

Welcome to the latest edition of Living Ratings

The last Ratings survey in 2018 uncovered a sector-wide improvement in functionality, content and design, with the gap between the leaders and the followers narrowing. But brand and digital are fast-evolving media – what clients needed last year may not be what they want today and so, with the game of catch-up over, we've raised the bar this year in our scoring and methodology.



Duncan Shaw, Co-founder and Executive Creative Director

What's the result?

There is a reassuring improvement across the top 100, but only 10 of the firms we surveyed earned the coveted distinction of 'Determined' digital communications. Whilst a healthy 67 firms this year ranked in the two groupings 'Focused and 'Energetic', this is actually down from 2018's figure. Perhaps most concerning is that 23 firms this year were ranked in our lowest category 'Lacklustre' and this represents an increase over last year's tally of 15. Interestingly, even with our tougher methodology for 2019, four of 2018's top five re-appear in this year's top five ratings as well. This is testament to their continued investment and just how strong their digital footprint continues to be.

In 2018, some of the basic needs of the client audience were being neglected, and it is surprising that it remains the case – 23% of the top 100 firms still do not have a responsive website. A staggering 68% of

law firms have no client log-in area, which hardly sends a message of putting clients front and centre. Another example of neglecting clients' needs is in the limited use of multi-language functionality. Language translation seems to be deployed if a firm has a presence in a region rather than for the enhanced experience of their regional clients.

Look at two of the most important physical building blocks of digital – user experience and search results – and you will see a great similarity in templating, functionality and even interface design treatment. In an industry that's looking for differentiation, this is a surprise. Whilst our number-one-placed firm delivers a distinctive and compelling web presence, few of the leaders are deploying a digital footprint that expresses their authentic difference. The fact that 73% of the top 100 have no clearly stated brand purpose on their home pages and 62% have no brand values on their sites is doubtless part of this problem.

Search functionality has improved slowly, however in our opinion just 22% of the top 100 deliver a rich search result with intelligently related content. Our number-three-placed firm leads the way here: before delivering great search results, it simply asks, 'How can we help?'

Websites should be engaging and enriching digital experiences across structured content and also tone. Whilst it is encouraging to see the very best firms continuing to reward users with issues-based marketing – focusing on the clients' real world business challenges rather than just 'industries' or 'sectors' – it's a shame

that the customer focus does not extend to all written content. Overall there is still too much exposition about the law firm and too little drafted with a client-first approach.

Two critical topics for the global law industry are diversity and gender representation at senior levels, and it is good to see more firms providing dedicated content around these issues. Seventy-five percent provide compelling content on their approach to diversity, but only 53% have detailed content on gender representation. For such an important topic we might reasonably expect a deeper focus.

The overall use of social media is on the rise – over 90% of the top 100 are now active on Twitter and LinkedIn. Facebook and Instagram accounts also rose, but this increased use of platforms has happened at the expense of implementing a cohesive social media strategy. Many still fail to grasp social's full potential and provide a mish-mash of content rather than targeted and related content across all channels. The development of apps and client tools is on the increase – our number-four-placed firm led the field on this criterion with its best-in-class client tools.

Over the following pages we present our findings in detail and you'll see which firms have made great efforts to present a cohesive, compelling and user-first digital and brand experience. Our conclusion at the end of this document gives useful guidance on ways to compete with our top 10 firms.

About Ratings

Now in its 24th edition, Living Ratings benchmarks the brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading financial and professional services brands.

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

Recent studies include:



The brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading asset managers – 2018



The brand and digital intelligence of America's leading wealth managers – 2018



The brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading law firms – 2018

Bespoke digital diagnostics for law firms

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

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

The objective of the diagnostic is:

Analysis

To analyse how your site performs against a set of proven benchmarks.

Re-alignment

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

Connectivity

To connect your social media strategy with your content strategy.

Purpose

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

Implementation

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

UX

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

Understanding

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

About Living Group

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



DIGITAL IMPACT AWARDS 2018

Corporate Content Awards Winner 2019

WINNER 2018 transformawards north america

WINNER 2018 transformawards asia-pacific

What defines us

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



Find out more at:

www.living-group.com

What we do

Engaging branding

Our creative teams in New York, London and Hong Kong deliver award-winning ideas with proven results, driving your business performance with strategic thinking, brand creation and enhancement and stand-out messaging. We fuse these key elements together to generate highly effective visual and verbal expressions of your firm.

Disruptive digital

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

Integrated campaigns

We can help transform your brand objectives into tangible business benefits – stimulating dialogue, lifting your profile, prompting consideration, and spurring action. We research, plan and execute advertising and social media campaigns worldwide, applying distinctive ideas and creative, backed by relevant analytics to measure your success.

Creating difference for our people and communities

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

Who, what, when and how we rated and how we classified each firm

Who we rated

In January and February 2019 our analysts reviewed the brand and digital intelligence of the world's leading law firms (source: The American Lawyer, December 2018). Each firm was rated against nearly 100 criteria covering engagement (functionality and social channels) and evidence (brand and content) across four categories.

How we calculate our scores

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

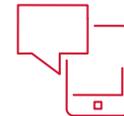
Sector averages are based on the full listing of the top 100 firms. The five firms with the highest scores are also reviewed with expanded case studies.



Website functionality



Website content



Social media presence



Social media content



Raising the bar. The 2019 criteria

With each iteration of our report, we evolve our scoring methodology to be more demanding. The 2019 Law Firm Ratings features a detailed analysis of:

Engagement



High quality search

We want it all and we want it now. Law firms should have quick intuitive search engines that serve up filtered results to help visitors find what they want easily.



IA and UX

Information architecture and user experiences are more important than ever to tell your brand story and present relevant and engaging content.



SEO

Never has search engine optimisation (SEO) been so important – it can be the difference between prospective clients finding you – or not! We apply third-party SEO software to scan every website and assess whether best practice has been adopted.



Site speed

No one likes waiting for answers, so what does a slow web server say about your firm? We reward firms with fast sites and speedy search results.



Active social media channels

Firms adopting best practice, using a range of active social media channels and promoting content that is proprietary can expect high scores. We also look positively on firms using the channels for their different audiences.

Evidence



Brand positioning

Law firms that are clear about who they are, what they do and why it matters to their target audiences on their home pages are rewarded. They do not assume that everyone knows them.



Visual language

Recognition is given to those firms that have a clear and consistent digital brand and use it to help their readers consume data.



Evidence of what you do

In a sector obsessed with evidence, we reward law firms that provide case studies that help their target audiences understand their skills and specialisms.



Biographies

People buy people, so we reward law firms that create well-structured and well-written partner biographies.



Specific gender-related content

We reward law firms that tackle this industry-wide issue head on and provide evidence that they are addressing their gender imbalance.

Defining brand and digital intelligence

Establishing a positive brand perception has never been more important. Often a client's first brand experience is a visit to a website, therefore the digital expression of brand intelligence is paramount in building the right kind of connection with a user.

Brand creation and curation

Creating a more influential digital experience requires careful attention to the way a brand behaves, speaks and presents itself visually. Cohesion and consistency are key in achieving this along with a mode of communicating that is distinctive and proprietary to that brand.

Many law firms have much to do to improve the digital deployment of their brands, particularly around visual identity and brand language. Indifference to making a brand work better often comes from a cynical perspective that rests in the complacency of a steady balance sheet. However, firms must deploy their brands intelligently, effectively and consistently, especially to engage with the new audiences arising each day through increased merger activity across the sector and business diversification beyond law. Clarity and articulation of who you are, what you do and why it matters to your audience form the foundation of creating significant difference for your brand in the legal landscape.

Expressing brand intelligence online can be done in a number of ways. Consistent and coherent brand language is essential and extends from a succinct and meaningful positioning statement that articulates the who, what and why of the brand and influences all subsequent content in the site. Brand values, supported by evidence in the broader content, deliver succinct points of reference to influence brand perception both internally and externally. A clear tone of voice throughout a digital experience serves to set governance to all written content from sector or service content, case studies and right through to partner bios.

A distinctive visual brand is a powerful tool for law firms to use in building brand recognition in a busy marketplace. Having an engaging and proprietary visual identity is an effective way to capture and retain user attention. It can inspire more compelling content, such as video and animation, and protect brand consistency in the continued conversation in social media. Effective visual brand design is an essential part of the bigger brand picture that is all too often overlooked or underestimated by law firms. In a sector that is beset by blue and grey colour palettes and arbitrary stock photos of modern city architecture, embracing a visual identity that makes a statement about who you are as a firm can be a huge advantage and pay dividends in user engagement.

Developing digital acumen

Equally important to brand is digital intelligence, and the thoughtful use of your firm's digital footprint will help amplify your brand.

In a sector where evidence is critical, the leading firms use their websites to deliver to their target audiences issues-based insights, case studies, tools and well-structured people pages, written with one client-first tone of voice and available in a variety of media, not just endless screens of text. However, these law firms are the few amongst the many, with the vast majority serving up bland cookie cutter and indistinguishable content that fails to engage or inspire.

When it comes to search, the best law firms serve up enriched and fast results that are filtered and make it easy for their users to find what they're looking for. The worst just provide lists, leaving the user to search again by scrolling through suggested answer after answer. What does this say about their firm?

Website SEO is also one of the pillars of digital wisdom, with our leaders placing great emphasis on ensuring their content is not just tagged and described correctly, but written with search engines in mind – succinct, relevant and timely.

A clear content strategy sits at the heart of digital intelligence – using your website and social media channels, not as a dumping ground for every word created by the firm, but as carefully curated outlets with different content delivered to each targeted audience segment. Our advice? Do less, but do it better. The mantra law firms should adopt is to fight the excess of clutter and noise.

Investment in brand and digital intelligence empowers firms to take the pole position in a bustling marketplace and opens up a more genuine dialogue with audiences, both incumbent and prospective.

A distinctive visual brand is a powerful tool for law firms to use in building brand recognition in a crowded marketplace.

Are you determined, focused, energetic or lacklustre?

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



Law firms ratings and rankings

Living Ratings 2019 Ranking	Living Ratings 2018 Ranking	American Lawyer Global 100, 2018	Firm name	Score / 760	%	Category
1 ↑	2	42	Winston & Strawn	620	81.58%	●
2 ↑	3	38	Goodwin Procter	615	80.92%	●
3 ↓	1	3	Baker McKenzie	610	80.26%	●
4 ↑	17	16	White & Case	595	78.29%	●
5 ↓	4	9	Hogan Lovells	585	76.97%	●
6 ↑	10	29	Herbert Smith Freehills	575	75.66%	●
7 ↑	38=	12	Linklaters	570	75.00%	●
8 ↑	25=	11	Morgan Lewis	568	74.74%	●
9 ↑	19	39	Eversheds Sutherland	565	74.34%	●
10 ↓	5	63	Ashurst	560	73.68%	●
11 =	11	44	Orrick	555	73.03%	●
12 ↓	9	4	DLA Piper	550	72.37%	●
13 =	13	40	Squire Patton Boggs	545	71.71%	●
14 ↑	20	19	Greenberg Traurig	540	71.05%	●
15 ↓	14=	47	McDermott Will & Emery	530	69.74%	●
16 ↓	6	74	Gowling WLG	525	69.08%	●
17 ↑	64=	37	Akin Gump	520	68.42%	●
18 ↓	7	32	Reed Smith	517.5	68.09%	●
19 ↑	66	22	Weil, Gotshal & Manges	515	67.76%	●
20 ↓	18	7	Clifford Chance	510	67.11%	●
21 ↑	30	35	King & Wood Mallesons	505	66.45%	●
22 ↓	16	62	Vinson & Elkins	502.5	66.12%	●
23 ↑	27	88	Nixon Peabody	500	65.79%	●
24 ↑	85=	50	Proskauer Rose	497.5	65.46%	●
25 –	N/A	93	McCarthy Tetrault	495	65.13%	●
26 ↓	8	55	Perkins Coie	490	64.47%	●
27 ↑	43=	65	Clyde & Co.	485.5	63.88%	●
28 ↓	22	15	Freshfields	485	63.82%	●
29 ↓	23	99	Bird & Bird	482.5	63.49%	●
30 ↓	12	72	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	480	63.16%	●
31 ↑	52	76	Fragomen	475	62.50%	●
32 ↓	21	59	O'Melveny & Myers	470.5	61.91%	●
33 ↓	31	92	Drinker Biddle & Reath	465	61.18%	●
34 ↑	37	56	Alston & Bird	463	60.92%	●
35 ↑	36	8	Sidley Austin	458.5	60.33%	●
36 ↑	85=	17	Gibson Dunn	455	59.87%	●
37 ↓	28	33	Paul Hastings	453.5	59.67%	●
38 ↓	34	61	Baker Botts	452.5	59.54%	●
39 ↓	32	48	Shearman & Sterling	451.5	59.41%	●
40 ↑	79	49	Milbank	445	58.55%	●
41 ↑	58=	46	Covington	442	58.16%	●
42 ↑	61	2	Latham & Watkins	440	57.89%	●
43 ↑	76=	5	Skadden	438.5	57.70%	●
44 ↑	46	67	Foley & Lardner	437.5	57.57%	●
45 ↓	40	20	CMS	435	57.24%	●
46 ↓	25=	78	Osler	430	56.58%	●
47 ↑	49	36	Morrison & Foerster	425	55.92%	●
48 –	N/A	80	Allens	420	55.26%	●
49 ↑	76=	28	Cleary Gottlieb	415	54.61%	●
50 ↓	38=	90	Ogletree Deakins	410	53.95%	●

Living Ratings 2019 Ranking	Living Ratings 2018 Ranking	American Lawyer Global 100, 2018	Firm name	Score / 760	%	Category
51 ↓	43=	85	Faegre Baker Daniels	405	53.29%	●
52 ↓	35	43	Dechert	400	52.63%	●
53 ↓	24	82	Little Mendelson	395	51.97%	●
54 ↓	14=	6	Dentons	390	51.32%	●
55 ↓	41=	87	Polsinelli	380	50.00%	●
56 ↑	82	31	WilmerHale	375	49.34%	●
57 ↓	47=	79	Hunton Andrews Kurth	370	48.68%	●
58 ↓	41=	68	Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton	368.5	48.49%	●
59 ↑	67=	34	Cooley	362.5	47.70%	●
60 ↓	53	14	Norton Rose Fulbright	360	47.37%	●
61 ↓	60	77	Katten	355	46.71%	●
62 ↓	29	73	Pillsbury	350	46.05%	●
63 ↓	50	45	Arnold & Porter	345	45.39%	●
64 ↑	90	13	Jones Day	340	44.74%	●
65 ↓	33	30	King & Spalding	338.5	44.54%	●
66 ↓	58=	64	McGuireWoods	337.5	44.41%	●
67 ↓	57	95	Fox Rothschild	336.5	44.28%	●
68 ↓	64=	18	Ropes & Gray	335	44.08%	●
69 ↓	56	53	Debevoise & Plimpton	332.5	43.75%	●
70 ↓	55	70	Seyfarth Shaw	330	43.42%	●
71 ↓	54	84	Locke Lord	325	42.76%	●
72 ↓	71	69	Baker & Hostetler	323.5	42.57%	●
73 =	73	91	Duane Morris	322.5	42.43%	●
74 ↓	72	52	Holland & Knight	320	42.11%	●
75 ↓	74	100	Blank Rome	315	41.45%	●
76 ↑	87	25	Paul Weiss	312.5	41.12%	●
77 ↓	62	89	Lewis Brisbois	310	40.79%	●
78 =	78	71	Fried Frank	305	40.13%	●
79 ↓	75	24	Mayer Brown	302.5	39.80%	●
80 ↓	63	75	Pinsent Masons	300	39.47%	●
81 ↑	83	60	Slaughter & May	290	38.16%	●
82 ↓	43=	94	Simmons & Simmons	287.5	37.83%	●
83 ↑	93	83	Troutman Sanders	285	37.50%	●
84 ↑	97	1	Kirkland & Ellis	270	35.53%	●
85 –	N/A	98	Zhong Lun	265	34.87%	●
86 ↓	84	21	Sullivan & Cromwell	263.5	34.67%	●
87 ↑	91=	26	Davis Polk	250	32.89%	●
88 ↓	67=	96	Jenner & Block	245	32.24%	●
89 =	89	27	Quinn Emanuel	240	31.58%	●
90 ↓	80=	54	Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati	230	30.26%	●
91 ↓	70	41	K&L Gates	228.5	30.07%	●
92 ↓	47=	86	Blake, Cassels & Graydon	225	29.61%	●
93 ↓	80=	10	Allen & Overy	200	26.32%	●
94 ↑	95	23	Simpson Thacher	195	25.66%	●
95 ↑	98	57	Willkie Farr & Gallagher	185	24.34%	●
96 =	96	66	Cravath, Swaine & Moore	180	23.68%	●
97 ↓	94	81	Venable	178.5	23.49%	●
98 ↑	99	51	Kim & Chang	100	13.16%	●
99 –	N/A	97	Yingke	90	11.84%	●
100 =	100	58	Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz	50	6.58%	●

● Determined ● Focused ● Energetic ● Lacklustre

Engagement and evidence: the leaders

Determined law firms build experiences for their users

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

1

Engagement

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

2

Evidence

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

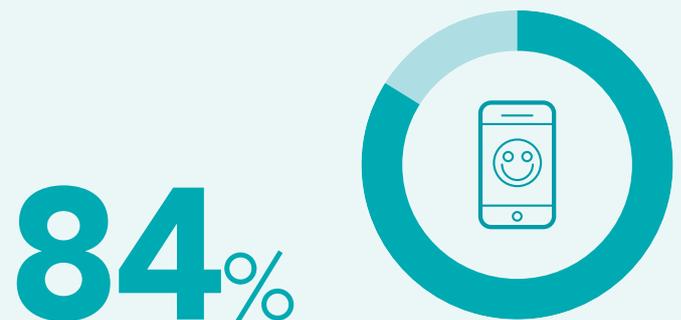
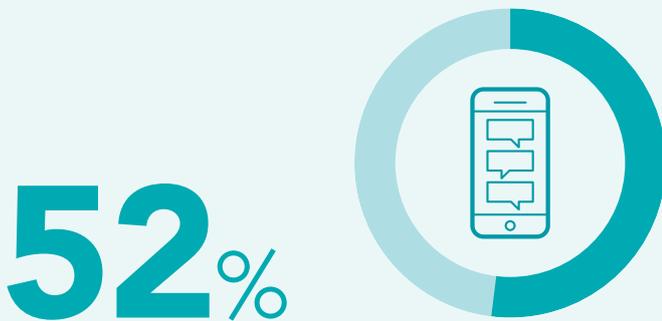
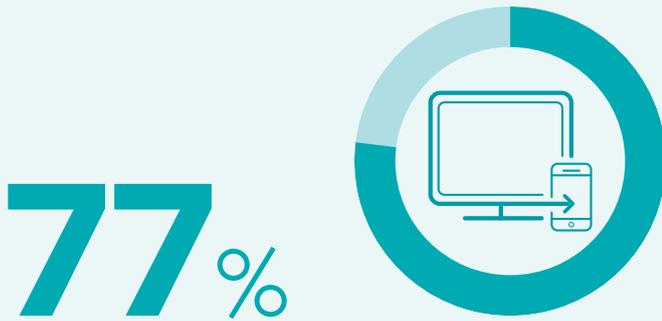
Engagement: our top 20

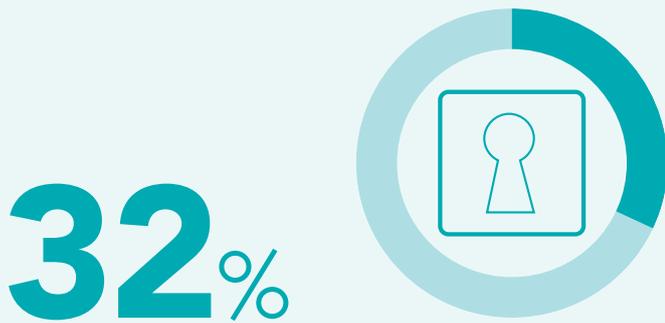
	Firm name	Engagement score (%)
1	Winston & Strawn	85.29
1=	Baker McKenzie	85.29
3	DLA Piper	82.35
4	Hogan Lovells	80.88
5	Linklaters	79.41
6	Perkins Coie	76.47
7	White & Case	75.00
7=	Herbert Smith Freehills	75.00
7=	Morgan Lewis	75.00
7=	Orrick	75.00
7=	Squire Patton Boggs	75.00
12	Vinson & Elkins	74.26
13	Ogletree Deakins	73.53
14	Sidley Austin	73.09
15	Goodwin Procter	72.06
15=	King & Wood Mallesons	72.06
15=	Milbank	72.06
18	Shearman & Sterling	71.03
19	Ashurst	70.59
20	Covington	68.24

Evidence: our top 20

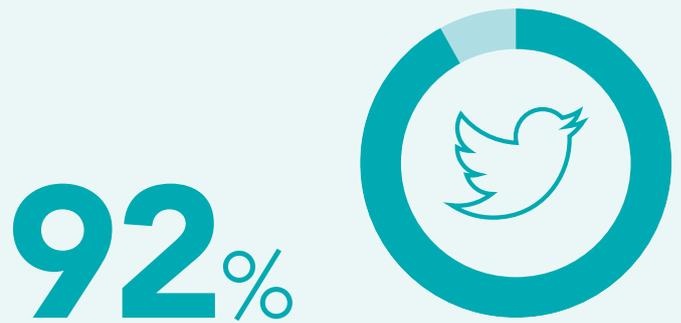
	Firm name	Evidence score (%)
1	Goodwin Procter	88.10
2	White & Case	80.95
3	Winston & Strawn	78.57
3=	Eversheds Sutherland	78.57
3=	Clifford Chance	78.57
6	Baker McKenzie	76.19
6=	Herbert Smith Freehills	76.19
6=	Ashurst	76.19
9	Hogan Lovells	73.81
9=	Morgan Lewis	73.81
9=	Greenberg Traurig	73.81
9=	McDermott Will & Emery	73.81
9=	Reed Smith	73.81
14	Linklaters	71.43
14=	Orrick	71.43
14=	Akin Gump	71.43
14=	McCarthy Tetrault	71.43
14=	Clyde & Co.	71.43
19	Squire Patton Boggs	69.05
19=	Gowling WLG	69.05

The numbers that define law firms: engagement

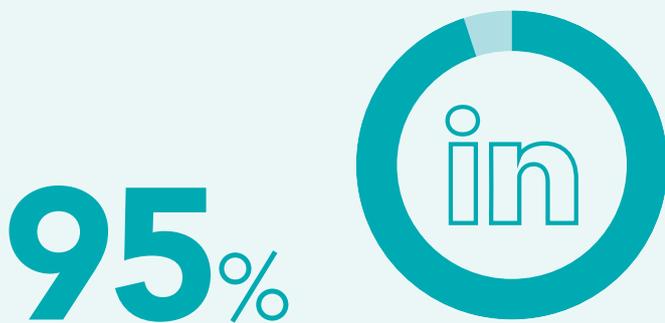




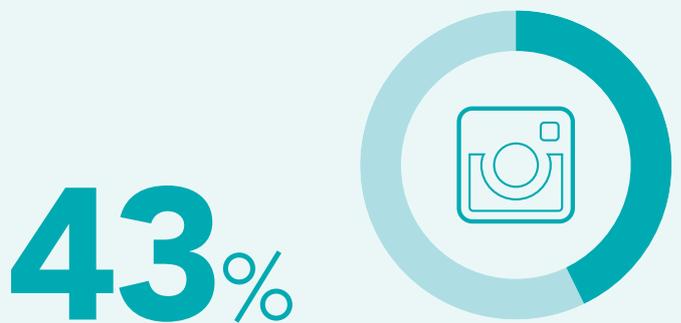
▲ of firms provide client log-in areas.
2018: 23%



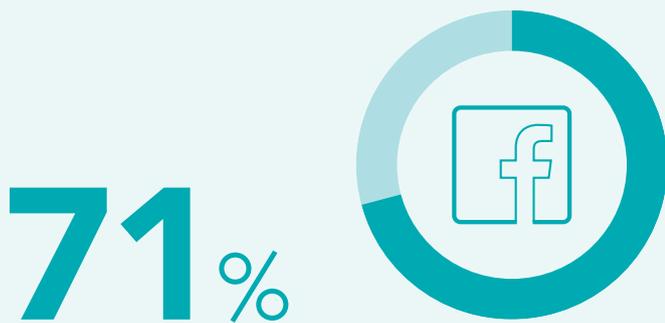
● of firms have an active Twitter channel.
2018: 92%



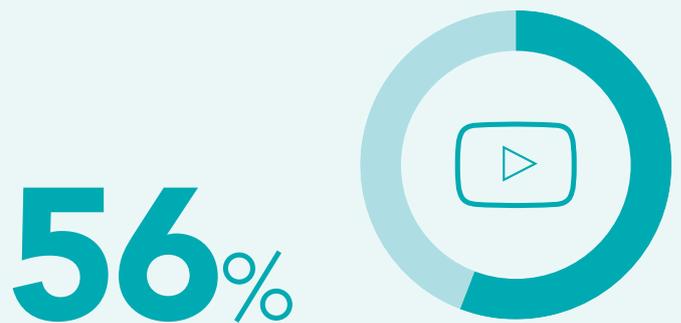
▼ of firms have an active LinkedIn channel.
2018: 97%



▲ of firms are now active on Instagram.
2018: 25%

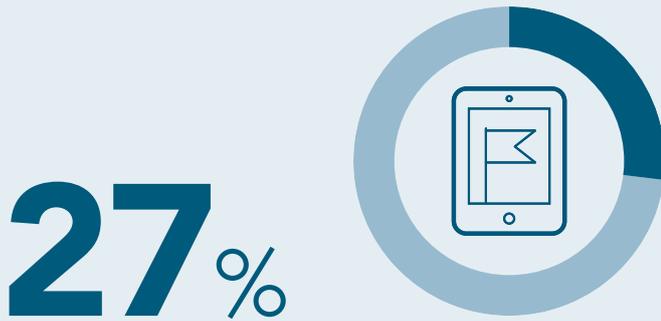


▼ of firms have an active Facebook channel.
2018: 76%



▼ of firms are now active on YouTube.
2018: 58%

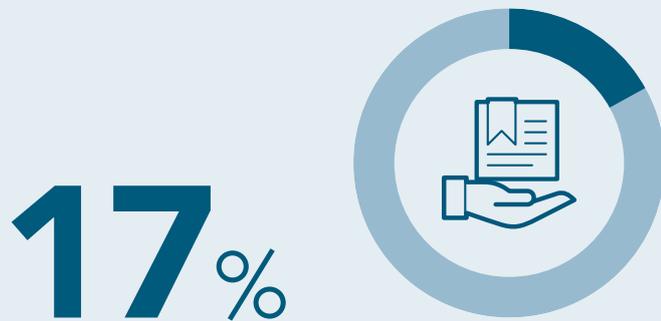
The numbers that define law firms: evidence



▲ of firms state their brand positioning upfront on their home page. 2018: 19%



▼ of firms communicate their brand values on their website. 2018: 56%



● of firms provide evidence to support their brand values. 2018: N/A



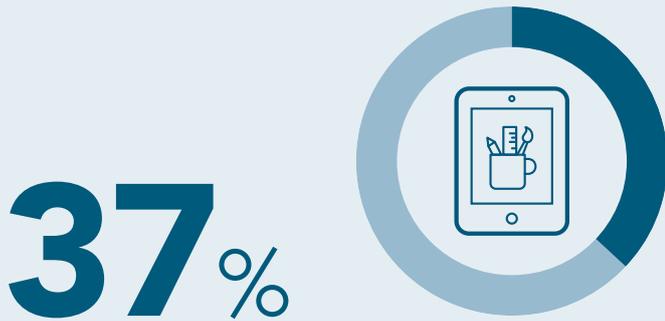
▼ of firms use a distinctive visual language on their website. 2018: 61%



● of firms provide case studies on their website. 2018: N/A



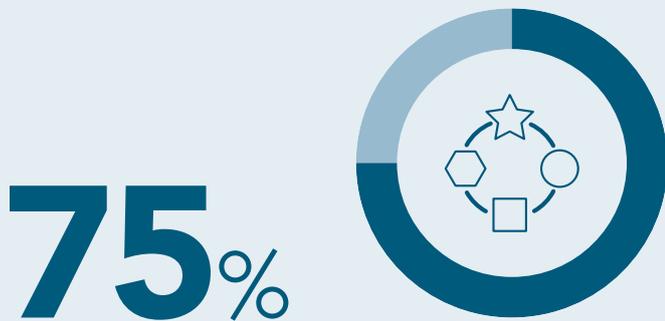
● of firms have high quality partner biography pages.



▼ of firms use design to enhance the content on their websites. 2018: 73%



▲ of firms have blogs on their websites. 2018: 49%



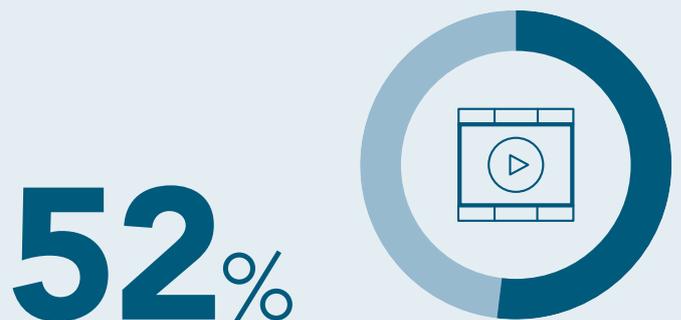
▼ of firms have prominent diversity content on their websites. 2018: 92%



● of firms have specific gender-related content on their websites. 2018: N/A



▲ of firms deliver thought leadership on their websites. 2018: 65%



▼ of firms use film or animation on their websites. 2018: 67%

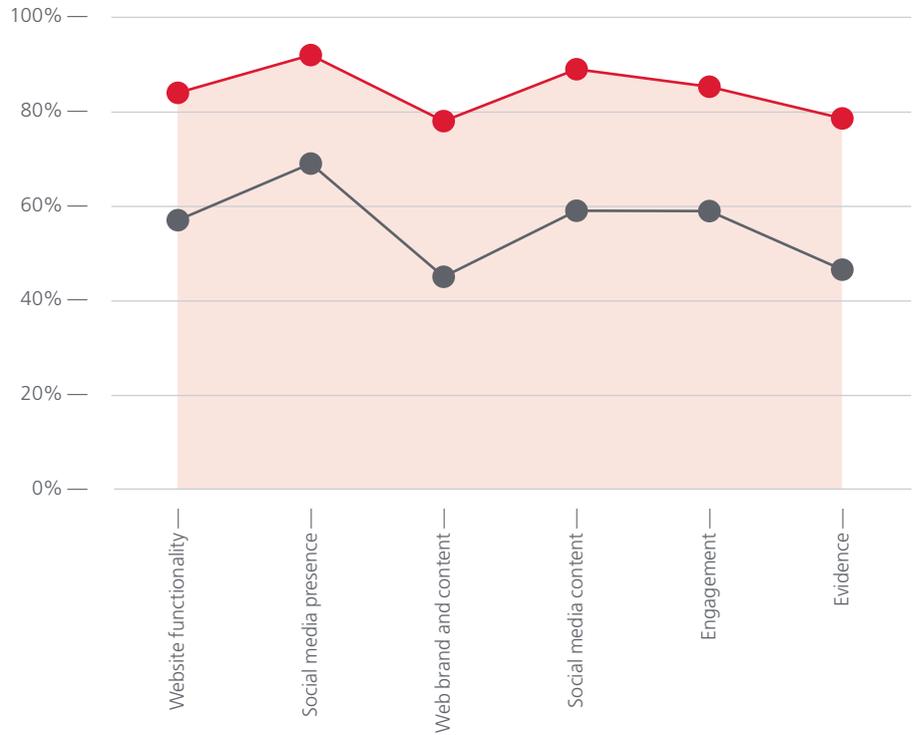
1 Winston & Strawn

winston.com



- Winston & Strawn
- Sector average

Classification:
▶ Determined



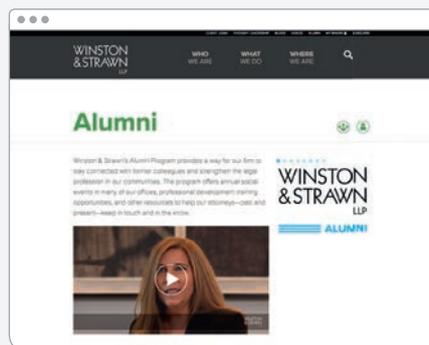
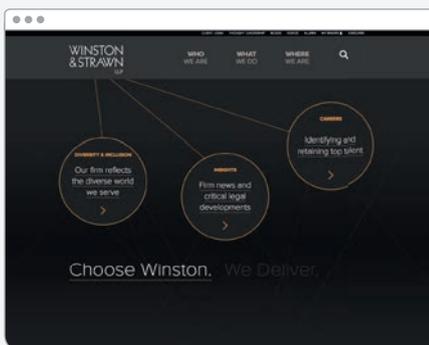
Key features

- ▶ An original and distinctive web presence
- ▶ Strong use of film to inform
- ▶ Compelling tone of voice
- ▶ Powerful search functionality
- ▶ Best-in-class people biographies

Winston.com’s distinctive pared-down visual language is backed up by great content. One of the few of the top 10 firms to deliver a compelling brand purpose upfront, this site is a brilliant balance of client-focused content and a confident showcase of their services. The interactive homepage navigates effortlessly to client testimonials, infographics and rich moving image. The site’s ‘My binder’ feature enables clients to cherry-pick content and save pages and articles, which can be accessed after signing up and logging in.

An advanced search function enables you to ‘jump’ to sections and apply an array of filters to pinpoint exactly what you’re looking for. Partner biographies are another area where Winston leads the field, giving users a rich mine of information about each lawyer at the firm; the content here is not only detailed but simple to navigate. Social media channels are intelligently used and build on their client-centric approach.

Images © Winston & Strawn



2

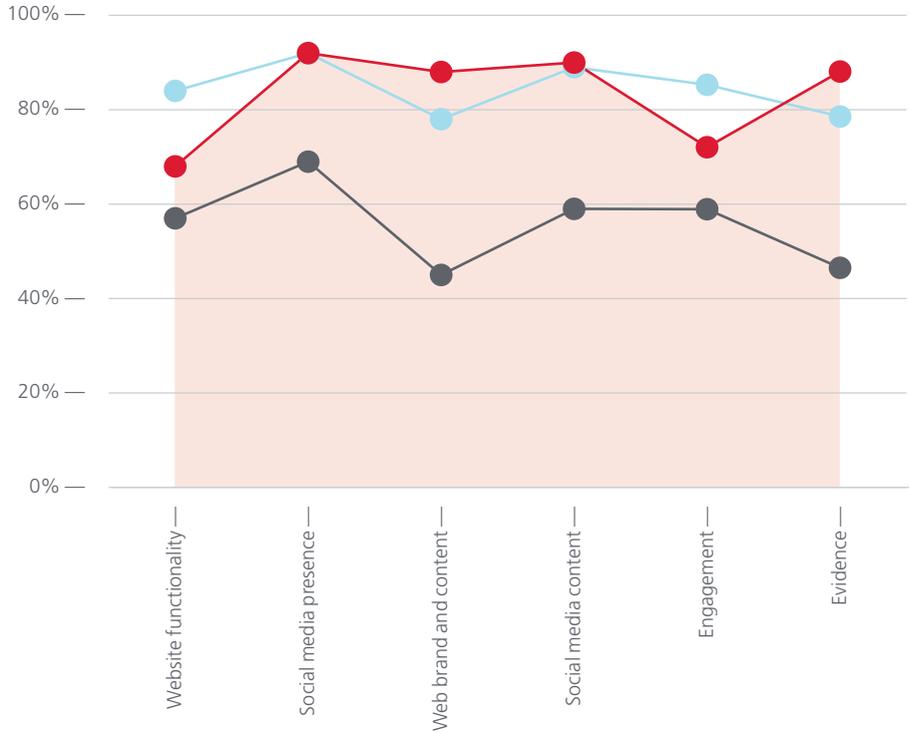
Goodwin Procter

goodwinprocter.com



- Goodwin Procter
- Sector average
- Sector leader

Classification:
▶ Determined



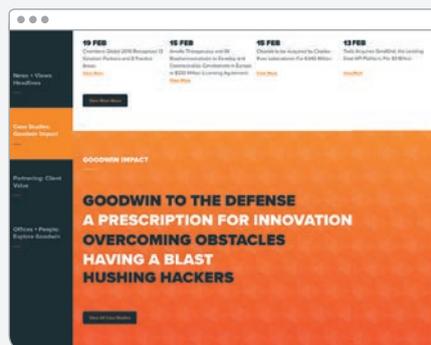
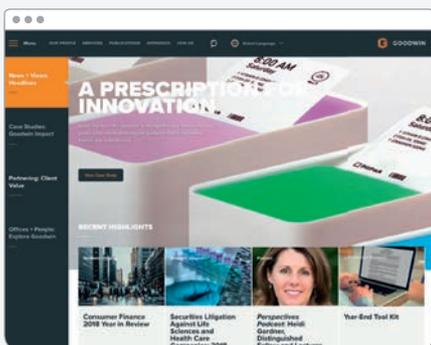
Key features

- ▶ **Compelling case studies**
- ▶ **Powerful user experience and guided navigation**
- ▶ **Detailed diversity and gender content**
- ▶ **Clear content strategy across all channels**

Goodwin’s focus on making clients’ lives easier is evident throughout this site, which effortlessly demonstrates their experience and expertise. They also lead the pack with their use of informative case studies, highlighting client benefits in real-life examples and these are matched by equally rich insights, information, blogs and videos.

Their homepage confidently leads to further impressive thought leadership and insights. The site’s advanced search is the best of the top 10 rated firms, filters are extensive, pinpointing content exactly and giving huge flexibility on how to view and organise search results. The ability to search by date ranges is a particularly thoughtful feature and a great example of client-first functionality.

Images © Goodwin Procter



3 Baker McKenzie

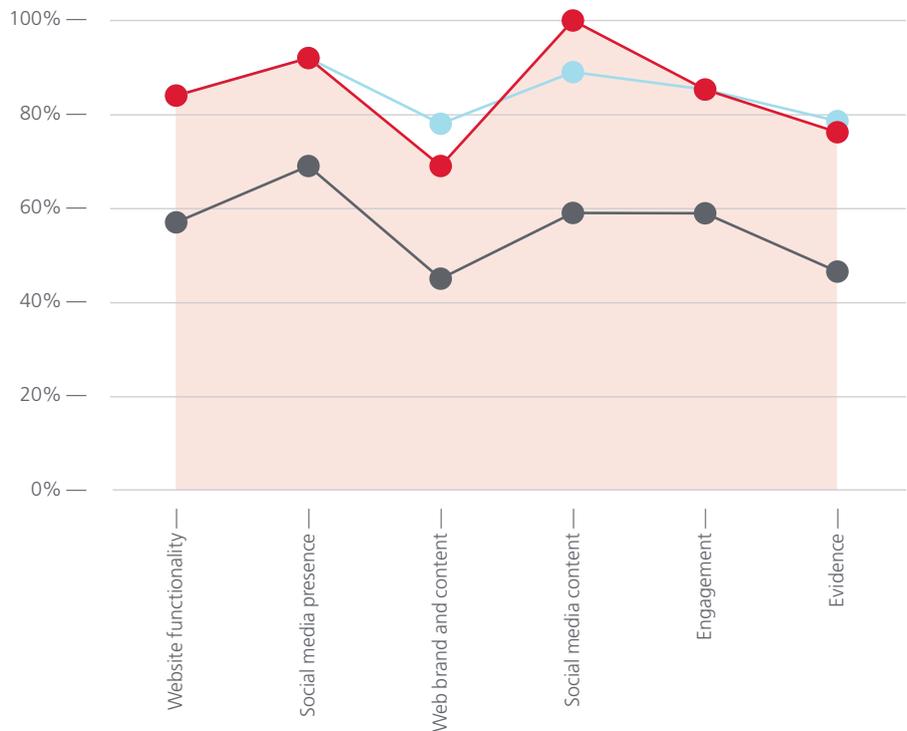
bakermckenzie.com



- Baker McKenzie
- Sector average
- Sector leader

Classification:

► Determined



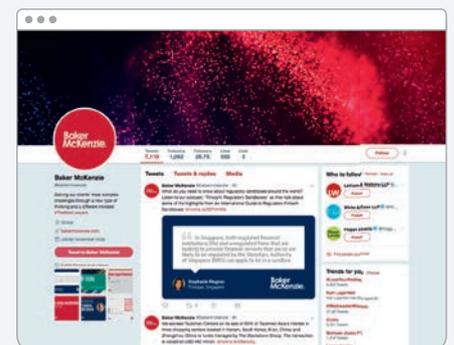
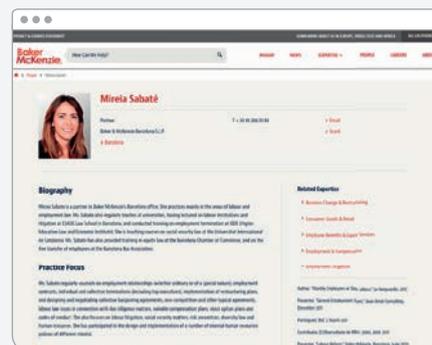
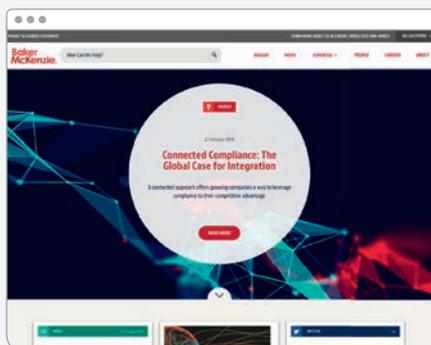
Key features

- Prominent search function 'How can we help?'
- Rich content on real issues
- Enhanced partner biographies
- Client-centric across all channels
- Clear content strategy

Baker McKenzie's home page leads with a confident search area titled 'How can we help?' This sets the tone for a truly client-centric site filled with rich insights and engaging thought leadership.

The primary navigation has its own extensive search functionality, offering an almost unlimited and site-wide search. Microsite hubs, a 'thought leadership kit' and detailed partner biographies are just some of the tools and content deployed to deliver this engaging experience. Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube are used well and build on the balance of powerful client insights and a compelling Baker McKenzie story.

Images © Baker McKenzie



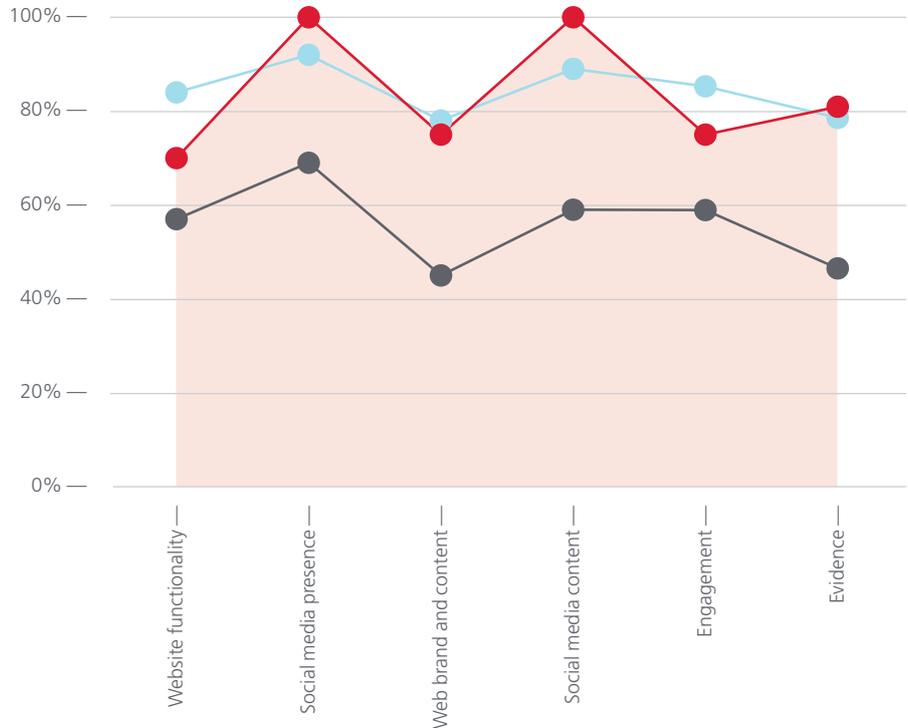
4 White & Case

whitecase.com



- White & Case
- Sector average
- Sector leader

Classification:
▶ Determined



Key features

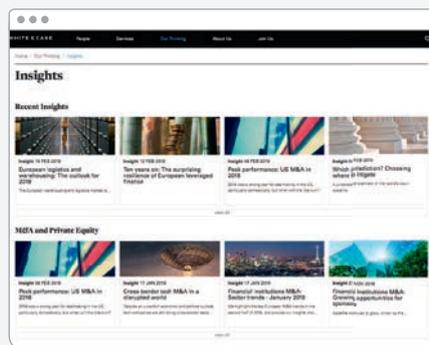
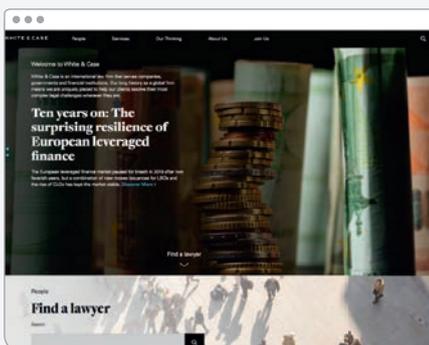
- ▶ **Powerful & differentiated presence**
- ▶ **Compelling thought leadership**
- ▶ **Good search functionality**
- ▶ **Relentlessly client-focused**

White & Case stands out for the distinctive look and structure of their web presence. Information on competitors' sites is often presented as a dull list; White & Case brings their content to life, grouping insights by Practice area, brilliantly highlighting the relevant experience.

The site has a 'Blog' like structure where thought leadership and insights lead the way. Delve deeper and detail is all here too: diversity content is backed by evidence in their 'Our stories' section. Social media is active, consistent and has a good mix of static and moving image content.

White & Case are also one of the very few law firms that provide an online tool, with the firm's M&A Explorer being a fabulous example of how to engage with target audiences in a highly memorable and practical way.

Images © White & Case



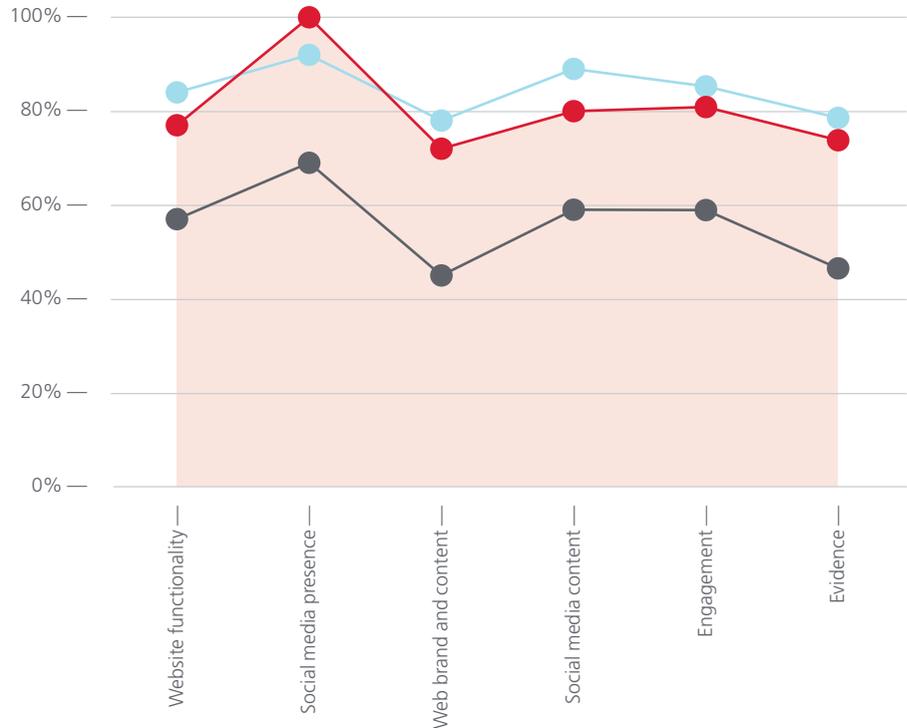
5 Hogan Lovells

hoganlovells.com



- Hogan Lovells
- Sector average
- Sector leader

Classification:
▶ Determined



Key features

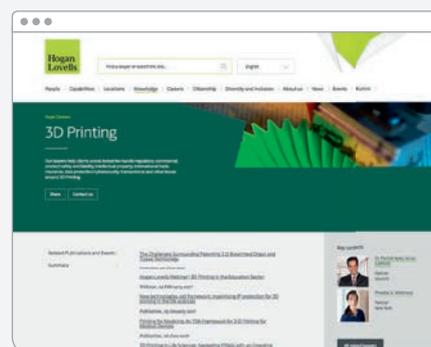
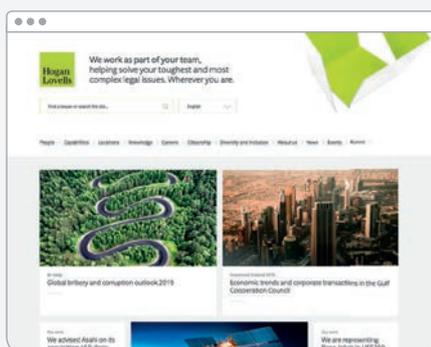
- ▶ Useful 'Topic centres'
- ▶ Rich blogging
- ▶ Quality search
- ▶ Leading social media

Hogan Lovells leads with a client-centric proposition that they will work as part of your team and help solve the toughest of legal issues. It is this straightforward approach that sets them apart from the pack. The firm's capabilities are backed by credentials including recognition, latest thinking and events.

Topic centres are extensive and well-curated, both content and tone of voice have clearly been thought about. Knowledge and thought leadership are demonstrated through an in-depth knowledge centre complete with blogs, guides and reviews. The excellent content is served in 6 different languages, perfectly demonstrating their intercontinental reach.

Leave the site to view their social platforms and you'll find even more best-in-class storytelling and compelling reasons to do business with them.

Images © Hogan Lovells



6 > 10

6

Herbert Smith Freehills
herbertsmithfreehills.com



Classification:
▶ Determined

Key features

- ▶ Clear client-centric vision and values
- ▶ Client extranet
- ▶ Deep insights via 'Knowledge Hubs'
- ▶ Regular Blogs

7

Linklaters
linklaters.com



Classification:
▶ Determined

Key features

- ▶ Clear client-centric vision and values
- ▶ Excellent Diversity content
- ▶ Leading on-line services
- ▶ Client 'Knowledge portal'

8

Morgan Lewis
morganlewis.com



Classification:
▶ Determined

Key features

- ▶ Excellent careers content
- ▶ Extensive use of film
- ▶ Client-centric content and tone of voice
- ▶ Distinctive brand look and feel

9

Eversheds Sutherland
eversheds-sutherland.com



Classification:
▶ Energetic

Key features

- ▶ Location-specific content
- ▶ Rich visual expression
- ▶ Client area
- ▶ Detailed service/practice areas

10

Ashurst
ashurst.com



Classification:
▶ Determined

Key features

- ▶ Clear content strategy in place
- ▶ Excellent content/knowledge hubs
- ▶ Detailed Diversity/Gender content
- ▶ Interactive location map



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

Please get in touch to arrange a meeting.

Opportunities to lead

Our Living Ratings results this year show a sector that is working hard to attract visitors with a compelling digital and brand presence. But there is room for improvement and there are opportunities for all: developing an engaging digital experience is not just the preserve of the wealthiest firms – it's not about money spent but the care and focus expended. Here are six big opportunities to make your brand and digital footprint even better.



1 Focus on what makes your firm special

Do you have a compelling brand purpose on your front page? Do your values really set you apart from your competitors? Does your 'About You' page only tell a client about you or does it demonstrate your understanding of them and give them reasons to work with you? Be strategic, focus on the things that really set you apart.



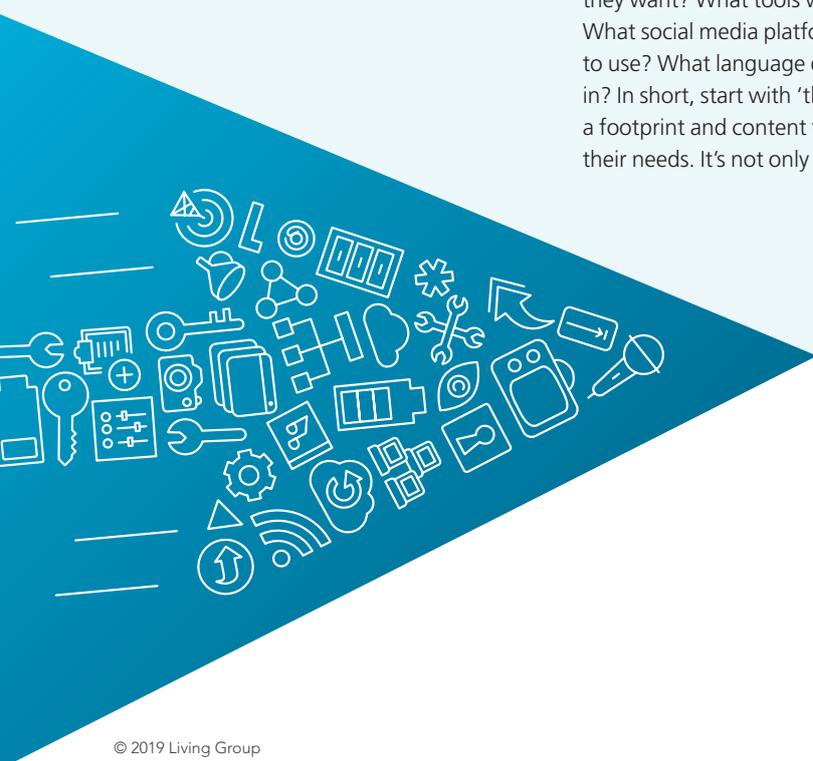
2 Build from your client needs out

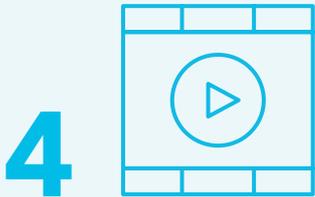
The legal sector shows very little digital differentiation, few firms are challenging the norm and many present logical but similar site structures. Review your content and your presence against your clients' needs. A big opportunity for any firm is a presence built entirely to reflect a client's digital journey and needs. What content do they want? What tools would help them? What social media platforms do they want to use? What language do they want to read in? In short, start with 'them' and generate a footprint and content that addresses their needs. It's not only about 'you'.



3 Prove it

In an industry that is based on evidence, there is little presented. Representative experience or lists of cases do not deliver all of the detail. Another big opportunity is to express your firm's story, experience and key strengths through engaging case studies and enhanced partner biographies.





To really engage – use engaging content

Clients are more and more time starved, often accessing information on small screens away from the office. It's already difficult to keep their focus if they are presented with lots of small text, doubly so if the written content is lacklustre. Provide them with inspiring and compelling content like online tools, infographics, animation or film. Rich media delivers the message in an engaging way and leaves a long lasting impression.



Get the basics right

Overall the legal sector is lagging behind other professional services in getting the basics of a robust digital presence right. There are easy wins here: an engaging Google descriptor tells your story before a client even visits your site. Your website needs to be responsive but also intelligently so: does your site lose critical navigation or information in small screen versions? Pay attention to the little details; site speed, SEO and SSL certificates all play an important part in providing a credible digital footprint.



Take the lead on gender-related content

After many years in which to embed policy and see the results, the top 10 firms now cover diversity content well. But gender specific content is limited overall and many firms are being slow to visibly address this high profile and widely reported issue. Leading in this area is not only the right thing to do – it will demonstrate thoughtful and stable leadership and will ultimately drive clients and the best talent to your law firm.

Clients are more and more time starved. Provide them with inspiring and compelling content like online tools, infographics, animation or film.

Get in touch

What's your score?

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



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Living Ratings

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