

# Wilson Browne Rebrand



**Industry Sector**  
Financial Services

**Client**  
Wilson Browne Solicitors

**Design Consultancy**  
White Clarke Creative

**Submission Date**  
1 July 2016

**For Publication**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wilson Browne Solicitors cover all areas of Private Client and Commercial law. They have a distinguished practice history, tracing back almost 200 years, and are well known in the East Midlands area.

Prior to 2014, the UK legal market was competitive and saturated. The need to stand out had never been greater. With legal practices looking for new ways to take themselves to market, a new solution was available – to be part of a national umbrella network of solicitors, offering a consistent approach, branding and customer message.

Early in 2014, having joined a national umbrella network several years earlier, Wilson Browne had not experienced the sales uplift they had been expecting. Website traffic was stagnant, social media presence was minimal, and some clients commented on the branding not reflecting the heritage and equity of the firm.

The legal network aimed to make local solicitors accessible to all. It became evident that changes to the Legal Services Act had not been the seismic shift expected. Naturally there were elements of what became known as ‘Tesco law’, but ultimately it was clear that Wilson Browne needed to maintain their heritage and not succumb to the commoditisation of legal services.

This case study explores how design has helped to rejuvenate Wilson Browne’s identity and how this has had an inspiring effect on several areas of the business.



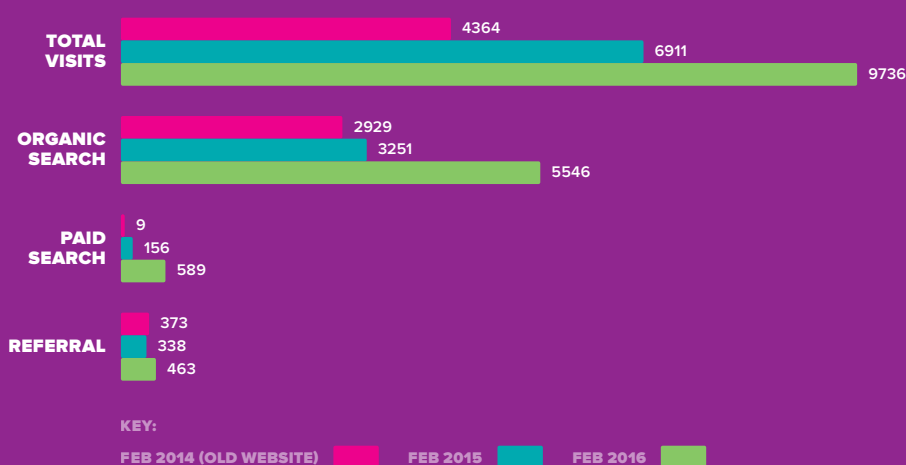
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Relaunching in May 2014, the business is now experiencing increasing website traffic, brand awareness via social media, improved customer satisfaction and staff morale – all areas cited for being awarded Large Law Firm of the Year 2015 by the Northamptonshire Law Society.

(265 words)

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LAW SOCIETY LARGE LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR 2015

### WEB SITE VISITS



#### TOTAL VISITS

▲  
**123%**

#### ORGANIC SEARCH

▲  
**89%**

#### PAID SEARCH

▲  
**6444%**

#### REFERRAL

▲  
**24%**

### INCREASE IN TURNOVER AFTER REBRAND

#### CORPORATE COMMERCIAL

▲  
**46%**

#### HOUSING

▲  
**17%**

#### COURT OF PROTECTION

▲  
**45%**

#### CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

▲  
**3.8%**

### INCREASE IN ANNUAL FILE OPENINGS AFTER REBRAND

#### CHILD CARE

▲  
**44%**

#### PRIVATE FAMILY

▲  
**32%**

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Outline of the brief

In 2008, a privately owned new player came to the market offering firms the opportunity to join a national network of legal practices. By joining law firms under one brand, it was thought there would be a strategic advantage utilising a common branding umbrella to provide marketing, IT/Web, PR and an element of strategic direction with fixed-price offerings, a focus on client service and new product development.

Wilson Browne joined the network in 2012, citing national brand recognition and economies of scale as key motivating factors and, of course, the potential to compete more effectively in an increasingly congested High Street.

Over the following eighteen months the business reviewed the venture. Wilson Browne had a mixed target audience comprising High Net Worth individuals and its Corporate/Commercial clients (As and Bs), together with C1 and C2 'High Street' work, e.g. wills, conveyancing and family law. On one view, C1s and C2s were very much the target audience that the legal network were aiming for. This left the As and Bs at risk of potentially failing to connect with the business' new identity. In effect, could Wilson Browne do more to connect with all of their clients?

The business made a decision to leave the network but realised it could not return to its previous branding. The new branding would have to portray a progressive image whilst alluding to the heritage of the firm and appealing to a broad range of B2B and B2C clients. It would be vital to have a high acceptance of the creative concept and design of the business' branded materials.

**"At the point of rebrand, we were massively excited by the prospect of branding that really resonated with both our Corporate and Personal clients. The proposed branding really struck a chord with both markets"**

*Kevin Rogers, Chairman of the Board*

Initially Wilson Browne were exploring two strategic directions. White Clarke Creative were asked to advise on both scenarios prior to commencing any creative work. They could either leave the legal network completely and rebrand to appeal to both target audiences; or stick with the legal network but introduce a sub-brand that enabled the Commercial/Corporate teams to connect with their target audiences.

For us the solution was simple. Rebrand the entire business. Draw on the company's heritage and create an identity that resonates with all target audiences. This way the entire business could move forward with common goals. We believed that developing a separate sub-brand for the Commercial side of the business would cause disharmony. Following extensive stakeholder consultation and research into the UK legal market, it became clear to the client that a complete rebrand was required in order to achieve the firm's business objectives.

From here the scope of the project widened considerably, following our strategic input, to become a full rebrand across the entire business covering website, signage, internal communications and point-of-sale.

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# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Target audiences

- High volume, low value 'High Street' C1/C2
- Low volume, high value 'High Net Worth individuals' and Commercial/Corporate clients

## Key business objectives

- 1 Create a new brand identity that appeals to all target audiences and employees
- 2 Increase website traffic, file openings and revenue
- 3 Raise brand awareness via social media

## Description

Wilson Browne has been a leading firm in the East Midlands for over 27 years. Recent mergers have made it one of the largest and most experienced legal practices in this area. With a strong local presence (five offices across Northamptonshire and one in Leicestershire), the firm covers all aspects of commercial law, child and family law, litigation, private client, trusts and charities law and domestic and commercial conveyancing.

## Overview of the market

In 2012 the UK legal market was undergoing nothing short of a revolution. The year before, provisions of the 2007 Legal Services Act came into effect to allow alternative business structures (ABSs). This meant non-lawyers in professional, management or ownership roles could now offer regulated legal services in England and Wales. Essentially law firms no longer needed to be owned by lawyers. It was a time for existing legal practices to become more transparent and to actually compete. Traditionally a closed market, not subject to competitive influences, only 22% of all customers 'shopped around' for their legal advice at the time. The emergence of legal offsprings from powerhouses such as KPMG, PwC and The Cooperative was certainly going to have an impact on the High Street and in the Commercial legal world.

## Project launch date

May 2014.

## Size of design budget and production costs

Design (includes web build) £

Production £

Invoiced between May-December 2014.

(766 words)

# OUTLINE OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION

The Wilson Browne brand merited a refresh. Our view as an agency was that the legal network's branding had diluted its identity and pulled away from its more traditional values and heritage.

Its previous identity – prior to the legal network branding – was still heavily prevalent across the business within key client areas. In working towards the brief, we discovered that many employees were unsure how the business should actually look and felt confused by the myriad of materials.

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Key to any future success would be how the business positioned itself with its customer base. Any identity and proposition would need to appeal across its two main target audiences.

## **Colour**

The previous incarnation of the Wilson Browne identity used a dark red colour. Its extensive use was overpowering; we felt it was a little old-fashioned and dreary. A livelier purple 'accent' colour would feel more dynamic, attention-seeking and optimistic.

This modern visual identity would appeal to a new, wider audience whilst not alienating the existing client base.

## **Logotype**

We intended to create a logotype which has the appropriate characteristics for the contemporary, competitive practice environment:

- Sufficient weight to have good presence
- Large counters aid readability
- Wide character spacing carries a bold, sturdy look



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*Logo and brand imagery*



# OUTLINE OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION

## Research

A selection of existing High Net Worth clients confirmed that the identity resonated well with this key client base. The purple accent colour invoked feelings of tradition, values and heritage. The logotype was modern enough to convey a legal partnership that was contemporary, professional and forward-thinking, whilst retaining its historical core values.

## Photography

Photography would form a leading role in the visual manifestations of Wilson Browne as a partnership.

### FAMILY MATTERS

At Wilson Browne Solicitors we understand how difficult the breakdown of a relationship can be.

With one of the largest and most experienced family law teams in the area we'll help you choose the route that's right for you. We cover all aspects of family law and our pricing is as straightforward as we are with an initial free phone call and a £60 fixed-fee, face-to-face consultation.

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LAW SOCIETY  
LARGE LAW FIRM  
OF THE YEAR  
2015**

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Latest news from Wilson Browne - 11.6.14

**In this edition...**

- Corporate Day gets thumbs up!
- Wilson Browne Nuneaton now open...
- Nuneaton office makes impressive debut
- Employees take part in London Marathon again...
- "I'm getting away from everything for three months - and it's all for a great cause..."
- Marketing Director in solo Amazon charity paddle challenge...










# OUTLINE OF THE DESIGN SOLUTION

## Wilson Browne Solicitors is the partners and employees

We wanted to portray the essence of Wilson Browne by presenting the partners and employees in the best possible light – overall giving a consummately professional appearance.

To achieve this we wanted the models to be existing Wilson Browne employees carrying out everyday functions in their work locations. This not only produced the perfect range of key shots but also helped employees connect with and get behind the rebranding exercise.

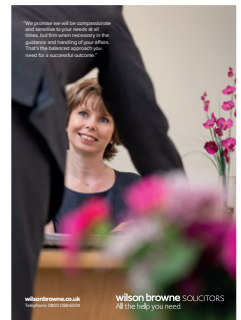
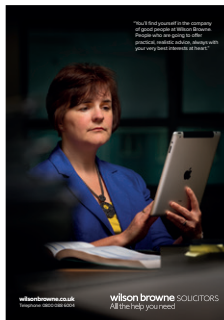
Various brand champions were selected to help discuss the launch with colleagues. The rebrand cascaded across all marketing collateral in the months leading to launch.

## Website development

A paramount requirement was to ensure we developed a responsive, user-friendly website that engaged traffic and linked to social media. We designed the site structure, menu structure and page layouts to align with client needs. We also added functionality to associate Wilson Browne services with guides and news items to help people find content relevant to what they needed to know. We speeded up page load times, and integrated with social media.

(470 words)

Branch PoS and signage





# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## 1. Create a new brand identity that appeals to all target audiences and employees

### NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LAW SOCIETY LARGE LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR 2015

Wilson Browne won the 2015 Northamptonshire Law Society Large Law Firm of the Year Award. When delivering the award, the Society highlighted client retention; the new website being very client focused; seeking client feedback (and the positive responses); and people

development, as key reasons for winning the award. This confirms that Wilson Browne has achieved its goal of appealing to their target audience. This is further reinforced by the customer testimonials below.

Subjectively, the employees at Wilson Browne have also been inspired, as was observed during their Staff Awards Ceremony; in addition, the marketing team were voted 'Team of the year 2015' by the Equity Partners.

"This shows what an impact the rebrand had on the business as a whole. Prior to the new identity, it would have been unthinkable that a non fee-earning team would be in the running, let alone win"

*Wayne Jenkins, Business Development and Marketing Director*

"At one point (during the Wilson Browne Solicitors Staff Awards Ceremony) we asked the trainees to stand up – just seeing all those faces, all those people that the firm is investing in for the future, made me tremendously proud. We invited members of our alumni (retired or ex partners) and I think it's fair to say that they remain very proud of the firm and its continued success"

*Ika Částka, Partner and previous Chairman of the Board*

### BEFORE

"If we weren't already with you before you became part of the legal network, we would never have become a client"

*Anonymous Commercial Client,  
Client Satisfaction Survey*

### AFTER

"We are delighted to see you have rebranded and reclaimed your identity as Wilson Browne"

*Anonymous Commercial Client,  
Client Satisfaction Survey*

"Wilson Browne is much improved, it has returned to its more personal approach, even though there was no change of staff in that period"

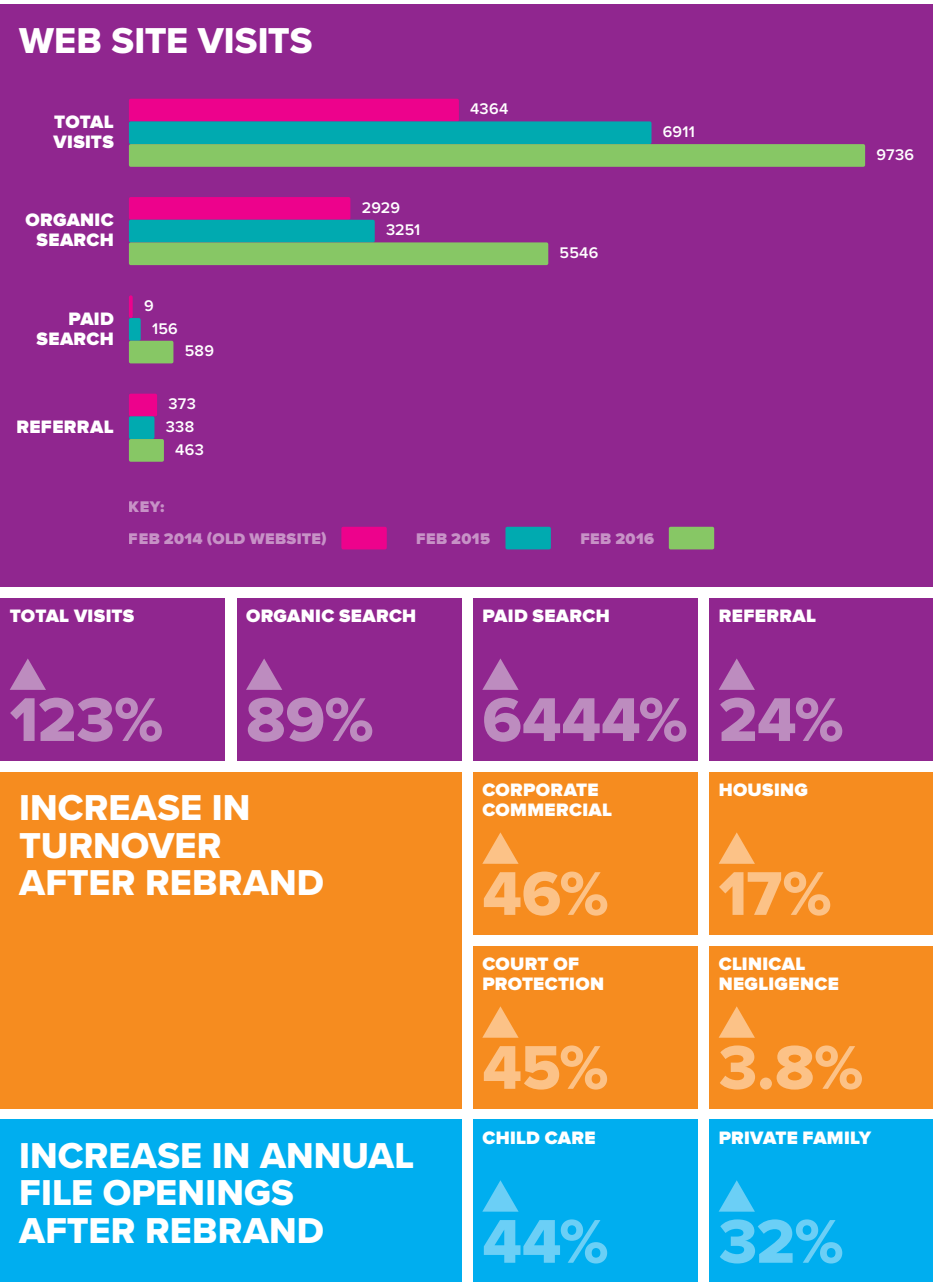
*Anonymous Employment Client,  
Client Satisfaction Survey*

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## 2. Increase website traffic, file openings and revenue

The branding and the completely new website which follows an ethos of communicating in ‘a professional but down-to-earth and friendly’ tone, has seen web volume double and in some months triple versus the same period last year. This is a monumental achievement and testament to the firm’s growing reputation.

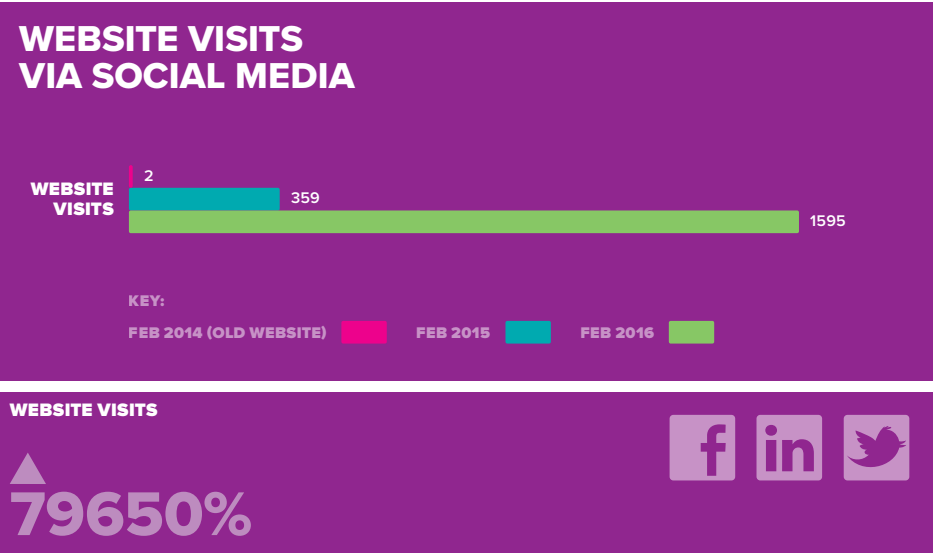
The figures below show the increase in the number of visits for a single month from before the rebrand to now, and the source of those visits. Visits originating from social media are described in the next section.



# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## 3. Raise brand awareness via social media

The new brand identity and website have given Wilson Browne the tools they need to establish a strong foothold in social media. Wilson Browne’s social media reach has increased by a factor of ten. Traffic to the website from social media was non-existent prior to the rebrand, but since then has grown year on year.





## OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

Following the success of the rebrand in 2014, Wilson Browne has increased its marketing budget, and invested in pay-per-click advertising and search engine optimisation, as well as advertising and editorials in offline publications. The search engine optimisation would not have been possible for Wilson Browne to do while under the umbrella brand that they left in 2014.

Wilson Browne has seen five Equity Partners reach retirement in short succession and with them also goes their equity investment. The growth of the company in spite of this is remarkable.

## RESEARCH RESOURCES

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*HR Magazine* 'Is this the biggest shake-up to legal services in 800 years?'  
Katie Jacobs, April 14, 2014

Mint UK – Company Report of Wilson Browne LLP

Wilson Browne Financial Reports

Constant Contact – online customer satisfaction survey

Google Analytics

National Law Society

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