Law Firm Marketing Club

2026 What Do Clients Want, Need and Expect?

Produced by the
Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by
katchr®
Partner Network Program

Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by katchr Partner Network Program

Contents

03 Introduction

04 A few words from our sponsor, Katchr

05 Executive summary

15 About the authors

15 About Katchr

Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by katchr Partner Network Program

Introduction

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Law Firm Marketing Club's 'What Do Clients Want, Need and Expect' research. We've seen this grow into one of the most consistently referenced pieces of independent research in the UK legal sector, and we're proud of the role it continues to play in shaping conversations across firms of all sizes.

At the heart of this research are over 600 members of the public, all potential users of legal services. Rather than guessing what clients might value, we asked them directly. How do they decide which law firm to contact? What reassures them early on? Where does confidence wobble, and where does trust grow? The result is a grounded, unfiltered view of what the client experience actually feels like from the outside.

In this iteration, we've continued to explore key stages of the client journey, including onboarding, trust and the reasons clients choose different law firms for different legal needs. Alongside this, we have added a topic that is dominating conversations in law firms, boardrooms and everyday life: AI.

Clients don't experience AI in isolation. They're already using it in online shopping, banking, travel, healthcare and customer service, often without even thinking about it. Naturally, they bring those expectations with them when they interact with a law firm. This year's research looks at how clients feel about the use of AI by law firms and where it adds confidence or concern.

We also dig deeper into the data to understand how views differ by age, client type and previous experience of using a law firm. Throughout the report, we focus on what these insights mean in practice and the practical implications.

We're delighted to have Katchr sponsoring our research this year and who bring their own perspective to the findings and the questions they raise for the profession. Together, we've interpreted the data into clear takeaways that help you sense-check your current approach and highlight where expectations are moving faster than many firms realise.

As always, thank you for your continued interest in the research and for being part of the conversation.

We hope you find it thought-provoking, useful and, above all, practical.



Laura Lack
LFMC Community Manager
laura@lawfirmmarketingclub.com



Dan Hodges
Managing Director of Conscious Solutions
dan@conscious.co.uk

A few words from our sponsor, Katchr

We're delighted to sponsor the 2026 What Do Clients Want, Need and Expect? report. Each year, this research offers an invaluable, evidence-led snapshot of how clients experience the legal sector.

What stands out most clearly this year is that clients are not asking for reinvention. They are asking for clarity, consistency and confidence. The fundamentals remain steady, but expectations around digital access, transparency and governance are rising quietly beneath the surface. Across the findings, clients continue to prioritise access to real people, clear communication, visible expertise and reassurance that their matter is being handled properly. These expectations are familiar, but tolerance for inconsistency is not what it once was.

The report shows that while first impressions are generally positive, trust can quickly erode when expectations set early on are not reinforced throughout the journey. Clients are particularly sensitive to gaps between what they are told and what they experience. This reinforces an important truth: client experience is not shaped by individual touchpoints, but by how well information, communication and decisions are joined up across the firm.

From our perspective, this all points back to clarity. Law firms don't lose clients because they lack ambition. They lose them when information is fragmented, expectations aren't managed, and insight isn't shared across teams. When people inside a firm are working from different versions of the truth, even good service can feel disjointed to the client.

Well-governed data plays a critical role here. It doesn't just support reporting; it underpins operational confidence. When firms trust their own data, they gain a clearer view of what's happening across matters, teams and clients. That clarity allows them to set realistic expectations, communicate more consistently and intervene early when things start to drift. This is what clients experience as reliability and professionalism.

The firms that stand out are not necessarily the loudest or the most technologically ambitious. They are the ones that professionalise the client experience through joined-up data, clear reporting and consistent delivery, turning "good enough" into genuinely excellent. Ultimately, trust works both ways. Clients need to trust their law firm, but that trust is built on a more fundamental foundation: firms trusting their own information well enough to act on it with confidence.

We hope you find this year's report as insightful as we do and that it supports meaningful reflection and improvement across the profession.



Martin Page
Chief Revenue Officer
Martin.Page@Katchr.com
www.katchr.com

Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by katchr Partner Network Program

Executive summary

This year, 642 people took part in our research.

OVERVIEW

642 Participants

Across **the UK**

Age Range: **18-75+**

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender: **50% Male / 50% Female**

Key Age Groups: **30-44 (Largest)** **18-29, 45-59**

EXPERIENCE WITH LAW FIRMS

29% Never used

26% Last Year

24% 1-5 Years Ago

21% More than 5 years ago

LEGAL MATTER TYPES

76% Personal matters only

10% Business matters only

14% Both

What we asked

The LFMC What Clients Want 2026 Survey asked some key questions to understand client experiences and preferences with law firms.

The survey explored:

- What's important to people when choosing a law firm
- What clients expect when dealing with a law firm
- The impact of clients' first impressions of a law firm
- The relevance of factors, including commitment to sustainability and diversity, for people when choosing a law firm
- Client expectations of a law firm's online presence, during interactions, feedback methods and the participants' overall thoughts on value and experience.

> What was the first impression that the law firm created?

> What's important to you when choosing a law firm?

> What do you expect to see when you check a law firm out online?

> How comfortable would you feel with AI being used in a law firm?

> How important is a law firm's approach to sustainability?

> How important is a law firm's approach to diversity & inclusion?

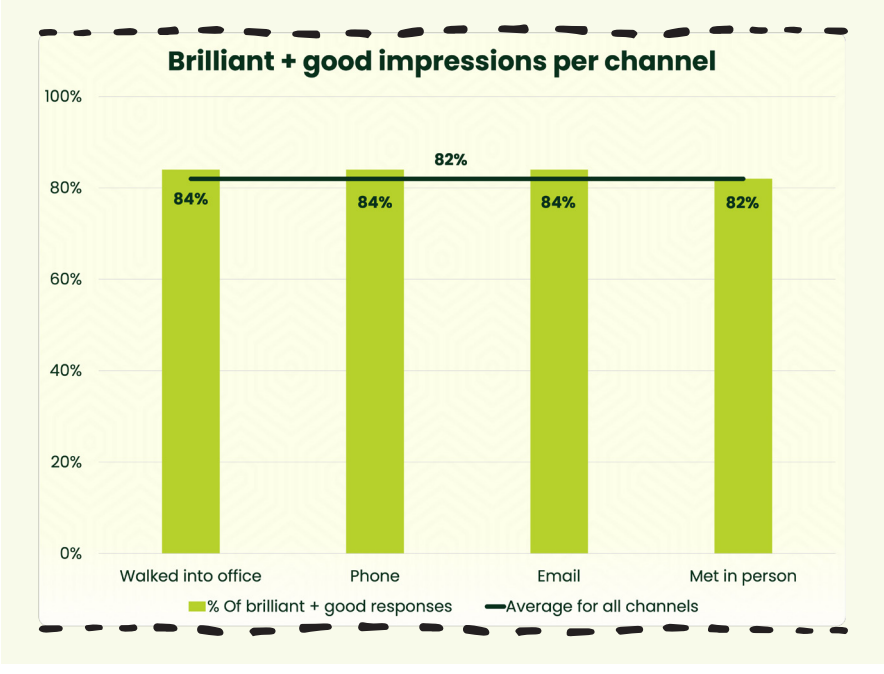
> What do you expect from a law firm?

> How did the law firm deliver to your expectations?

> Would you use the law firm again?

© Conscious Solutions Ltd 2026. What Do Clients Want, Need and Expect? 2026

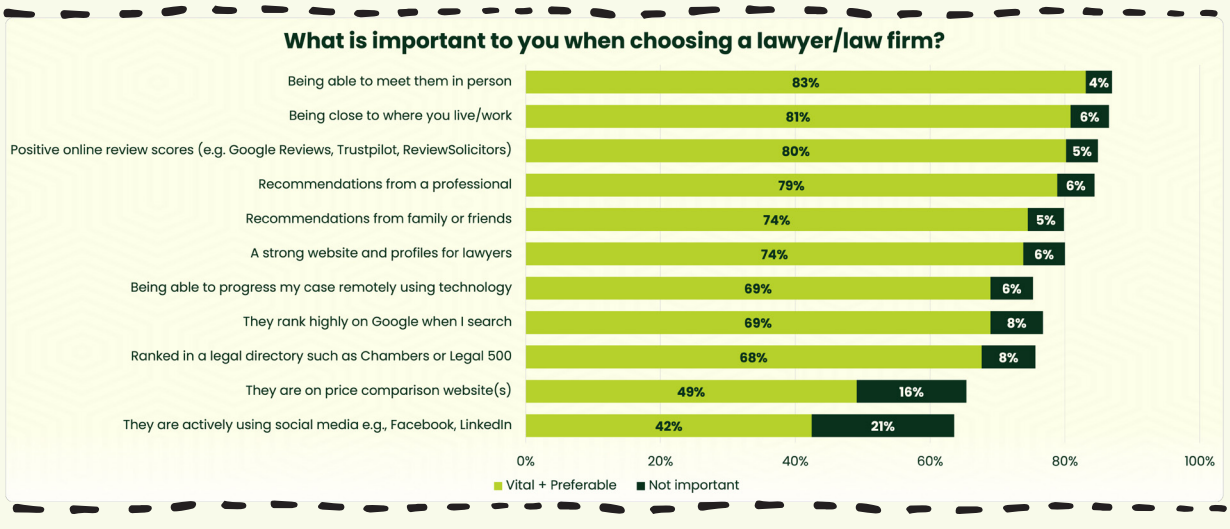
1. What was the first impression that the law firm created?



- **82% of respondents rated their first impression of a law firm as brilliant or good.**
- **Phone calls are the most popular way to make initial contact with a firm.**
- **Respondents aged 18-29 were the only age group where phone calls were not the most common method of communication. Emails were the most common method for this age group (33%).**

Most firms are getting the early stages of the client relationship right, with initial interactions viewed positively. However, firms need to remain consistent with their ongoing approach to client care and managing expectations to keep meeting them.

2. If choosing a lawyer/law firm what are the important factors you look for?

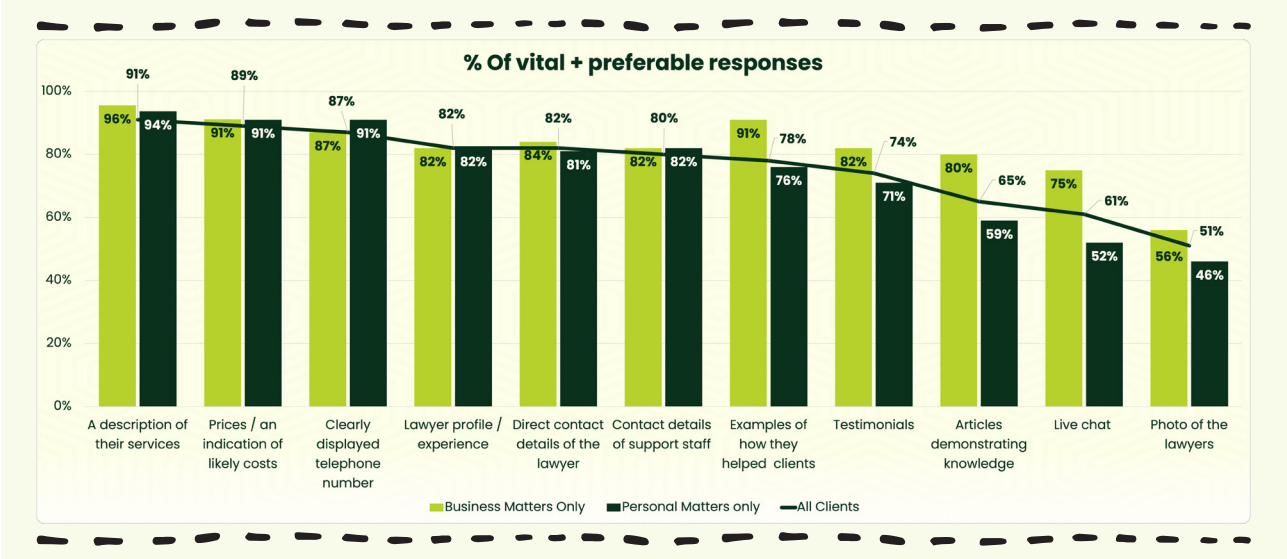


- **Being able to meet in person is a top priority for clients, however, they are increasingly valuing firms' websites, positive online reviews, and good online search visibility. This digital reputation is now almost as influential as traditional word-of-mouth for many clients, particularly those under 45.**

- **There is a growing expectation that firms will provide a hybrid experience, including in-person contact and access to digital tools and information.**

The core criteria for choosing a law firm remain unchanged, but client expectations around them are evolving. Firms that adapt early will be best positioned as generational dynamics shift.

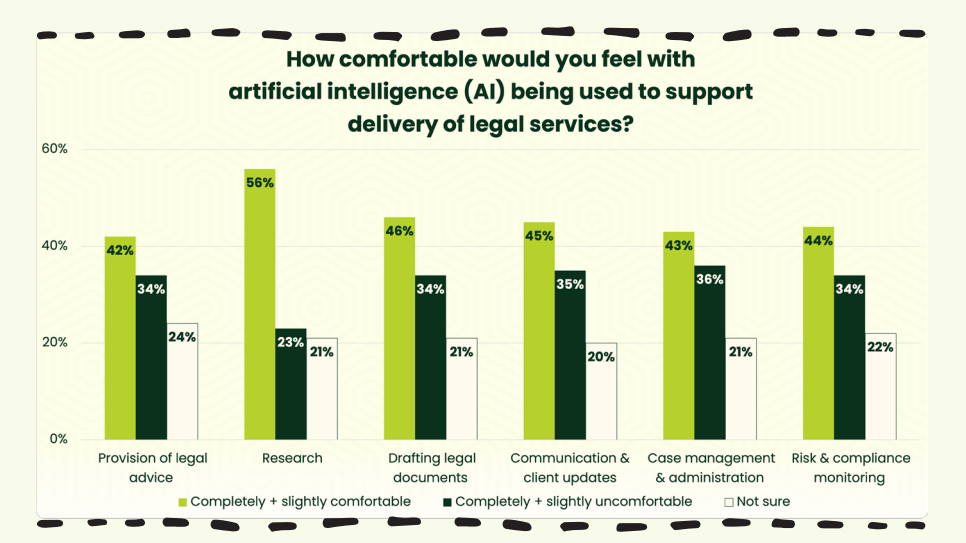
3. What do you expect to see when you check the lawyers/law firm out online?



- **Similar to last year's results, these are the top six things clients broadly expect to see in a firm's online presence:**
  - Description of services
  - Prices/an indication of likely costs
  - Clearly displayed telephone number
  - Lawyer/fee earner profile/experience
  - Direct contact details of the lawyer/fee earner
  - Contact details for support staff.
- **Business clients and younger personal clients are increasingly expecting to see live chat on websites.**
- **Highlighting a lawyer and firm's expertise is valued higher by business clients than personal clients.**

Clients expect clear online information, visible expertise, and easy ways to contact real people. Responsive tools like live chat are becoming increasingly expected, particularly by clients under 45. Firms that get these basics right can build trust quickly and remove friction before the relationship even starts.

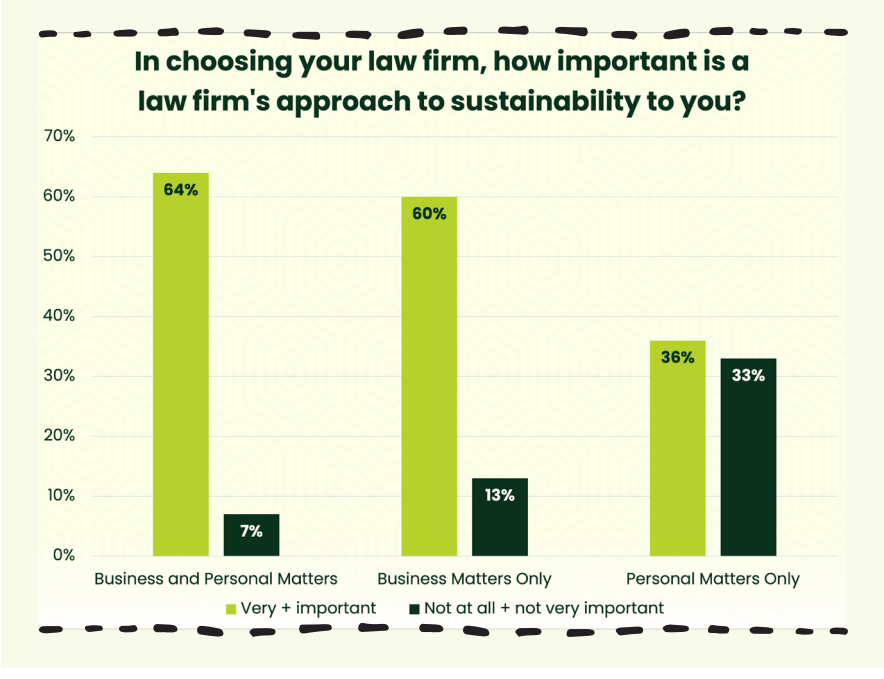
4. How comfortable would you feel with artificial intelligence (AI) being used to support delivery of legal services?



- **45% of clients are completely or slightly comfortable with the use of AI in law firms.**
- **Clients are most comfortable with firms using AI for research and least comfortable with its use for case management and administration.**
- **Around half of younger respondents were completely or slightly comfortable with the use of AI, compared to only 25% of those over 75.**
- **Overall, business clients are more comfortable with the use of AI than personal clients at 62% and 42%, respectively.**

To maintain trust with clients, firms must be transparent about where they use AI and how they manage it.

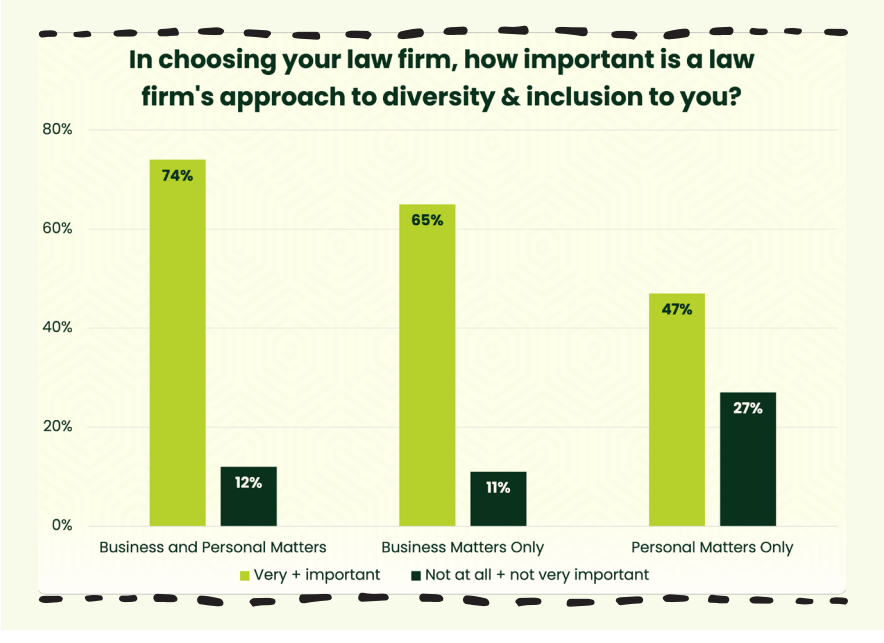
5. In choosing your law firm, how important is a law firm's approach to sustainability to you?



- **40% of respondents considered sustainability very important or "important" in their approach to selecting a law firm.**
- **Broken down by age, 48% of younger respondents considered it to be "very important" or "important" compared to just 29% for older respondents.**

Sustainability is becoming an increasingly important factor in selecting a law firm, with significantly stronger expectations among younger respondents than older clients.

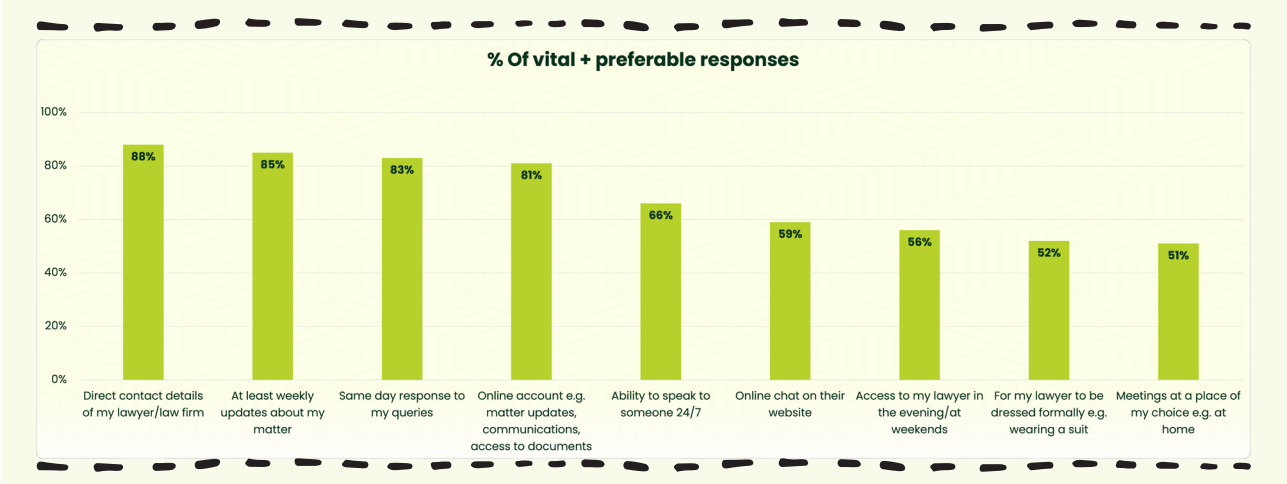
6. In choosing your law firm, how important is a law firm's approach to diversity & inclusivity to you?



- **51% of respondents rate a law firm's approach to diversity and inclusion as very important or important.**
- **More than half of younger respondents consider D&I to be important compared to 30% of over-75s.**
- **D&I is a more significant decision factor for business clients, with 65% ranking it as very important or important in their selection criteria.**

Clients still prioritise the best legal expertise but increasingly see diversity and inclusive cultures as part of what defines a great firm.

7. What do you expect from a lawyer/law firm?

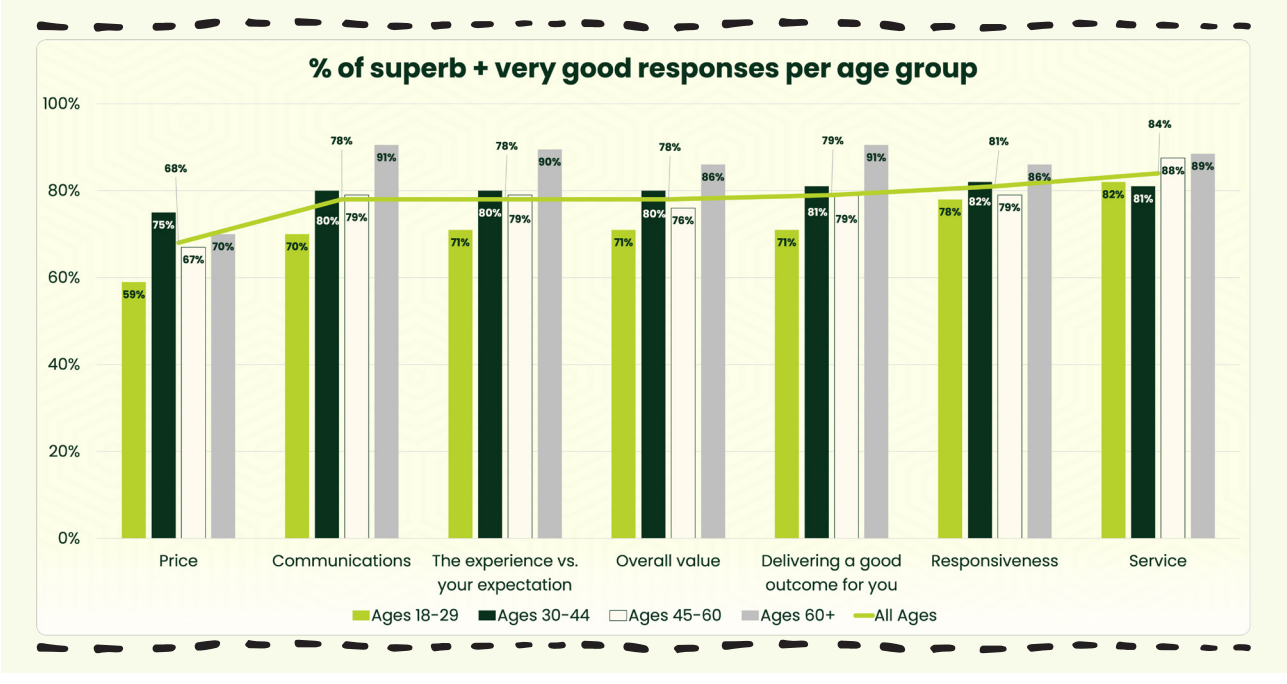


- **The most highly ranked client expectations were:**
  - Direct contact details (88%)
  - At least weekly updates (85%)
  - Same-day responses (83%)
  - Online account for updates and documents (81%)

- **Younger respondents rated the options of online chat and 24/7 access to the firm as more important than older respondents.**

Clients don't expect round-the-clock availability, but they do expect clear communication about roles and expectations.

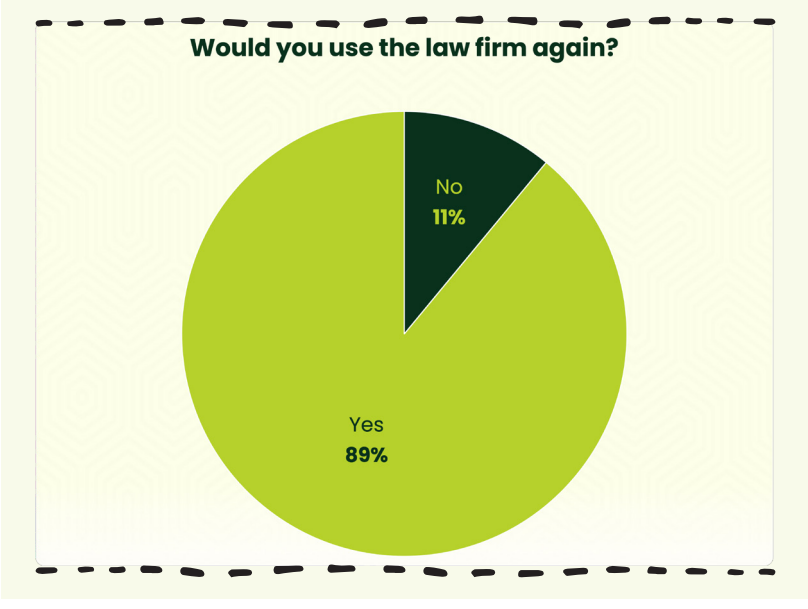
8. How did the law firm deliver to your expectations?



- **Client expectations are least met when it comes to price and transparency around how much their matter will cost.**
- **The service provided by firms is the strongest area for meeting expectations.**
- **Overall, there is a contrast between the age groups with younger clients giving the lowest proportion of superb and very good responses compared to older clients giving the highest.**

Price is the main source of friction in client relationships, but clearer pricing and better communication can help close the gap.

9. Would you use the law firm again?



- **Clients are willing to use their law firm again with 89% saying they would return.**
- **This doesn't match with how many respondents actually do return, though, at 56%.**

The firms that approach new matters as being the start of a long-term client relationship will see more loyalty from their clients and repeat business.

Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by katchr Partner Network Program

About the authors



Laura Lack | LFMC Community Manager

Laura manages the Law Firm Marketing Club (LFMC), a welcoming and collaborative community for law firms striving to do better marketing and business development. Having worked closely with law firms on digital marketing at Conscious Solutions, Laura understands how isolating marketing and BD can sometimes feel in a law firm and is passionate about making the Club a genuinely supportive space. Laura enjoys continually updating the members' resources, unique research pieces and collaboration opportunities – all with the LFMC members' wants, needs and expectations at the heart of what the Club delivers.



Dan Hodges | Managing Director of Conscious Solutions

Dan Hodges is Managing Director of Conscious Solutions, where he works with law firms as a trusted partner in driving sustainable growth and improved performance. With nearly 20 years' experience in the legal and professional services sector, Dan combines strategic thinking with a practical, hands-on approach. He works closely with firms to shape clear direction, strengthen their online presence, and deliver measurable results. He is a strong advocate of collaboration, both within his team and with clients. Dan believes the best outcomes come from working together, challenging thinking, and empowering people to push boundaries and achieve more.

About Katchr

Katchr is a business intelligence solution built exclusively for law firms by legal technology specialists. Trusted by over 100 UK firms, Katchr unifies data from PMS, finance, CRM, HR and case systems into one clear view of firm performance.

Katchr's mission is to help firms continually increase the value they gain from their data. Leaders in marketing and business development, management, risk, finance and IT use Katchr to turn information into actionable insights on profitability and performance.

For law firm marketing and BD teams, Katchr reveals what drives new business, strengthens client relationships and shows ROI, enabling strategic, focused growth.

Law Firm Marketing Club

Sponsored by katchr Partner Network Program

More than just a place to learn, grow, and share

The Law Firm Marketing Club (LFMC) is a vibrant community for law firms committed to improving their marketing and business development (BD) efforts. Whether your goals are to attract more clients, increase fees, enhance marketing skills, or collaborate with like-minded professionals across the UK, LFMC offers the tools, resources, and connections to help you succeed.

Membership benefits at a glance
For just £1,650+VAT annually, LFMC membership unlocks a wealth of resources and opportunities for your entire firm, including:

Extensive training resources
- Unlimited access to recorded sessions on marketing and BD.
- Marketing development programme sessions open to all firm members.

Valuable marketing tools
- Resources, checklists, and guides valued at £1,650
- Access to exclusive research reports, including What clients want (worth £450+VAT) and the Professional Services Marketing Survey.

Special offers from LFMC partners
- Discounts like 10% off Promptr CRM or a complimentary website and SEO audit from Conscious Solutions.

Collaborative networking opportunities
- Monthly marketing development programme sessions designed to upskill your team.
- Collaboration meetings with other members and partners, complete with shared notes.
- Invitations to exclusive networking events, including netwalking.

Insightful events and summits
- Attendance at two annual summits featuring strategic workshops.
- Access to Conscious Solutions digital marketing training days, full-day sessions in Bristol with expert-led sessions.

Get in touch with laura@lawfirmmarketingclub.com for more information about the Club.