



The Elements of a Winning RFP

Your request for proposal for a website design project should include the following elements:

Company Description

Explain what your firm does as well as where it sits in the ecosystem of law firms. This should include your firm's unique positioning (as you perceive it).

Project Overview

Describe your website design project in detail. In addition, explain why you are seeking a website redesign. Will this be a full redesign, including a totally new information architecture and branding elements? Or will it be more of a refresher within your existing site and design parameters? Do you already have a web development partner, or are you looking for your design partner to arrange that for you? Finally, you may choose to indicate the type of relationship you are seeking with a designer (will this be a one-and-done project, or are you looking to develop an ongoing relationship with a design firm?).

Description of your Existing Website

Provide a description of your firm's existing website. Explain what is and isn't working about the site. For example, if your site suffers from technical or performance problems, spell them out.

Technical and Functional Requirements

Clearly spell out the different functions you want your new website to perform. For example, you may want certain social media integrations or to have the ability to easily download staff biographies in PDF form in order to facilitate your firm's proposal-making process.

Visual Design Objectives

Is your firm satisfied with any aspects of your current design system? Do you hope to preserve certain elements, or are you looking for a more dramatic redesign? To what extent are you pursuing brand change versus a new website design that preserves your existing branding? Know that a full rebranding project is much larger than a website redesign.

Website Target Audiences

Explain who you hope to reach with your website. Obviously, this will include prospective clients and potential employees. If possible, go deeper than that in defining your audiences. For example, you might say that one of your audiences is small to medium-sized businesses in the healthcare industry. Think about your ideal clients and use that to guide your discussion of your target audiences.

Realistic Timeline Objectives

Spell out your firm's hopes or expectations regarding the website design project. Keep in mind that even smaller firms often can't get the approvals necessary to complete a website redesign project within 6 months. If you want to accelerate your project, be prepared to clear the schedules of everyone who has to approve it. The average law firm's website design project actually takes closer to 1.5-2 years to complete.

Budget

If you already have an idea of your budget range, include that in your RFP. This helps agencies self-select by giving them a quick understanding of whether or not they should take the time to respond with a proposal. It also shows potential design partners whether your budget is realistically aligned with your proposed project's scope and objectives.