

EMAIL MARKETING FOR LAW FIRMS

The Law Firm Email Gap

Why firms are leaving leads, referrals, and revenue sitting in the inbox, and the follow-up system that stops it.

92%

of lawyers communicate with clients by email

32%

of firms actually market through it

33%

reply to a prospective client's email

Lawyers live in email. Most firms don't market in it.

Email is the channel your clients already prefer. It beats phone, meetings, video, and text. It is also the channel almost nobody is using deliberately. That distance between where clients are and where firms show up is the gap.

92%

of lawyers say email is one of the methods they use most often with clients

vs. phone 88% · in person 45% · video 37% · text 18%

32%

of law firms report using email marketing

Down from 40% a year earlier. Newsletter use fell from 50% to 41%. The gap is widening, not closing.

EMAIL WORKS AT EVERY STAGE OF THE CLIENT LIFECYCLE



Two out of three firms never answered the email.

In a secret-shopper study of 500 law firms, only 33% replied to a prospective client's email, worse than the 40% response rate measured five years earlier. Speed is not the problem. Of the firms that did reply, 84% replied within eight hours. The problem is that no system owns the follow-up.

67%

of firms never responded to a prospective client's email at all

18%

of responders explained next steps or expected costs

2%

referenced experience with a similar matter, even when asked directly

73%

of shoppers said they would be unlikely to recommend the firm they contacted

WHAT IT ACTUALLY COSTS

You lose the case in front of you and the referrals behind it. One unanswered email quietly removes a client, their review, and everyone they would have sent you.

Satisfied clients still walk away.

Referrals are still how legal work moves. Nearly half of recent clients found their lawyer through one, and most expect to ask for one again. But satisfaction on its own does not keep you in mind. 79% of clients said they were satisfied, and a quarter of them still would not hire the same lawyer again.

48%

found their lawyer through a referral

58%

would seek a referral next time they need a lawyer

24%

would be unlikely to rehire their previous lawyer

59%

of solo and small firms say referrals are their strongest source of leads

WHO SHOULD BE HEARING FROM YOU

- Former clients, after the matter closes
- Attorneys who send you conflicts and overflow
- Professional partners: agents, advisers, mediators
- Leads who inquired and went quiet

Email is the cheapest way to stay visible to the people who already trust you, instead of paying again to reacquire the same audience.

Eight emails worth building once.

Not a monthly newsletter you dread writing. A small set of sequences that run whether or not anyone remembers to hit send.

01

Welcome & nurture sequence

Educates a new subscriber over a few emails, then invites the consultation.

02

A newsletter people finish

One useful idea per send, written for clients rather than for other lawyers.

03

Legal updates & client alerts

The most common play already. 66% of firms sending email use alerts, so make yours plain English.

04

FAQ answers

The questions you answer on every intake call, sent before the call happens.

05

Case-process education

What happens next, how long it takes, what it costs. This is the 18% almost nobody sends.

06

Review & referral asks

Timed to the moment a client is happiest, not to the moment you need work.

07

Dormant-lead reactivation

Every inquiry you already paid for that never became a matter.

08

Former-client check-ins

Keeps you the obvious answer when a friend asks them for a name.

Only 35% of firms using email send anything personalized. Segmentation by practice area, matter stage, or referral relationship is the easiest advantage still sitting on the table.

Measure consultations, not opens.

32.3%

average open rate for legal services, above the 30.8% all-industry average

\$10–\$36

returned per \$1 spent, reported by 35% of marketing leaders; 30% report \$36–\$50

45:1

the ROI threshold of the top 8% of programs, which lean on newsletters and onboarding, not promos

THE FIVE RULES

- Segment before you write: practice area, stage, relationship
- One useful idea per email, in plain English
- One call to action, repeated, never five competing links
- Automate the sequences a human will forget
- Reply fast, then let the system carry the follow-up

TRACK THESE INSTEAD

- Consultations booked from email
- Reactivated leads that became matters
- Referrals attributed to former clients
- Reviews requested and received

Benchmarks vary widely by platform and methodology. One large study of 4.4 billion emails reports legal open rates as high as 47.3% with a 12.1% click-through rate. Use benchmarks for direction, and your own booked consultations for decisions.

You already paid to earn their attention.

Email is how you stop starting from zero every time you need another case. SEO, ads and referrals get you the address. What happens next decides whether it was worth it.

COMPLIMENTARY EMAIL SNAPSHOT

Get your free email plan.

Send me your firm website and a little context. I'll review what you have and send back a short plan: what I'd fix first, what I'd send, and where the biggest opportunities are.

No required sales call.

Prefer plain email?

hello@clairewriteslaw.com