer search results, for example.

Put yourself in the General Counsel’s shoes. Why would you make the GC of any company click several times to find a lawyer’s bio, then not immediately give him the details of what this lawyer does? I am not sure who is driving this trend—developers, perhaps—but we think it’s a mistake from a usability standpoint. It’s both anti-visitor and anti-lawyer.

Fortunately, the 2006 AmLaw 100 scores were superior to the aggregate 2005 scores. But there is huge room for improvement here. Lawyer biographies should be updated regularly, at least quarterly, and should provide readers a complete snapshot of what makes these professionals outstanding.

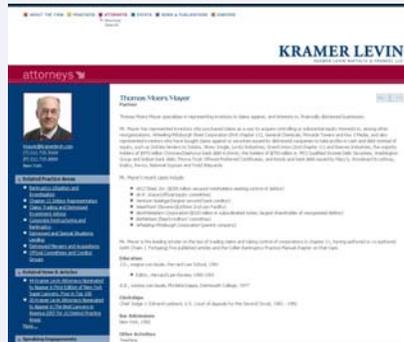
Corporate counsel say they frequently visit law firm Web sites to look up lawyers—professionals they have short-listed or to whom they have been referred. Then why are lawyer biographies so shallow and poor?

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 5 Lawyer Biographies



example – No. 5
“Lawyer Biographies”

Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP
kramerlevin.com



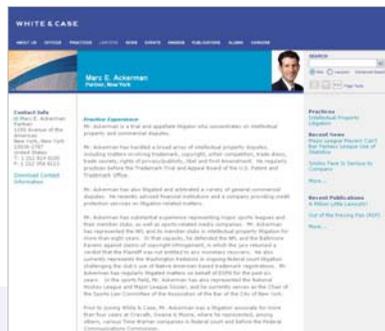
Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP

Lawyer Biography

We highlight **Kramer Levin** because they received a score of **94** on Foundational Best Practice 5—*Lawyer Biographies*. The only thing the researchers didn’t like is that the office addresses are not included on the bios, and the v-card is in a page tools area, which may get missed by visitors. And, as with every firm in the AmLaw 100 group, some partner bios need more meat.

Otherwise, these are well-organized and presented. Most bios have a concise, but detailed summary paragraph of the lawyer’s experience, with bullet points that include the relevant information—dollar size, deal type, client name (if you have permission to use), case styling, jurisdiction of litigation, and so on.

The cross-linking is well done—related practice areas, news/articles and speaking engagements.



White & Case LLP
whitecase.com

NOTABLE: White & Case, with a **93** score, recently launched a new site design, and the quality of the lawyer biographies improved considerably over 2005. The layout of the page is excellent, because the most important information is centered on the page inside a wide column. Bios begin directly with experience, above the fold (meaning, no scrolling is required to get top highlights of the information). Contact information is detailed on the left, includes the office address—which we always recommend—and multiple cross-links to practices, news/articles and events.

Finally, foreign languages are broken out—although I suggest moving them up higher on the page, and placing it in either the right or left column—and the firm even breaks out “citizenship.”

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 5
“Lawyer Biographies”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
96	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
94	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
94	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
93	White & Case LLP	whitecase.com
91	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
90	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
90	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
89	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
89	LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP	llgm.com
89	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com
88	Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	debevoise.com
88	Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	kattenlaw.com
87	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP	eapdlaw.com
87	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	pillsburylaw.com
86	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
86	Patton Boggs LLP	pattonboggs.com
86	Ropes & Gray LLP	ropesgray.com
85	Fulbright & Jaworski LLP	fulbright.com
84	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
83	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hhlaw.com
83	Hunton & Williams LLP	hunton.com
81	Baker Botts L.L.P.	bakerbotts.com
80	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP	dicksteinshapiro.com
80	Jenner & Block LLP	jenner.com
80	Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP	sablaw.com
80	Vinson & Elkins LLP	velaw.com
80	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP	willkie.com

6 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE PRACTICE/INDUSTRY DESCRIPTIONS

- Practices and industries are broken out separately
- Practice and industry descriptions answer the questions:
 - i. What have you done?
 - ii. For whom have you done it?
 - iii. What can you do for me?
- Descriptions offer proof of any claims made
- Descriptions include specifics of deals and cases
- Descriptions identify clients by name and/or type of organization or entity
- They link to list of lawyers in practice/industry
- They link to related news/articles/publications, etc.
- They include related case studies or stories

Buyers of legal services type in your URL and have a list of conscious and subconscious questions they want answered. They'll decide in a matter of seconds whether your firm has answered them.

Buyers of legal services go to law firm Web sites for several reasons, but primarily to validate a referral to a practice or lawyer. They type in the URL with a list of conscious and subconscious questions that they want answered. And they will decide in a matter of seconds, or rarely in more than a few minutes whether your firm has satisfied them.

Knowing this, why do the practice and industry descriptions of America's best law firms continue to be generic, unspecific and firm-focused paragraphs and pages? I said it in the 2005 White Paper, and I'll repeat it here: *Practice and industry descriptions should be as rich and specific as your state bar association allows.*

This is the law firm's chance to showcase its strengths, its innovation and its uniqueness. The work and how you do it are two of the three things that truly differentiate you from your long list of competitors. The third thing is your list of clients.

Break out practices and industries. Regions, too. Separating these firm strengths is better from a usability standpoint. If you don't, firms of AmLaw 100 size force visitors to sift through 40 to 100 practice areas. Second, different buyers of legal services value different things—for some, industry depth is a deciding factor in the lawyers they hire. For others, specific expertise in a niche is what they need.

Some firms break out their regional practices—Latin American practice, China practice, and so on. Leverage your experience by organizing and repurposing it in several different parts of your Web site. Know what your visitors want. Then give it to them.

Proof. Proof is a simple concept, but few firms have mastered the art of proving the claims they make. There are only a couple ways to offer proof—a) give examples that answer the questions in the bullets above, and b) quote third party sources that rank firms by the work they do in certain areas, such as the Thomson League Tables, the *American Lawyer* and *Project Finance* magazine, as examples.

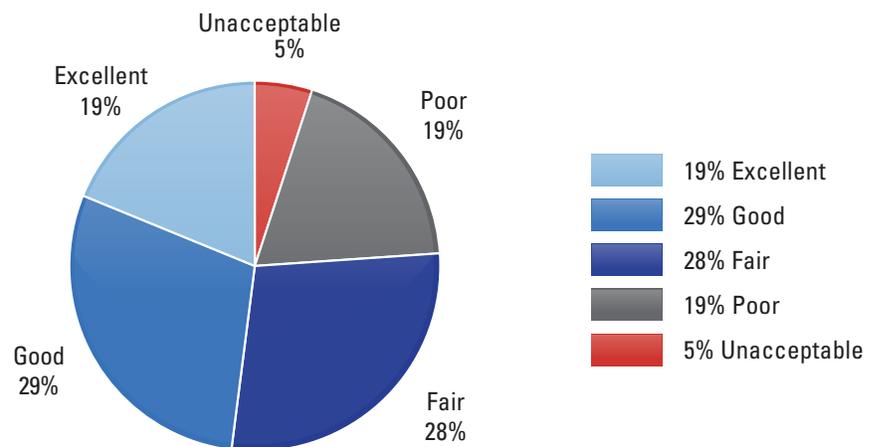
Naming clients. Some firms have policies against naming clients. Fifteen years ago, that was a policy that was broadly embraced by many firms. However, today, your competitors ARE naming clients, so if you don't, you are competing at a disadvantage.

Only name them if you have their written permission and if your state bar association permits it. If you can't name them (because matters are too sensitive) describe the type of organization or company: Fortune 100 pharmaceutical company, Fortune 1000 automotive parts distributor, and so on.

Long lists of "representative clients" that are detached from specific practices and industries aren't helpful. Several AmLaw 100 firms do this. Visitors want to know *specifically* in what areas you have worked with ExxonMobil or Wal-Mart. Having a blue-chip client list may mean less if a firm has only done low-dollar, commodity work for the companies.

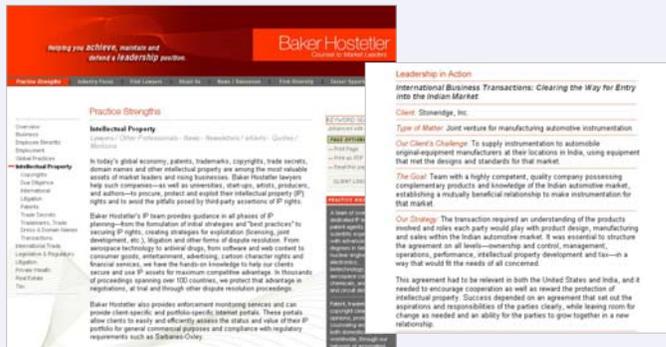
Cross-linking is critical, and the researchers were rigorous in downgrading firms that don't offer this. Descriptions must link to the lawyers who work in the practice or industry, as well as to news, articles, publications, case studies and events.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 6 *Practice/Industry Descriptions*



example - No. 6
 "Practice/Industry Descriptions"

Baker & Hostetler LLP
 bakerlaw.com



Baker & Hostetler LLP
 Practice Description
 Leadership in Action
 Case Studies



Baker & Hostetler LLP
 Market Leader Profile

Baker Hostetler scored **100** for its practice and industry descriptions. Highlights of the descriptions are the various layers of data available by practice. For example, most of the practices include “Leadership in Action” case studies that are short, concise and put forth the most relevant facts. They are all organized in the same way—practice to practice—so it’s easy to get a uniform and consistent snapshot of the strengths of this firm. They identify: “client, type of matter, our client’s challenge, the goal, our strategy, and results.”

In addition, the descriptions separate out bits of related information, such as “practice highlights” and “representative clients,” and they link to the lawyers, news, articles, events and quotes/mentions.

Finally, to further support Baker Hostetler’s “Counsel to Market Leaders” positioning strategy, the firm includes several “Market Leader Profiles.” These are longer stories about the longevity of certain client relationships and the work the clients and Baker Hostetler have done together.



Hunton & Williams LLP
 hunton.com

NOTABLE: Hunton & Williams scored **97** on this Foundational Best Practice. The firm offers very detailed client and matter information. Some practice descriptions, such as Energy, include long case studies, with links to related information and lawyers. Others, like Student Loans, have detailed transaction lists. Curiously, the Energy “Industries” description does not link to lawyers—an oversight. So the firm should better match the energy industries offering to the description they include in “Practices.”

One issue the researchers noted was the page layout for practices/industries. Because the text area is so narrow right-to-left, a visitor must scroll and scroll to read it. The navigation also needs improvement—to access other practice areas, a visitor must return to the global navigation bar and start over.



Dorsey & Whitney LLP
dorsey.com

ALSO NOTABLE: Dorsey & Whitney scored a **99** for this Foundational Best Practice, in part because they have a page of well-written “Client Successes” that visitors can access in the cascading menu for “Services” in the global navigation. The success stories are descriptive and cover the highlights of the transaction or matter, including dollars, client logo and name, any industry details, and link to the lawyer team that handled the matter.

The practice and industry descriptions are fully cross-linked, but the client success stories do not link to the appropriate practices or industries, and they should. The lawyer names inside the text may get lost—so they should be separated out at the right or left of the story.

TOP SCORING FIRMS Foundational Best Practice No. 6 “Practice/Industry Descriptions”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
100	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
99	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
98	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com
98	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
97	DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary	dlapiper.com
97	Hunton & Williams LLP	hunton.com
95	Winston & Strawn LLP	winston.com
94	Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.	ssd.com
93	Duane Morris LLP	duanemorris.com
93	Pepper Hamilton LLP	pepperlaw.com
90	Alston & Bird LLP	alston.com
90	Dechert LLP	dechert.com
89	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP	eapdlaw.com
88	Dewey Ballantine LLP	deweyballantine.com
88	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com
88	Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP	srz.com
86	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
86	Morrison & Foerster LLP	mofo.com
86	Perkins Coie LLP	perkinscoie.com
85	Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	debevoise.com
85	King & Spalding LLP	kslaw.com
84	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP	cgsh.com
84	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
83	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hhlaw.com
83	Ropes & Gray LLP	ropesgray.com

7 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE CONTACT INFORMATION

- Firm contact information is accessible in one-click
- All firm offices are listed in contacts page (preferred—include office contacts, such as managing partner, executive director, recruiting professionals, senior marketers, media contact, etc.)
- Maps and directions are accessible and easy to follow

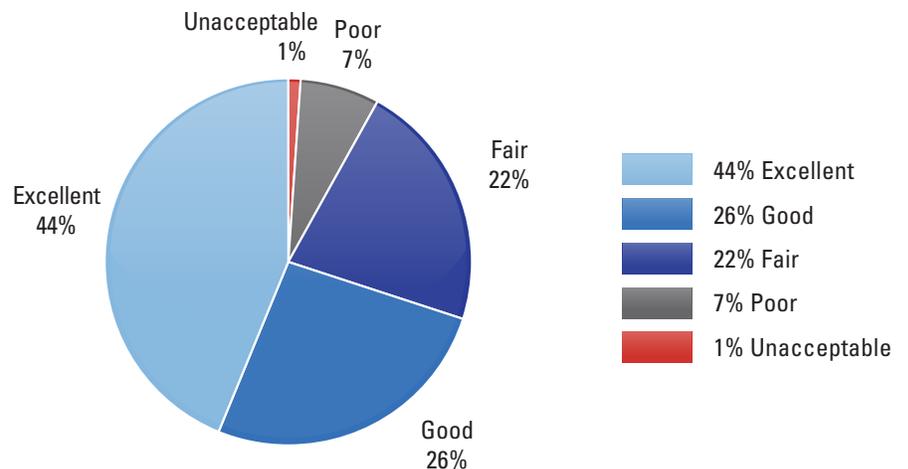
As the 2005 White Paper noted, the requirements for this Foundational Best Practice are simple and straightforward: *make it easy for clients, prospects and other visitors to contact you.* Put all the relevant information in one place—and make it easy to find.

I have heard firm leaders say that they don't want their names and office contact information listed apart from their biographies. They are concerned that they'll be deluged with phone calls. This is a little like putting a welcome mat outside your office, but then never answering the door. And an experienced assistant can discern the tone of an appropriate call from one that isn't.

A note about the firms that rely on Mapquest® and Yahoo!® maps—they aren't always accurate. In fact, they are often not accurate. It's better to have your graphic designer create maps especially for your offices—maps that are 100% reliable, easy to print, and that highlight your office building. Don't forget to include full contact info on each map.

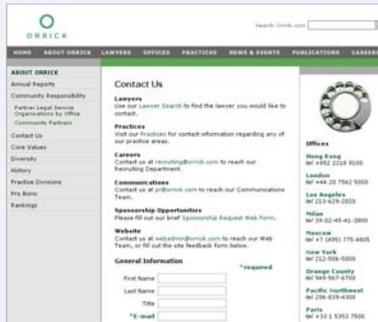
All law firms should score 100 on this Foundational Best Practice.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 7 Contact Information



example – No. 7 “Contact Information”

Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
orrick.com



Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP

Contact Us

Orrick scored **100** on this Foundational Best Practice for several reasons. “Offices” is a tab in the global navigation bar, so a visitor can either access the overview page, which is a one-click summary of all the office contact information, or select the specific office they want to reach via the cascading menu. Each individual office page gives contact info for the managing partner, a bio link and links to all other lawyers in that office.

In the footer navigation, there is a “Contact Us” link, which takes a visitor to the page pictured below. It offers quick links to lawyer contacts (in the lawyer search area), practice contacts, recruiting, communications and contacts who handle sponsorship requests. It also includes contact links to the Web site team and a form for visitors to complete. The right hand column includes links to the individual office pages and their phone numbers at a glance.

Orrick makes it easy for visitors to contact the firm—and does so in a couple of ways.



Vinson & Elkins LLP
velaw.com

NOTABLE: Vinson & Elkins also scored **100** on this best practice. VE includes “Offices” in its global navigation. A click on it pulls up a summary page listing all office contact info, with links to the individual offices. Each office page gives highlights of the office, plus full contact info for the administrative partner(s). Maps are easy to read (and print) and directions are easy to follow.

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 7
“Contact Information”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
100	Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP	orrick.com
100	Vinson & Elkins LLP	velaw.com
98	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
98	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
98	Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Nicholson Graham LLP	klng.com
98	Pepper Hamilton LLP	pepperlaw.com
98	Perkins Coie LLP	perkinscoie.com
98	Thelen Reid & Priest LLP	thelenreid.com
98	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
97	Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	drinkerbiddle.com
97	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
97	Proskauer Rose LLP	proskauer.com
97	Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP	weil.com
97	Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP	wemed.com
95	Howrey LLP	howrey.com
95	Morrison & Foerster LLP	mofo.com
94	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP	dicksteinshapiro.com
94	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
94	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hogan.com
94	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
93	Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCoy LLP	milbank.com
93	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com
93	Sullivan & Cromwell LLP	sullcrom.com
93	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP	willkie.com
92	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com
92	Patton Boggs LLP	pattonboggs.com
92	Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP	paulweiss.com
92	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	pillsburylaw.com

8 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE SEARCH

- Site offers keyword search query box on home page with default search of entire site
- Site offers advanced search option with opportunity to narrow or refine the search in multiple ways
- Site offers detailed lawyer search (by name, nickname, maiden name, law school, practice, industry, state, country, foreign languages, etc.)
- Site offers separate articles/publications search

Jakob Nielsen says, “Search is the user’s lifeline when navigation fails.” As mentioned earlier, all Web sites should be designed to accommodate searchers, navigators and browsers. Search should be presented in a simple box on the home page, and on all interior pages. Many firms have a search link, which takes visitors to a search page—but this is an extra, unnecessary click.

Search is the user's lifeline when navigation fails. If your search doesn't deliver, you aren't providing what your visitors need and want. They will leave.

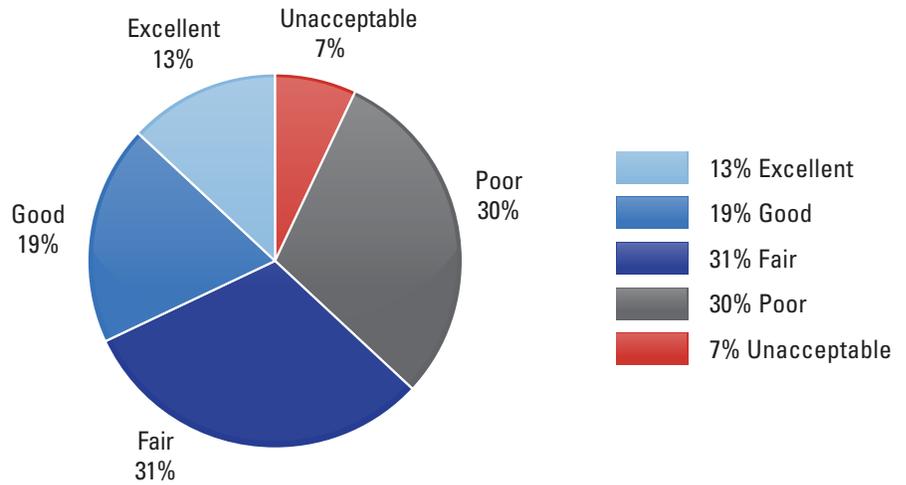
Some graphic designers want to minimize the search box to a link because it takes away from the home page aesthetic. And they don’t want to add the ever-present quick link to an advanced search. If your designer is suggesting this to you, say, “No.” Visitors expect you to have thorough and robust search features, and have them accessible on every page of your site.

Too many firms fall down in the lawyer and publication searches. For the lawyer search, ensure that lawyers can be found by various forms of their name—Richard, Dick, Rick and Rich. Many women lawyers want to be found by either or both their maiden and married names.

Publications and events should be searchable by topic, presenter or author, publication and date. Finally, your advanced search should enable visitors to refine their searches—partners in New York who have energy and securities litigation experience.

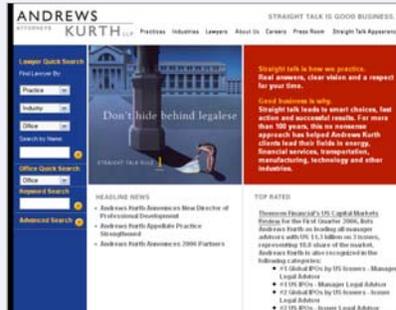
All firms should score 100 in this Foundational Best Practice. It’s so achievable—and will be much appreciated by your visitors.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 8 Site Search



example – No. 8 “Site Search”

Andrews Kurth LLP
andrewskurth.com

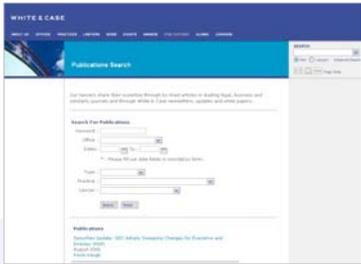


Andrews Kurth LLP

Advanced Site Search

Andrews Kurth scored **100** on this Foundational Best Practice. The firm has an advanced search area on its home page, where a visitor can “Find a Lawyer by” practice, industry, office or name. In addition, there is an “Office Quick Search” and a keyword search, with a link to advanced search.

The lawyer search offers the alphabet (which most AmLaw 100 firms do), plus first name/nickname, last name/maiden name, title, office, language, practice and industry. The “Press Room” search includes keyword/topic, author, publication, date, practice and industry.



White & Case LLP
whitecase.com

NOTABLE: White & Case LLP also scored **100** on Foundational Best Practice 8—*Site Search*. The firm prominently features a search box on the home page, with a “radio button” allowing visitors to choose “site” or “lawyers.” The advanced search is easily accessible, but allows visitors only one keyword plus section choice per search. The lawyer search doesn’t break out nickname and maiden name, but it does include law school. White & Case’s publications search includes the most important basics, plus a search for “type of publication,” such as newsletters, memoranda, briefs, brochures, featured articles, annual reports and more.

TOP SCORING FIRMS Foundational Best Practice No. 8 “Site Search”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
100	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
100	White & Case LLP	whitecase.com
98	Cooley Godward LLP	cooley.com
98	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hogan.com
96	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
94	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
93	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
91	Duane Morris LLP	duanemorris.com
89	Faegre & Benson LLP	faegre.com
89	Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP	kattenlaw.com
87	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP & Affiliates	skadden.com
86	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
86	Fulbright & Jaworski LLP	fulbright.com
85	Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, PLLC	wcsr.com
84	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
84	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com
83	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
81	Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP	sonnenschein.com
80	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
79	Proskauer Rose LLP	proskauer.com
77	Sullivan & Cromwell LLP	sullcrom.com
76	Fish & Richardson PC	fr.com
76	Latham & Watkins LLP	lw.com
75	Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.	ssd.com
74	Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	debevoise.com
74	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP	eapdlaw.com
74	LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP	llgm.com
74	Patton Boggs LLP	pattonboggs.com
74	Seyfarth Shaw LLP	seyfarth.com

9 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE OPTIMIZATION FOR ONLINE SEARCH

- Meta tags, keywords, page title and site description are correctly used and placed
- Page titles are optimized
- Site has a site map that is current
- What is the site’s online awareness—comparative analysis of:
 - i. Google® page rank
 - ii. Number of pages indexed by Google
 - iii. Link popularity

As the Internet becomes the leading research tool of C-level business executives, a law firm’s online visibility and awareness plays a significantly more meaningful role in business development. A 2004 *Forbes* survey¹ revealed that a significant percentage of corporate executives uses the Internet daily.

- 54% C-level executives do online research
- 34% go to the Web first to find information on a product or service
- 86% use search engines

If you compare the *Forbes* number of 86% of C-level executives utilizing search to the 63% of the general public utilizing search as a 2005 Pew Internet study² indicated, you see that online search is a critical research tool for enterprise level decision makers. And the *Forbes* study is more than two years old, so it isn’t a stretch to assume that these percentages are the same or higher today.

This reinforces just how important it is for firms to develop and implement a well thought out online marketing strategy. Yet, for many of the world’s top law firms, it is still overlooked. Any online marketing strategy starts with *foundational* search engine optimization of the firm’s Web site.

The Criteria for “Online Awareness.” As one of the Ten Foundational Best Practices, we looked at the basics of site optimization, which include meta tags for page titles, descriptions and keywords, along with home page HTML copy and site maps. Then we combined that with a broader look at the overall online awareness and visibility of each firm.

¹“*A Day in the Life of CEOs Online*” Trended Web Usage of CEO’s and Sr. Managers of Enterprise Level Companies--2,300 completed surveys. 1,012 were identified as C-Level Executives and 462 were Senior Managers. All from companies of 1,000 or more employees. *Forbes* March 2004.

²Pew Internet & American Life Project. September 2005 tracking survey.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anchor text: Links have the ability to show simple text as the link on the page, i.e. “your law firm” are the words you see on the Web page, and it links to www.yourlawfirm.com. Anchor text can also be optimized with keywords, i.e. “IP litigation firm, Jones Day.”

Google Page Rank: Page Rank is a patented method, developed by Larry Page, the cofounder of Google, to assign a numerical weighting to each element of a hyperlinked set of documents, such as the World Wide Web, with the purpose of “measuring” its relative importance within the set.

Inbound links: Inbound links are links on other Web sites that link back to your site.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS (CONT.)

Indexed pages: Google and most other search engines utilize a robot “spider” that is constantly reading and indexing (putting them in the Google database) Web pages. If the Google robot has problems reading certain pages on your Web site, those pages may not be indexed.

Meta tags: “Meta data” is data about data. There are multiple meta tag fields in the HTML code of a Web page for meta data such as title, description and keywords.

Page titles: The page title is the text displayed in the very top left of a Web browser, and typically your screen if you have maximized the window.

Site map: A site map is a comprehensive list of the pages of a Web site usually displayed in text on a single page. With most content management systems, site maps are usually dynamically updated each time the law firm adds or deletes pages from its site.

To measure the online awareness and visibility of the AmLaw 100 firms, we used Google® as the benchmark. According to an August 3, 2006 Hitwise Analyst Weblog, (Bill Tancer General Manager, Global Research, Hitwise), Google currently has over 60% of all search traffic. The three pieces of Google data we incorporated into our *Online Awareness* score were a) Google Page Rank, b) the number of pages indexed by Google and c) the number of inbound links indicated by Google.

As expected, the AmLaw 100 firms scored across the board in the analysis. But, with the addition of the “online awareness” benchmark in the 2006 analysis, more firms either leapt to a score of “excellent” or dropped to the “unacceptable” level.

■ The Common Sense of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Basics.

Starting with the analysis of site optimization, it became apparent that most firms still do not have the basics of on-site SEO in place. These elements are both simple and critical.

For example, a large portion of search traffic to an AmLaw 100 site or any law firm site will always be for individual lawyer names. Corporate counsel readily admit to using Google, often before they search for lawyers or firms at martindale.com. If that is the case, then why would a firm’s site not have the lawyer’s name in the page title of his or her bio? The page title is one of the very first things a search robot looks at to determine the content on the page. Ensuring that all of your page titles indicate the content of the page is a simple solution to an important opportunity.

This type of seemingly small oversight is indicative of the lack of attention or understanding of search marketing by many AmLaw 100 firms. For example, a few sentences of HTML text describing your firm (“strategy copy” as discussed under Ten Foundational Best Practice 1—*Communicating your Message*) on the home page of your site communicate important information about your firm and Web site to both the human user and the search engine robot indexing your site. But many firms have little text on the home page of their sites, and if they do, it’s primarily news items.

The page title tag discussed above is followed in importance by the meta tag for the description. Some search engines will utilize the description as the “snippet” shown for your site on the search results page, so it is important that this description be concise and appropriate for this use.

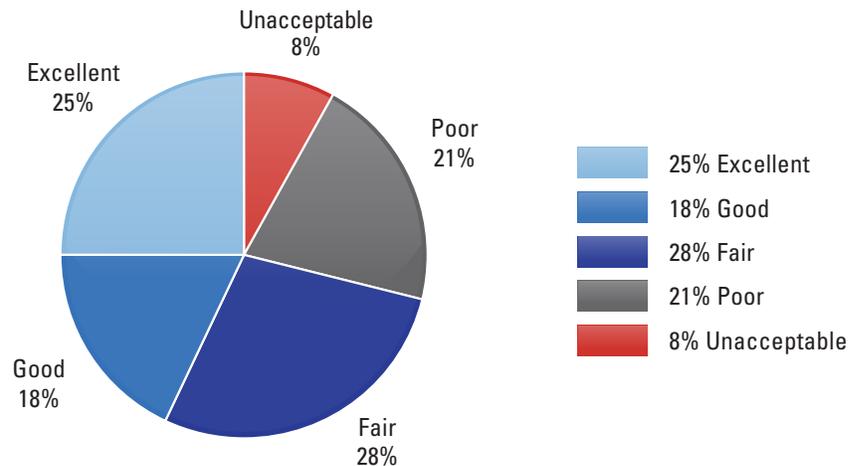
Because of the amount of “keyword stuffing” (think of stuffing a ballot box) used by “black hat” SEO practitioners, the majority of search engines do not look at the meta tag for keywords. If you do utilize the keyword meta tag, the words in the tag should also be in the content of the page itself to avoid any perception of impropriety.

In terms of keywords and phrases, your focus should be on the title, the description and the content on the page.

We did keep the keyword meta tag in our analysis as an indicator of the level of SEO awareness and effort. Developing a strategic keyword list is a critical step in your online marketing research and the presence of this list in the keyword meta tag indicates this step has been undertaken by the firm.

The basics of site search optimization will help the search engines “see” your firm’s site and understand the content and context of the pages within the site. And, logically, these same important basics also help human visitors understand your firm and help them navigate your Web site. Both human users and search engine robots are coming to your site to get information on the firm, its experience, its partners, associates, recruiting and more. And both the human user and the search engine robot will leave your site if they don’t easily find the information they are seeking. You have just allowed the future client, valuable lateral or the future top ten search listing to leave and maybe not come back.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 9 *Site Optimization for Online Search*



example - No. 9 “Site Optimization for Online Search”

Jones Day LLP
jonesday.com



Jones Day LLP

Site Optimization for Online Search



DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary
dlapiper.com

Twenty-five of the AmLaw 100 firms earned a score of “excellent” in the 2006 analysis. Two firms had the top scores for this Foundational Best Practice—**Jones Day** and **Fulbright & Jaworski**, both having a score of **99**. A third firm, **DLA Piper**, received a **91**.

Firm	Pages Indexed by Google*	Links Shown in Google*	Google Page Rank*
Jones Day	212,000	2,670	6/10
Fulbright	108,000	1,100	6/10
DLA Piper	672,000	2,170	7/10

*June 2006 Statistics

NOTABLE: DLA Piper is leaving a few things on the table as far as the basics are concerned, but they have truly excelled in one of the most important aspects of successful online awareness. They have created a substantial amount of external links to their site. As any search engine marketing professional will tell you, external links to your site from other quality Web sites is a key determination of search and online success.

ALSO NOTABLE: As with Jones Day and DLA Piper, **Fulbright** is making the most of the basic tenets of SEO. They also appear to have employed additional online marketing strategies that contribute to their success in developing online awareness and traffic.

Beyond the Basics. Once you are past the basics of site optimization, your marketing and communications efforts play the most important role in developing online awareness of your firm. Developing quality links to your site and its content is a critical element of online marketing.

These quality links not only drive direct traffic to your site, they are also one of the major factors that search engine algorithms consider when determining the relevancy and quality of your site content against an original search query.



Fulbright & Jaworski LLP
fulbright.com

Matt Cutts, Senior Software Engineer for Google says, "It's interesting how much of SEO comes back to good, old fashioned marketing."

AmLaw 100 lawyers are prolific writers and publishers of content, the marketing and communications professionals in the firm create and distribute press releases, and your firm and its lawyers are likely associated with multiple professional organizations. These are all opportunities for you to create quality links to your site.

These opportunities can be amplified with a diligent and concerted effort to create links with optimized “anchor text.” These are the actual words displayed on the page as the link.

There are multiple tools available to view the links to your site. Use the tools to find those links, and with these and any new link opportunities, try to supply an optimized link—a link that has anchor text that is relevant to the site content, and that links back to a page on your site, which has similarly relevant content.

To check to see how many of your site’s pages Google is indexing, type the following in the Google search bar type: site:www.yoursite.com (e.g., site:jonesday.com). Note that this changes regularly, so keep monitoring it. To learn how many sites and pages link to your Web site, in the Google search bar, type: link:www.yoursite.com (e.g., link:jonesday.com).

Jones Day, Fulbright and DLA Piper all publish content from their lawyers on a regular basis. This content includes information about the firms’ expertise, their clients and their clients’ businesses and industries. It is a powerful tool for developing quality links to their sites.

Links drive direct traffic to your site and enhance your search success. And, by creating great content that communicates your firm’s message and expertise, you are communicating both to the human users of your site and to the search engine robots that your firm or lawyers should be considered experts in particular areas.

Matt Cutts, Senior Software Engineer for Google says, "It's interesting how much of SEO comes back to good, old fashioned marketing."

In order to see results, you have to be looking. The end result of a well planned and executed online marketing campaign is increased online visibility—visibility that directly relates to an increase in the quantity and quality of visitors to your Web site.

The AmLaw 100 research team also looked at the “Alexa” ranking of the AmLaw 100. Alexa is part of Amazon Web Services and provides Web site traffic data gathered from users of the Alexa toolbar and a couple of other sources related to Amazon.

As I indicated earlier, Internet data is no different from other statistics. It can be skewed by any number of variables. Users of the Alexa toolbar tend to be more technically oriented than the typical Web user, so it is just a slice of representative Web data that can be used to track trends in usage and traffic.

Now, all the caveats aside, you should take the time to access any and all data you can from your site and about your site. Alexa provides free competitive data that can be analyzed along with your own Web site analytics. But, use it only as an indication of what your site and other sites are doing, track and compare the data to identify trends or issues.

If we look at the Alexa ratings of the AmLaw 100 and use this as one of the barometers for your site traffic, then it does have some meaning. In this context, two firms have top 10 Alexa rankings in comparison to all AmLaw 100 firms, Jones Day and DLA Piper. Fulbright is further down the list. These ratings were taken in early June of 2006.

Visibility alone isn't enough. Traffic to your Web site is based on a large set of variables. Yes, sites that have SEO basics in place, have strategically optimized content and have a significant amount of quality inbound links will have good visibility in the search engines. But this visibility alone does not guarantee higher Web site traffic. It should *help* increase traffic, but more importantly, if done strategically, it will help increase *well qualified* traffic to your site.

Your Web site can be successfully used to not only position the firm and deliver your differentiating messages, but, with the proper attention, can also directly impact business development. If potential clients are looking, don't you want to be found?

Keep in mind, all of your firm's marketing, PR and business development efforts should be supported by your Web site and, conversely, should also enhance the visibility and success of your Web site. All online and offline activities should be seamlessly integrated. When your firm is successful in a high profile case, make sure your PR effort works to send interested people who are reading about that case to your Web site.

The real story about your Web site. The most important set of data about the traffic on your site is your own data, the log files from your site. This is real, tangible and undisputable data about what is happening with your Web site. It is the most reliable tool to analyze the success or failure of your site.

Make sure you have access to timely, easy-to-digest reports, and look for issues and trends. Dig deeper when you see something that is working or something that is not. If you do not have the in-house knowledge to read and understand your Web analytics reports, engage an expert who can do this for you, and have them train your marketing and Web site team. If your Web development or hosting vendor does not provide this service, there are consultants out there who can help.

But buyer beware. While there are solid experts available, there are also a large group of SEO consultants who promise sweeping success, and who do not understand marketing, the legal industry, or they simply rely on "black hat" practices.

In conclusion. There are firms in the AmLaw 100 that have implemented many of the strategies and processes to facilitate improved online visibility and search engine success. There are many more that seem to be addressing few, if any, of these strategies and processes.

Your firm's Web site is a dynamic marketing and communications tool that can be successfully used to not only position the firm and deliver the firm's message but, with the proper attention, can also directly impact business development. If potential clients are looking, don't you want to be found?

If you do, become knowledgeable about the issues discussed here. Learn more about what the visitors to your site are doing, look and see how visible you are in the major search engines. Act like a potential client—try to find your firm in relationship to the significant matters your target prospects may have. You might not like what you find, but you can make the changes suggested here to improve.

Review, analyze, plan, implement and then start all over again.

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 9

“Site Optimization for Online Search”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
99	Fulbright & Jaworski LLP	fulbright.com
99	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
96	Greenberg Traurig LLP	gtlaw.com
96	Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP	sidley.com
96	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
95	Dechert LLP	dechert.com
95	Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP	sonnenschein.com
95	Venable LLP	venable.com
94	Proskauer Rose LLP	proskauer.com
94	Seyfarth Shaw LLP	seyfarth.com
94	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com
93	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com
93	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hogan.com
91	Baker & McKenzie	bakernet.com
91	DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary	dlapiper.com
90	Squire, Sanders & Dempsey L.L.P.	ssd.com
89	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
89	Nixon Peabody LLP	nixonpeabody.com
88	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
88	Dewey Ballantine LLP	deweyballantine.com
88	Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	drinkerbiddle.com
87	Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP	gibsondunn.com
86	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
86	McDermott, Will & Emery LLP	mwe.com
86	Vinson & Elkins LLP	velaw.com

10 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE “HYGIENE”

- Site includes up-to-date copyright
- No error pages are found
- No broken links or broken images are evident
- Pages print and email easily
- Site offers dynamic print page to PDF option on most pages

In the 2005 White Paper, I said that this Foundational Best Practice spotlights the Web equivalent of “spinach in your teeth.” Visitors to AmLaw 100 Web sites expect a seamless, perfect experience—the same as when they enter your various physical offices. The little things in this bullet list matter, and they are all easy to fix.

Every firm should score 100 on this Foundational Best Practice, but only eight law firms earned a score of “excellent.” Thirteen firms earned “poor” or “unacceptable” scores. It’s surprising that some firms still have an out-of-date copyright—we found one for the year 2000. Some firms don’t have any copyright at all, and others have the words “Copyright—firm name” but no dates listed. Still others hide the copyright notice in the disclaimer language.

The purpose of a visible, current copyright notice is clear—just ask your IP lawyers.

Print/Email. Make it easy for your visitors to print a clean copy of your Web pages, and also enable them to email your pages to their colleagues. Very few of the AmLaw 100 firms offer this on all or most of their Web pages. Some offer it only on lawyer bios, and not on practice or industry descriptions, or any other pages of the site. And a surprising number don’t offer any print or emailability.

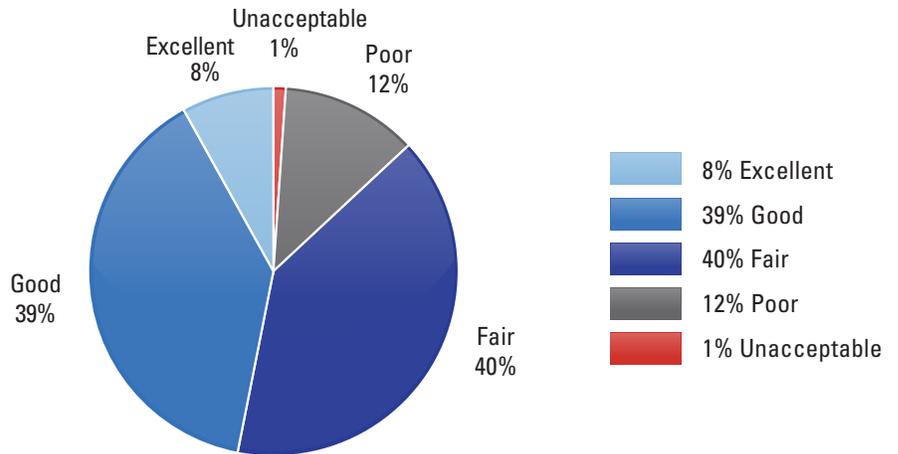
Only a handful of firms enable a visitor to print a clean, “presentation-ready” page from the Web site. Firms are falling way short with their “Print friendly” pages. They are most often poorly designed, looking like a typewritten document, and they still include the HTML coding at the top and the bottom of the printed page.

A dynamic “Print to PDF” is a branded, specially designed template that is dynamically created each time a visitor clicks the Print to PDF link on the page. It builds the page “on the fly,” meaning that any last minute edits you’ve done to the page are incorporated instantly into the page when printed.

Many firms include PDFs in their news, articles and publications area, but these are documents that are uploaded and stored on the site. They are not dynamically created when a visitor requests it. (Note the earlier White Paper comments about storing a lot of ready-made PDFs.)

Why are these important? They help you put your best foot forward, control the look and feel of all materials with your firm name on it, and many lawyers use these Print to PDF pages as their “ready-to-go” sales materials. Andrews Kurth and Baker Hostetler are examples of firms that effectively use the dynamic Print to PDF.

Group Scores for Foundational Best Practice No. 10 Site “Hygiene”



example - No. 10 “Site ‘Hygiene’”

Patton Boggs LLP
pattonboggs.com



Patton Boggs LLP
Site “Hygiene”

It’s difficult to illustrate this Foundational Best Practice, because when firms are executing well, the site operates smoothly. **Patton Boggs** earned a **97** for this Foundational Best Practice.

TOP SCORING FIRMS

Foundational Best Practice No. 10
“Site ‘Hygiene’”

Score	Firm Name	Firm URL
100	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com
98	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com
97	Patton Boggs LLP	pattonboggs.com
90	White & Case LLP	whitecase.com
89	LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae LLP	llgm.com
89	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP	willkie.com
86	Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP	mayerbrown.com
86	Venable LLP	venable.com
85	Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP	simpsonthacher.com
84	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	pillsburylaw.com
83	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com
83	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com
83	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com
82	Arnold & Porter LLP	arnoldporter.com
82	Dechert LLP	dechert.com
82	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP	dicksteinshapiro.com
82	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP	eapdlaw.com
81	Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	drinkerbiddle.com
81	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com
80	Blank Rome LLP	blankrome.com
80	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com
80	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com
80	Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP	sonnenschein.com
79	Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Nicholson Graham LLP	klng.com
79	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com

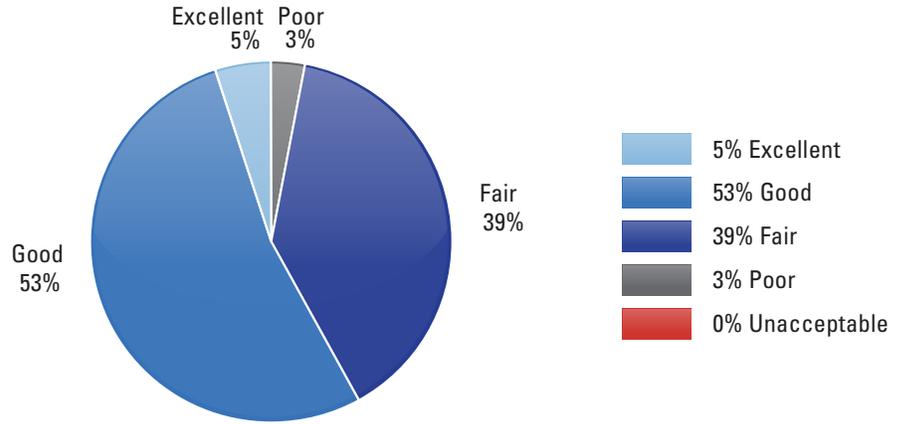


TOTAL SCORES

TEN FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

2006

2006 AmLaw 100 Total Firm Rankings



TOP 25 FIRMS

TEN FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

2006

These are the **top 25** rated firms for the *2006 AmLaw 100 Web Sites—Ten Foundational Best Practices* analysis. These sites are well-worth visitors' time and attention. Congratulations to these firms—they will be rewarded with visitor loyalty.

Rank	Firm Name	Firm URL	Score
1	Baker & Hostetler LLP	bakerlaw.com	93.3
2	Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP	wilmerhale.com	90.9
3	Jones Day LLP	jonesday.com	88.7
4	Andrews Kurth LLP	andrewskurth.com	87.8
5	Hogan & Hartson LLP	hhlaw.com	86.0
6	Foley & Lardner LLP	foley.com	84.9
7	Dorsey & Whitney LLP	dorsey.com	84.8
8	Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC	mintzlevin.com	83.8
9	Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP	eapdlaw.com	83.7
10	Shearman & Sterling LLP	shearman.com	83.4
11	DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary LLP	dlapiper.com	82.7
12	Kilpatrick Stockton LLP	kilpatrickstockton.com	82.4
13	Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP	kramerlevin.com	82.1
14	Dickstein Shapiro Morin & Oshinsky LLP	dicksteinshapiro.com	81.4
15	Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP	sonnenschein.com	81.1





Rank	Firm Name	Firm URL	Score
16	Morrison & Foerster LLP	mofo.com	80.4
17	Hughes Hubbard LLP	hugheshubbard.com	80.3
18	McGuireWoods LLP	mcguirewoods.com	79.8
19(T)	Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP	pillsburylaw.com	79.4
19(T)	Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP	willkie.com	79.4
20	Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, PC	wmgr.com	79.2
21	White & Case LLP	whitecase.com	79.1
22	Fulbright & Jaworski LLP	fulbright.com	79.0
23	Debevoise & Plimpton LLP	debevoise.com	78.9
24	Patton Boggs LLP	pattonboggs.com	78.6
25	Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP	paulweiss.com	78.3

Note: Of the AmLaw 100 firms reviewed in the 2006 study, the top score was 93 and the bottom score was 32.

A final note to the AmLaw 100 firms about this research. Because most of the sites are constantly changing, what the researchers noted in May 2006 about certain sites—both good and bad—may be different in August or September 2006. It is both the nature and great advantage of this medium. It's important to note that any criticisms noted by the researchers in the individual law firm reports were likely noticed by your visitors, simply because these best practices and the attributes within each one are *foundational*.

While you may discount the researchers' findings, or disagree with the scores your firm received, I hope you approach each law firm report as an opportunity to learn how and what to improve the next time you invest in Web site enhancement and redesign.

TIDBITS, TRENDS AND SURPRISES 2006

Reviewing the AmLaw 100 sites within a concentrated few-week period of time enables us to identify trends, and the popularity of certain features and functionality. Things become more noticeable simply because they are viewed in comparison to all the other AmLaw 100 sites being analyzed at the same time.

ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Audio and Video

Still very few of the AmLaw 100 offer audio and video features on their Web sites. Leverage your programming, events, speeches and conferences by including links to your presentations online. Firms aren't offering podcasting, but we hope that the 2007 analysis highlights firms that are taking advantage of this increasingly popular medium.

Biographies—Associates

In 2006, few New York headquartered firms include much information about their associates, some don't include anything. Non-New York firms are better, with those firms' associates having full biographies—just as though they were bright, contributing members of client teams. Imagine that! The New York argument continues to be “We don't want to make it easy for headhunters to recruit them away.” The fact is, if your associates are inclined to leave, they will leave. It has nothing to do with their having a decent biography on the Internet.

Biographies—Partners and Others

Only 17 of the AmLaw 100 scored “excellent” on Foundational Best Practice 5—*Lawyer Biographies*. This means that the nation's top lawyers at many firms are simply not maximizing their chances to compete at the highest level. Certainly a tiny handful of lawyers are so well-known that they don't “need” a biography. However, there are hundreds of experienced, capable, successful lawyers who are simply competing and differentiating themselves better by offering visitors answers to the questions they have—what have you done, and for whom have you done it.

Blogs

A handful of firms have successful blogs, but even the firms that do could improve the online visibility of them. In some cases, researchers had to click several times to find them. If you are considering a blog strategy, ensure that you are maximizing the links to and from each blog, and that the information posted is tied to the relevant lawyers, practices, industries and other key areas of your site.

Content Syndication

At the time of the 2006 analysis, only seven of the AmLaw 100 were using RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds, which enable visitors to subscribe to dynamic distribution to firm news—audio or text. The vast majority of firms offer rich content, but they aren't leveraging it.

Content in General

The sixteen firms that redesigned their sites this year also improved their content—in some cases, considerably. There is a lot of rich information to be found on AmLaw 100 sites. However, in too many instances, it remains hard to find. And it continues to be written in a sterile, firm-focused voice, which unfortunately, causes many of the firms to sound the same.

Diversity

A few firms are working hard to set themselves apart when it comes to diversity and women's initiatives. Weil Gotshal includes very detailed diversity information, including supplier diversity. Others worth noting include: Skadden, Kirkland & Ellis, Shearman & Sterling, Fulbright, Cadwalader, Hughes Hubbard, McguireWoods and Sonnenschein. A few firms' descriptions specifically address sexual orientation, and a handful include detailed diversity reports.

Emailability of Web Site Pages

As I said in the 2005 White Paper, this is such standard functionality, why don't all the firms offer this on every page? Very few do. A huge missed opportunity.

Extranets

Law firms are always seeking ways to improve their client relationships, and make them "stickier." Extranets and client portals are a grand way to do this. As mentioned in the White Paper, a couple of firms are showing off this capability via a video demonstration—good for them! I assume that most firms offer extranets, it's just that they aren't prominently featuring the links on their Web sites.

Flash and Splash Pages

Only a small number of firms use splash pages, and they continue to be irritating. The flash used on sites has improved dramatically since 2005. It generally isn't getting in the way of visitors getting what they need and want. But remember to test flash using a dial-up connection—56k modem. Many international visitors are still on slow connections.

Foreign Languages

It's a rare firm that doesn't include a globe somewhere in its site graphics. Far fewer firms than we expected offered foreign language translations, even though they boast of having "global reach." Interestingly, these firms do have international offices and practices, but many simply aren't supporting them via this critical communications tool. Lawyer biographies should all be searchable by "language" and lawyers should have their language fluency stand out on the page, as opposed to concealing it inside dense paragraphs of text.

Industries

The majority of firms do not break out practices and industries. Some designers suggest it's a "real estate issue." It is easy to design a good, intuitive navigation structure that enables firms to break out practices and industries separately. One just has to think through it.

Interactivity

We noted earlier that few sites contain audio/video content, but we should also note that firms aren't taking advantage of hosting podcasts and Webinars. A couple firms featured Webinars in their events areas. Blog content should be linked to the firm Web sites, and prolific content creators should include RSS feeds.

News features

Virtually all the firms successfully and regularly convey their latest news and events up front—right on the home page. Note that if they are on the home page, they should be frequently updated.

Organization

Client service teams, industry teams and regional capabilities may be hot trends in the delivery of legal services, but few Web sites reflect them in the way content and experience are organized. Some firms are getting closer. Bingham McCutcheon and Nixon Peabody are a couple of examples—they are being more client-focused in how they present what they do.

Personalization/customization

A small number of firms design their sites so they can be personalized by each visitor. This is simple functionality that demonstrates that firms are client-focused. We don't know how many visitors actually take the five minutes to register and customize the home page so that it puts news, practices, developments and lawyers of interest up front. But we think it sends a positive signal to visitors about the firms that offer it.

Redesign and revision frequency

As I mentioned in this White Paper, sixteen firms launched new sites since the research was done in 2005. Some sites had a home page "face lift" but no related design adjustment on the inside of the site. This is problematic for various reasons, most of which are obvious. The good news is that most sites have a current copyright, current news items and current practice description content. Web sites are expensive projects to plan, design and launch. However, because of the ever-changing nature of this Internet beast, there is an expectation by your sophisticated visitors that the look and feel of the site will change every two to three years.

SEO and SEM

Perhaps firms ignore this because it feels like "voodoo." And, honestly, it is a little. The fact is, superior, effective offline marketing and business development initiatives should drive related online success. Focus on your human visitor first—if you make the human happy, you will almost assuredly keep the robot interested, if not happy.

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URLs

When law firms merge, it's common for the firm to change the Web site URL to accommodate the "new" firm name. This is a bad idea from an SEO standpoint. When firms change the URL and redirect traffic to the new name, they can potentially affect page rank benefits, Alexa ratings, etc. It can affect how pages are perceived by Google for indexing, frequency of visits, and so on. Take naming politics out of your URL. It's better never to change your domain, and if you must, don't redirect the traffic to the new URL.

■ FINALLY...

The AmLaw 100 firms are consistently competing at the highest level. Their Web sites should facilitate this. Study your Web site analytics and learn about your visitors—the pathways they take through your site, the pages they select, the minutes they spend with you, from where they come. Continually improve your Web site offerings and usability. You will be rewarded with visitor loyalty.

Thank you for your purchase of this White Paper. We invite you to share this material, in whole or in part, freely within your law firm or company. However, providing this to others outside your organization and/or reproducing any part of it in soft or hard copy is strictly prohibited.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deborah McMurray is CEO and Strategy Architect of Content Pilot LLC and has also served as managing principal of Deborah McMurray Associates. She advises law firms on strategic marketing initiatives that focus a firm's strategy and its marketing investments. Deborah and her creative team develop targeted positioning and branding strategies for firms throughout the U.S., including the creation of Web sites and Web-based proposal centers, collateral, advertising campaigns and other print and electronic brochures and materials.



A co-author of the ABA's recent book, **Lawyer's Guide to Marketing on the Internet, 2nd ed.** (the third edition will be published Spring 2007) and co-editor of **Lawyer's Guide to Marketing your Practice, 2nd ed.**, Deborah is an authority on the design and development of top law firm Web sites. She serves as strategy architect and team leader for these projects, overseeing the projects and the Content Pilot creative and development team.

In November 2005, she published a White Paper after commissioning the first research about the **AMLAW 100 Web sites—AMLAW 100 Web Sites: Ten Foundational Best Practices**. The White Paper and the individual law firm reports are available for download at <http://www.deborahmcmurray.com/amlaw100>. The 2006 research of the AMLAW 100 Web sites has been completed and is also available online.

Content Pilot team members are frequently hired to conduct "Web scans" of law firm Web sites. These are comprehensive audits that analyze strategy, design, content, usability and functionality. Web site, proposal center and alumni center clients include legal industry leaders and dozens of law firms.

She is an industry leader in law firm marketing metrics, helping firms measure and track return on investment. Deborah created Couch Money[®], a law firm cost recovery program and marketing budgeting system. She has 22 years' experience in strategic marketing, positioning and communications for professional services firms and served for 11 years (1987 - 1998) as the first in-house marketing director at Texas-based Johnson & Swanson/Gibbs and Hughes & Luce, LLP.

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LEGAL INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

Legal Marketing Association

- National Board of Directors, Secretary, 1998-2000
- Co-Chair national LMA Conference, Palm Springs, 2000
- Your Honor Awards Chair 2001-2002
- Publications Committee Chair 2001-2002
- Research Committee, Member 2001 - present
- Participated in the repositioning of LMA (from NALFMA) in 1998
- *Strategies: The Journal of Legal Marketing*, published by LMA. As Executive Editor, led positioning of publication as the source of legal marketing information in the industry. Member Editorial Board since 1989.

American Bar Association

- Member, LPM Publishing Board 2002 – present
- Member, Law Practice Management Section, 2002 – present

Dallas Bar Association

- *Headnotes*, Co-chair publications committee, 1999
- Technology Editor 1998
- Media Relations Committee co-chair in 1996-1997

Frequent Speaker

ABA, LMA, State Bar of Texas, ALA, ACLEA, NAELA and other legal and business audiences on Web sites, proposal generation and automation, law firm marketing metrics, branding/positioning and business development

Author

- White Papers: *2006 AmLaw 100 Web Sites—Ten Foundational Best Practices*, September 2006; *2005 AmLaw 100 Web Sites—Ten Foundational Best Practices*, November 2005.
- Numerous articles published in *Strategies*, *Legal Times*, *The National Law Journal*, *The New York Law Journal*, *ABA's Law Practice Management*, *Of Counsel*, *The Texas Lawyer*, *Dallas Bar Headnotes* and *The New Jersey Lawyer*.
- Co-author of the ABA's "*Lawyer's Guide to Marketing on the Internet, 2nd Ed.*" published October 2002, and co-editor of the ABA's *Lawyer's Guide to Marketing Your Practice, 2nd Ed.*, published February 2004.

Education

- Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, Gustavus Adolphus College, St Peter, MN
- Master of Music, honors, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

APPENDIX A: QUARTILE SCORES

By Foundational Best Practice

1 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	1	13	63	23

2 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	0	2	7	91

3 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE NAVIGATION

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	2	1	24	73

4 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE NARRATIVE CONTENT

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	0	6	36	58

5 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE LAWYER BIOGRAPHIES

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	2	14	43	41

APPENDIX A: QUARTILE SCORES

By Foundational Best Practice—(Cont.)

6 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE PRACTICE/INDUSTRY DESCRIPTIONS

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	5	19	42	34

7 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE CONTACT INFORMATION

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	1	7	32	60

8 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE SEARCH

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	7	30	40	23

9 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE OPTIMIZATION FOR ONLINE SEARCH

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	8	21	38	33

10 FOUNDATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SITE "HYGIENE"

QUARTILE SCORE	1 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 75	76 to 100
No. Of Firms	1	12	53	34

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