The State of Digital Marketing for Lawyers

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Brief Overview

Trends To Watch

Rise of AMP (Accelerated Mobile Pages)

- AMP is a new tool Google uses to present mobile users with a range of **streamlined articles** through which users can slide-scroll
- Google is not **favoring AMP sites** in search results **yet**
- Currently, AMP is a **good solution for blogs**
- We are still **watching and waiting** on whether AMP is a positive for websites

Mobile First Indexing

- Google is steadily moving toward a mobile-only world and strongly evangelizing for a shift from desktop to **mobile first mindset**
- Check your **mobile page speed**. Optimize for mobile
- Google has created a **new mobile index.**
- Expected rollout in 2017.

THINK MOBILE FIRST!

Shift to Https

- Increased Rankings – Google confirmed **ranking boost** for Https sites

- Security & Privacy – Adds **security** and makes site more secure for visitors by **encrypting** all communication and preventing tampering by third parties

Bing is Making a Comeback

- Bing is the search engine for Siri, Alexa, and Cortana
- Bing is a big player in **voice search**, continues to grow
- Try some voice searches on your iPhone or Amazon Echo and see how you are ranking. (Not now, after the presentation).

Stay Updated on SEO Trends

- Check-in regularly with **industry experts**
- Subscribe to popular SEO blog/news sites to know of **trends & updates** in the world of SEO

SEO Fundamentals

- Content Strategy
- Link-building
- Local Search
- Technical SEO

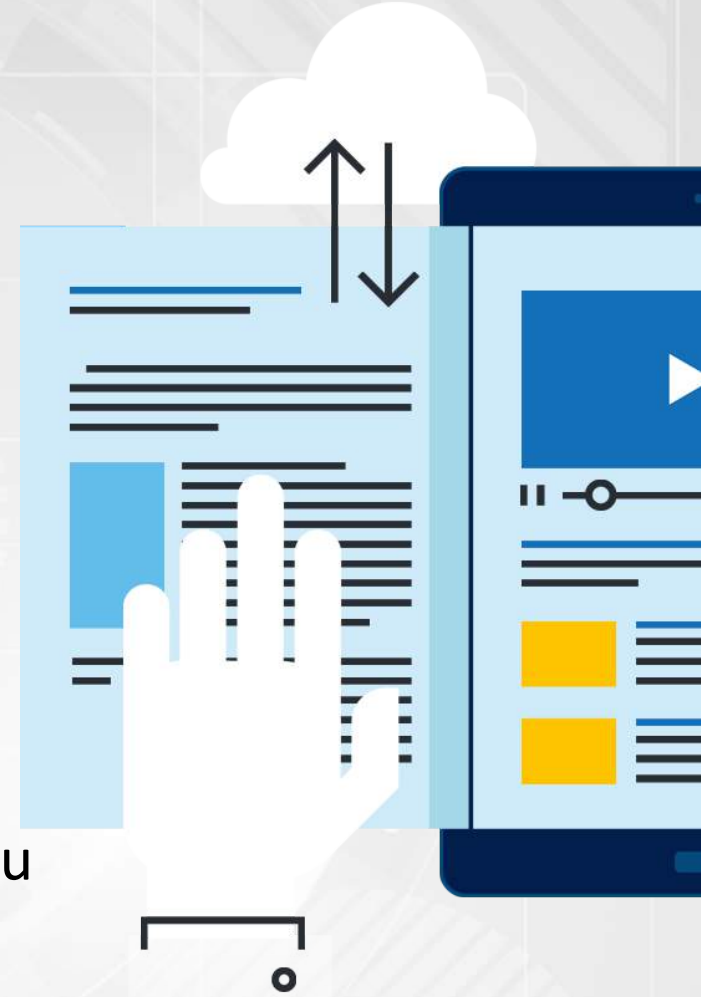
Content Strategy

Strategic Content Development

- **Content 101:** If you want to rank for something, you need to create content for that topic

  E.g., If you want to rank for a local search term, build **localized content**

- List out your **ranking goals**, and then develop a content strategy that gives you rich content for all your priority areas



Google Focused on Sophistication

- Google hired Linguistic and Semantic Experts
- Google working on **Machine Learning** to develop algorithms that can identify rich and relevant content
- Google looking at **Level of Sophistication** in writing

GOOD CONTENT

VS.

BAD CONTENT

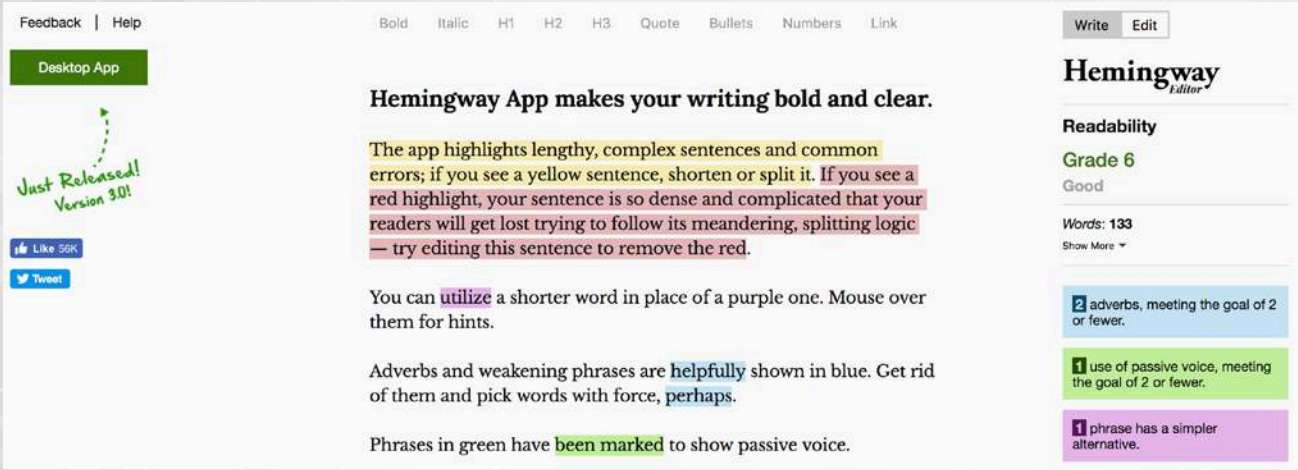
Staying Away from Bad Content

- Google algorithms getting better at distinguishing between good and bad content
- The era of overseas content writers is gone – it's time to start leveraging your experts
  - Your best content will come from your best and most knowledgeable writers (***hint*, usually your attorneys**)
- Focus your content development around context (i.e., the whole piece of content) rather than around exact search terms

Edit Your Content for Brevity and Clarity

Google is looking for rich but clear writing

HemingwayApp.com **is a good tool to gauge readability**



The app will help cut down on confusing and clunky sentence structure. It will save time in editing and help your content rank better.

Become a Thought Leader in Your Space

(Branding as an SEO Strategy)

- **Niche Blogging** – A **Branding** Tool – Niche blogs are targeted blogs that talk **exclusively** about a **specific topic**
- Using Twitter to become a **Thought Leader** – only worth it if you have great contributions
- **Be genuine** or don't do it all

LINK BUILDING

A Healthy Link Portfolio Is the Key to Building Authority for Your Website

- If authoritative websites and domain types (e.g., .gov and .edu) link to your website, it helps to build your website's authority

- **Website Authority** results in better rankings for terms within your website's area of authority (e.g., tax law)

- Your **Link Portfolio** includes all the webpages and domains that link to your website

- Think of links as **citations** that help build **credibility** with Google's algorithm

Develop Resource Pages to Become an Authority
(Bringing Content and Linkbuilding Together)

- There is real value in building authority on topics outside of your legal services
- Build **educational** & **informational** resources that other sites and organizations will want to link to
- It can help boost the overall authoritative profile of your website
- Also, links from educational and authoritative sites are **valuable** & **high-quality**

Local Link Building

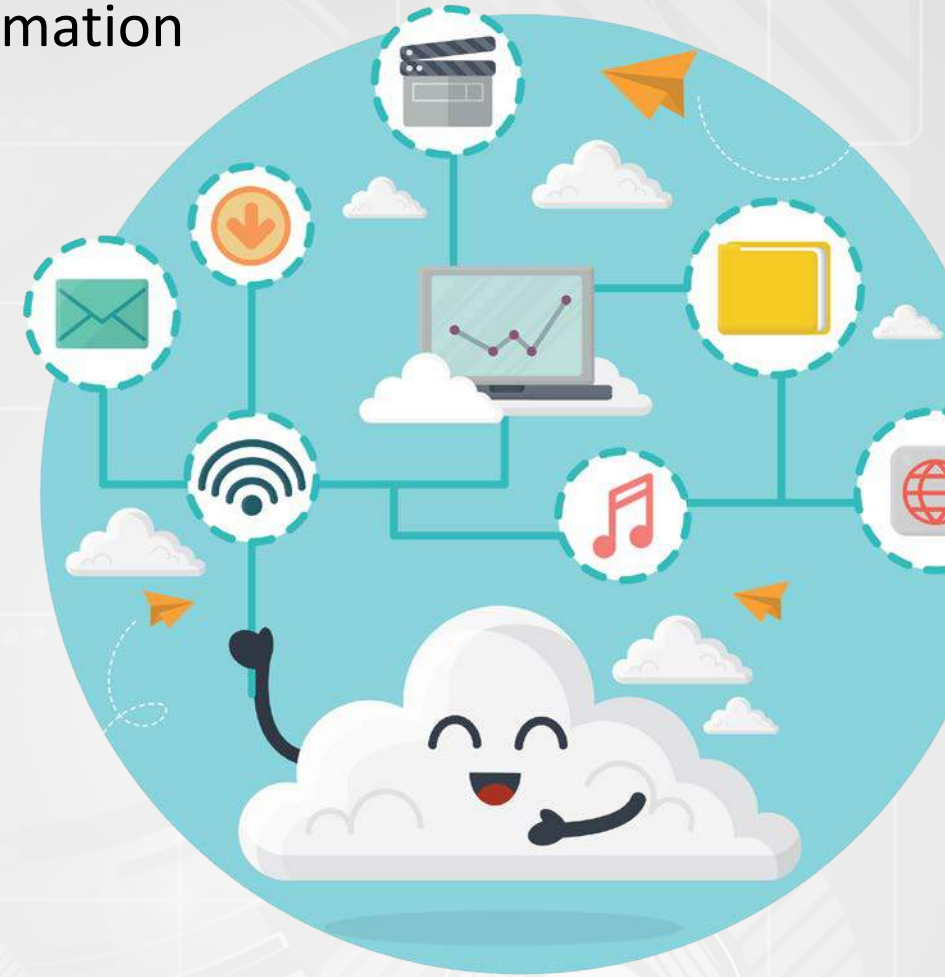
- Promote your business **locally**
- Choose a **recurring event**; e.g. annual food drives, scholarships
- Focus on community involvement but **don't neglect SEO**

Create Infographics

- **Visual representation** of information

LINKS

- **Build** powerful infographics
- Has potential to **go viral**



AHREFs: Keeping a Healthy Link Portfolio

- Gives you the **rating/score** of a page and the domain
- You can **review** backlinks and referring domains
- You can track the domains/backlinks **gained & lost** over time

LOCAL SEARCH

Local Search is As Important as Ever

- **Local SEO** can help your website appear in the local search results with your firm's name, address, phone number, and a link to your website

- Local search uses its own **algorithm** that focuses on:
  - Local content,
  - Links from local sites, and
  - Consistent citations to your **N**ame, **A**ddress, and **P**hone Number (NAP)

- Think of Local SEO as showing Google that you are a **reputable local business**

Strengthen Local Profiles

- **Run Searches of Your Firm Name** to see how you are being listed on directory websites
- **Claim** your third-party listing profiles
- Make sure the information listed is **Accurate and Complete**
- Inconsistent listings can impact local rankings negatively

Go Local in Content

- Create **location-specific** content to match the terms where you want to rank.

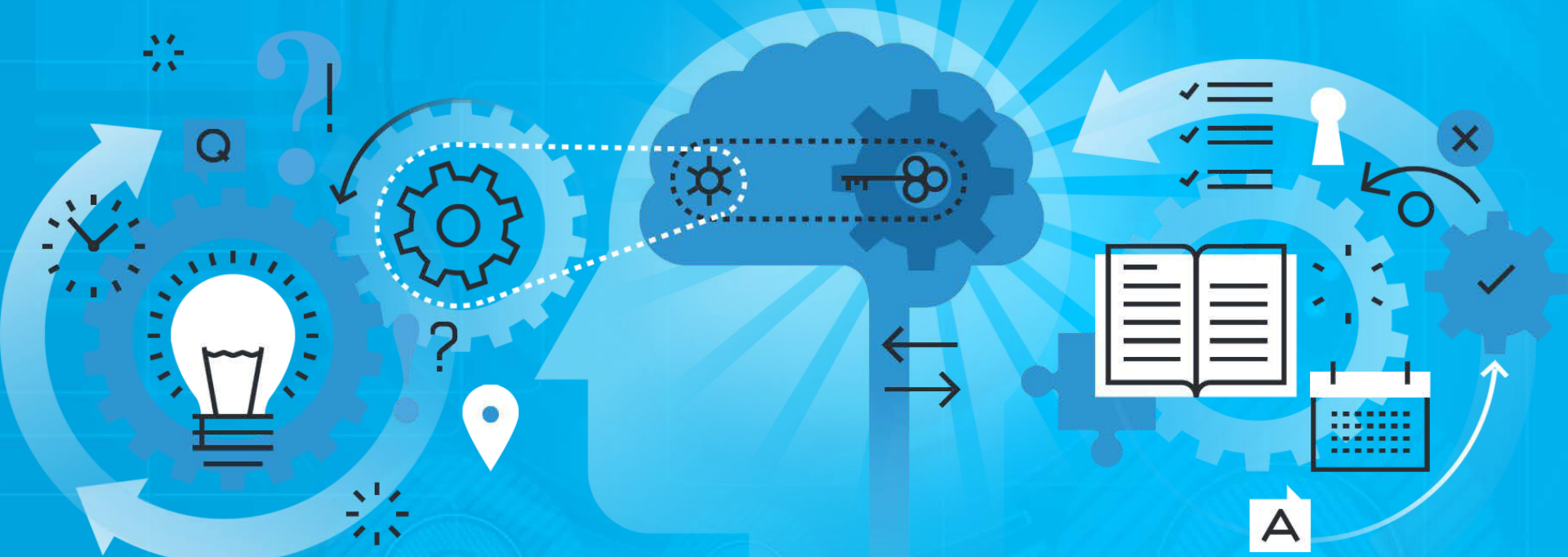
- Think beyond State-Level – **City and County** terms get a lot of search traffic

Reviews

- Embrace **reputation management**
- Make it **easy** for clients to review your business
- **Monitor** your reviews. Know when you gain or lose a review

You do not want a bad and false review to be hanging around and hurting your rating.

Technical SEO



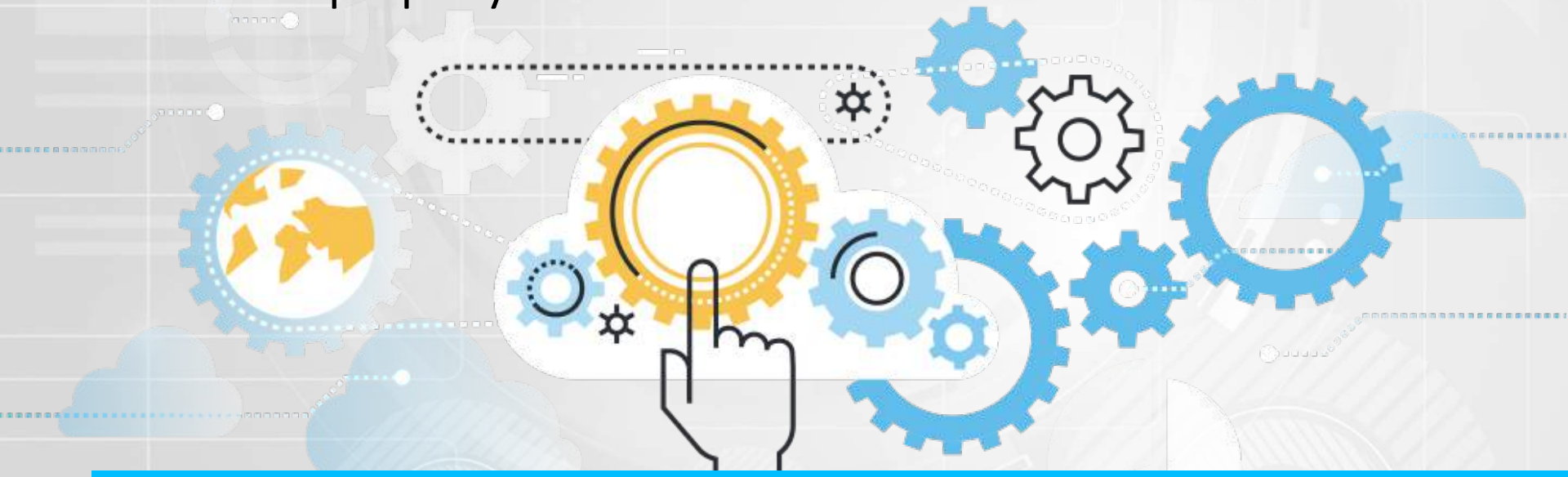
Optimize Your Metadata

- Algorithms use metadata to understand the relevance of your webpages to search terms
- **Title Tags** – Stay within the character limit, make sure your keywords are present
- **Headings** – Your headings will help search bots understand the topics of your pages
- **Meta Descriptions** – Additional metadata for optimization, but also customer-facing on search results

Markup for Schema

- Schema markup is gaining more & more **importance in ranking well** on searches

- Schema markup allows the search engine to **understand** the website and its content, and then **display** your content properly on SERPS

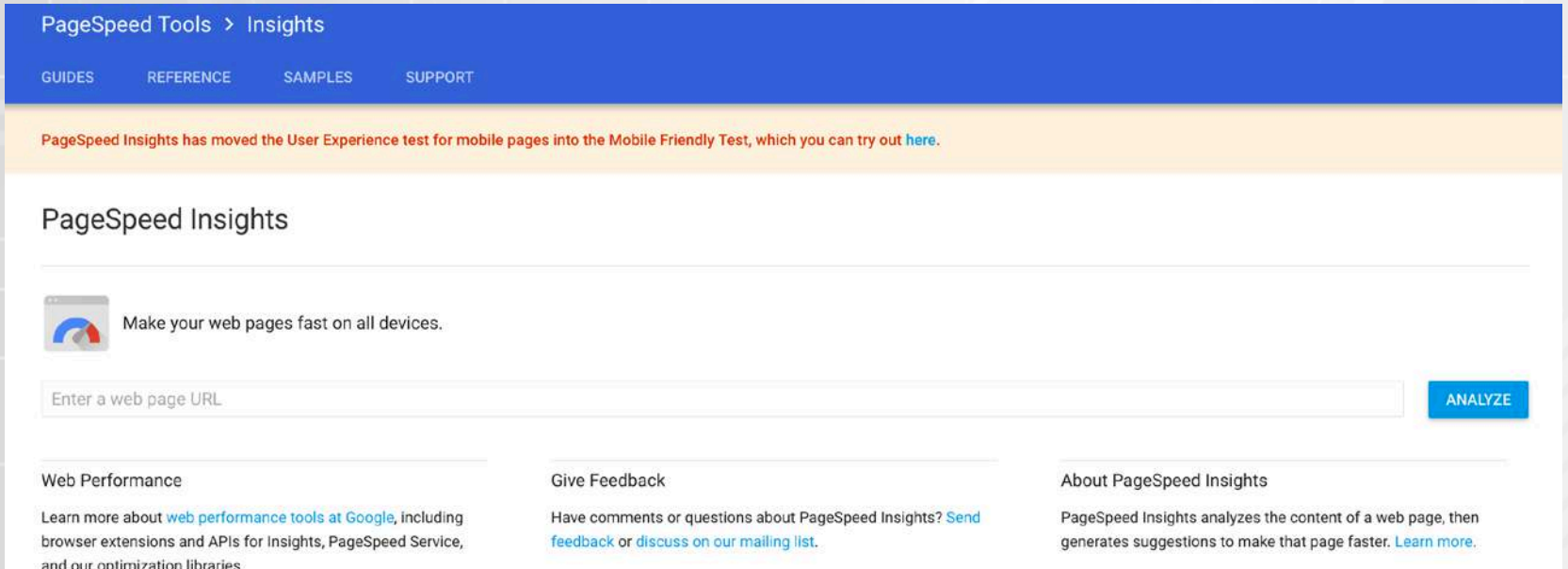


PageSpeed: Google Page Speed Insight

- Run your website on **Google's PageSpeed Insight** tool

  developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed

- Optimize your site's speed on both **mobile & desktop**



Cool Apps

Screamingfrog

A desktop program that crawls websites for links, images, scripts etc. Helps with site audits from an SEO perspective

yoast

A WordPress SEO plugin to optimize your web page

AUTODESK®
PIXLR®

A free desktop photo editing program

Google Developers

Google's free tool to review and optimize site for speed on desktop & mobile devices

slack

A cloud-based chat and collaboration tool

Questions?

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