

The Review Velocity Playbook

How to earn four to eight reviews a month across Google, Avvo and Martindale without breaking California's professional conduct rules, and why velocity matters more than totals for AI citations.

AI engines treat reviews as evidence a firm is real, active and trusted. Studies of AI visibility find brand mentions correlate about three times more strongly than backlinks. Recency and cadence matter more than the total: a firm adding six reviews a month outperforms one with 200 and none.

The rules first

- Ask, never incentivize. No discounts, gifts or fee credits for reviews.
- Never disclose case details in a response. "Thank you for trusting us with your matter" is the ceiling.
- Do not review-gate. Ask every client, not only the happy ones.
- Do not write or buy reviews. Platforms detect it and the State Bar treats it as misleading advertising.

The request flow

Moment	Channel	Message
Matter closes	Email from the attorney	Personal thank-you, one link, one sentence asking for a review of the experience
+3 days, no review	SMS from the office	"Jane asked me to send this in case it's easier from your phone" + link
+10 days	None	Stop. Two touches, then done.

Where to send them

- **Google** first: feeds the map pack and AI Overviews. Use the short review link from your Business Profile.
- **Avvo** second: AI engines treat it as a legal-specific authority; criminal defense clients rely on it.
- **Martindale** third: still read by engines for business and estate practices.
- Rotate the primary link month to month so no platform stalls.

Responding

- Every review, every platform, within two business days.
- Use the reviewer's language. A Spanish review gets a Spanish reply.
- Mention the practice area and city naturally: "helping families in Glendale" reinforces the entity.
- For negative reviews: acknowledge, do not argue, offer a phone call, never confirm they were a client.
- Report reviews that break platform rules; do not try to bury them.

Measuring velocity

Metric	Target	Why
New reviews per month, all platforms	4–8	Cadence is what engines read as "active"
Response time	< 2 business days	Responsiveness signal on Google
Share mentioning practice area	> 50%	Specific reviews get quoted; generic ones do not
Platforms with a review this quarter	3	Corroboration across sources

A month one plan

1. Claim and align every profile: same name, phone, address, categories, photos.
2. Write the two request templates in the attorney's voice; get them approved.
3. Build the closing-checklist step that triggers the request.
4. Assign one person to respond, with the confidentiality rule printed above their desk.
5. Track the four metrics monthly next to your AI citation rate.

Want this done for your firm?

The AI citation audit is free for Los Angeles law firms: forty-plus client questions through four engines, a written report, a thirty-minute walkthrough. isonn.com/free-ai-visibility-check