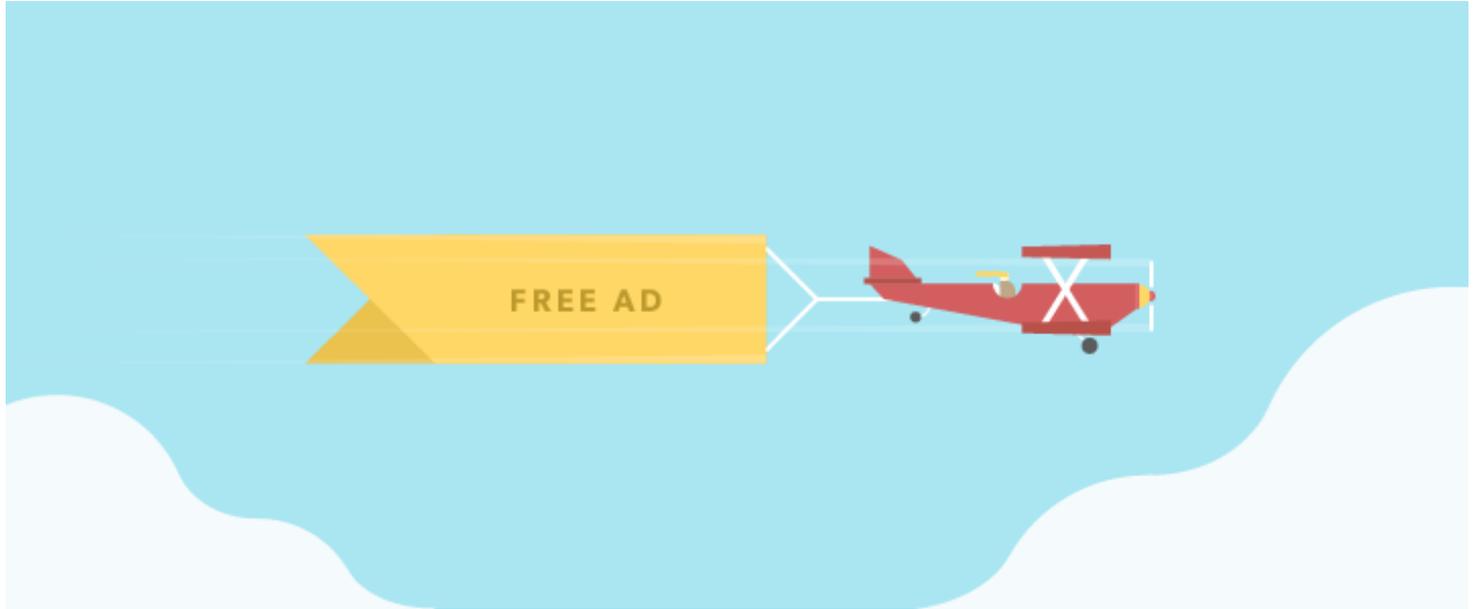


10 Ways Lawyers Can Advertise Online For Free

✓ www.goclio.com/blog/10-places-lawyers-can-advertise-online-for-free/

Written by [The Clio Team](#) , posted October 14, 2015



by Willie Peacock of the [Law Office of William C. Peacock](#) , writing about his experiences running a solo law firm.

When I was preparing to launch my own practice, I read pretty much every book on the market that professed to spill the secrets of solo practice success. One of the seemingly more hokey ideas was that one should take a walk daily through the downtown area of their city so that they were constantly in sight, in mind.

Sadly, Long Beach, California does not work like that. Most major cities don't — not many people ask passerbys on the sidewalk if they are lawyers. Instead, as more people turn to their phones and mobile devices to find lawyers, it's equally important to be sure that those people can find you — and maybe associate a face with the name.

Having your own website is a great start, but you also need to reach more broadly: you need to plaster your face or firm logo on as many virtual bus benches as possible. We've got a list of ten that are absolutely free — unless you cave to the salespeople and pay for upgrades:

1. Avvo

Love 'em or hate 'em (and I've heard plenty of opinions on both sides at the bar meetings and on listservs), these are the folks that are trying to create a Quora of law or a Yelp of lawyers. And by trying, I mean they've already done it: they [just received a huge investment](#) from some rich dudes and are now putting up TV commercials.

If you haven't already done it, go ahead and claim your [Avvo](#) profile. Fill it with pictures, endorsements from fellow attorneys, and enjoy the free listing that will almost certainly be one of the top search results when you search for your name, because, for better or worse, their SEO game is impressive.

2. Yelp

Speaking of reviews, you've definitely heard of Yelp, haven't you? A lot of lawyers are scared of Yelp and other review sites, as they are a forum for all of those crazy, unreasonable clients to vent. And you can't do much about a

bad review, while magically, Yelp filters out a lot of good reviews as spam. Personally, I don't fear bad reviews at all: they're either a blip or an opportunity for constructive criticism.

Besides, if you claim your Yelp page through [Yelp for Business owners](#), you can control the message: add logos and photos, encourage happy clients to leave positive reviews, and [respond to negative reviews ethically](#).

3. Google My Places/Google+

Google is a verb now. You need to play along. Lawyers can get their business listed in Google Maps and on Google+ by visiting [Google My Business](#) and entering the requisite info. Doing so will ensure that your lost clients, who grab their Android smartphones, can easily find you in their navigation software. You might also notice that when you do a generic lawyer/geographic search (divorce lawyers in Chicago, Illinois), that the first results are always the local listings, which is yet another good reason to make sure that you are in their directory — you get an extra chance to pop up in Google's search results.

Creating a local listing also results in the creation of a Google+ page, where, yes, there is a forum for client reviews. You can also edit hours (again, a very useful resource for clients who are looking you up), add photos, and post updates about your firm (a la Facebook).

4. Bing Places

Just like Google, Bing has local listings atop the search results. And, as I found out the other day when Bing-ing myself (that sounds terrible), your search results can vary greatly between the two major search engines. Adding yourself to [Bing Places](#) means you'll (hopefully) be easy to find in either.

Nerdy side note: with Bing being baked into Windows 10, my prediction is that it will be used far more in the coming years by less sophisticated users who don't know how to change the built-in search to Google or DuckDuckGo. It'll be even more important then to appear in every search engine.

5. Apple Maps

Again, for all your lost clients, you'll want to [appear in Apple Maps](#). This may not help with search results, or through desktop browsers, but it will help iPhone and iPad users who are using Apple's included navigation software — a less lost client is a less late client, which means less time wasted for you (and them).

6. Facebook

I'm not a huge fan of [creating a free Facebook page](#)

for one's firm to advertise online for free, unless, of course, you want to pay to play — the social network reduced "organic" (unpaid) appearances for businesses in consumers' News Feeds [to nearly nothing last year](#). But, it still might be helpful to appear in Facebook's directory. (In other words, create a page, check it to make sure there are no negative reviews, and don't invest much time beyond the initial setup.)

Why? If you're active in social media, especially Instagram and Facebook, you'll want to tag posts with your location. Plus, it can't hurt to have yourself in one more place online, even if Facebook *a/so* allows people to leave crazy, angry reviews.

7. YP.com

Remember the yellow pages? Yeah, me neither. The only thing I can tell you about the phone book is that, at least according to a late Sopranos episode, it will stop a medium caliber bullet.

The Yellow Pages, seeking to stay relevant in today's world, made a belated move to the Internet. And while I can't recall ever seeing a YP.com entry appear in Google's search results, I have seen them pop up repeatedly in Bing's search results.

It only takes a few minutes to [add your listing](#). Expect an ad sales phone call from them, just like you will from pretty much every other listing on this page. Just tell them that you're broke and have no money whatsoever — that's usually enough to get most ad sales folks to hang up for a few months.

8. Justia

The legal information portal has [lawyer profiles](#)! And not only do they appear on Justia, but they also appear on the Legal Information Institute (Cornell)'s website as well. The profiles are surprisingly robust: you can add photos, links to all of your social media accounts, and they even incorporate a little map to your office.

9. State and Local Bars

Sorry, this one may be a bit obvious, but most state bars have a directory of their lawyers and their contact information. Make sure yours is up to date. You should also check with any local bar associations that you've joined to see if they maintain a directory — it's not technically free, but if you've already paid to join, you might as well get your money's worth.

10. Guest Blogging

It's not just about your physical address and phone number — you also want people to be able to find your website. One of the best ways to do this, if you write well, is to write articles for popular websites that accept user-generated content. The most obvious example is The Huffington Post. Other strong possibilities are legal information websites and possibly your state or local bar. (Missouri, for example, has [Missouri Lawyers Help](#), a blog written by local lawyers that provides basic legal information to consumers.)

Each post that you write will be another place where you can be found online and is another link pointing back to your website (which is typically great for ranking higher in Google's search results). It's also a great opportunity to demonstrate authority in your practice area in a less transparently commercial environment than your own website.

A quick note on two other lawyer directories: FindLaw used to provide free listings for lawyers (or at least, that is what I was told), but when I called last week, they told me that the directory was now only for paid website customers. Lawyer.com, which annoyingly created a listing for me in San Jose, California (about 300 miles from where I live), also [does not create free listings](#), though they do create listings for you if one of their "partner" websites has you listed. (I have no clue, as of yet, how my profile came to be or how one goes about fixing an incorrect listing.)

Final Thoughts

There are certainly drawbacks to free listings: lots of ad sales calls, more forums open for disgruntled ex-clients, and more listings to monitor and update if your firm relocates or shutters. You also have to be selective about where you list. [Be mindful of sites that might land you in hot water, like what happened with this lawyer in Indiana](#). But the benefits outweigh the annoyances: not only does this shotgun approach to creating an online presence ensure that people will actually find you across multiple search engines, but for most of these sites, the links back to your own website add SEO (search ranking) juice, which makes it more likely that your own website will be at the top of any search results for your firm.

Control the message: by claiming or creating these profiles, filling them out consistently across all of the different sites, and pointing them all to your own website, you can actively shape what clients see when they look you up.

Take your online presence to the next level and check out our latest post on [10 Pay Per Click Advertising Tips for Lawyers](#) – and see your results with Clio’s latest marketing tool [Campaign Tracker](#). Project the image you want, and see what reaps the rewards.