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Personal Injury SEO

Who really holds page one for injury searches, from a study of 27 Google results pages.

A personal injury firm's guide | 2026 edition

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SECTION 01

The short answer

01

Most personal injury SEO advice is a checklist that would work just as well for a plumber. We pulled the top 10 Google results for 27 injury searches across 10 US metros and found what those checklists skip. One directory, Super Lawyers, sat on page one in 22 of 23 local searches. The billboard firms showed up often but held #1 only once. Single-state firms won 17 of the 23 top spots.

What to do about it:

1

Make your homepage read like an injury page.

For a one-city firm it is the injury page. Firms won 7 of 10 #1 spots on the general search, 6 of them with a homepage.

2

Build a real page for each case type you want.

Every firm that won a truck search did it with a trucking page. A paragraph on the car accident page will not compete.

3

Put directory effort where it ranks.

Super Lawyers was on 22 of 23 local page ones. Avvo, FindLaw, Martindale and Lawyers.com were on none.

4

Measure signed cases, not traffic.

Track every call and form to the page it came from and the case it became. Cost per signed case is the number.

WHAT THE STUDY FOUND

Across 23 local injury searches in 10 metros, single-state law firms held 71% of the top 10 results, multi-state advertiser firms held 13% and lawyer directories another 13%. Single-state firms won 17 of the 23 #1 spots, Super Lawyers took 5 and a multi-state firm took 1.

Who this guide is for

Partners at small firms in big metros who keep landing below the name on every billboard, trucking and catastrophic injury firms that want the searches that bring those cases, and marketing leads at firms with several offices deciding which pages and profiles are worth building city by city.

SECTION 02

The Personal Injury Page-One Map

02

On October 19, 2026, we pulled the top 10 organic results from Semrush for "personal injury lawyer" plus the city in 10 metros, "car accident lawyer" in 8, "truck accident attorney" in 5 and four research searches. Multi-state means the firm's own site lists offices in 3 or more states. Map pack and ads are not counted. 11 of the 23 local #1 results were homepages, none of them on a truck search.

Search type	Who holds page one	What it means for you
Personal injury lawyer plus city	Single-state firms 71%, multi-state firms 14%, directories 12%. Firms won 7 of 10 #1 spots, 6 with a homepage. Super Lawyers held the other 3.	→ The core search. A one-city firm's homepage is its injury page, so it has to read like one.
Car accident lawyer plus city	Single-state firms 71%, multi-state firms 14%, directories 12%. In 7 of 8 cities, 4 to 7 of the domains also ranked for the general search.	→ A strong general page and a strong car accident page lift each other. Build both.
Truck accident attorney plus city	Single-state firms 72%, directories 16%, multi-state firms 8%. 47 of 50 results were truck-specific pages.	→ A separate race. Every firm that won #1 did it with a trucking page.
Research searches	Firm blog posts held all 10 results for the settlement search. Insurers and state agencies held 6 of 10 for what to do after a car accident.	→ Open to a firm that writes the state-specific answer.

Lane	Searches a month, combined	Semrush difficulty	Top three: firms, multi-state, directories
Personal injury lawyer, 10 metros	About 51,300	8 to 82	20, 2, 8 of 30
Car accident lawyer, 8 metros	About 42,700	37 to 66	14, 3, 7 of 24
Truck accident attorney, 5 metros	About 13,200	19 to 45	11, 1, 3 of 15
Research searches, 4	About 11,070	13 to 55	5, 2, 1 of 12

SECTION 03

Super Lawyers and the billboard firms

03

The single most consistent result in our data was a directory. Super Lawyers appeared on page one in 22 of 23 local searches: 9 of 10 general injury searches, 8 of 8 car accident searches and 5 of 5 truck searches. It sat in the top three in 18 and held #1 in 5, including Atlanta, Miami and Philadelphia for "personal injury lawyer."

If your attorneys are selected

Super Lawyers says it reviews 12 indicators and selects the top 5% in each state, so you cannot simply create a listing. Treat the profiles like a second website: complete practice areas, a current photo and a link to the right case-type page.

If they are not

Justia was the only other directory in our local results, on 4 of 23 page ones. Avvo, FindLaw, Martindale and Lawyers.com appeared in none. Chasing every legal directory spends effort where almost nothing ranked.

Visible everywhere, rarely on top

29 of 227

local results went to multi-state firms, 13%. Ben Crump Law appeared in 11 of 23 searches, more than any firm, at positions 2 to 9.

1 #1

for a multi-state firm: TopDog Law for "car accident lawyer atlanta." They held 6 of 69 top-three spots.

Schuerger Shunnarah appeared in 7 searches, mostly at #6. Kanner & Pintaluga appeared in 5, at #6 or #8.

All 29 of those results were city, office or state pages on a national domain. None was a homepage. Domain strength carries those pages into the top 10 in dozens of markets, but the top spot in our data went to a firm based in that city.

SAY YOU ARE LOCAL, PLAINLY

In a Los Angeles Reddit thread that ranked for "car accident lawyer los angeles," the person asking said they had seen all the bigger names on the billboards and wanted a local recommendation instead. Put it on your pages: where your office is, which courthouse you file in and who answers the phone.

SECTION 04

Truck pages, car pages and city pages

04

Car accident searches and the general injury search share most of their page one. Truck searches don't. In each of the 5 truck cities, only 1 or 2 of the firms on the truck page also ranked for the general search, leaving out directories. The clicks cost more too: Semrush puts "truck accident attorney chicago" at about $308 a click and "truck accident attorney dallas" at about $277, against about $189 for "car accident lawyer houston."

> **CHANGE TARGETS, NOT EFFORT**
>
> A six-lawyer Dallas firm ranks #9 for "personal injury lawyer dallas" and has a two-paragraph section on truck crashes. The map says to change targets. Lyons & Simmons held #1 for "truck accident attorney dallas" with a truck wrecks page, and none of the top three truck results was a homepage. A real trucking page faces that field, not the 10 firms fighting over the general search.

Each case-type page should answer, near the top:

- What kinds of cases you take, and the ones you refer out
- Which attorneys handle them, with their bar admissions
- What the person should do in the next few days, in your state
- How the fee works, including no fee unless you recover if that is true for your firm, and what your state requires you to say about costs
- How fast someone will call back, with the phone number and form visible without scrolling

A trucking page per metro should cover the federal and state rules that apply to carriers, the evidence that disappears fast after a crash, the attorneys who handle these cases and the trucking results you can describe accurately. Write a city page only for a place you actually serve, with something true about it: the courthouse, the highways where crashes happen, the office the client would visit.

Skip the keyword domain. 35 of the 161 local firm results came from domains with a case word in the name, like "injuryattorney," and only 2 held #1. The other 15 firm #1 spots went to domains built on a lawyer's or firm's name.

SECTION 05

Business Profiles, reviews and the advertising rules

05

The Business Profile drives the map pack, which sits above every organic result we counted. Google's guidelines name lawyers as individual practitioners, who can have their own profile if they work in a public-facing role and can be reached at the verified location during stated hours.

- **One office:** one firm profile, plus practitioner profiles for the lawyers clients actually meet there. Growth comes from reviews, categories and pages.
- **Staffed offices in several cities:** each office can have its own profile, city page and review flow. No profiles for cities without an office.
- **No specialty duplicates:** a practitioner should not have several profiles for several specialties.
- **No keyword names:** "Smith Law" can't become "Smith Law Car Accident Lawyer Houston." Adding unnecessary information can get the profile suspended.

In Bryan's AI visibility audits, odd variations in a business's name, address or phone number across listings are the most common actual error he finds, and the easiest to fix. Ask every client for a review at the end of a case, by text, with a direct link, and reply to every review in a calm sentence or two without discussing the case.

Where the attorney advertising rules change the copy

The rules are set state by state. The ABA's Model Rules bind no one until a state adopts its own version. North Carolina's Rule 7.1 is a typical example: it bars statements likely to create an unjustified expectation about results, and its comment says past results can mislead. Its Rule 7.2 limits specialist claims to certified lawyers and bars giving anything of value for a recommendation, with listed exceptions.

CHECK THESE AGAINST YOUR STATE'S ADOPTED RULES

Case-value calculators, which held 5 of the top 7 results for "how much is my case worth." Firm-written lists of recommended lawyers, and "best" in a page address. Pages that lead with the largest verdicts. Any review request that comes with a gift or discount belongs in front of your state bar's ethics line first. This is not legal advice.

SECTION 06

Research searches, intake and AI search

06

Research search	Searches a month	Who held page one
average car accident settlement	About 590	Firm blog posts, all 10 results
what to do after a car accident	About 9,900	Insurers and state agencies 6 of 10, led by California's Department of Insurance
do i need a lawyer for a car accident	Not listed	Ben Crump at #1, with Best Lawyers, a Reddit thread and Avvo
how much is my case worth	Not listed	Five calculators in the top 7, three from firms

The opening is the state-specific answer. An insurer's checklist can't tell a Georgia driver what Georgia law expects after a crash, and the two firm pages that ranked were each written for one state. Give the real steps, the deadline that matters and when to call, checked and signed by one of your attorneys, without promising an outcome.

Intake is part of the SEO program

An injured person who gets voicemail at 9pm on a Saturday calls the next firm on the page. Answer calls and chats around the clock, and return web forms within minutes.

> **SAME RANKINGS, MORE SIGNED CASES**
>
> A four-lawyer Phoenix firm ranks well for "car accident lawyer phoenix" but a third of its search calls come in after 6pm and go to voicemail. It adds an overnight answering service trained on its intake questions and texts back every form within five minutes. Its rankings didn't change. Its signed cases from search did.

The AI layer

Semrush flagged AI Overviews on 7 of the 15 local injury searches we pulled through its interface. When we logged legal AI Overviews earlier this year, the one for "best personal injury lawyer Houston" was built from Business Profile cards. Directories, review sites and Reddit threads hold much of page one and feed AI answers too, so start with consistency: one firm name, one phone number per office and one clear list of case types everywhere your firm appears.

SECTION 07

Cost, payback and hiring help

07

SEO is slower to start than paid clicks. Consultwebs, a large legal SEO agency, says its clients typically wait 12 to 18 months for a significant return. Translate any retainer into signed cases by the fee, not the settlement.

The payback worksheet

Step	The math	Your number
1. Total investment	Monthly SEO spend times months. 12 is a fair first look.	_____
2. Typical gross recovery	A typical case for the case types you want, not your best verdict	_____
3. Fee per case	Step 2 times your fee, times the share you keep after referral splits	_____
4. Signed cases to break even	Step 1 divided by step 3, rounded up	_____
5. Inquiries needed	Step 4 divided by the share of search inquiries that sign	_____

A WORKED EXAMPLE

A $3,000 monthly program over 12 months is $36,000. If a typical case resolves for $30,000 and the fee is one third, each case brings in $10,000, so four signed cases that resolve cover the year. Fees arrive when a case resolves, so cash payback runs later. Case costs and liens are not modeled.

Ask an agency for 4 things before you sign

1. **A page-one review of your top case types in your main cities,** firm by firm.
2. **A Business Profile plan** that follows Google's rules, with no keyword-stuffed names.
3. **Reporting on signed cases and fees by case type and page,** not just rankings.
4. **Who writes your case-type pages,** and which attorney reviews them against your state's rules.

SECTION 08

Is your injury SEO aimed at cases you can win?

08

Answer for your firm as it stands today. Each "no" is a gap. Start with the lanes the Page-One Map marks as most open: truck pages, real city pages and state-specific research pages.

Question	Yes	Partly	No
SEARCH TARGETING			
Have you checked who holds page one for your top case types in each city you serve?	☐	☐	☐
Does your homepage read like a personal injury page for your city?	☐	☐	☐
Does every case type you want more of, such as trucking, have its own page per metro?	☐	☐	☐
PROFILES AND DIRECTORIES			
Does your firm have one Business Profile per staffed office, with no profiles for cities you don't have an office in?	☐	☐	☐
Is your Business Profile name your real firm name, with no case types or cities added?	☐	☐	☐
If your attorneys are selected for Super Lawyers, are those profiles complete and linked to the right case-type pages?	☐	☐	☐
PAGES AND RULES			
Does each case-type page say near the top which cases you take, who handles them, the next steps in your state, how the fee works and how fast you call back?	☐	☐	☐
Do your pages say plainly where your office is, which courthouse you file in and who answers the phone?	☐	☐	☐
Have your results claims, calculators, "best" language and review requests been checked against your state's adopted advertising rules?	☐	☐	☐
INTAKE AND MEASUREMENT			
Are calls and chats answered around the clock, and web forms returned within minutes?	☐	☐	☐
Do you track every call and form to the page it came from and the case type it became?	☐	☐	☐
Do you know your cost per signed case from search?	☐	☐	☐

YES	PARTLY	NO
_____	_____	_____

SECTION 09

Frequently asked questions

09

Q **Can a local firm outrank the billboard firms?**

In our data, usually yes for the top spot. Multi-state firms held 13% of local results but only 1 of 23 #1 spots. Single-state firms won 17.

Q **Which searches should a firm chase first?**

The case types you want more of, in the cities you actually serve. Truck searches are a separate, smaller race, and every firm that won one did it with a trucking page.

Q **Which legal directories are worth the effort?**

Check your own page one first. In ours, Super Lawyers appeared in 22 of 23 local searches and Justia in 4. Avvo, FindLaw, Martindale and Lawyers.com appeared in none.

Q **Can I add "car accident lawyer" to my Business Profile name?**

No. Google's guidelines say the name should reflect your real-world business name, and adding unnecessary information can get the profile suspended, even when a competitor gets away with it for a while.

Q **How long does personal injury SEO take?**

It depends on the lane. Truck pages, city pages for real offices and state-specific research pages can show signed cases within a year. A metro head term takes longer. Consultwebs says its clients typically wait 12 to 18 months for a significant return.

Q **What contingency fee should I use in the payback math?**

Your own agreement. As one example, Florida presumes an injury fee excessive above one third of a recovery up to $1 million when the case resolves before an answer is filed, or above 40% after that. Other states set their own limits.

Q **Does AI search change the plan?**

It raises the stakes on consistency. The directories, review sites and Reddit threads that hold page one also feed AI answers, so keep one firm name, one phone number per office and one list of case types everywhere.

SECTION 10

Next steps

10

1. **Run the self-audit** on the previous pages. Be honest.
2. **Search your top case types in each city you serve** and note which results are local firms, national firms and directories.
3. **Build the first case-type page** in the most open lane, and fix your Business Profile name and structure.
4. **Talk to someone who does this for injury firms.** A clear look at which searches your firm can win, and which to stop paying for.

WORK WITH BROWN BEAR

Brown Bear builds the page-one map for injury firms first, then does the page, profile, review, intake tracking and AI search work that follows from it. brownbear.digital/industries/personal-injury-lawyers | bryan@brownbear.digital

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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