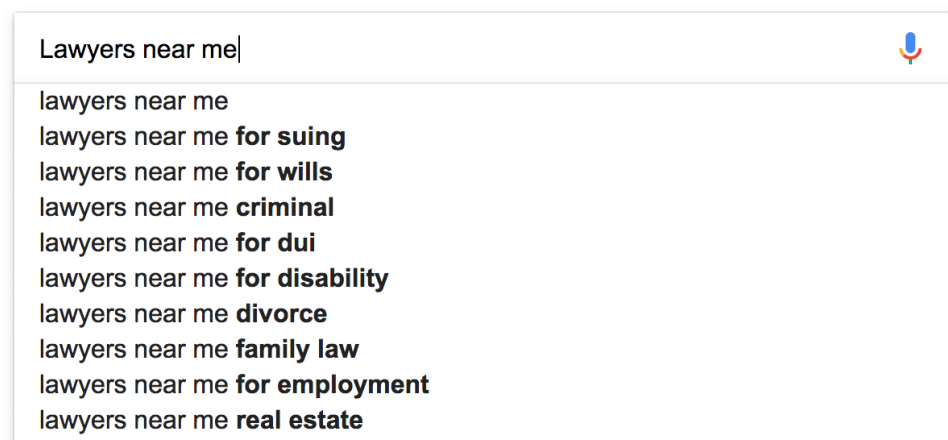


Local Search for Lawyers: How Online Visibility Leads to Clients



You have a *big* problem.

Your clients can't tell you and your competitors apart. If you're reading this, you're probably an experienced attorney. You know the law. You know how things work inside this complicated legal system of ours.

Your clients on the other hand, **don't**.

Their expectations tend to be simple, naive and occasionally unrealistic. What's worse, **they know it**. They know they don't understand what you do.

Which means they're lost without you.

What kind of lawyer are you anyway?

Local search provides clients with the answer.

Your clients are flying blind. When it comes to choosing an attorney, most clients aren't particularly sophisticated. They don't know where to begin, what to look for, or the questions they should ask. They can't evaluate an attorney properly because they don't know what they don't know.

Here's why *their* blindness is *your* problem.

When it comes to local search, the vast majority of lawyers make two *very common* mistakes.

1. They expect their clients to *find* them.
2. They expect their clients to *evaluate* them **accurately**.

1. They expect their clients to *find* them.

Most clients use local search in some shape or fashion to find the attorneys they work with. They use Google. They rely on referrals and recommendations. They troll review sites like Avvo. They ask for help on social media. If usual methods don't work (and they're desperate), they scrape a list together and they start making calls.

If you're visible and you (or your agency) push the right buttons, you get their attention. If these prospects have a positive experience with you, you get more attention.

Here's why that's a problem.

Most lawyers *aren't* visible. They're not getting a lot of traffic to their sites. They don't present their law firm to clients at the right time and place, with the right message.

So, they don't win clients.

And if clients can find them? If they do get the traffic and attention they need, they often make another mistake.

2. They expect their clients to *evaluate them accurately*.

Imagine that a prospective client is in the market for a real estate attorney. They're not sure where to start so they spend some time searching on Google. They create a shortlist of attorneys to call.

They begin working through their list.

They're repeatedly forced to sift through jargon, weasel words, and noise — the information they either don't understand or don't care about.

Here's an example:

"...dedicated to providing advice and expertise at the highest levels. We have achieved extraordinary results following the distinctive vision of our founders — a cohesive team of lawyers intensely focused on solving our clients' most important problems."

Or this.

"Each of our practice areas is highly regarded, and our lawyers are recognized around the world for their commitment to the representation of our clients' interests."

Which is basically a long-winded way of saying *"we're good at our jobs. Please hire us."* It doesn't give clients anything clear they can use to evaluate these firms. Which is a problem because clients are looking for a way to quickly sort through their list. They're short on expertise so they tend to focus their attention on two specific areas.

Credibility and outcomes.

Your clients use local search to quickly sort through candidates. Credibility and outcome markers help them *qualify* or *disqualify* potential candidates.

Your clients look for details like...

- Precise dollar amounts (which you can't share) and the number of settlements you've won
- Your experience with cases like theirs
- Your win/lose ratio
- Specifics on your story and character
- Awards, recognition and testimonials
- Uniqueness that shows you have an edge over your competitors and in court

See where I'm going with this?

Outcomes are straightforward. Your clients want a specific answer to one question: *"What specifically have you done for others like me?"*

The more compelling your answer, the higher your conversion rate.

[MyReviews](#)

With local search for lawyers, your conversion rate is the key to success

Want to receive more qualified clients than you can handle?

It starts with your [local content](#).

What exactly is local content and why is it so important? Your local content tells people *and* search engines what your business, product or service is all about. That's incredibly important because this gives Google the tools it needs to rank lawyers appropriately.

Local content includes:

- Your GMB listings and local packs
- Reviews via mainstream sources like Google and Facebook
- Reviews via specialty sources like Avvo and Martindale
- Local press coverage (e.g. news, press releases, profile pieces, etc.)
- Active social media profiles
- Contact info

- About pages with pictures or video of real people
- Events in the community
- Blog posts
- Podcasts, videos or slides
- Guest posts on relevant or appropriate outlets
- Local advertising via LinkedIn Ads, Facebook Ads or Google AdWords

Lawyers who are starting out may work on these details themselves, but most established lawyers will probably delegate these responsibilities to someone else.

Local content forms the basis of a strong local search and lead generation campaign. It's vital that you develop a clear idea about the details your team should be working on.

Why?

When it comes to marketing there are two forms of content.

1. **Education** attracts client attention. It can be in the form of a story, entertainment or editorial. A thought piece or a research report. A checklist or a lead magnet. If it teaches clients something they want or need to know, it immediately attracts their attention. Education is important because it **(a.)** builds authority in the mind of prospective clients and **(b.)** it establishes your role as a *trustworthy caregiver* in the caregiver/recipient relationship.
2. **Information** informs clients. It deals with logistical and non-logistical questions. When they're ready to select a firm their fears crop up. What's your hourly rate? How long does my unused retainer last? Do you bill by the hour or at a flat rate? Where are you located? When are you open? By appointment only or are walk-ins welcome? Information trains clients, showing them how you do business.

If you want to win a significant amount of new clients *you need both*.

Seems obvious doesn't it?

It's the first step in a successful campaign but it's also the portion most law firms get wrong. Where specifically do they go wrong?

1. They create content that's *top heavy* - too much information, not enough education.
2. Share lots of information but *fail to educate* - ensuring clients haggle over hourly rates or complain about service.

3. Their local search *profile is lopsided* (e.g. lawyers share lots of content on Avvo but neglect Google reviews, Martindale, local directories and social media profiles).



Local search is about quality **and** quantity.

The competitive landscape is *incredibly* crowded. Law firms with the largest amount of high quality *local content* – the firms that focus on **credibility** and **outcomes** – rise to the top.

What does that look like?

Let's take a look at the [Law Offices of Kirk Obear & Associates](#) to find out.

We're looking for credibility and outcomes. Does anything about Obear stand out?

Take a look.

Attorney Kirk Obear came to Wisconsin in 1999 after serving in the U.S. Air Force for more than ten years. He graduated summa cum laude from Mount Olive College in 1990 with a degree in Psychology, and received his law degree from the University of Buffalo School of Law in 1994.

While serving in the Air Force, Attorney Obear worked as both a prosecutor and a defense lawyer. As the Chief of Military Justice, he was responsible for the prosecution of military members under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. He also held an appointment as a Special Assistant United States Attorney, prosecuting civilians under Federal jurisdiction. In his next assignment as Area Defense Counsel, Attorney Obear defended clients throughout the country and around the world, earning him a national reputation for success. He was one of the few active-duty defense lawyers to receive the Meritorious Service Medal as a Captain. Attorney Obear received more than a dozen awards, citations, and medals, including a medal for Valor Under Enemy Fire in the Persian Gulf War.

Through his combined experience as a prosecutor and defense attorney, Attorney Obear has litigated over 100 jury trials. He is currently admitted to practice before the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, the U.S. District for the Western District of Wisconsin, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

To date, Attorney Obear's advocacy has resulted in over 1,000 jury acquittals, amendments, or dismissals from defense motions filed on behalf of his clients.

During his ten year practice in the state of Wisconsin, Attorney Obear has served as the President of the Wisconsin Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys (WACDL) and is currently the Director of Legislative Affairs for WACDL. He was recently elected to the Board of Directors for the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, an organization dedicated to fighting on the front lines of human rights and civil liberties activism. Every year since 2007, he has been listed in Wisconsin SuperLawyers®, a distinction reserved for the top 5% of attorneys in the state.

Attorney Obear has been a guest speaker on Wisconsin Public Radio regarding developments in law, and as an outspoken advocate against the death penalty. His teaching experience includes courses taught to other defense attorneys throughout the country.

Kirk hosts a radio talk show on Saturday mornings from 8:00 - 9:00 AM. "Legal Defense with Kirk Obear" has been on the air since 2010 and has been a big hit in the AM radio market. The show can be heard on AM 1330 WHBL and is now streaming live all over the country

His about page is loaded with credibility and outcomes.

- Practicing law for more than 20 years
- Licensed to practice in several states
- Was a prosecutor for the Air Force *and* the federal government
- He's defended clients throughout the country and *around the world*
- He's connected to a lot of very powerful people
- Personally litigated 100 jury trials, some attorneys
- His advocacy has resulted in over 1,000 jury acquittals, amendments, or dismissals
- He teaches other lawyers how to do their jobs
- He has his own radio show

Kirk Obear Attorney at Law ★
Lawyer in Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Address: 603 S 8th St, Sheboygan, WI 53081
Hours: Open now · Add full hours
Phone: (920) 395-2200

Add missing information
Add business hours

Know this place? Answer quick questions

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Reviews from the web

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Attorney Kirk Obear came to Wisconsin in 1999 after serving in the U.S. Air Force for more than ten years. He graduated summa cum laude from Mount Olive College in 1990 with a degree in Psychology, and received his law degree from the University of Buffalo School of Law in 1994. While serving in the Air Force, Attorney ...

Kirk Obear & Associates - Home | Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/Places/Sheboygan, Wisconsin/Criminal Lawyer
★★★★★ Rating: 4.7 - 12 votes
Kirk Obear & Associates, Sheboygan, WI. 166 likes · 9 were here. Hey are you in trouble? Then get over here and hire us! We are a fierce team of...

Lawyer Kirk Obear - Sheboygan, WI Attorney - Avvo
https://www.avvo.com/.../Wisconsin/Sheboygan/Criminal Defense Attorneys
★★★★★ Rating: 10/10 - Review by Avvo
Kirk Obear is a Criminal Defense Attorney in Sheboygan, WI. Click Kirk's profile to discover their Avvo Rating, write a review, and read professional endorsements.

Kirk Obear's Reviews - Sheboygan, WI Attorney - Avvo
https://www.avvo.com/Find a lawyer/Kirk Bowden Obear
★★★★★ Rating: 5 - 20 reviews
Mar 23, 2016 - Sheboygan, WI attorney Kirk Obear - read reviews from former clients.

What about local content? He was featured on SuperLawyers.

SITUATION NORML

Why Kirk Obear, a former chief of military justice, works pro bono for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

Published in 2011 Wisconsin Super Lawyers — December 2011
by [Betsy Graca](#)

"My mother was from the Woodstock generation," says criminal defense attorney Kirk Obear, "and never really imagined that any of her children would end up in the military."

But he did. Obear started as a combat videographer in the U.S. Air Force in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm. After earning a psychology degree and a J.D., he became a JAG officer, then the Chief of Military Justice and an assistant U.S. attorney. He received a medal for valor under enemy fire in the Persian Gulf War and the Meritorious Service Medal for his work as a defense lawyer. Following disagreements with superiors on the harshness of fraternization cases, he was shifted from prosecution to defense.

Though his mother couldn't imagine him in the military, the military probably can't imagine one of his current pro bono activities: Obear is on the National Legal Committee for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).

Obear wants to be clear, though. "I'm not involved with [NORML] because I want people to smoke marijuana," he says. "I want to work with a group of people that are very knowledgeable with search and seizure law. Basically, we are on the cutting edge of what's happening with law enforcement agencies and with how the Fourth Amendment is being applied throughout the country and in the U.S. Supreme Court."

NORML's National Legal Committee consists of criminal defense attorneys working pro bono, who frequently represent clients charged with marijuana offenses. The attorneys follow the legal issues that impact marijuana consumers and keep the organization informed regarding relevant trends in law

FEATURED LAWYERS



Kirk B. Obear

He's a [contributor](#) to the Wisconsin Law Journal.

Wisconsin Law Journal

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Tag Archives: **Kirk Obear**

Man to face trial in death of fiancée's child
April 30, 2015 9:17 am 1 Comment
A man accused of causing the death of his fiancée's 4-year-old son will stand trial in Sheboygan County.
Tagged with: KIRK OBEAR

Klokow might benefit from 1957 parole rules
August 10, 2013 2:07 pm 1 Comment
A Sheboygan woman who killed her baby more than 50 years ago could be paroled two years sooner than prosecutors initially thought, because her case is governed by the less strict parole rules of 1957.
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Mom gets up to 10 years for baby's 1957 death (UPDATE)
May 1, 2013 10:50 pm 1 Comment
A Wisconsin woman accused of killing her baby more than 50 years ago showed up at her sentencing hearing Wednesday expecting to be sentenced to 45 days in jail as part of a plea agreement forged between lawyers. Instead, Ruby C. Klokow was sentenced to a maximum of 10 years in prison.
Tagged with: ANGELA SUTKIEWICZ JOE DECECCO KIRK OBEAR RUBY KLOKOW

Can you see what's happening?

Using a variety of local search content, Obear gives prospective clients the credibility and outcome markers they need. His resume is impressive; it establishes him as an authority and is far more likely to cement him as a leading candidate with prospective clients.

Which local search tactics work best for lawyers?

- **Create a list of local search platforms.** These profiles include social media platforms like Facebook, Review management platforms like Avvo and directory listings like YP.com. This also includes influential platforms (formal and informal) that you can use to attract more traffic to your website via local search keywords.
- **Build a list of (local) keywords.** Use tools like [Google Keyword Planner](#), [Soovle](#), [AnswerthePublic.com](#), and [UberSuggest](#) to generate a list of keywords prospective clients use to find an attorney. Use practice areas, brand names, and common misspellings in your keyword list to attract more clients.
- **Create an irresistible offer** for prospective clients. This goes beyond the free consultation many firms peddle. For example, you can provide potential clients with a fast start guide that includes helpful checklists, and a shopping guide with questions they should be asking (i.e., OWI fast start kit that helps clients find, vet and hire the right law firm).
- **Register, claim, and complete each of your local profiles.** Adding your information to platforms like Apple Maps, Google, Facebook, Yelp, Avvo, Martindale, and others, gives clients meaningful information about your law firm. This includes your byline, hours of operation, phone number, email address, etc. Doing this prevents competitors or third party providers from claiming or holding your profile hostage.
- **Request reviews from your clients via support teams.** This can be done via an automated (or semi-automated) service like our platform. Reviews are authoritative because they're visible across a wide variety of search engines, social media, and review platforms. The more five-star reviews you have, the easier it is to attract, win, and retain outstanding clients.
- **Partner up with local community groups.** If you're a real estate attorney, join real estate clubs and investment groups. Participate in

entrepreneur and investor meetups. Reach out to these groups and offer to conduct free or low cost seminars and workshops for their audience. Create irresistible offers tailored for each of the groups you approach. They're going to do some digging on Google to vet you and your law firm properly. When they do, they're going to see the substantial review, social, and search presence you've developed ahead of time, which will open doors for you.

- **Begin giving speeches and presentations to your target audience.** If you've followed the steps I've laid out above, you're a well-known presence in your community. Use this to approach larger groups in your community with the same offer you made to your community groups. Only this time, offer to conduct speeches, workshops, seminars, or events for their audience. If possible, negotiate payment for your services and the chance to present your irresistible offer to their audience.
- **Use paid advertising to identify your conversion keywords.** You can use the income you've received from your speeches, workshops, seminars, and events to fund your advertising campaign. This campaign is focused on one thing — identifying the Google keywords that lead to money. Once you've identified them, invest heavily in Local and Organic SEO. The majority of the firms that use SEO choose their keywords blindly; you're different, you're selecting the keywords that produce revenue for your law firm.

See the difference?

If you want to win more clients with local search you'll need to lead with content.

It sounds overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. If you're looking to start small, here's a shorter list you can use to get started.

1. **Claim or create your listings** on [Google My Business](#), Apple Maps and Bing.
2. **Use aggregators to claim and verify** your business. Aggregators like [Yext](#) create listings in dozens of key directories and social networks like [Foursquare](#), [YP](#), [CitySearch](#) and more.
3. **Complete your profile.** Add hours of operation, contact details, phone numbers, your website address – anything customers need to work with your business.

4. **Be a consistent creator.** Create local content, reach out to local, high traffic publications. Pitch content to them. Use an irresistible offer to lure readers back to your site. Publish a podcast. Approach talk radio shows as a guest. Pitch a Q&A column to up-and-coming sites.

Did you catch the secret to local search?

It's giving.

Make it a habit to give potential clients your best. Give them high quality education and clear information **consistently**. Use the platform provided by well known brands to win new clients quickly. Give your agency or your team, the data they need to answer your client's subconscious question.

What kind of lawyer are you?

Local search provides your clients with the answer. Your clients know they don't know the law, they can't tell you and your competitors apart. They're vulnerable, they're lost, and they know it. Give your clients the credibility and outcome markers they need.

Provide them with exceptional content in the form of education and information. Do this for clients consistently, and they'll reward you with more attention and more business than you can handle. .

Your client's needs are straightforward: Protect me, make my problems go away.

Don't tell clients you can do this for them. **Show them clearly**. They're simple, inexperienced, and occasionally unrealistic. What's worse, **they know it**. They need your help.

Local search isn't for lawyers.

It's for your clients, the people, corporations and interests you serve. Use local search well and clients will see they're lost without you.

[Get Started for Free-and use MyReviews to improve your local search image.](#)