

What Could the ABA's Clarification on Lawyer Advertising Rules Mean for You?

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PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, June 28, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Bar Association, or ABA, voted in favor of modernizing its rules on lawyer advertising. Part of this modification to regulations includes clarifying the rules as well. [Legal advertising](#) has been a confusing area regarding legal ethics for lawyers for many years now.

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The proposed changes were only a piece of a larger proposal made during the ABA's annual meeting in Chicago. These changes focused on model Rules 7.1 through 7.5. These parts have now been compressed and simplified, according to the ABA.

According to Lucian Pera, a partner at Adams & Reese in Memphis, the proposed changes will have a focus on false and misleading ads. The changes will allow for lawyers to better communicate their services to potential clients, offering better insight into how they can solve potential clients' legal issues.

From the perspective of the younger generation of attorneys, the old ABA rules have made it nearly impossible to utilize creativity in legal advertising. Many have claimed it has also hindered business and potential business from booming.

Much of this hindered creativity stems from lawyers being unsure of what is appropriate and ethical and what is not okay to say in advertisements. The area of legal advertisement has been murky and questionable for years, which prompted the proposal for change.

According to the ABA, the changes will act as guidance and make it clearer for lawyers to know what they can say in advertisements and what is restricted. For example, the rules would clarify

how lawyers approach advertising about fees, restricting any misleading fee information.

The Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL) who attended the annual meeting completely agreed to the necessity of the proposed changes. Allison Martin Rhodes, president of the APRL, went as far as to call the old rules “chaotic.” She argued that nobody in the legal field ever truly understood the rules, which has caused mass confusion.

While representatives of the APRL believe the change in rules will help ease confusion and give clarity on legal advertising, the rules do not truly address advertising on social media networks. If a lawyer has his or her own personal LinkedIn page and self-promotes, is that considered advertising?

There are questions like the above that are still not addressed under the proposed new rules in regards to social media networks, which could still lead to confusion amongst lawyers. However, the ABA hopes the majority of uncertainty will be resolved under the new rule model.

The ABA model rule changes are not bound to be enforced by individual states. They instead act as guidelines for individual states to follow and potentially craft their own regulations based off of. The ABA hopes within the next few years, the majority of states will adopt these changes.

Many lawyers are hoping this change will make it easier to understand the ethical side of advertising their firms. Supporters believe the changes will lead to a complex entirely new set of regulations regarding lawyer advertisements.

Digital Marketing for Lawyers

Digital marketing strategies and online marketing can, and should, be tailored to the unique type of business as well as the target audience for which they are built -- including practice areas, legal services, online reviews, and intake forms. Though most law firms rely on SEO and Pay-Per-Click advertising to draw in new clients, the legal industry is far more diverse than just those two channels. Law firm marketing and outreach should be tailored to each individual firm, its experience, and the services offered. A law firm's internet marketing should highlight what it does best, and what makes it stand out from competitors. Law firms want to attract the right clients – the clients who are looking for those services.

Web Design

Websites have become a primary marketing tool for all institutions, including law firms. In fact, a recent survey indicates that 100% users look up law firm websites of comparable law firms for evaluating and comparing their skills and services and 90% of respondents say attorney biographies sections on websites influenced their ultimate engagement decision.

It follows that your law firm website design and architecture should be appealing and contemporary. Moreover, its content should be optimized and organized such that potential clients and search engines can find the information they are looking for efficiently. The better user experiences your law firm's website offers; the better will be your website traffic,

engagement, and conversion rates.

Content Marketing

Nobody wants to hire a lawyer that doesn't know what they're talking about, so you want to be sure that the website content on your website is asserting your industry authority. Unfortunately, there are some law firm partners out there who have had poor content slip through the cracks and landed on their blog.

If you don't want that to happen to you, ask yourself these questions: When was the last time you thoroughly reviewed your website? Can you pinpoint the overall message of your website? Is the content on there easy to read? Is your site simple to navigate? Do you have a regularly updated blog?

An informative and authoritative blog with new content is imperative to your site as it should encourage both employee recruits and prospective clients to move down the funnel from the awareness stage to the consideration stage, and then to the action stage.

Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) refers to the practice of enhancing your website and online presence to rank better on search engines like Google and Bing when people search for services your firm provides. Gone are the days when people would thumb through the Yellow Pages to find a lawyer. Now, when someone needs a particular service, they perform a Google search on their smartphone or use voice commands to instantly find what they're looking for.

This is why it's so important for your law practice to appear on the first page of Google's results. In fact, it's been found that the top five search results on Google receive 70% of clicks. So law firms should be focusing their marketing efforts on SEO.

And, probably the biggest SEO problem facing lawyers today is that their websites are not mobile-friendly. This refers to when a website is not fast to load on a mobile device, which results in the user exiting the page.

However, optimizing your website for mobile is only half the battle. There are also other aspects of law firm SEO that need to be considered to improve your website rankings, including:

- Optimizing internal pages on your site for specific keywords related to your firm's services
- Including important, relevant keywords in all titles, images, and heading tags across the website
- Optimizing all images on the website with keyword-driven descriptions
- Content marketing, including landing pages.

Social Media Marketing

If you've been questioning whether or not your practice needs a Facebook page - well, yes it does.

In fact, 95% of millennials expect brands to have a Facebook presence. And, beyond that, 87% of Gen X'ers and 70% of people ages 45-60 also think that brands should at the very least, have a Facebook page. Why? Because it proves to the online world that the people at your law firm are actually human.

So, in addition to Facebook, what other social media platforms should you be on? It ultimately depends on your law firm's practice area.

For instance, if your law firm provides small businesses with legal advice, rather than individual clients for example those that special in family law or personal injury lawyers - it could be a good idea to focus on LinkedIn since it's an excellent platform for B2B marketing.

Aside from providing your law firm with a human side, a social media presence can also help boost your SEO. Although social media doesn't necessarily have a direct impact on your rankings, it can support your SEO efforts in the following ways:

Improve local SEO efforts

Help distribute content and prolong its lifespan

Increase brand's authority and recognition

Increase brand's visibility online and help drive traffic to your site

But, if you want to seriously compete with other law firms on social media, you should probably invest in paid social ads or PPC to help alongside your organic efforts.

[Advisory Concept Evolvers:](#)

Advisory Concept Evolvers, located at 2040 Market Street in Center City, Philadelphia, offers innovative legal marketing services to build your client book. We have the experience and proven results to make your law firm more profitable, efficient and relevant. To learn more about how our digital marketing experts can help with your law firm marketing, contact us today for a free consultation at 215-510-2167. We can put your law office back on track to achieve your business development goals!

About ACE:

Advisory Concept Evolvers, aka ACE, is a state of the art and cutting edge boutique law firm marketing agency pin-pointed in two locations nationwide -- one in Philadelphia, PA, at the nexus of legal marketing in Center City, and one in Big Sky, MT, the fast-growing hub of western U.S. legal marketing opportunities. ACE is an expert digital marketing agency that specializes in law firms and providing incisive guidance to make a law firm stand out through marketing efforts, website content, and law firm SEO.

This release was drafted by [Results Driven Marketing, LLC](#): a full-service digital marketing, public relations, advertising and content marketing firm located in Wynnewood, PA.

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