

Question: Should law firms use client success stories on their websites?



Answer: YES! And here is why and how to make them effective.

Searching for the right attorney for representation is an emotion-filled time in many people's lives. They're scared because they find themselves in an unknown situation whose outcome could affect them for years to come. Their financial freedom may be at stake, or perhaps their personal freedom hangs in the balance. They want and need to find an experienced, talented attorney they can trust. And they need to do it quickly. Deciding on the right attorney is the first salve they can apply to ease their pain.

Your firm is in business to help your clients ease that pain – ultimately, to make it disappear altogether, correct? If written effectively, client success stories will garner your potential client's attention, keep them reading and, in the end, help them decide that your firm is well worth their time to contact.

SOCIAL PROOF AND CREDIBILITY

Success stories work because the reader empathizes with the person in it - your satisfied client. That's an attention grabber. How so?

They will recognize the pain as their own and relate to the situation because they are in the same or very similar boat. The reader keeps reading because the story is compelling, complete with quotes from your client. And they know it has a happy ending – precisely what they seek.

Here's where your firm comes in. It briefly but accurately and honestly describes how you saved the day and provided the client with effective representation whose outcome was what the client needed.

You've demonstrated your firm's credibility and provided the reader with social proof that you deliver the goods – as you claim elsewhere.

BUT IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU

Many law firms use client success stories on their websites. And many get bogged down with legal jargon and spend too much of the reader's time describing their actions to win the case. They should spend more time making that personal connection between the happy client and the reader. That resonates with your potential client. Your reader wants to be your satisfied client. Not you.

THE TIPPING POINT

"Yeah, I need to talk to these folks." That's the objective thought after someone reads one of your client's success stories. You've convinced them to give you a shot.

SUCCESS STORIES WRITTEN WITH SUCCESS IN MIND

A professional copywriter, one well-versed in this process, should be employed to write your client success stories. And it is a process. A good copywriter recognizes they need to be "in the know" before any writing begins. Without mentioning the details, the method includes the following:

- Becoming familiar with your firm and the subject client
- Interviewing someone from your office who is familiar with the case
- Interviewing your happy client
- Culling all that information and writing the story itself.

Also, the client-subject of the story needs to review the content for their approval before publishing.

THE FIRM'S ROLE IN SUCCESS STORIES

A trusted employee, someone familiar with your ongoing cases and who has had face-to-face contact with your clients, should be designated to identify potential success story opportunities for you. An experienced person will know what cases and recognize the clients that might be a good fit for a client success story. If you fail to have someone "on the lookout" for your firm, identifying these valuable opportunities will become haphazard at best, or they may fall by the wayside entirely.

The firm must make the original contact with the client to see if they would be interested in participating - and soon after the case ends, while the client still has that positive feeling about the outcome, is best.

Maintaining client confidentiality and complying with the ethical rules and regulations governing attorney advertising is a given. And those rules can be spelled out in the copywriter's contract and complied with via a non-disclosure agreement.

Some creativity - choosing a visually attractive format - is a must as well.

TRASH TESTIMONIALS?

No. Continue to use them. But success stories are much better at serving as that aforementioned "tipping point" to help a potential client decide to contact you.

RECAPPING THE "WHY"

Success stories are highly effective marketing tools. By spotlighting a satisfied client, these stories build trust, provide social proof, and demonstrate your firm's expertise - while showcasing your ability to achieve real-world, positive outcomes.

And if you needed a lawyer, isn't that exactly what YOU would be looking for?